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GENERAL

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★ AVALON HILL

Volume 25, Number 6



★ ★ The AVALON HILL GENERAL

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TOMMY ATKINS AT WAR

The British in *ASL*

6
By Charles Markuss

DESERT WINDS

The Scenarios of *WOA*, Part I

13
By Mark Nixon

AREA NEWS

The Latest in Competitive Gaming

21
By Don Burdick

BROKEN SWORDS

The Minor Neutral Powers 1939-41

22
By David Meyler

COMING ATTRACTIONS

RED BARRICADES

23
By Charles Kibler

SQUAD LEADER CLINIC

Man Versus Tank

25
By Jon Mishcon

WITH ROMMEL (AND MONTY) IN THE DESERT

A Study of Axis and Allied Play in *PAA*

27
By Martin Shaw

BUT NOT ALONE

Two-Player *ST. NAZAIRE*

32
By Marcus Watney

UP ON THE AFRICAN FRONT

The *DESERT WAR* Expansion for *UP FRONT*

35
By Steve Harvester

SPECIAL AIR SERVICE

The SAS and *FIREPOWER*

41
By James Werbaneth

PAX DISCORDIA

Trying to Cut Through the Chaos

49
By Kenneth Campbell

SPORTS SPECIAL

STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL, Part One

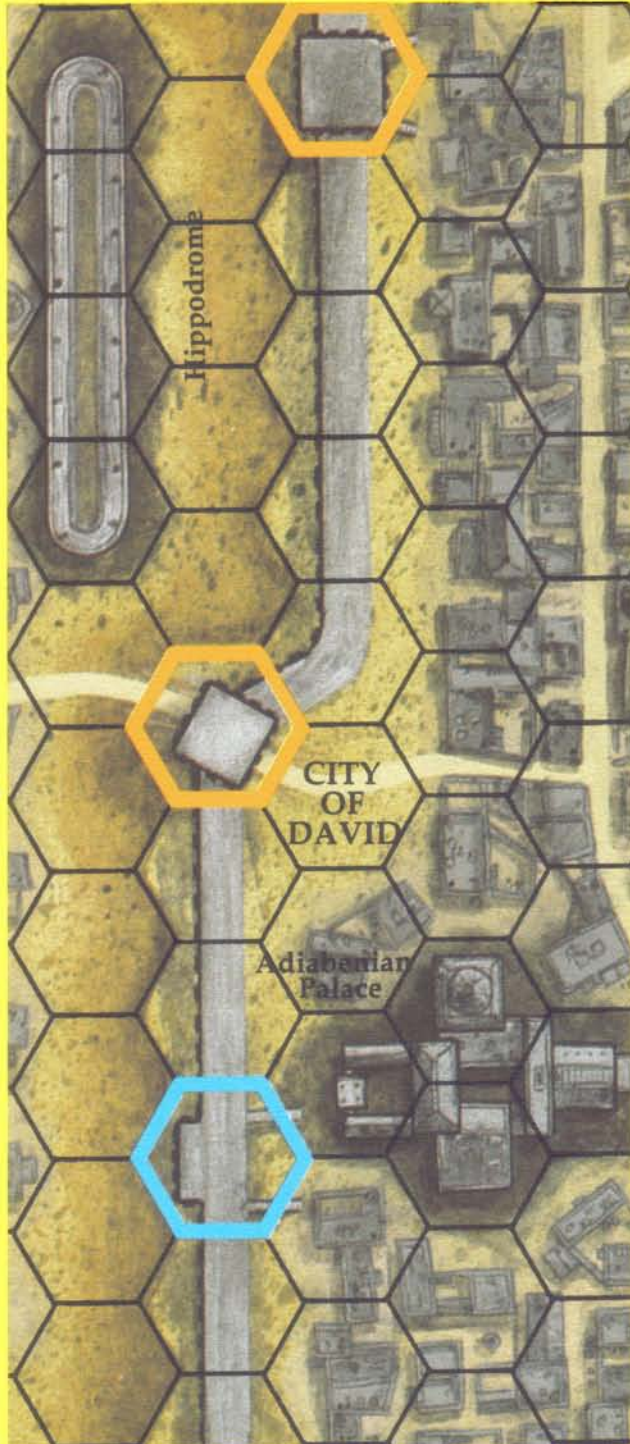
54
By Jim Burnett

COMPUTER CORNER

Beyond *SUPER SUNDAY*

55
By John Huff

The SIEGE of JERUSALEM



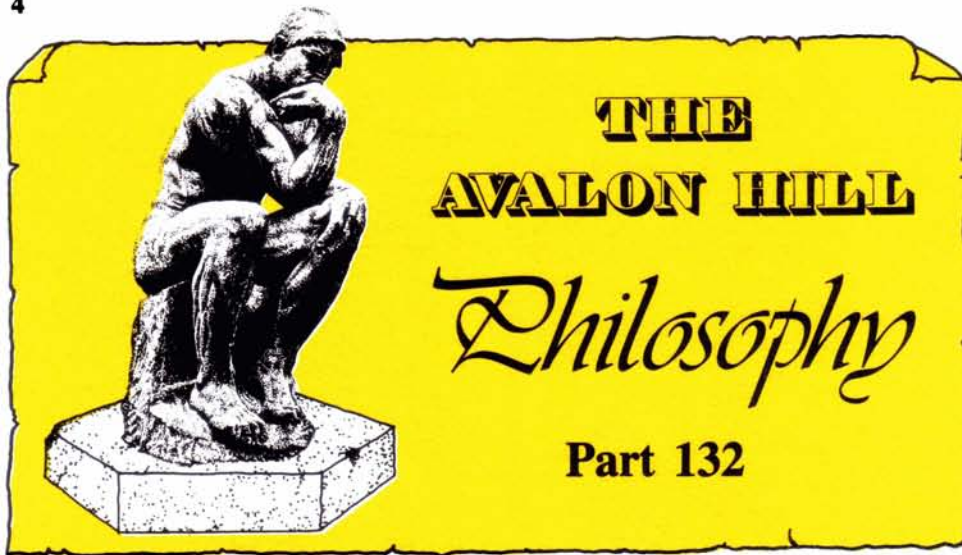
It is 70 A.D....Dawn breaks on the combined might of four Legions arrayed on the heights of Mount Scopus, starting their methodical advance across the valley to the ancient walled city of Jerusalem. Siege lines have been secured tight about the city. There is no hope of escape. The besieged must persist behind their stout walls or perish before a vengeful Rome. Five grueling years of campaigning in Judaea is now culminating in the **SIEGE OF JERUSALEM**.



This is **SIEGE OF JERUSALEM**...an epic battle simulation with all the trappings and majesty of a Cecil B. DeMille film spectacular. Facing the greatest army of antiquity, the Judaeans must rely on the stoutness of their walls to halt the unbeatable Roman legions and therein lies the fascination: the immovable object vs the unstoppable force. As Eliezar Ben Yair, leader of the Zealots, you must conduct a skilled defense of the city's ever shrinking perimeter—exactng from the Romans a price so terrible that they will be forced to lift their siege—or break out to continue your struggle for freedom at Masada. As Titus, commander of the Roman army, you must decide when, where, and how to renew the assault—gauging your troop needs against the progress of your siege works and the press of time caused by outside threats. More than just conducting tactical combat, the Roman must formulate an overall strategic plan for the conduct of the siege.

Vastly revised from its initial printing of the 70's, **SIEGE OF JERUSALEM** now boasts two-sided counters, a continuous combat system, a strategic interphase for conducting the entire siege, and the morale/panic rules so important in portraying ancient warfare. An Introductory Scenario depicting the abortive assault of Gallus with the XII Legion three years previous allows players to learn how to handle a legion in a single day's play while training for eventual participation in the conduct of the epic siege.

SIEGE OF JERUSALEM is now available for \$35.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add 10% for shipping and handling (20% for Canadian/Mexican orders, or 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.



THE AVALON HILL

Philosophy

Part 132

A couple of weeks ago, I had the pleasure of spending three weekend days at the *ASL Oktoberfest*, the now annual tournament hosted by Bill "Fish" Conner in his hometown of Youngstown, Ohio. Returning to the office on Tuesday, I found a lengthy missive from David Hood (Chapel Hill, NC) on the developing plans for the *World DIP-Con* to be held next June 22-24. These two happenstances brought to mind the role that such small (usually less than 150 devoted gamers), specialized gatherings play in our hobby. And why I find pleasure in attending them whenever circumstances permit.

If you've been in this hobby long, you are familiar with ORIGINS (the "National" gaming convention) and GENCON (the fantasy-oriented convention) and HISTORICON (the HMGS miniatures convention). But, quite frankly, I'm rather befuddled by these massive gatherings. I find it hard to enjoy myself much in the din of hype, "live" dungeons, seminars, commercialism, auctions, awards ceremonies, costume contests, and what-not. I can't hear what those I most want to be with—fellow gamers who happen to enjoy playing my favorite—have to say. It's damn hard these days to find a quiet corner to pass a couple of hours exchanging stories of our wargaming adventures or to play a game just for the fun of it.

That's where the small, regional conventions have the advantage. In the case of the specialized ones—those devoted to a certain title or series of games—you can be assured of finding lots of companionship, away from those folk who can't quite understand your fascination for voluminous rules and rolling dice, or for lying to your best friends and using trickery and deceit to climb over them to a win. I find it refreshing to be among a group enthusiastic about a game in these days of fads and throw-away designs. Untroubled, I'm able to immerse myself for two or three days in a gaming fantasy, one shared by everyone else who happens to be attending the convention. It's very easy to make new acquaintances and find a game to play; we all speak the same language. And games... yes, lots of games tucked into every nook and cranny. It seems to this interested observer that if these fellows have grabbed the time from their busy lives to come to such a passionate gathering, they are intent on making every minute count.

For instance, at the recent *ASL Oktoberfest*, some 84 players—from as far away as the wilds of Canada and Arizona—came together for a three-day meet. To even be considered in the competition, one had to play at least eight scenarios. Needless-to-say, some of these fellows played games for upwards of 16 hours a day, for three days! A couple of campaign games on the new *RED*

BARRICADES maps were in evidence; new cover artwork was shown off by Charlie Kibler; a team tournament was organized; copies of Bill Conner's new *ASL* newsletter were available for the asking; even some playtesting of the Japanese took place. And the conversation—in the bar, the lobby, the restaurant, the rooms—everywhere the convention-goers (and that's one thing about such small conventions; everyone soon recognizes everybody else there as a fellow fanatic) bumped into each other was devoted to THE GAME. The atmosphere was relaxed, yet invigorating. I hope to be at Bill's little (although if it keeps growing he may have to change the venue) get-together again next year. If you are an *ASL* player, nothing at the larger conventions can match the *Oktoberfest*.

The approaching *World DIP-Con*, the first held in the United States, is shaping up to be a rare treat for all those, casual or fanatic, who enjoy that game. I understand (not having been able to convince management that I could spend a few days in England quite happily) that the 1988 world event (Birmingham, UK) was exciting and entertaining, a natural high of the best sort for those who gathered to play the grand-daddy of multi-player political games. The designer, Allan Calhmer, was a guest of the convention and a number of prominent American players attended. David Hood and Ken Peel, prime movers in bringing the event to this shore, are full of plans to make it a weekend to remember. They have even consciously selected a date so that overseas visitors might also take in ORIGINS, "just down the road", the next week. From what Mr. Hood reports in his amateur *DIP* 'zine, *Carolina Command & Commentary*, there will be contingents from Europe, Canada and Australia, as well as the best of American players, all seeking to claim bragging rights. As with Bill Conner's event, there will be *DIPLOMACY* sets tucked into every corner (many of an international flavor; ever play on a board printed in Dutch?) and lots of *DIPLOMACY* talk, news and rumors abounding, in the halls. No matter if you're a novice, new to this madness, or a tested veteran of 25 years of backstabbing, like some of these hoary old relics, you're bound to find the fellowship and fun appealing.

If you aren't able to attend a convention devoted to your favorite game, try one of the regional wargame conventions in your locale. Each issue of *THE GENERAL* I compile a listing of those Avalon Hill has been notified about. It's been my observation that most every metropolitan center is home to one or more of these a year; and there are quite a few held in surprising places—Boise, ID, Farmington, ME, Southfield, MI, Sioux City, NE, Dover, NH. Seems to me that there's one held at some point of the year within driving distance of most everywhere in

CONVENTION CALENDAR

The *GENERAL* will list any gaming convention in this space free of charge on a space available basis provided that we are notified at least four months in advance of the convention date. Each listing must include the name, date, site, and contact address of the convention. Additional information of interest to our readership such as tournaments or events utilizing The Avalon Hill Game Company's games is solicited and will be printed if made available.

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

JANUARY 20-21

PANDEMONIUM VII, Toronto, Ontario
Contact: David Simpson, 17b Wales Avenue, Toronto M5T 1J2, Canada. (416) 597-1934.

Note: Numerous tournaments, including those in *DIPLOMACY*, *ENEMY IN SIGHT*, *KREMLIN*, *B-17*, *1830*, *WS&JM*.

FEBRUARY 23-25

TOTAL CONFUSION, Worcester, Massachusetts
Contact: Martha McCray, P.O. Box 1463, Worcester, MA 01607.

Note: Includes tournaments in *ACQUIRE*, *CIRCUS MAXIMUM*, *DIPLOMACY*, *TITAN*, *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* and *1830*.

MARCH 9-11

OWLCON XI, Houston, Texas
Contact: Jon Benignus, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251.

Note: Amid a plethora of RPG, tournaments in *CIV*, *DIP* and *ASL* will be offered.

MARCH 16-18

CONTEST VII, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Contact: Robert Briggs, TSS/Contest, P.O. Box 4726, Tulsa, OK 74159.

Note: A RPG-oriented convention with tournaments in *RUNEQUEST*.

APRIL 28-29

WINDS OF WAR '90, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Contact: Raymond Woloszyn, 7162 Mantlewood Lane, Kernersville, NC 27284. (919) 996-5677.

Note: Regional *ASL* tournament, with the theme "Blitzkrieg 1940".

JUNE 22-24

WORLD DIP-CON II, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Contact: David, Hood, 15-F Estes Park, Carrboro, NC 27510.

Note: The international *DIPLOMACY* convention, combined with the national *DIPLOMACY* tournament this year.

JUNE 28-JULY 1

ORIGINS '90, Atlanta, Georgia
Contact: Origins '90, P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362. (404) 457-2490.

Note: The National Strategy and Adventure Gaming Convention and Exposition.

JULY 26-29

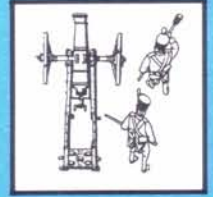
HISTORICON '90, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Contact: Mr. Robert Coggins

Note: The NorthEast's premier miniatures gaming convention, with miniatures versions of some of Avalon Hill's best boardgames (*MBT*, *FLIGHT LEADER*, *ADVANCED SL*) as well as *NAPOLÉON'S BATTLES*.

this vast country. While you might not find competition in just the game for which you have been honing your skills these many weeks, you are sure to find something else of interest. Most of these regional cons offer small tournaments in the most popular titles; contact the organizers and see if your favorite is among these. If it isn't, maybe you should

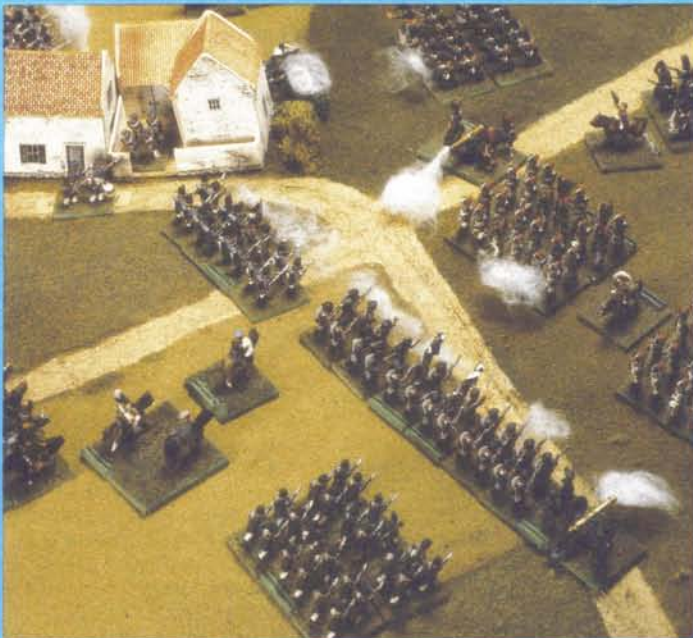
Continued on Page 48, Column 3

Napoleon's Battles



NAPOLEON'S BATTLES is a set of miniature wargaming rules covering the major elements of ground warfare from the French Revolution through the Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815) on a *grand tactical* scale. Primarily intended for the use of 15mm figures, there are also provisions for other scales. Intended for large actions, **NAPOLEON'S BATTLES** permits the re-creation of major battles of the era, and combines the completeness and comprehensiveness of boardgame rules with a unique miniature wargaming system that emphasizes command and constant player interaction.

The game's mechanics allow players to concentrate on their proper roles. YOU control an army or corps, and the decisions YOU make correspond to those of historic officers at the same command levels. Can the



battered brigades of the First Division hold while YOU rally the leaderless Second Division? The enemy looks vulnerable—is now the time to unleash YOUR cavalry, or should they be kept in hand for a future emergency? Has the time come for YOU to grab a standard and *personally* lead cheering grenadiers into the smoke and carnage? YOU are in command, and YOUR decisions will decide the battles that determine the fates of empires.

★ **Endless Game Variations:** The game's given scenarios include the historic battles of Marengo, Austerlitz, Eylau, Talavera, Borodino, and Waterloo. Use the given scenarios, or use the point system and design instructions to devise games based on real or fictitious battles.

★ **A Treasure Trove Of Information:** Game data for the characteristics of over 350 unit types differentiated by nationality and time period, and over 800 historic combat leaders rated for their abilities (or lack of them).

★ **Three Booklets:** An introductory booklet provides general background of wargaming and the game's historical era, hints on painting uniforms and terrain, information on organizing combat units, etc. A scenario booklet provides complete information for refighting eight battles, and for designing additional scenarios. A rule booklet includes Basic, Advanced, and Optional Rules—choose the levels of complexity and detail that YOU enjoy.

★ **Die-Cut Counters:** The game includes the information markers required to play. It also has full-size counters and terrain pieces that can be used in place of miniatures to allow first time players to "get their feet wet" without a lot of special equipment.

NAPOLEON'S BATTLES is available now for \$25.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add 10% for shipping and handling (20% for Canadian/Mexican orders; 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.



TOMMY ATKINS AT WAR

The British in ASL

By Charles Markuss

The long-awaited *WEST OF ALAMEIN* provides a welcome revision of *COD* and yet more variety for the epic *ASL* game system. We British have eagerly anticipated *WOA*'s release in the way that American players looked forward to the appearance of *YANKS*. For those readers who have yet to convert their hard-earned cash into "Tommys" (or have already done so, but not opened the box), a review of this latest module follows in which some explanations will be attempted for those rules and capabilities peculiar to the British. In addition, some well-worn myths about the "Tommy" of World War 2 will be simultaneously debunked, and his strengths and weaknesses examined in the context of a rather sweeping observation made by Hitler about the British soldier shortly after Dunkirk:

The British soldier has retained the characteristics which he had in World War I. Very brave and tenacious in defense, unskilled in attack, wretchedly commanded. Weapons and equipment are of the highest order, but the overall organization is bad.

cited by A. Mollo in *The Armed Forces of World War II*, p. 61

Readers will hopefully be able to judge the accuracy of this statement from what follows, but George Parrish's beautiful artwork captures the British spirit perfectly. Whereas the GIs on the *YANKS* box-art have been surprised by an enemy flank attack, the "Tommys" on the *WOA* lid are triumphantly advancing in a set-piece battle. The first lieutenant is (typically) armed only with a wrist-watch and a revolver, while the NCO brandishes a "tommy-gun", followed by a Bren gunner and the rest of the lads with bayonets fixed to their Lee-Enfields. A Matilda II, sporting disruptive camouflage, provides more than just moral support (as the burning Italian M13/40 shows). Out-generated by O'Connor and technically outclassed by the "Queen of the Battlefield", the often suicidal courage of the Italian soldiers did not prevent their defeat. Only Rommel's arrival would humble "Tommy" in the desert war.

INFANTRY

The most obvious change from *CRESCENDO OF DOOM* is the squad counter artwork for the British;

those static poses have gone and "Tommy" is now doing something more energetic than standing about waiting for the tea to brew. Apart from those useful smoke-grenade exponents and the revised crew counter graphics, the major changes to the multi-man counters are the substitution for the 6-3-8 airborne squads by the deadlier 6-4-8s and the "promotion" of the Gurkhas to Elite status. The *ASL* rulebook reveals other changes too, like Tommy's immunity to Covering (except for the poorer quality troops); Stealth advantages for the ANZACs and Gurkhas; that helpful +1 drm in nocturnal recon attempts to "spot" enemy defenders. The first of these changes reflects Tommy's stoicism (more on this later), while the last simulates the British flair for "recce" and night patrols. The cool-headed Britons also score well on the "Heat of Battle" drm, being less likely to go "berserk" and more likely to become "heroic" than most other nationalities, although these traits are all (of course) stereotypes to a large degree. A notable omission from *ASL/WOA* is *COD*'s automatic motorcycle experience for British leaders—a nice rule I thought simulating British Army requirements that all officers be competent motorcyclists.

Historically, British officers had a poor reputation, based on the 1914-18 "lions led by donkeys" stories—themselves rather sweeping generalizations. All armies have their share of idiots, of course, but the evidence suggests that British officers were far from incompetent. If many senior officers were mediocre, staff work became at least adequate after a poor start. Unfortunately, pre-war theories envisaged only a minor and supportive role for the British Army (even when the obsession with colonial defense began to wane) and Germany was supposed to be defeated by naval blockade, British bombers, and the French Army—a modified re-run of the 1914-18 war. In keeping with this perception, the BEF of 1940 was composed largely of reservists, while that of 1914 had contained the cream of Britain's soldiers. When this strategy proved illusory in 1940 and the Army had to be expanded rapidly for its new and greater role, there were insufficient trained officers. The absence of meaningful pre-war exercises compounded matters, and during the war there was an understandable reluctance among commanders to release their brightest subordinates for

Staff College courses. On a tactical level there were similar shortcomings, allowing old doctrines and inadequate officers to linger on. Moreover, many pre-war officers preferred polo matches, fox-hunting and pig-sticking to studying their profession seriously. The "public school" (roughly equivalent to an American private school) education received by most pre-war officers encouraged the admiration of heroic amateurism and a hostility towards any hint of professionalism except, perhaps, in the care of horses. Technology was heretical. The different counter art for the 6+1, 10-2 and 10-3 leaders depict smartly-dressed officers carrying nothing more lethal than a cane and bring to mind the more eccentric breed in the British Army who believed in adopting a deliberately conspicuous profile; for example, a certain Lt-Colonel at Arnhem who (as an ex-Master of the Iraqi Royal Exodus Hunt) used his copper hunting-horn to rally his men, and a Major—also at Arnhem—who led his men into battle while wearing a bowler-hat and carrying a battered umbrella for (as he later claimed) identification purposes.

This attitude was particularly common in the cavalry regiments (which had fought their badly-managed mechanization tooth and nail), their play-boy officers being "selected" by private income and class rather than by merit since Army pay alone was insufficient for their equine-oriented lifestyle or their fancy "tinsel" uniforms. To some extent, this financial hurdle still exists today, certainly in the Household Cavalry regiments that foreign tourists love to photograph. To this, the "... most mentally inept, unprofessional and reactionary group in the British Army", the bulk of the wartime AFVs were entrusted. Men such as these were unwilling to fight, let alone socialize, with "inferior" regiments and humans—an attitude not found even in the medieval Anglo-Welsh armies. Inconvenient orders were disputed in France; command was exercised more by conference than by obedience in the new 8th Army; and to General Hobart's chagrin, the 7th Armoured Division's officers preferred polo to combat training. Small wonder there was often a mindless insistence on futile and suicidally inappropriate tactics until the Germans bloodily removed them from command (but unfortunately, some were still there during Normandy).

Luckily, however, the artillery and infantry branches were less infected by this mental malaise and most junior British officers were at least as good as their allies (if usually not quite up to the German standards). This is reflected in the game's British "Leader Generation Number" of "5", the best in *ASL* after that of the German. The quality of these leaders was due as much to social factors as changes in recruitment; there has always been a reluctance among the British self-styled "upper classes" to follow technical or commercial vocations, and soldiering has always been more socially acceptable than in, say, the USA. Social trends therefore placed public school types, the sons of professional soldiers and other natural leaders, into the armed forces—especially into "glamorous" combat formations rather than into "grubby" support formations. While such men often found it difficult to adjust to life in the armored formations of World War 2, and were not renowned for their tactical brilliance, they at least knew how to care for, motivate, and lead their men.

In 1939, this social group supplied 84% of aspiring officers (40% of these from "military" families), but wartime samples showed a fall to only 25% when demand exceeded the supply (the equivalent figures of self-recruitment by such military families were 29% in 1933 for Germany and 23% in 1935 for the US). A less elitist approach had to be adopted in the war (as it had in 1916-18) and therefore well-educated "middle class" men comprised the bulk of the officer corps. German selection procedures, including extensive psychological assessments, were copied with great success; officer quality was also enhanced by the many NCO platoon commanders of 1939 (sergeant majors) who were also commissioned. Some of these rose to command regiments or battalions by 1945, and even some privates were commissioned in the field for outstanding bravery or initiative. Under the "Canloan" scheme of October 1943, 673 Canadian officers were also provided for British units in the ETO and PTO (of whom 465 became casualties). Despite the fact that the officer casualty rates were higher for World War 2 than for the First World War, the need for so many officers was largely self-inflicted. By 1943, it was unthinkable to have mere NCOs commanding platoons, and there was a glut of senior commanders due to over-promotion (the USA had similar problems). By contrast, the Germans used their officers more economically and efficiently, delegating much more responsibility out of sheer necessity (giving, for instance, their NCOs responsibilities equivalent to Allied junior officers). The superior German "LG" number reflects this nicely.

The best British squads still have a range of only five hexes, although "home-grown" Britons (at least) were famous for their marksmanship. Pumping out lots of lead is all very well, but it helps if some of this actually *hits* the target. Tommy's fire-arms training was a legacy of his traditional and primary role as Imperial Policeman in situations where every shot had to count when confronting hordes of unfriendly chaps. But range factors in *ASL* reflect more than just shooting skill. Unfortunately there was also another legacy from the colonial wars which militated against tactical efficiency—the Regimental System of organization used by the British Army. This type of structure was coupled with recruitment based on regional lines to supply the far reaches of the Empire with troops, one battalion remaining at home refitting while the other served overseas, and then vice versa. The "Regiment", or more precisely a battalion therein, gave Tommy a home (often the best he ever had), a sense of belonging with its emphasis on unique and regional differences, a focus for his loyalty, and a boost to his morale when things got bad—the honor and success of the Regiment meant a lot.

But regimental customs, traditions and jargon could also make it difficult for newcomers to fit into what was essentially an army organized into separate and distinct tribes. This fostering of cliques often undermined the cohesion of larger formations (or even regiments receiving a large influx of replacements). Regimentalism bred suspicion and mistrust (or even hatred on occasion) of other regiments or services within the British Army (which still persist to this day in its milder aspects). One modern source describes it as "... an unprofessional coalition of arms and services" and as "... a number of loosely coordinated social groups which mirror the views of the society from which they derive their attitudes to military problems" (Bidwell & Graham, *Firepower*, 1982). The traditional regional pattern of recruitment still used by most regiments reinforced this insular outlook during the war, as did the increasingly multi-national character of the British Army; the British soldier of all ranks traditionally looked down on Indian Army service, referring to its troops as "frontier soldiers". Although wartime necessities eroded regional recruitment somewhat and provided a greater mix of personnel within regiments, its members still thought in terms of "regiment" rather than "division"; as a result, battlefield coordination of armor, infantry and artillery was poor until quite late in the war. At its worse, different types of units often fought their own bizarre little private wars against a fully-integrated foe... with predictable results. Successive defeats merely prolonged the suspicions, and it took time for Tommy to learn to fight in larger, division-sized formations with others alongside. Only after Normandy was full coordination achieved, although the Canadians and ANZACs had managed this much earlier.

Moreover, the Regiment's paternalistic environment stifled personal initiative (especially amongst the less-educated, pre-war regulars) in comparison with German and American troops. Although ANZAC, Canadian and other Commonwealth troops were less inhibited, Indian troops were sometimes treated like children by patronizing British officers. Consequently, Tommy (like his Soviet counterpart) was usually hard to dislodge when defending, but combat performance deteriorated when leaders became casualties (statistical analysis later revealed that the Canadians were the least likely to surrender among "British" troops). Tommy Atkins expected his leaders to lead, and in the attack he went to ground if he became leaderless (commandos, paratroops and similar types excluded). In contrast, German troops were *expected* (let alone encouraged) to display high levels of personal initiative, and U.S. troops though often poorly led by "90-day wonders" tended to do likewise. This British weakness was evident in situations where forceful or formal leadership was absent or impractical; despite facing German infiltration tactics as early as 1918, most British line troops never developed effective countermeasures and were far less willing to adopt such tactics themselves than German, Japanese or Soviet troops. The closest the British got to infiltration tactics were their nightly raids and patrols, which invariably involved returning to their own lines by daylight rather than remaining behind the enemy's to cause trouble. Infiltration tactics were second-nature to the Germans, as were sudden and rapid counterattacks to retake lost positions. British counterattacks were slower, more deliberate and less cost-effective.

Such lack of imagination and flexibility were reinforced by other factors. Until 1938, imperial policing was regarded as the British Army's first priority and another European war was deemed unlikely. Thus, preparation for the latter was bottom of the list, and training and equipment reflected this outlook. There was a tradition of public sentiment against continental doctrines of military efficiency; war was regarded more as an obscene art-form than

as a science. Army maneuvers were similarly unrealistic, and memories of the 1914-18 slaughter bred caution since officers had nightmares about similar losses amid Britain's dwindling manpower resources. Tactics were therefore "safe", unimaginative, relatively predictable, and so (ironically) expensive in lives. The low British range factors also simulate a tendency to do things "by the book" since pre-war training was no real preparation for fighting a first-rate mechanized army. Although the 1937 "Infantry Training Manual" did modernize tactics a little and allow commanders more discretion, throughout the war there was general dissatisfaction with the adequacy of British training for the realities of combat. During the war years there was still the emphasis on a "correct solution" to a tactical problem drawn from a choice of various "drills". These drills were intended to be merely a wartime teaching aid to foster greater tactical awareness, but inexperienced junior officers came to regard them as ends in themselves and applied them far more rigidly than the battlefield demanded. They were not a success, especially in an attack where flexibility, imagination and rapid decision-making were paramount. British training was essentially prescriptive in character, fostering a methodical, set-piece approach to combat. To the British, all problems were categorized into types, whereas the Germans saw each as essentially unique. General Auchinleck admitted, "we were not as well trained as the Germans—a fault of our prewar training. We don't really train for war in peacetime England—we play at it."

Tommy's good morale factors appear to contradict the fact that the majority of the troops rarely felt the lust for revenge or the blind hatred for the enemy that motivated other victims of Axis aggression. However, the Pacific theater was something of an exception, while Polish and Free French and other "refugee" contingents in the British Army were understandably less philosophical or dispassionate. In theory, Tommy Atkins could go for 400 Combat Days (680 calendar days) before breaking down psychologically (the American GI, some 200-240 Combat Days) according to separate wartime studies. This is reflected in *ASL* in the different morale values. There are four main reasons for the difference between US and British morale values. Firstly, the environment: due to geographical proximity, the Axis threat was more immediate and real to Tommy and his family than for the average GI.

Secondly, the two armies used a different selection process for the combat soldiers; the British method lay somewhere between the two extremes represented by German and American practice, respectively. The Germans deliberately gave their combat units a much greater proportion of high-quality personnel of all ranks, whereas the U.S. Army consciously diverted the cream of their intake (in most cases) away from combat units—especially the infantry—into the more technically-oriented branches where reward and promotion often came easier. The British therefore got a better cross-section of the available personnel into their combat units, especially into those with distinguished histories.

Thirdly, the British rotated their front-line formations more frequently than did the U.S. Army, and had superior psychiatric treatment available (to detect, prevent and cure breakdowns) based on their experience with the 1914-18 "shell-shock" cases. Experience showed that this medical back-up was far more effective than short-lived and unsuccessful attempts to "toughen" troops by visits to slaughterhouses, indoctrination, and endless marches.

Fourth, Britain's social structure and long military tradition made civilians more readily adaptable to military life and discipline than their American cousins. This writer does not believe, as has been

suggested previously, that European troops were necessarily more accustomed to physical hardship than the GIs. Even if this were the case, it would not in itself make Europeans better soldiers, since socio-economic origins are less relevant to combat performance than training, leadership, discipline and tactics.

In comparing Allied and German practice, rewards and punishments are illuminating, for while the Germans were among the most fair and egalitarian in rewarding *exceptional* courage when combined with *personal initiative* (heroism alone was not qualification for a medal), they were also much more ruthless towards "cowards" and deserters—an estimated 5302 were executed between 1939 and 1945 (compared with only 22 in the 1914-18 war). The British and Americans, on the other hand, were amongst the most humane; only one GI was executed for desertion and, despite Churchill's protests, the British Army refused to reintroduce the death penalty for these offenses after it had abolished them (in 1930) because the 1914-18 experiences—when 266 executions took place for desertion—"cast doubts upon its effectiveness". In effect, the British Army over-reacted and replaced the iron fist with a velvet glove; the harshest sentence imposed was three years imprisonment, but a mere six months was more common. Partly for this reason, the British had an average 4% desertion rate in the army throughout the war, the bulk being infantrymen. This compares with an average of only .79% for the German Army. By the way, Allied desertion rates were highest in the bloody, static "side-show" fought in Italy. For British soldiers at least, this official leniency allowed them to "unofficially" transfer from a unit by deserting and letting themselves be rounded-up for reassignment to under-strength formations on a random basis. With so many units below strength by 1944, such replacements were gratefully received without too many questions, enabling the Tommy to find a unit to his liking by empirical methods, and it was apparently quite wide-spread later in the war (especially in Italy).

Britain's 1939-45 army casualties totalled 126734 killed and 239575 wounded (about 25% of the 1914-18 losses). However, Canadian, Indian and New Zealand contingents were proportionally harder hit due to their smaller non-combatant sections (their support services being largely provided by British personnel within the British Army structure onto which the Commonwealth units were grafted). In Normandy and Italy, casualty rates approached those of 1914-18 on occasions, and as the war dragged on the shortage of infantry could be alleviated only partly (as in the U.S. Army) by using hastily-trained men and by disbanding some armored or artillery formations. A reduction in the overall percentage of non-combatant personnel within units, along the German and Russian lines, was not attempted, so British combat units steadily fell in strength. The better British and Commonwealth formations naturally tended to be over-used, losing their elan, the men becoming tired and resentful. The lowering of the British ELR in 1945 encapsulates this fact, and "war-weariness" generally.

INFANTRY WEAPONS

Britain's financial, industrial and human resources were very limited compared to her major allies, and her massive investments in the USA and elsewhere had to be liquidated to pay for the war long before Pearl Harbor. The war left Britain almost bankrupt, costing some 25% of her national wealth, and ran her aging railways and industrial plants into the ground. With between 33 and 50% of the war effort devoted to bombing Germany, and most of the rest devoted to the naval war, the British Army was slow on the list of priorities for men and material.

Moreover, a large slice (about 12 divisions worth) of Army resources went into AA defenses. By 1944, only 61% of British munitions were home-produced (compared to initial near self-sufficiency). Small wonder that "economy" and "conservation" became bywords in human and material expenditures in the Army. Bren gunners were taught to fire single shots whenever possible; British mortars had low official rates of fire; British paratroops carried no second, back-up parachute until 1950 (which did nothing to encourage volunteers).

The firepower of British infantry sections (squads) in *ASL* is "low", not just because of the reliance on rifles, but for organizational reasons as well. Until 1943 each British squad at full strength had only eight men; ten thereafter. This compares with a normative nine in the Soviet squad, ten (later nine) in the German, eleven in the French, twelve in the U.S. and up to thirteen in the Japanese and U.S. Marine Corps. The small size of British infantry formations was mirrored in the larger units too, for their infantry company TO&E was one of the smallest of any participant in the war; at full strength in 1939, it contained 129 men if there were four platoons (but usually there were only three with 100 men). By 1944, each company had 125-127 men. By comparison, a U.S. infantry division's companies had between 193 and 223 men, a U.S. armored division's between 178 and 251; the German company ranged 191-200 before 1944, and 161 thereafter. While a Soviet SMG company had only 78-100 men (but more firepower), their rifle companies had 143 men; the French 190, the Italian 158 and the Japanese between 114 and 265 (the latter based on contradictory data).

Nor is this the whole story. British rifle battalions were far more poorly equipped with organic support weapons than their foreign equivalents, as the "Support Allotment Chart" shows. The following table illustrates the serious deficiencies

Weapon:	Brit	USA	Germany	USSR	Italy	Japan
Lt. Mortar	12/9	9	9/-	9/6	18	27-36
Medium Mortar	2/6	6	6	6/9	—	2*
Heavy Mortar	**	—	-/4	—	—	—
MMG & HMG	—	14	12	12/9	8	8
.50 cal. HMG	—	6	—	—	—	—

Numbers separated by "/" denote initial and late-war totals.

* = sometimes present

** = mortar battalions (only) had eight after 1941

British MMGs were not organic below divisional level until late in the war, being kept in specialist MG battalions (with 36 or 48 MMGs apiece) which had little direct contact with ordinary infantry; this did little to improve tactical efficiency. The MMGs were doled out to lower formations as "required", and for defense this usually sufficed—but in fluid situations or in attack they were rarely in the right place in meaningful numbers when needed. By 1944, the MG companies were detached to brigades, but there were never enough of them.

Ironically, even in 1914-18 the Canadians and Germans had used a much more generous MG allocation than the "specialist" British. But the lesson was ignored, another instance where new weapons of apparently dubious value had been placed into a specialist corps because no established branch of the British Army would accept them. This quaint legacy of the First World War ensured, in the case of MG battalions, that the troops therein were technicians first—soldiers second—and infantrymen only a poor third. Hopefully, this will explain the rather odd British MMG and HMG allocations in the *ASL* tables, with such variations for defense, attack or neither. While the early eight-man squad was probably not seriously disadvantaged in combat with larger enemy squads (it did, after all, usually contain a LMG), the deficiencies in organic MGs was another matter completely at company level and above. In this respect, at least, Hitler's observation about "bad" British organization was justified.

It has become fashionable to dismiss all British equipment as inferior, impractical or obsolete—but this is another generalization. Certainly the British did rely on rifles for far too long (due to economy, conservatism, massive stocks, and especially lots of old ammunition), but even the Germans were predominately rifle-equipped even late in the war because the demand for automatic weapons exceeded supply. The British failure to provide their troops with something like the M1 Garand was due not only to conservatism but also to excessively-severe specifications which no contemporary prototypes under evaluation could have met, and the reluctance to discard millions of rounds of incompatible rimmed cartridges. The demands of wartime production extinguished any hopes of introducing such a weapon.

The Boys ATR was "ludicrously inadequate" against European tanks, having been designed for the defense of the Egyptian border after the Italian-Abyssinian war. It also reflected a General Staff obsession with infantry-held anti-tank weapons from 1927 onwards (the same year the lance was formally declared obsolete) and it was rushed into service despite its shortcomings. Apart from the vicious recoil, the noise made the wearing of ear-plugs mandatory, and the original steel-cored bullet had to be replaced with one of tungsten-carbide to render the weapon even remotely effective. The 1937 training leaflet recommended practice against tanks moving at 15-25 mph at up to 500 yards away—highly optimistic in the extreme. By 1943, nearly 69000—more than any other type of ATR—had been made, even though "... a good crossbow would have been just as useful and far cheaper."

But perhaps the main British technical weakness in infantry weaponry lay in mortars, as there was no inter-war research into mortar design, or into the effects of rain on ignition efficiency. The 2-inch mortar, of 1918 vintage, lacked punch (like all mortars of this caliber). Possessing a theoretical rate of fire of 20-30 rpm, great skill was needed by the user if ammunition was not to be wasted. Although it could, in theory, be fired point-blank (an unwise procedure), it had poor range compared to most foreign equivalents:

Nationality	Caliber	Range (yards)
British	2-inch (51mm)	500
French	50mm	503
German	50mm	569
Italian	45mm	586
Japanese	50mm	711
Polish	46mm	875
Soviet	50mm	875
French	60mm	1860
American	60mm	1985

It was the same story with the British 3-inch mortar; initially it could reach only 1600 yards while the German and Italian 81mm mortars could reach 2625 and 4429 yards, respectively. The 3-inch's range was eventually increased to 2790 yards, although some crews improved even on this by the unorthodox use of captured ammunition. When the 4.2-inch mortar was introduced to improve the reach of British mortars, only 4100 yards could be obtained—by which time the Germans already had in service their copies of the Soviet 120mm mortar with a range of 6500 yards, a heavier bomb, and a lower overall weight.

More successful weaponry in the British arsenal included the Bren LMG, probably the best of its kind at the time, and this modified Czech design was already in pre-war service (as well as being more plentiful than has sometimes been suggested). The British SW Allotment Chart confirms this. Produced by a single factory in Britain that was never bombed by the Luftwaffe, over 30000 existed by mid-1940 with production increasing from 300 weekly in 1938 to over 1000 per week by 1943. Canadian factories also made them, eventually accounting for over 60% of the total output. Australian firms made them too, while most Indian

troops used the comparable Vickers-Berthier LMG. As a result, production kept pace with demand and losses (except just after Dunkirk). The inferior Besal, hurriedly designed as a substitute, was never needed. Indeed, the U.S. Army would have done well to adopt the Bren instead of the ghastly BAR, for it had many features superior to the German MG34 and MG42 LMGs.

Another reasonably good, if unpopular, British weapon was the PIAT; it was safer to use than (if not as powerful as) the *panzerfaust*, and was also capable of being fired from inside hard cover, unlike any foreign equivalent. Given the choice of no backblast or the ability to fire at lower elevations, I'd take the former every time (even if a bungled recocking attempt ran the risk of a hernia or a strained back). The PIAT can also be fired by any SMC; with other SCW, only Hero counters can do so.

ORDNANCE

British ordnance was the same mixture of "the Good, the Bad and the Ugly" found in all armies. Pre-war development of artillery had, however, suffered from financial stringency, large stocks of 1918-vintage equipment and the excessive influence of those officers responsible for colonial defense. The latter, for example, delayed the introduction of HE to replace the traditional (and inferior) shrapnel despite a consensus of technical opinion against them. From the early 1920s on, there was a growing emphasis on AT artillery, and even new field guns had to be capable of "self-protection" from AFVs, so there was little inter-war research in heavy artillery since it was deemed to be superfluous to requirements.

The few designs sanctioned had very long development times due to the financial climate, and bulk production before 1936 was impossible. The 25-pounder field gun, for instance, was first mooted about 1925, but no detailed specifications emerged until 1936, and production only began in February 1940. When war seemed inevitable, this process became more frantic, to the extent that the 5.5-inch gun-howitzer (based on a 1939 General Staff requirement) was ready for trials the same year. But the first carriages were too light for the weapon mounted, and production of a new, stronger, welded version was not cleared until April 1941. Speed in development, therefore, left bugs which caused unexpected delays. Due to high safety factors (insisted on by Parliament), British ordnance tended to be cumbersome by foreign standards, especially concerning weight. Some safety tolerances were, however, relaxed during the war to speed production, conserve scarce materials and boost ballistic performance; but balanced against this was the need to use inferior metals in British shells for strategic reasons, necessitating thicker shell walls to preserve strength at the expense of the explosive filling. (The resultant weight increase also partly explains the poor range of British mortars.)

The 2-pounder AT gun and its tank-mounted equivalent are often singled out for criticism for failing to penetrate German face-hardened armor at 300 yards. But this was due to its uncapped AP ammunition rather than any inherent weakness in the gun design itself. By the time that Armor-Piercing Capped, Ballistic-Cap ammunition (APCBC, which did not shatter on impact) was available, German armor thicknesses had increased to the extent that the 2-pounder was fit only for recon vehicles and for use against Japan. This delay in producing effective ammunition again exemplifies the pre-war British contempt for technologists. Due to production problems, even uncapped AP shot was scarce during the 1940 French campaign. Even worse, no AFV (Technical) Branch to examine captured enemy AFVs was set up by GHQ until November 1941; so when the British captured a German PzKfw IV in April 1941, nobody bothered to inspect it until

March 1942—when its face-hardened armor was finally discovered. The U.S. 37mm AT had, theoretically, less penetration than the 2-pounder, but at least it had a shatter-proof APC projectile.

There is no official explanation for the absence of 2-pounder HE ammunition for so long, but the reasons are not elusive. With so much pre-war doctrine in the hands of military theorists with little practical experience of tactical or technical problems, it appears that MGs alone were considered sufficient to deal with enemy AT guns and other "soft" targets; Liddell-Hart wrote about such guns being "smothered" by one-man tankettes armed with MGs. This optimism and the obsession with countering the threat posed by the tank conspired to give the 2-pounder only AP shot, even though an HE round had been developed as early as 1935. It was also more than just coincidence that this emphasis on AT capability came at the very time the guns themselves and the responsibility for AT defense in the British Army) passed from the infantry to the artillery during 1938-1940. Even when HE finally became available, there were still problems because the small explosive filling gave poor lethality, and this probably also explains why the British never issued 37mm HE in the desert campaign.

Late in the war light armor mounting the (by then) puny 2-pounder presented crews with the difficult choice of either retaining the "Littlejohn Adaptor" to fire APCNR (omitted from *ASL* in the interests of simplicity) or removing the adaptor so that HE could be fired. As it was hardly sensible for crews to unbutton and remove the adaptor each time HE was required, some recon troops kept the adaptors on some armored cars and left it off others. Others simply fired APCNR without the adaptor in place despite the inferior performance that this caused.

To complete the picture of the 2-pounder, the towed version, while having a 360° traverse, was complicated and difficult to mass produce. Its weight impaired manhandling (but then, AT guns survived by concealment rather than mobility). In the hands of resolute crews, its small size did allow it to destroy AFVs with daring close-range flank or rear shots (provided that it could be deployed in suitable terrain). And this is how the 2-pounder was supposed to have been used. The ANZACs were especially good at these tactics. The 2-pounder saw out the Pacific campaigns as an AT gun because it was easier to manhandle than its successor; but officially it should have been phased out to ease the logistical burden.

The story of the 6-pounder is one of delay caused by the urgent need to replace all the 2-pounders lost in France rather than disrupt existing production and introduce a new gun at a critical time. It eventually arrived in the desert (not a moment too soon) to counter the new enemy AFVs; but again, HE ammunition only came later and its lethality was poor compared to the 75mm's HE round as well as being scarcer. There were also problems with HE premature detonations, according to documents dated as late as April 1944—due mainly to the incompatibility of certain HE fuses with 6-pounder tubes mounting muzzle-brakes.

The 17-pounder AT gun is a success story—almost. Available in good time (for a change) to deal with the late-war enemy AFVs, HE ammunition was again overlooked for over a year and, as with all high-velocity weapons, effect was inferior to lower-velocity guns because the shell walls have to be made thicker at the expense of the explosive charge. It was also a beast of a gun to conceal or manhandle, to the extent that a prototype motorized version (similar to the post-war Soviet 85mm gun) was built, albeit not put into production.

Another gun of excellent quality was the celebrated 25-pounder, which made a passable AT gun in the desert for want of anything better. Its

special turntable, an ingenious feature, permitted rapid traverse by a single crewman and greatly enhanced its AT capability, but its 60-second set-up and three-minute limber-up times along with a lowish rate of fire (due to the two-piece ammunition) were inferior to "pure" AT guns. The gun's curved trajectory also rendered it less accurate in the AT role, and it lacked killing-power against fortifications compared to 105mm artillery, although it had good range for a field gun.

The 5.5-inch gun-howitzer was another work-horse weapon when its carriage was perfected, although its reputation suffered a short set-back in Italy when premature shell detonations caused many burst barrels. The 3.7-inch AA gun (first mooted about 1920 but not produced until 1938) was a lost opportunity to field a British version of the German 88mm gun, albeit less mobile if a bit more powerful. In the hands of Heavy AA batteries in Burma, it did wonderfully against the Japanese due to its air-burst capability. The obsolete 3-inch 20cwt. AA gun was also potentially an excellent AT gun, but never used as such in anger. The larger British guns were not particularly new or good (save the Anglo-U.S. 7.2-inch Mark VI howitzer, which arrived only late in the war).

The British were also poorly equipped in SP artillery because development had ceased in the early 1930s in favor of conventional, towed artillery—thanks to conservatism and poorly defined doctrines. The 2-pounder and 6-pounder portees, as well as the Deacon and the Bishop, were clumsy, vulnerable, and inefficient improvisations. The Sexton, while more efficient, was under-gunned for its size and weight. The Archer got a mixed reception; M10 crews in Italy disliked the thin armor, rearward facing gun and limited traverse, describing it as "quite useless" after initial impressions.

But the real flaw in British artillery practice was an organizational blunder imposed in 1938 (by bureaucrats, not soldiers) whereby field artillery regiments (each of which was equivalent to two U.S. battalions in the number of guns contained) were reorganized into two batteries of 12 guns apiece in the interests of economy and technical convenience. Tactical considerations were ignored. Because the basic role of these regiments was to support the infantry brigades containing three battalions, there were problems dividing the two batteries into three without disrupting administration and fire control. This defect, of anonymous parenthood, was remedied (by reverting to three eight-gun batteries) after Dunkirk—although not overnight, with one source claiming that it lingered on until 1942 in the desert.

As to personnel, British (and American) artillery formations probably contained the cream of their respective land forces, and in this branch at least were both numerically and qualitatively superior to their German counterparts. If British ordnance was of mixed quality, it was well handled most of the time, although AT guns were rarely used as imaginatively as German weapons. (Ironically, the tactic of deliberately luring enemy armor onto a hidden screen of AT guns was first used by the British at Tobruk in April 1941, after which they forgot the trick; Rommel did not.) With a shortage of heavy artillery for much of the war, and with the RAF indifferent towards tactical ground support for the first half of the war due to an obsession with their bombing crusade against Germany, there was over-reliance on field artillery for both fire support and AT defense initially. Not only was it over-worked, it was also spread too thinly to provide more than token support until well into desert campaign. However, the British corrected these shortcomings brilliantly.

The "ace" up the British sleeve was the combination of Forward Observers with a revolutionary form of fire control based on radio inter-communication. FOs had generally been only junior

officers, but the British put *senior* officers up front to make rapid decisions and issue appropriate *orders* for the supportive fire of up to an entire corps if necessary, without having to make time-consuming requests for permission. A call for regimental support could be answered in just 60 seconds, and divisional support in just three minutes, once the system was perfected. To represent this in *ASL* would probably destroy playability, but the revised OBA rules and tables do now give the British an edge over other nationalities, and rightly so. The system was devised by Colonel H.J. Parham, commanding a field artillery regiment in Belgium in 1940, where he used the system unofficially and experimentally against German armor. With Parham's help, Brigadier S. Kirkham then devised a simple drill enabling the FO to have control of the regiment's firepower within three to four minutes. The system demanded good radio communication, but was ingeniously simple; every gun that could reach and bear on target would fire as soon and as rapidly as possible. Speed and weight of bombardment to provide hammerblows in emergencies mattered more than its accuracy. After a near disaster during a demonstration for the top brass, this centralized fire control was first used at the second battle of Alamein, and came into general use in 1943 (by which time the artillery was no longer spread thinly all over the desert but concentrated at divisional level or above). The system was the most advanced in the world at the time, being far more flexible than even German methods; the U.S. Army was quick to adopt it, although their Forward Observers were still junior in rank. By comparison, Soviet artillery methods resembled those of the British in 1916-18.

ARMOR

Although all nations produced their share of expensive junk (the inevitable fate of all weapon systems eventually), for most of the war British tank design was a national scandal. Britain's Technical Liaison Officer in Detroit wrote "... little of the labour and materials expended on the 25,000 British-built tanks helped to win the war." Without the U.S. tank arsenal to fall back on, the Empire would never have struck back. The growing dominance of U.S.-built tanks is shown by the following: of the equipment issued to British tank regiments in North West Europe in 1944, 32 (maximum) were Shermans, 12 Churchill/AVRE, nine Cromwells. In 1945 the figures were: 25 (maximum) Shermans, 11 Churchill/AVRE, eight Cromwell, and four Comets. Even this is not the whole story, since it ignores the Stuarts found in all regimental headquarters, and the fact that the majority of tanks used by British forces in Italy and the PTO were American-built, and that three Churchill regiments were disbanded before VE-Day due to heavy losses.

The reasons for the British tank fiasco are many and varied, and cannot be discussed in any great detail here. Firstly, as the pioneers of the tank and the victors in the Great War, the British rested on their laurels and allowed their tank-producing infrastructure to decay in the locust years before World War 2. Little equipment was still being made by specialist firms, and only one major privately owned (i.e., non-government controlled) tank manufacturer—Vickers-Armstrong—remained since AFVs were uncommercial propositions in peacetime. Consequently, neither prestige nor profit could be made by producing them, and the business (such as it was) attracted little design talent. So, when rearmament began, many heavy engineering and automotive concerns became designer/producers in order to restore the lost capacity despite their inherent unsuitability. Most had inadequate design facilities and fairly idle plants of patchy quality. Contracts to build tanks were often awarded on the basis of how to lift ailing firms out of the economic doldrums into which many had sunk during the

Depression. The automotive industry in Britain, for example, could in no way be compared to its American counterpart; it was smaller, less efficient and traditionally more concerned with aesthetics than significant innovation. The heavy engineering firms (e.g., railway workshops and the like) had little if any experience of vehicle mass production.

Secondly, with pre-war research and development severely curtailed financially, there was a deliberate preference for light tanks and armored cars, individually cheaper to build and operate, at the expense of more combat-worthy vehicles. The former were also easier to transport and ideal for colonial "peace-keeping", so they got priority. As few Britons expected or relished an involvement in a major European war, heavier tanks to cross the trenches, shell-holes and wire of another Great War were given scant attention.

Thirdly, there was a vicious spiral of demand caused by the dearth of pre-war prototypes and the lack of any coherent design policy, coupled with an over-reliance on the French Army and its industrial base in Britain's hurried war plans. And when France fell, the British haste to rearm became so frantic that quantity was allowed to totally suppress quality for a critical time. This led to the mass-production of untried designs like the *Covenanter*, *Crusader* and *Churchill*. Their components performed well enough in bench-tests, but not under combat conditions when assembled together. The deficiency was particularly acute in power units and transmissions (the heart of any AFV) and, until the arrival of the GMC diesel and Rolls-Royce Meteor, underpowered commercial engines had to suffice. Because optimistic re-armament forecasts could not be met, technological corners were cut, with lamentable results. For instance, over 1700 *Covenanters* alone were built, a machine best described as "junk".

Fourthly, direction and requirements were muddled. There was hesitancy, at first, in choosing between French-built heavy tanks and the lighter, more-agile German machines to copy. Only the defeat in France finally crystallized official opinion in favor of the latter to meet future requirements. To compound matters, the responsibility for the development and production of tanks was transferred from the War Office to the new Ministry of Supply shortly before the fighting began, depriving the soldiers of all technical advice and control of specification policies. Consequently, the military could now only ask for what the Ministry of Supply could (or would) deliver—an abrupt reversal of previous and normal practice. The Tank Board, created to help formulate policy and liaison between the War Office and the Ministry of Supply, had powers only of recommendation; its ever-changing membership had, mostly, very little interest in or knowledge of tank design. Only user criticism and the bitter experiences of the battlefields gradually freed tank R&D from the jealous clutches of the Ministry of Supply; but it was 1943 before any real progress was made and more battleworthy tanks left the factories in significant numbers. With weak overall control of specifications, with most tank manufacturers unskilled at adapting or redesigning existing models, and with the obsession for quantity at any price well into 1941, there was considerable delay in converting user criticism or requests for improvements into reality, and this was never properly resolved.

For an industrialist or bureaucrat far from the bloody reality of the battlefields, it was anathema to introduce improvements just when production of the current model was placed in high gear; the large number of Churchill and Cromwell versions is not so much a chronology of steady improvements as a long series of vehicles belatedly "re-worked" to approximately acceptable standards of mobility, reliability, firepower and protection. The lower

usage numbers for AFV-produced smoke on the earlier Churchill and Valentine models reflects the patchy execution of these and other modifications, about which no complete records appear to have survived. The rather conservative approach to design and production meant that new features (like sloped and welded armor) were only adopted much later than in most other countries because few builders had either the expertise or the necessary equipment. Making the hull front of the Comet nearly vertical just for the sake of incorporating a bow MG beggars understanding so late in the war; one wonders if British tank designers knew that tanks like the T-34 or the Panther even existed.

Fifthly, tank design was hampered by initially severe AFV size and weight limitations. The latter were based on available engineering equipment (of 1918 vintage) in Britain which was slowly replaced, and which could accommodate only light AFVs. When it came to size, the British AFVs had to be rail-transportable since the dense British railway network promised quicker, cheaper and easier transport than the island's road network. Unfortunately, Britain paid the price as the pioneer of railways with very tight height and (especially) width restrictions through tunnels, bridges and between multiple tracks—limiting the dimensions of tanks and their turret rings (so that problems arose when upgunning became imperative). Whereas the loading gauge width of Western Europe is 10 feet, four inches and North America's is 10 feet, nine inches, in Britain it is only eight feet, ten inches overall—even though all these areas save Ireland share the same rail track gauge of four feet, 8.5 inches. Thus, Churchill tanks without their side air-intakes could just barely be accommodated, as could the taller Grants and Shermans on special low-slung flatcars, but the Cromwell and the Comet could not unless protruding equipment was first removed. Ironically, the rail transportation of tanks was, in practice, largely confined to machines leaving the factory for overseas or storage; those already adopted by formations usually went by road (on tank transporters) for greater flexibility and convenience. From March 1942 road movement became the rule for all new tanks except during the D-Day build-up. Freed of these unnecessary restrictions, the British produced the 11-foot wide Centurian, a copy of the Panther which just missed war-time service and which, progressively upgunned and armored, outclassed all opposition for the next two decades.

Sixthly, AFV firepower was of less concern to the tank builders than to the men who used them; production statistics seemed to matter more to the former group. Thus, lack of foresight rendered the earlier tanks, especially, incapable of being quickly and easily upgunned. For example, the turret rings (which limit the size and power of the main armament) of the Matilda II and the Valentine were only 50 inches in diameter, compared to the 54.25 inches in the Churchill, 57.2 inches in the Cromwell, 64 inches in the Comet, 66.75 inches in the Challenger, and the generous 69 inches in the Sherman and 74 inches in the Centurian. Thus, when the soldiers outflanked the Ministry of Supply and got extra 6-pounders produced for their use, there were no vehicles immediately available in which to mount them because the only serious contender, the Valentine, had been redesigned prior to production with a smaller turret. The original turret design was probably unacceptable (nobody appears to know the official reason) because the 2-pounder barrel overhanging the hull front—a feature that most contemporary designers except the Soviets avoided at all costs. The Churchill too was originally conceived as a mounting for various weapons, including the 6-pounder, but this was not permitted until 1941. The result: a twelve-month delay in improving firepower at a heavy cost in lives and machines.

The ever-changing specifications usually put gun-

power low on the list of priorities. Until 1942 the role of tanks and AT guns was to defeat enemy armor; hence the issue of AP shot only. But the folly of this over-specialization was obvious by late 1941 from experiences in the desert, and a flood of request for HE followed. As good AP and HE performance are largely mutually exclusive, much official soul-searching followed before the British embraced the "dual purpose" American 75mm type weapon as standard one year later. Official requirements in February 1943 called for the majority of tanks to carry this gun, but by March this was lowered to only 30%—with 50% of the AFVs having 6- or 17-pounders and the rest close support howitzers. By May 1944, however, the proportions had been changed again to 65%, 25% and 10% respectively. Montgomery's unfortunate signature of a telegram stated that "... the 75mm gun is all we require" was, alas, taken too literally. In effect, this was an over-reaction to the bad ol' AP-shot days, and the bad ol' "dual-purpose" days followed.

Seventhly, there was inter-department rivalry, non-cooperation, stupidity and official inertia of the worst sort. Three examples will suffice:

The Cromwell could have been in service by 1942 but for the fact that Leyland Motors, who accepted "parentage" of the project, argued tenaciously in a prolonged dispute for the installation of their own (modified) version of the obsolete Liberty engine rather than the superior Rolls Royce Meteor. When the Meteor was finally forced through, this adaptation of the Merlin engine caused Rolls Royce problems; and so the two industrialists agreed, over lunch, to exchange their respective engine programs. This enabled Rolls Royce to retain their aero engine specialism, and Rover their tank engines. Rover eventually developed the Meteor from the Merlin, but the resultant chaos that this arrangement brought kept the Cromwell out of the war until Normandy, by which time it was barely superior to the old 75mm Sherman.

Then there was the British 75mm gun; precious resources were squandered also on this inferior version of the American weapon. Based on a re-bored 6-pounder, it had numerous teething troubles. Special firing trials for the British 75mm gun were held as late as October 1944 after user criticism; and the troops preferred the U.S. version—especially the mounting, side-opening breech and electric firing system.

And the 17-pounder. Farsighted (and desperate) British soldiers finally got this mounted in the Sherman, but the bureaucrats had been asked to do this as early as July 1942. Instead of the 200 that the Army wanted, due to official resistance only a handful were available initially—and only 20-25% of regimental strength consisted of "Fireflies" in Normandy. The Challenger, of course, was a poor substitute due to its inferior armor and a tendency to shed its tracks, thanks to an unfortunate combination of rear sprockets, excessive track and hull length, its high speed and Christie suspension. Another major drawback was its poor ammunition storage. It carried only 48 rounds for the 17-pounder (whereas the Firefly had up to 78), and in the Challenger most rounds were fairly inaccessibly stored in the hull front and odd corners of the turret. The tank's *second* loader probably spent most of his time fishing these out of their nooks and crannies, and this explains why its ROF in *ASL* is so low. As for the de-rated 17-pounder in the Comet, its AT performance was seriously compromised by the absence of APDS ammunition. It was little consolation that the gun's HE round and accuracy were both superb.

Eighthly, and last, the British engaged in over-experimentation and the production of "dead-end" types that wasted design and production resources, the former activity due in part to the unpleasant experiences caused by the mass-production of tanks

straight off the drawing board earlier in the war. Examples of this wastage include the Tetrarch, TOG I and II (an enlarged version of the French Char B, but even uglier), the Centaur, Valiant (the end of the Valentine line, with a hull front like the Soviet IS-3 and usual 75mm "pea-shooter" armament), the Challenger, Avenger (a lower-slung Challenger), Tortoise (a super-heavy SPG with the mobility of Fort Knox), and the Black Prince (a widened Churchill with 17-pounder)—none of which gave the British Army a battleworthy AFV akin to the Soviet T-34 family.

With hindsight it is easy to criticize, of course, but no British tank of the war succeeded in combining such good qualities as the Soviet "Snow King" (the German nickname for the T-34). The Matilda II, for example, was a contemporary vehicle and Britain's best tank when the war began. It had good armor, but even here the British erred; inadequate testing had fostered the delusion that it could resist the German 88mm gun above 440 yards range (in fact, the vehicle was vulnerable to it at over 2000 yards). The Matilda's small turret ring prevented upgunning with a more versatile weapon, and even the CS versions were more smoke-layers than HE support weapons (because the HE round was of poor quality and scarce). This left a single MG to deal with "soft" targets. Nor was the Matilda II designed for the rigors of mobile warfare; rather it was an assault tank to be used only for short periods between lengthy spells of maintenance and preparation. Its steering clutches were not nearly rugged enough; it also had a high ground pressure. It was not particularly reliable, although its pre-Dunkirk crews (mechanically better trained than those later) did much to save its reputation. Matildas were difficult to mass produce, and were probably the most expensive British tanks to see combat in the war. Not exactly good value.

The British AFVs have low rates of fire in *ASL* not just because of their relative small turret rings (which made for cramped fighting compartments), but also because official doctrine emphasized accuracy, ammunition conservation, and crew safety—all of which conspired to keep ROF low. Inadequate testing under field conditions meant that while rapid gun-laying was theoretically possible through the use of special shoulder-rests for tank gunners operating 2- and 6-pounder weapons, the device was actually very tiring to use in action and detrimental to performance. Initially the British practiced firing on the move, but German tanks in the desert (which fired while stationary) soon showed this to be a waste of ammunition, tanks and crews. The British appear to have made little use of the gyro-stabilizers fitted into their U.S.-built AFVs, but say they were excellent for producing "spraying fire" (indicating a marked lack of faith in their ability to improve gun accuracy).

In *ASL*, the reliability of British AFVs is justifiably lower than the U.S. vehicles. Even improved types like the Valentine, the debugged Churchill and the Cromwell demanded more maintenance than Shermans. The mechanical reliability of the (in this respect) superb Czech 38(t) and of the American vehicles in general is better than the British and Soviet vehicles with good reason; the 30(t) needed just 30 minutes of daily maintenance and the Sherman about an hour (though it often got by on less). In comparison, the Crusader, Grant and Valentine required about 3.25 hours. But the real *prima donnas* among Allied tanks were the Covenanter, the Churchill and the early Soviet KV's; the two British tanks required four hours of daily attention if mechanical tantrums were to be minimized, while the latter's engine had to be lubricated after just one-to-two hours of running.

Initially, British mechanical reliability was very poor, and in 1940 75% of the British tanks left in France were lost through mechanical breakdown.

In the early desert battles, this figure was still at 60%, compared to losses through breakdown and ditching of 60-63% at the Battle of Cambrai in 1917! The early Churchill's battle debut was considerably delayed due to the evil reputation it had gained for poor reliability even in the cooler European environment, and there was great reluctance at first to send it to the desert front. The Crusader's inherent mechanical flaws were worsened by poor workmanship, while two British tanks—the wretched Covenanter and the light Tanks Marks I-VI—shared an unfortunate tendency to "reverse-steer" (i.e., turn in the opposite direction than that intended) under certain conditions. The latter were also dangerously top-heavy. In comparing the American Sherman with British tanks from a mechanical standpoint, only the latter's offroad mobility was superior; the Churchill in particular often surprised the enemy by appearing unexpectedly in apparently "tank-proof" terrain like the Tunisian hills or the muddy Reichswald. The Sherman needed good roads to be really effective.

Having discussed the bad side of British tank technology at such length, the good points also deserve mention for the sake of balance. British tanks when penetrated did at least burn more slowly than German or U.S. tanks, giving the survivors more time to bail-out. The Churchill would "brew up" 60% of the time, but gave its crew about ten seconds to escape before the flames reached the crew compartment (whereas the Sherman almost always caught fire and gave its crew just 3-5 seconds to get out). The British, in fact, nicknamed the Sherman the "Ronson", while the Germans preferred to call them "Tommy-cookers". Wet-stowage Shermans, moreover, comprised only 7.7% of those supplied to the Britain, and not all of them saw action.

There were exceptions to the rule regarding British "crew-friendliness" of their AFVs however. Some Mark VIC light tanks (already vulnerable enough) went to France without armament, having their turret fronts covered with plywood to plug the holes and their crews armed with pistols and rifles (some met the panzers still in this condition). Some early Crusaders had armor of inferior quality, while some Cromwells also suffered from sub-standard armor (made by an inexperienced manufacturer), but the latter batch thankfully never saw action. It should again be stressed that while pressures on scarce materials forced reduction in the non-ferrous metal content of British plate, strict production controls avoided a fall in quality.

The mounting of the 17-pounder is also something of a success story, and it enabled the British to deal more effectively with German armor (most of which was concentrated against them in Normandy) than the U.S. Army's less-potent AFVs. It is also one aspect of tank warfare that the British can be very self-righteous about, since the United States had ignored Britain's offer of 200 17-pounder barrels per month if Uncle Sam would build his own Firefly turrets. This proposal was rejected on purely nationalistic grounds with specious arguments, and the "Not Invented Here" policy of the U.S. Army cost innumerable Allied lives. In fact, the U.S. Army subsequently twice requested Fireflies from the British, but none arrived in time to see combat in U.S. hands. Unofficially, however, British Fireflies (and Crocodiles) were sometimes dispatched to support U.S. units in combat.

Other successes include the "Funnies". The British excelled in specialized armor, notably assault vehicles like the Crocodile, the Crab, the DD tank, a host of bridgelayers, and the ARVE. Again, the U.S. army was offered equal shares of all the "Funnies", but took only the DD tanks on the grounds of crew unfamiliarity with British equipment—and suffered accordingly on D-Day.

Britain also produced thousands of nimble, low-slung recon vehicles which were used with great dash and success by the Army and RAF in all theaters. If British tanks were usually undergunned, British AC were not and carried welded armor from an early date. However, the massive AEC was essentially road-bound due to its bulk, unsynchronized gearbox, and leaf-spring suspension (revealing the truck ancestry of its chassis); it possessed "great potential for blocking the roadway." Technical development of wheeled AFVs was not really spectacular, though the Daimler vehicles were something of an exception and the supply of these superb vehicles never met the demand. As a result, the inferior Humber scout and armored cars were produced as substitutes, even though they barely met official specifications due to their commercial chassis. Most British wheeled AFVs suffered from this problem as long as they were regarded as "tanks on wheels", but once the General Staff lost interest in light tanks after Dunkirk (because tougher vehicles to resist the expected German invasion were needed) wheeled AFVs gradually usurped the reconnaissance role. These AFVs could sacrifice armament and armor for accommodation, speed and range, and the British enthusiasm for them reflects not only their lower cost but also the greater need for fresh information by senior British commanders (who were far from happy to let their subordinates run the war up front without the sort of interference that German generals were famous for). Too, the British infatuation with ACs and scouts must be rooted, to some extent, in their tradition of horsemanship and elan.

The only serious omission from the British armored arsenal was a good APC, and they relied far more on their poorly-protected carriers (with their small load-carrying capacity) than on U.S. half-tracks. In the case of recon units, at least, carriers were used more as "battle taxis", with their crews dismounting at first opportunity and using walkie-talkies in preference to remaining in their vehicles any longer than was absolutely necessary. Players tempted to fire their 2-inch mortars from inside their vulnerable carriers might like to remember this. On the other hand, most British trucks were generally reliable if not sparkling performers; again they were mostly commercial adaptations rather than purpose-built war vehicles. However, the new desert terrain rules show that they were far better suited for desert conditions than their foreign equivalents. In North Africa at least, the U.S. Jeep had a poor reputation for reliability since many British soldiers drove them much too fast and overloaded them.

Many vehicles included in *COD* have been omitted from *WEST OF ALAMEIN* for historical reasons as well as to keep the cost down as much as possible. The Light Tanks Marks I-VIB are all pretty much similar in game terms (all were death-traps in real life), so a "generic" Mark VIB counter suffices. The Medium Tank Mark II saw little action, which was just as well for its unfortunate crewmen, as did the M8 Greyhound, the Centaur Dozer, and the Valentine DD. It is doubtful that the Staghound II, Valentine X or Sherman III(L) ever saw combat, and these have made way for more deserving inclusions like the Lloyd Carrier, the Carrier India pattern, the Valentine III/V, the Rolls Royce armored car, the Humber LRC and the Priest Kangaroo. Pressures on counter mix, however, forced out others such as the Churchill AVRE bridgelayer, the Churchill "LT" reworked to roughly Mark III/VIII standards (but with inferior, 8AF, turret armor), and the Centurian I (which would have been fun for hypothetical DYO situations).

British handling of armor suffered for too long from a lack of commanders who really understood how to use it properly, a symptom of the long-overdue and unpopular mechanization of the cavalry from 1937 onwards. The fact was that pre-war in-

terest in tanks was seen by most officers as freakish and fanatic. There was a dearth of pre-war exercises (some of which bordered on farce), and a shortage of available land in Britain for even wartime exercises due to agricultural demands caused by the U-boat blockade. When British generals in the desert admitted that their own forces were "... still largely an army of amateurs fighting professionals," it was as much an admission of the poor handling of armored formations as an indictment of their small-unit tactics. The performance of British armor was not helped by organizational blunders; in late 1941, divisions in North Africa were reorganized into brigade-sized units with only weak tank strength and artillery support. They were then doled out along the front and expected to accomplish all that their larger predecessors had failed to do against an enemy who believed in concentration of force. The Germans just gobbled them up in detail. Inspired by the exploits of Lawrence in Arabia and the sometimes wild and vague theories of Liddell-Hart, British commanders chose to fight a sort of mechanized guerrilla warfare and so dispersed their armor, grossly over-estimating the dangers that concentration would face from air attack. They practiced "mobility" for its own sake by driving about endlessly to no useful purpose and to the detriment of the vehicles concerned ("swanning about" in British slang). When the armor was re-organized on a divisional basis, it was for much of the war a tank-heavy TO&E with inadequate infantry support and hence, inadequate flexibility.

The separation of tanks and regiments into "infantry" and "cruiser" types, each with its own tactical doctrines, did nothing to improve things. Cooperation between these two branches was often lacking because the cavalry and RTR (*Royal Tank Regiment*) units shared a mutual dislike dating back to the Great War; this rift took time and the deeds of a greater enemy to heal. Further, each separate role was executed in a rather rigid manner, while the different performance characteristics of the vehicles concerned caused headaches for the commanders much like the early mixtures of T-34s and KVVs did in the Red Army. The "I" tanks downgraded mobility, surprise and maneuver while the cruiser tank crews had been led to believe that speed was a substitute for thinner armor. Reassured by official statements that their 2-pounders could pierce German armor below 500-yard range, each would trundle or charge (respectively) unsupported into enemy killing grounds with their pennants flying—like French medieval knights, and just as slow to learn the lessons of war. Even in Normandy, where common sense should have prevailed and where the British could afford to lose six tanks for every panzer destroyed, many British units would "charge" PzKpff IVs. Fortunately, there were neither the numbers (before Second Alamein at least) nor suitable cover for similar heroics in the desert.

Temperamentally, the British were probably better suited than the Americans for the bloody attrition of the Normandy battlefields (and also possessed, initially, more tanks on D-Day for this very purpose) and the British did at least systematically destroy the German armor embroiled there as planned—albeit at terrible cost. The self-sacrifice of the British, Canadian and Polish tankers allowed Patton's forces to race across France relatively unopposed once they had broken out. This fact often seems forgotten. Events after the breakout showed that men like Horrocks, Roberts and even the ultra-cautious Montgomery could handle armor with the skill shown by O'Connor in the desert battles, by Patton and by most German field commanders.

THE DESERT BATTLEGROUND

Since *WEST OF ALAMEIN* is a desert war game, a short comment on the area is appropriate. No combatants really foresaw the problems caused to

mechanized warfare by millions of tons of natural abrasives (which tanks ingested at the rate of about one pound per five miles travelled), but thanks to Major-General Hobart, commanding the Mobile Division Egypt in 1939, the British were better equipped than the Italians. However, the latter adapted quickly, if not as fast as the Germans. Acclimatization could be an expensive process; the British 44th Recon Regiment, for instance, wrote off (i.e., ruined) about 70 motorcycles in the process in September 1942 and had to virtually "relearn" how to drive its carriers in the soft sand.

The desert is no billiard table either, as the *WOA* boards and overlays show. The rocks, wadis, salt marshes and other dubious geographical delights to movement were augmented by mines in their thousands, to the extent that 20-33% of all tank casualties there were lost to mines (compared to only about 16% in NW Europe). The "gentler" terrain placed scant cover at a premium, together with any advantages to be gained from the sun's position, movement, dust, heat haze, smoke and mist. Shallow hills and depressions gave the lower-slung British, Italian and German vehicles an advantage over their taller U.S. counterparts when it came to exploiting precious hull-down positions. To compensate for the general lack of cover, early British armor there sported "disruptive" paint schemes like the Matilda on the *WOA* box lid, although the British later returned to more orthodox camouflage painting.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that "Tommy Atkins" and his Commonwealth and refugee comrades had problems, but they also had some strengths—tough, dogged, and prepared to "muddle through", often sustained by a wry and cynical sense of humor. Equipped with a mix of good and bad weapons, Tommy was eventually capable of taking on his opponents on more or less equal terms once his confidence (dented by earlier defeats) was restored. The traditionally small, neglected Army was greatly expanded to play a far more vital role than most people had foreseen. Never as professional as the German, nor as well equipped as the American, the British Army was not decisive in itself and could never have been mistaken for a more genteel version of the Red Army. But it made an important contribution to victory despite its handicaps by taking some of the heat off Britain's allies at critical moments for many years. It also inflicted some stunning defeats on all its enemies, particularly on the Italians in the early desert battles and in Burma where it gave the Japanese their worst drubbing in any of their land campaigns. As a result, Tommy Atkins is a worthy opponent for your cardboard Germans, Italians and the other Axis troops yet to enter the arena. So when your AFVs go forth to support that "thin Khaki line", may they always pass safely "Through Mud and Blood to the Green Fields Beyond" (as the Royal Tank Regiment's motto so eloquently advocates).



DESERT WINDS

The Scenarios of WOA, Part I

By Mark C. Nixon

I enjoyed the *WEST OF ALAMEIN* playtest immensely. Oh, not at first, of course. That very first game which David Sisler and I sat down to play in February 1988 was a "Bridgehead Too Wet", and not only did we have a great deal of trouble with the openness of the desert and the new rules (as usual, we worked with word-processed rules) but that scenario initially allowed the Germans to enter play from all four directions; the British were immediately surrounded and hit with Encircling Fire. Well, it's all just part of the program; play-testing is supposed to find such little problems and correct them. As we worked our way through the 11 scenarios of the playtest we found, before too terribly long and before we had driven Mr. McNamara too awfully far into his grave with our incessant haranguing about scenarios with thousands of vehicles and rules which maimed our favorite tactics, that we were having a blast playing out in the open desert. Not only are the scenarios all big winners in my book, but *WOA* brought the British, the best written rules chapter yet, and that wonderful "British Vehicle Notes" section. Any one of those would have been worth the price of the entire module.

I tell you that, which might double as an advertisement, so that you will know where I am coming from over the course of the next hour or so during which you will, I hope, read the rest of this article. I like *WEST OF ALAMEIN* a lot! The other thing I think you should be aware of is that I am biased in favor of the attacker. Although I don't believe I can win with any more frequency taking one side or the other, I almost always prefer to have control of the attacking forces. I like to play aggressively, although I'd like to think not recklessly; and I like to play fast without going hypersonic. I regularly play against some who are extremely aggressive and very successful with this style, and have faced some players who move so fast that we end up playing the ancient "move them back so I can shoot at them where they were" game because the units are already six or seven hexes down that road before I can say, "I'll shoot". I don't hit either of those two extremes; but as you read these scenario analyses, bear in mind that if anything I have probably favored the attacker.

I felt it would be best to confess these few points before asking you to read what follows. I'm certainly not infallible; the next several pages ought to prove that. But I do hope you enjoy this study and that you find a few gems which either reveal some new tactic or rule interpretation (or even stir your own creative juices into devising some new approaches to these tactical situations). These pages might seem to be a lengthy account of the eight scenarios, but they are as nothing to what could have been presented. The problem with going on at greater length is that I couldn't write it and most of you would probably lose interest and refuse to read it. But if these words can generate some new insights in your appreciation of *ASL*, I will be absolutely delighted.

The members of the local group here who have crunched my troops over the past years, who have thrown every "sleazy" rule interpretation they could conjure my way (I won't even mention using *ESB* with Recalled tanks so they'll immobilize and force the crews to abandon them, and then re-entering the tank with another crew), are the indomitable Rick Troha, Bill Sisler and, of course, the suddenly infamous David Sisler. This article is as much due to their efforts as my own.

The ensuing eight accounts of the *WEST OF ALAMEIN* scenarios are all alike in one respect. Not a one of them proposes a "perfect plan". Since I don't believe in them, I don't waste time looking for them. The attack which works once and the defense which *sometimes* proves to be absolutely impregnable will not stand up to the test of repeated playings. I know; I have tried. I have played 243 scenarios in the past two years, and that is what I base this view upon. Your experience might be of more or fewer games than that, but there you have mine. Other than that one common thread and a standard format, I have endeavored to discuss different topics in each. Don't be misled. The coverage of sniper tactics discussed in the last scenario can apply just as well to every other scenario which contains those sneaky, hidden wonders. And since I have not fooled myself into believing I can touch upon every item of importance in every scenario, all I have done here is highlight those elements of each scenario which I found most interesting or different and suggest an approach or two which might be used to deal with them. I'm not really much concerned with exactly how one certain scenario is best played, but hope that this work might suggest some new angles for you to look at, some different tactics which might improve your play, clear up some ambiguous rule you've struggled with, or at least gives you delight as you read about some of the foolish maneuvers that Nixon fellow tries. Well, he's only a lowly 8-1, after all.



Scenario 35 Blazin' Chariots

Rating: 55% German

Attraction: This is a charge in every sense of the word. Pure armor confrontation—a delightful introduction to the wide-open desert fighting which should be enjoyed by all. Fast play allows plenty of opportunity to experiment with different tactics.

German Advantages: ROF; Armor Leaders; APCR; Stationary.

If you can avoid the temptation to Intensive Fire until it is unavoidable, your guns should give you a better-than-even chance to win. However, because you can expect a high number of shots you must likewise be prepared to suffer a gun breakdown or two, even without calling for those Intensive Fire shots. It is a fair assessment to say that these gun malfunctions—or lack of them—will largely determine the course of the game in as much as the enemy will likely break your line if you've suffered early losses, but will be hard pressed to do so should your guns remain active. This is because of the number of shots you will enjoy at Acquired targets thanks

to your stationary vehicles with ROF 2, some of which will be leader-directed. In addition, once the enemy have drawn within effective range, you can unleash your APCR upon them. Notice also that any time your TH# is equal to the Depletion number of your special ammo, you might nearly double your chance of a hit by committing that special ammo, although admittedly at the risk of losing that capability but, in this case, at no greater risk than it ever entails. At least by using it this way you should avoid the dilemma of the gunner who rolled well enough to have effected a hit with normal AP, only to have missed due to trying for the special ammo on a shot with a much higher TH# than D#.

German Disadvantages: Outnumbered; Must Score High DVP to Win; Malfunctions.

"Fear" is probably the best way to sum up the German disadvantages. Fear of losing a few guns, of being overrun, and of not scoring the DVP might accumulate to force the German player into mistakes. Intensive Fire is the most obvious mistake, for although it can win games and is often necessary, there is a time for it and a time to withhold it. Another mistake is premature movement of your tanks. Simply because the British have maneuvered out of the Sun Blindness zone is no reason to abandon positions which afford ample fire opportunities at already Acquired targets. In fact, it would probably never be a good idea to move rather than fire at an already Acquired target (although there must be exceptions, so don't take this as a maxim). The big danger here is that those British need only two turns of movement to break through your line and swarm over your tanks—even only one at a time—with their superior numbers and start smashing them with rear and side shots. They can do this even after coming to a stop on Turn 1 in order to allow themselves shots in their DFPh unmodified by their own motion. At this point, if your guns, your TH rolls and your TK rolls fail you, the British player might already have gained the upper hand. If it is grim enough, I would not even hesitate to start firing off some Intensive Fire shots.

German Defense:

If you set up in hexrow "Z", you are asking for trouble. This is because the British could then sit on the board edge (row "A") and remain in the 25-30 hex range from your guns. At that range, their LL guns gain a +2 TH modifier which effectively cancels their disadvantages of smaller guns and red TH numbers. With the TH chances even, their multiple hits and ability to prey on the German weaker tanks (mainly the MK IIIGs) should swing the odds in their favor. At such ranges, they have no problem firing from outside each tank's Sun Blindness zone, and for every tank they trade, they draw closer to victory. As the German commander, I would rule out the "Z" row entirely.

By setting up in the "X" and "Y" rows, on the other hand, the German is guaranteed targets at the 19-24 hex range; and it is unlikely the enemy would even try to duel with the resultant TH# stacked against them. They are almost certain to charge your positions in this circumstance. Your line should be spread across the board, with tank types equally distributed throughout. The only ones you might plan to move—the MK IIs—should be arranged so that their exit from the line does not leave any gaping holes. Not that the British might go somewhere once behind the line; but if they are going to penetrate it, you will want to avail yourself of *some* close-

range shots, the better to hit and maybe kill them. As for those MK IIs, reasons you might opt to pull them out of the line are to raid the enemy rear (especially effective for running down any crews which might have survived), laying a sD smoke screen to cover any of the MK III or Mk IV tanks that are in trouble, or simply to get them out of the line of fire where they are as much easy DVP for the enemy as any real threat to the British armor.

The Mk IVs should probably fire only HE at long-range motion targets, saving their scarce AP for closer shots once the enemy are acquired. At least their TH numbers are not reduced for ranges beyond 18 hexes as for AP rounds. The HE also does a better job as a collateral attack versus exposed crew members than any AP ever will. The ability of these tanks to fire smoke can also be a blessing and, like their escorting Mk IIIs, their machineguns might prove to be as valuable as their MA, so don't forget to fire at those exposed British crews.

The cream of your tank force is, of course, the five Mk IIIs, particularly those two IIHs. These will usually contain the armor leaders; their ability to survive beyond the life of their brethren is unquestionable, although some masochistic opponent might actually "gun" for them first, ignoring his advantage versus the IIIGs and forfeiting any gains he might have realized with early kills on these more lightly armored targets. But don't count on that. Put the leaders in the IIHs. There they will enjoy the most fire opportunities and are afforded greater protection to their crews while exposed. These tanks should be positioned on boards 27 and 26, close to board 28 in order to provide the bulwark of your defense. With a IIIG on the outside flanks and the third in the middle of board 28 with the two Mk IVs, the Germans have a respectable defense which can withstand assault from either flank. The Mk IIs fall into place on the extreme flanks if you intend to raid the enemy rear, or in the center if you'll withdraw them or use them as guns in the line.

The first turn of every game I've seen has been a matter of sitting and firing for the German side. This is the best thing to do no matter whether the enemy are charging your position or stopping to duel at some intermediate range. Remember, because you have avoided the "Z" row and have a formidable line spread across the entire playing area, the enemy cannot just sit at the 25-hex range and duel for if they tried that, some of your tanks would be at the 19-24 range—which would admirably defeat the enemy attempt to equalize the range. Should the British choose to sit and duel, I anticipate a German win at least 75% of the time. Only inordinate bad luck with gun malfunctions and some combination of favorable British and poor German TH and TK rolls might lead to a different conclusion. That is why I expect the British player to try to charge the German line and smash it bit by bit at close range.

This leads into the middle part of the game, Turns 2-4, during which time a wild melee, of the armored sort, will usually occur. Both sides will be tossing in liberal usage of sD; there will likely be a few burning wrecks on the battlefield; and the whole thing, despite occurring in the open desert, can begin to take on a rather macabre appearance—wrecked hulks here and there, flames and smoke billowing from some earlier struggle and several desperate, exhausted former tank crews angling in for that one last chance at that immobilized panzer, while the few remaining tanks on either side still exchange shots and stalk one another amidst the scarred battlefield.

The end game for the German, if it has been close, will be very much the same as that for the Brit. It often comes down to a single kill for either side making the difference between victory or defeat. Should you take that Prep Fire shot at that Stuart, despite three guns already having acquired you; or should you try to roll your sD number and make a geta-

way, to live and fight until the end of the game? At this stage of the battle, immobilized tanks which have gone long ignored can very often become the focal point of attention as the antagonists turn their gaze back again to those old targets, now holding perhaps the DVP needed to finally secure the win.

British Advantages: Multiple Hits; Numbers; Fluid Attack.

If one hit doesn't kill, how about two tries? Multiple Hits might always seem too few and far between, but it only takes one to register a kill on a tank which otherwise might have continued unscathed. If you consider the fact that it is not too terribly difficult to hit those panzers once you've stopped and Acquired them outside the Sun Blindness zone, the value of your Multiple Hits is a nice advantage to weigh against the enemy's armor leaders and higher ROF. As for the ROF issue itself, your twelve tanks actually are not too far off the German level, especially if the Mk II and Mk IV ROF are not valued as highly as those of your 37LL guns (which is a legitimate assessment). Note too, that for every Mk III you destroy, the enemy must kill two Stuarts in order to maintain the ROF status quo. This two-to-one ratio is a reflection of your advantage in numbers and the German disadvantage in DVP needed for a win. That is, as you trade off Stuarts for Mk IIIs, you draw closer to your DVP goal quicker than does the German, while your ROF potential is depleted by only one per lost tank versus the German loss of two.

But your greatest advantage lies in what some might profess to be your greatest disadvantage—the attack across the open desert. True, there are going to be some losses in that mad dash at the enemy. My approach to such a dilemma, once it has been determined that there is no better course of action, is to see what advantage might be derived from it. In this case, once the inevitable losses have been accepted, it is apparent that the two-turn charge is the very thing that delivers these Stuarts to the point from which they can dominate the game. More will be said on this in the discussion of the attack itself. Suffice it to say now that the British numbers and their relatively fast (two turns) arrival in the midst of the enemy line allows them to exercise control over a situation which would find them with the odds stacked horribly against them were they forced to sit and duel at moderate range.

British Disadvantages: Early Losses; Red TH Numbers; Low CS and sD Numbers.

There will be several tanks lost by the time your first decent opportunity to return fire (your Turn 1 DFPh) rolls around. This is unavoidable; it's part of this scenario which is built in. Save yourself the anguish of worrying about it and plan to pick up the pieces and carry on with whatever is left alive. Believe it or not, this is the way the scenario is supposed to proceed; it's the way the designer imagined it; it's the way it was historically; it's even the way it went during playtesting! Expect to lose four or five tanks to outright kills, Shock, Stun and Immobilization by the end of the German Prep Fire Phase of Turn 1. Never fear, it might even be worse than that. Just continue the game.

Unless you catch the German set up in the "Z" row, you will not be able to overcome your red TH# stigma until you gain the 0-6 hex range. Twist and turn those C4 basic TH number modifications as you like, that is the only other range where your guns will hit equally with any gun in the enemy arsenal. Every place else on the mapboard leaves you at a disadvantage on your hit attempts. The only way to remedy this situation, until you close the range, is against an opponent who keeps his tankers buttoned-up. There are a number of tactics involved here, primarily regarding the range at which you come to a stop on Turn 1. More on this in the next section.

Finally, it may seem trivial, but Crew Survival is very important in this particular action. To illustrate this, consider how many Stuarts would have to be eliminated for a German win if all the crews were to survive—all twelve! That ignores the alternate end of the VC and is far fetched to the extreme in any case. But it does stress the fact that there is nothing much more disconcerting to the enemy than knocking out a tank he thinks is worth seven DVP, only to watch the crew scamper away with two of those hard earned points. The British could use a higher Crew Survival, and should thank their lucky stars whenever a crew makes the great leap to survival. In a similar vein, the low sD number of these tanks means smoke is not a thing which can be expected, as in the case of the better prepared German dischargers. For that matter, the Mk IVs even offer the chance of firing smoke, adding to the overall British woes of comparison.

British Attack:

As stated at the outset, this is going to be a charge across the open desert. But the Stuarts will stop at the end of their Movement Phase. Although it would be perfectly logical to keep them in motion in order to make them more difficult targets for the German gunners, that same motion would also preclude them from any reasonable chance of hitting the enemy in return during their own upcoming defensive fire. Not only that, but they would be Acquired no matter what, yet without coming to a stop could not likewise acquire their counterparts to the west. By firing acquisition shots in their initial Advancing Fire Phase, they will have a very good chance of scoring some hits in Defensive Fire and could even opt to extend that into their subsequent Prep Fire—should you elect to forego movement in Turn 2.

But standing at this range (7-10 hexes from the enemy) is just another way to play into the German's hands. Something must be done to overcome the initial sacrifice of those tankers lost on the mad dash in; their end should not be allowed to pass without some attempt at retribution. There are a few options. Probably the most blatant, in that it somewhat abuses game mechanics, is to try for Excessive Speed in order to gain a few hexes and attain the closer range (0-6 hexes) with the enemy. Because the Stuarts must reach the "S" row in order to achieve a six-hex range to enemy targets in the "X" row, without fighting sun blindness (or reach the "T" row against an enemy in row "Y") this entails an ESB roll equal to "9" or less for row "S" (or "8" for row "T"). Thank heaven these are U.S.-made tanks, or I wouldn't even suggest this tactic as a remote possibility. Immobilization itself is not so bad, but the resultant need to take a TC on all future hits which otherwise fall harmless is devastating. I would avoid this tactic (especially the way I roll ESB) but mention it here as a point of interest. If you find yourself in a desperate spot, ESB might be your best chance.

Despite appearances however, the first turn of the game is not a time for desperation. This scenario would be an injustice if it were. It is a grim situation for the British, true, but they still wield great strength and have at their disposal tactics to secure a win. The first-turn objective is the "Q" row. All tanks which avoid destruction or other harm can reach this position and stop outside the sun blindness zone of a target. Notice that if you are outside a tank's sun blindness zone, that enemy tank would have to change its CA in order to fire at you—assuming that its CA began the game aligned due east. So you gain at least this little bit of added DRM should the Germans hold fire until you have come to a stop. However, there will also be enemy tanks directly ahead which don't have to change CA, so this is no universal relief.

There are also reasons to stop before reaching the "Q" row. If you intend to do battle with your crews

CE, it might pay to stop nine hexes away from the enemy in order to render their machineguns less effective. Carried to the extreme, sitting back at the "K" or "L" row will reduce their MGs to a 4FP attack—but I reject that ploy as yielding too much ground for too little gain. Your second turn's movement would be overly restricted by the resultant need to cover all the ground between "K" and the enemy line. After all, the further away from the enemy MGs, the further away are your own as well. Because the German tanks will have to spin their turrets in many cases, they won't all be able to combine their bow and coaxial machineguns on a single target, and will therefore often take two low odds shots. The Stuart machinegun mix is much better so long as the crew is CE, for the AAMG can add its weight to that of either of the other two (yielding either two 4FP attacks, a 6FP and 2FP, or even two 2FP and a 4FP). Still, this is only a slight advantage, and the positioning of your tanks is the only tactic which allows it to be brought into play. As for whether to be CE or not, I prefer to mix it up. Against a CE enemy, I like to accept the challenge and go for it. If the enemy tankers hide, though, it depends on other factors. Out here with no Sniper around and no opposing infantry, it is simply too tempting to go CE to resist—at least until the two armored forces are at point blank range. Taking a 16FP (+2) attack is too risky, so I button-up at that point, at the latest.

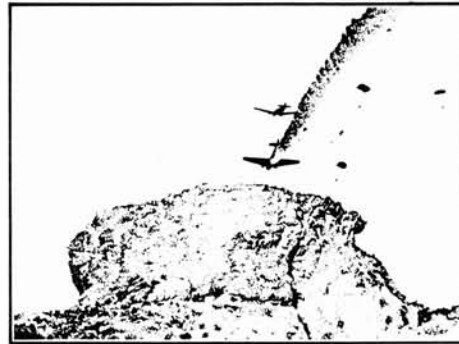
The attack itself must pick on any weak flank in the enemy line. This might be something as subtle as redirecting everyone towards the flank where a German gun malfunctioned on Turn 1. Should a sudden wind kick up, attack the flank which would allow the greatest cover from flaming wrecks and drifting smoke. Should you be so fortunate that the German sets up with a weak side, you don't even have to seriously consider attacking anywhere but there. But if you face a well-dispersed defender and nothing outstanding occurs to help out, I prefer to send six tanks down each board edge, spreading out to attack abreast. A perfectly executed British Turn 1 would end with six tanks in 26Q1-6 and six more in 27Q5-10. Some of these might be adjusted slightly in order to align them outside of sun blindness to a specific target, but this gives the general idea I strive for. This attack forces the German player to delegate his tanks to defending a certain flank. He can't swing his CA back and forth without paying the price in TH DRM. On Turn 2, the remnants of these two attacking groups swing around each flank to envelop the enemy from the northwest and the southwest. This finds the German tanks in the middle facing out, and the Stuarts firing either at close-range targets and enjoying side and rear shots when they score hull hits (unless the panzers pay the price to change their VCA) or the British tanks might even fire over to the other flank in order to gain rear hits on defenders there. In either case, it is now the German who must fight the sun blindness, and his tanks are surrounded and mauled at close range by superior numbers.

That last bit certainly paints a rosy picture, but I have not lost sight of the fact that the British have paid dearly to get to that point. They are playing "catch-up" now, for the Germans have surely scored big and could even have the game well in hand. But overall, I've given them only a slight advantage, for the 16 DVP difference in the Victory Conditions does allow the British to recoup during Turns 2-4 and come back to win. As mentioned previously, it is often a very close game at the end, with desperation taking hold of the battlefield and risky maneuvers surfacing as each side tries for those last few points needed for a win.

Conclusion:

The German might feel a bit smug at the outset as he sits in his tanks and awaits the coming assault. His eyes even gleam a bit as those irreverent

Englishers blister across the open, straight for his 50mm guns. Tank crews calmly slam round after round into the afternoon heat, and still the enemy press on. They stop and fire, then fire again. A few hits are noted and a Mk III bursts into flame. The Mk IIs pack it in and pull out of line. A Mk IV gunner signals he has run out of AP. A Mk III gun overheats; its commander has been foolishly trying to exceed his limits. The message comes, "The enemy have broken through on the left." Lt. Brunner is killed by machinegun fire. Panic sets in all along the line and the scene is one of complete confusion. Enemy tanks are everywhere at once; what ever happened to our cozy little war?



Scenario 36 Rachi Ridge

Rating: 50%-50%

Attraction: In the first published paratroop of the ASL system, the Germans drift to earth unopposed—almost. Turns 2 and 3 find them scrambling to regroup in preparation for the expected onslaught, which arrives with typical British aplomb. Fancy the idea of these Fusiliers having a go at this tough assignment; yet they bully their way across undulating and rugged terrain to put the *Fallschirmjaegers* through an ugly ordeal.

German Advantages: High Ground; Time; Morale.

It is tempting to try to put everyone on the board 25 heights and simply dare the enemy forward. Indeed, level 4 is precisely where the 9-2 and both MMGs should be—probably P6 or J6 are the best choices. However, the vagaries of the drop will not always allow such placement, and there is more to be gained by defending in depth and forcing the British to consume as much of their precious little time as possible for each position taken. Even though the scenario card says 10 turns, the enemy have only eight to accomplish their VC and their best weapon, the 9-2 leader, has only seven. They must hustle to clear all level 4 hexes, and you can best compound their problems by showing local strength in key spots scattered all over the battlefield. More specifics on that score later. The key is to use the high ground for the heavy weapons (those few you have) and bottle up the attack elsewhere with squad firepower, which is admittedly hampered with a four-hex normal range. But your final advantage, morale, should allow your troops to stand and fight, even on unequal terms strengthwise. All the while these delaying skirmishes contribute to the deterioration of the British timetable.

German Disadvantages: Scatter; Range; TEM.

This action begins with a shotgun approach to defense. The German player gets only 50% chance of hitting each drop point, and even then each individual parachute counter can drift as many as five hexes—and will likely end up in two half-squads. This deploying process itself can easily deplete the standard compliment of 2-3-8 HS provided with the game, so it's no small problem when one considers

the loss of range and firepower inherent in this transformation. There are not enough leaders to ensure that all HS will recombine prior to the British entrance; some units might even miss the battlefield entirely and not be able to return. The SW must be recovered; somebody will likely land on a crag or building and fail a MC; and the enemy Sniper and booby-traps add more misery to this "unopposed" landing. But most of the troops will normally be somewhere in the playing area and will be able to dish out some punishment. The problem with this is that they cannot dish it with a very long spoon. A normal range of four hexes is something of a problem when facing an enemy with a range of five for most of his squads and a minimum of seven for his 11 SW. The German LMGs and MMGs alleviate this somewhat, but still come up short against the British SW which are directed by leadership every bit as effective as their own.

The lack of trees and scarcity of buildings, added to the difficulties of entrenching, more or less force the defense to cling to height advantage, olive groves, crags and Crest status. Because it is the only +2 TEM available over a good part of the battlefield, Crest status in particular will be a valuable tool. But, for the most part, the defense will depend on +1 terrain, an unpleasant prospect but an unavoidable one except where the Sniper and booby trap threats are successfully challenged, which might entail several turns of risk due to the extra +2 DRM on entrenching attempts. Countering that DRM with the 9-2 leader would be the act of a desperate gamer, in my opinion, for as sure as you're sitting while reading these words, he is the one who will take that booby trap, and the Sniper might strike him no matter who is making the actual entrenchment attempt.

German Defense:

The best thing to do here is try for a good set-up, while expecting to settle for making the most of what is left after the drop. The first decision is how to arrange your three wings. If you drop everyone as full squads, there will be two full wings and the third will have only three squads. But the option is open to deploy one or two squads, and this can be used to make the three wings more or less equal in manpower with no additional hazard in the form of injuries. (Notice that were there 14 German squads, as in the initial version of this scenario, there could be four wings if two squads were deployed.) I would try to drop the #1 Wing with the 9-2, five squads and both MMGs, plus maybe the 8-0, in the vicinity of 25J6. Wing #2 includes the 9-1, five squads and two LMGs and heads for 18X5, with the intention of defending some combination of that hill, the X8-P4 wadii, the wall and the 18CC3-25K5 wadii line. Should they actually hit this target, their drift will determine exactly where the defense will be. The third wing is composed of the 8-1, three squads and two LMGs. They want to land around 25Z4 with the intent of slowing any enemy advance from the south. With the north so blocked by wings #1 and #2, a southern attack is likely, so this smallest group might have the toughest job. But this outlines only one possible plan; there are a great many and all will be subject to change as the drop points will all survive the E9.12 dr only 12.5% of the time. Unlike the "old" game, there are no tricks available to keep the wings coordinated despite missed drop points, for now a missed drop point entails a totally random pick for the actual landing target.

Well, so much for fantasy. So what do you do when reality strikes in the form of two or three missed drop points? First of all, somebody has to make their way back to the heights of board 25. Second, the 9-2 must be united with the MMGs and located in some defensible terrain, someplace where he has an escape route or rout path, if you will. I think this leader should be run off board 18 if that's where he landed, even at the expense of leaving

behind a few uncombined HS. This helps justify dropping the 8-0 along with him; the 8-0 can stay behind to recombine the HS. The 9-2 is too valuable and so must reach the northern wadii, the 25Y2 village or the board 25 heights before the British arrive. If he were to try to defend the board 18 central wadii or one of the hills on that board, he could be too easily surrounded and eliminated for my taste. The third part of this regrouping concerns the balance of the paras. Their task is to formulate the defense in depth which was discussed in the opening paragraph of this section. They may not be positioned to reach the most ideal locations, but should still be able to plant themselves somewhere from which they can give the attacking British some serious grief. The only exception to this would be those unfortunate few who land too far offboard to do anything more than return onboard (or maybe even don't make it at all) and any poor souls who break upon landing or while trying to dig foxholes and fail to rally.

The optimum placement for the bulk of the defense seems to me to be in the northern half of the board (therefore the espoused drop points above). Any British attack from or across the south has a much longer trek and less favorable terrain to reach the heights of Hill 792. If the north is well defended, the British might even be forced to resort to depending on firepower to knock the defenders off 792 rather than gaining those heights and clearing them by hand. That should prove to be their undoing, for it is a simple enough matter to leave a MMC in 25J7 or some other reverse slope hex where it is safe from enemy fire and will be able to advance onto level 4 on Turn 10 for a win. Any British attacking from the south will have a difficult time negotiating the approaches to Hill 766 while under fire. Don't expect them to make it on time. The reverse slope defense is also a tactic which can work well for a larger number of troops. Hexes such as J7, L7, M8, M7 and P7 are ideal for rally points, hiding, gaining concealment and for making the last stand which challenges the enemy to advance onto the level 4 hexes in the face of deadly fire. Of course, there must be defenders on the front line as well, or the British will simply charge up the slopes unopposed. That cannot be allowed. The end-game should see both sides in the vicinity of Hill 792, each trying to gain final control of the summit.

British Advantages: Sniper; Firepower; Mortars; Booby Traps.

It is fortunate there are booby traps and a "7" Sniper available; the other advantages would likely not be enough to carry the day in this tough battle. The Sniper number means that for every 100 applicable DR, you can expect 5.55 Sniper attacks ($100 \times .1666 \times .333$) compared to your opponent's expected 1.85 attacks. In other words, you should average three times as many Sniper attacks as the German player. The numbers are even a bit more in your favor if you consider that sooner or later you will benefit from an extra Sniper attack or two thanks to random selection ties. But overall, it will mean nothing unless you also employ the wisdom to locate and perhaps even relocate the Sniper counter well. If the Sniper is not within range of the enemy 9-2 leader, I would consider moving it even on a "Sniper-1" dr unless some other valuable target were nearby. Once zeroed in on the 9-2, the Sniper might solve the problem of that hostile -2 DRM for you. Because of this Sniper and the booby traps, you should be ready to take any shot at the enemy which might result in even a PTC. The more of such chances, the more you will benefit.

On their own, of course, the Sniper and booby traps could not do a thing about winning the scenario. These British do possess a tremendous amount of firepower, and will be truly overwhelming anytime they can engage the enemy at a nine- or ten-hex range, simply because the enemy squads

cannot even return fire at such range. The big kicker is that 9-2 with the HMG and both MMGs. He can rake all level 4 frontline positions with 2(-) or 4(-) fire from 18R9. Anyone in his normal range will be staring down a 24-table attack (counting the squads). With ROF luck, this attack might sweep clean all available targets. Facing return fire from the enemy 9-2 in 25J6, these lead troops should easily withstand the 2(+1) attack he can muster with the two MMGs. Should the enemy 9-2 be at closer range, the British attack would likely run around him to bring combined firepower upon him from several directions at once.

Never underestimate the value of those 51mm mortars. The point will be driven home most significantly should you manage to bring one of them within range of a key enemy strongpoint and lay in a round of smoke. Smoke in the enemy hex completely changes the tactics of assaulting that position. Instead of a -2 DRM for running at it across open ground, the DRM suddenly becomes +2! Even if the position itself cannot be hit, placing smoke in the LOS between the enemy and open ground you must cross might be just the thing to break open an entire flank, or to crack that impregnable outpost. Using smoke tactics with a mild breeze blowing from the west will even grant the bonus of drifting smoke; it is a valuable tool which the German cannot counter or match. Cover your virgin ears!

British Disadvantages: Difficult Terrain; Dispersed VC Area.

At least this is not one of those scenarios in which the defender sits secure in +3 TEM stone buildings. It will be tough enough to work across all the open ground, traverse the wadiis and scramble up the four levels to reach Hill 792 while facing enemy positions in +1 TEM. Still, I believe the rigours could be easily overcome were it not for the fact that hills 766 and 758 must also be secured. The attack almost surely will be split or originate from the south, either of which exact a fearful toll from the cutting edge of the main drive on Hill 792. These British troops should easily enough persevere against the Germans stacked against them if only they can get at them all in time. But those defenders are so strewn about the battlefield, holding objectives as far apart as 19 hexes, that it is dreadfully difficult to go at them all at once. Anything can happen in this system (one of the big reasons why I like it) and a very small force might take Hill 758 from a superior defending force—so that possibility is always present. But it's not something one can expect. The influx of strength such a move would allow the northern assault might be sufficient to assure the success of that group, but the serious commander must then second-guess the likelihood of suffering a complete rebuff in the south. The answer will never be the same, for it depends much on how the enemy land, and is covered in more detail in the following section.

British Attack:

Although much will depend on the nature of the defense, there are a few constants to consider in the attack. First, you must decide whether you will advance the dismantled machineguns or set them up (R9 is my favorite) in preparation for the 9-2 to come in and take control on Turn 4. If the enemy are holding the board 25 ridgeline, I like to use this tactic. If they have yielded that defensive position, by all means move the heavy weapons forward. Remember, even if the R9 position draws return fire, it will be very light due to the range and the stone building, and it is better to have that firepower directed where you are strong rather than against your advancing infantry, who are much more fragile.

Second, the main avenue of the assault must be chosen. My favorite is the north, but I also expect

the enemy to defend there the heaviest, especially if playing a past opponent who might have knowledge of my preference. But if the defense is weak there, whether due to lack of familiarity with my choice or a bad drop or because (gasp!) my opponent hasn't read these words, the buildings and wall and wadii afford about the best protection to be found on the battlefield. Unfortunately, if you follow this plan and Hill 758 is also defended, the second attacking force headed for that hill will be entirely on their own, although with possible support from the R9 firebase. If there are more than just a few Germans in this southern area, however, it would probably be best to focus the attack up the center of board 18, through the wadii and the brush. Unless the enemy are not on levels 3 and 4, those board 18 hills will not provide any cover due to the great height advantage of the Germans, so don't count on much here unless R9 and your Sniper can do a number on any such high-level defenders.

However, following the wadii to 18P4 does at least bring you to the center of the board. From this point, it might have to be a footrace to get to either the village or the crags around 25Q4. But enemy dispositions might be such that a bold move is called for. This can happen even on the first turn of your entry too, so watch for it. On the other hand, if resistance is still pinning you down in the wadii, you still have smoke, assault move and advance to try to work your way free without risking FFMO and FFNAM in combination. Unfortunately, a well-placed German might have you nailed in this position, which would suggest that your choice to take this avenue was perhaps an error. It's not an easy piece of ground to traverse, so I would take it only if the enemy could not respond quickly enough to put heavy fire on you in the 18P4 area by Turn 5—about the time you'll be there and trying to exit the wadii.

Any attack from the south might easily end in disaster, due primarily to the lack of cover in the area. A unit on Hill 758 can see every hex on board 18 south of G10 (except F0 which is protected by the cliff); level-3 defenders have nearly as good a view, and even those Germans on level 2 can see almost every hex out there. The wadii in 25GG3-CC3 will not provide any cover to units lucky enough to get to it either. The only attack which will work against a well-defended Hill 758 is one of 9-10 hex range, outside the range of those enemy squads. The best assault on this hill would consist of hitting it with a smoke round or two and rushing it. But if this area is lightly defended, you might try a quick charge up the slopes. Expect to lose some troops, but those who follow might be able to control this southern objective by Turn 5 if you've been lucky against minimal resistance.

With only five leaders I do not recommend splitting the attack into more than two groups. Should the 9-2 remain in 18R9 to dish out some long-range machinegun fire, he will eventually have to move to assist the final assault on Hill 792, so I don't actually consider him leading a third group. For that matter, he might just as easily be needed in the south for the final push on 758. My hope for him is that he and the Sniper eventually subdue the enemy 9-2 and those MMGs, which would allow him to lead his troops forward to the 18S1 building, 25S2 crag or the village as an intermediate step before committing to the final push. The longer he can remain situated in this manner, the more certain you will be that once committed he will head for the location which needs him the most.

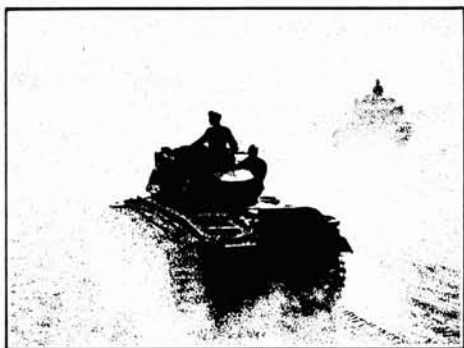
Since the enemy are not onboard at the time you place your Sniper and you don't know where his 9-2 is anyway, Hill 792 seems like the ideal spot to locate the counter. Even if all wings miss this area, someone is bound to head for it; the Sniper, in all likelihood, will hit whoever makes the most progress. Another approach might be to watch

where the wing originally targeted for that hill ends up; bank on it containing the 9-2, and position the Sniper to strike there. Whatever Sniper tactic you employ, a little planning of this sort will go a long way. I wouldn't hesitate to move him with my SAN of "7"; just make sure you have a legally better spot to move him for you must still meet the placement requirements of A14.2.

The finale comes on Turn 10 in this one. I wouldn't expect to ascend the heights before that turn. If you have forced the Germans to adopt a reverse-slope defense and can gain some concealment prior to moving onto the summit, your cause will be greatly enhanced. But you can't always count on that extra bit of security and might need to move onto the summit with plans of advancing into the enemy on the west slope. That tactic, at least, will tie them up such that they shouldn't be able to escape your melee grasp to advance back up themselves. There will also be those games in which the final struggle is on the summit itself or, worse yet, even on the eastern slopes. These are more desperate times for the British, but not nearly so desperate as that of the commander whose attack has languished and finds that he must rely on firepower to knock the Germans off the heights. As mentioned earlier, a single German MMC able to advance back up to one of the level 4 victory hexes is all that is needed to pull out a win in this case. But you British commanders might take heart yet, for the Sniper lurks nearby and might oblige you with an unexpected win. I've seen it happen more than once or twice. So long as there is hope, I'd hang in there and give it my best.

Conclusion:

The Fusiliers push the attack even to the point of running across the open upon occasion. The defenders are overwhelmed in several locations and still the attack proceeds up the hills. A round or two of smoke whistles in and signals the final assault upon the peaks. The Fallschirmjäger consider their comrades and the magnitude of the attack and know, most of them, that their way is crashing to an end this day.



Scenario 37 Khamsin

Rating: 50%-50%

Attraction: Yet another first for the desert, a combined-arms battle featuring new terrain, new entrenchments and a bizarre sort of climate. British and German forces struggle to even find one another. The "wide-open" spaces have turned into a close quarters arena with a maximum range of but ten hexes. The whole confrontation might best be described as a "massive, multi-hex melee."

British Advantages: Grant Tanks; Superior Infantry.

Those two Grants are undoubtedly the backbone of the defense. Most everything else should go into protecting their flanks, trying to force the German

straight onto their guns. A hull-down Grant, with its frontal turret armor of "11", is all but impregnable to every enemy gun except the Marder. The bow 75mm gun won't be able to fire from such a position, but it might be swung around to cover a flank or even left facing down the anticipated German attempts to charge up onto a hillock as a means of overcoming the HD problem. The German player might feel a bit reluctant to do this if he knows the move will bring another 75mm gun into play. For that matter, even the side armor of these Grants is as good as the frontal armor of the German panzers; these are truly outstanding vehicles in this situation.

Protecting the flanks of the two Grants is a bit of a problem with all those enemy tanks out there, able to move about with some amount of ease due to the storm. The Crusaders, the Stuart and the 40L AT gun certainly help, but it is the infantry who must carry the lion's share of this load. They are able to contribute in this manner largely due to the protection of the storm, but also because they possess eight AFV-killing weapons in addition to their CC abilities. If the German is overly aggressive with his halftracks, he might dig himself a hole very deep in DVP—one from which he might not escape. His tanks are also susceptible to these eight SW and must be leery of CC situations. Because of the storm, infantry in "Khamsin" are able to waltz right up to enemy armor with surprising immunity to fire; CC will be high on the priority list of tank killing means for both sides.

British Disadvantages: Encirclement/Rout; Mobility.

By Turn 3, there might be Germans on all sides, totally enveloping your positions. Once in this situation, you may not be able to rout and you will come under the influence of Encirclement in choice locations. There will also be enemy troops and tanks intermixed with your troops by this time and the whole mangled brawl does a fair job of nailing you down in your positions. There may be a tendency for the defenders to grow frustrated and even panicky. They must rely on their morale and the cover provided by the storm to see them through several turns of this kind of action. That little matter is complicated by the fact that they cannot be content with defending themselves; they must also stave off disaster for the Grants as well. Any British who break in the middle and latter stages of the game might be lost for good with their rout denied by surrounding Germans. The enemy, on the other hand, will usually still be able to rout, although fear of losing this ability might preclude them from taking too great a risk themselves.

British Defense:

There are three basic defenses worth considering, and all are viewed here from the perspective of locating the sangars and tanks (since the infantry go in those sangars anyway). The easiest defense to establish is the attempt to hold all three hillock summits. This is probably not the best idea because it makes the enemy's job a relatively simple matter of steamrolling them one at a time. However, it does play upon the fact that the 8½ turns puts some pressure on the Germans, and they might have to split their force to take all three summits. None of these will be pushovers either, for there will be three sangars adjacent to each summit hex. That's right: the British avoid the temptation to place a sangar on the summit, and instead make it a much more defensible spot by guarding all around it. Any Germans who want to ascend that rise must move adjacent to all three sangars, or nullify them in advance. In this defense, I like the ATG in 28DD9 or even 27Z1, although the latter is a bit exposed. But the big problem with this defense is that there is no coordination between British armor and infantry. The obvious place for the armor in this deployment is right in the center, around

27CC1—but this is a terrible spot. The infantry are not situated to protect the tanks and I expect them to be caught by side and rear shots at close range by Turns 3 and 4. The alternative is to place the tanks individually around each summit and hope that this dispersal gives the Germans more trouble. More likely, it will merely lead to the loss of all British armor. I don't much care for this defense.

Much better is to pick one spot and defend it with everything. Try sangars in 28oY5, Y7, Z8, oAA6, oBB4, oBB7, BB9, oCC6, oDD7 and oDD9. The ATG and sangar go in 28BB2, and the tanks spread out behind the hillock from 28BB3 to EE8. The Crusaders are formidable enough in HD positions thanks to their superior turret armor, small size, ROF, Multiple Hits and "T" guns. But they are vulnerable to an infantry attack, so don't stick them out on a limb or the enemy will simply walk up to them and CC them into oblivion. This defense is best to use against an opponent who has developed an appreciation for coming across the southern edge in order to avoid attacking into the Heavy Wind (F11.761). It allows the tanks to assume their positions on their turn of entry and forces the Germans to attack through the entire infantry contingent in order to get to summit 28oBB6. But it gives away the other two summits without a fight, allows the enemy attack to concentrate on one target, and leaves the right flank somewhat up in the air to an attack directly across the north edge. Some of these problems might be amended by relocating the ATG into the center rear of the action and by placing the AFVs further northwest behind the hillock with the sangars spread out a bit more to protect them. This might be the best defense against an unknown opponent; it has been the defense of choice in the games I have seen. An obvious alternate is to do very much the same thing around summit 27oAA4. But that is where the enemy will usually be headed from the start, and it takes the British armor until their Turn 2 to get there; the Mk IIIs will arrive first. Just to throw a monkey-wrench into things, either of these defenses might stick a single sangar out onto one of the vacant summit hexes. The single defender inside might well tie up an inordinate number of the enemy for several turns, and could be a small risk that will yield great benefit.

The third option I want to review is the most interesting in my opinion. It is based on the assumption that the Germans will need to use their infantry to gain the upper hand against the British tanks. If we can expect them to try to come in for some CC action, what is the best way to prepare for it? I think the best thing to do is to park the tanks on top of "sangared" infantry. Picture sangars in 28oY8, oZ3, oZ5, BB3, oBB5, oBB8, oCC7, DD5 and EE8, with the ATG in sangar in 28FF5. The Grants are in 28oAA7 and oCC7, and the Crusaders in 28oZ5 and EE8. The Stuart might be in 28oZ3 to help cover the right flank. Should the German attack come across the north instead of the south, these armor locations would swing around 90-degrees to the right in order to face the coming assault head-on. With infantry in the hex with this armor, we see the benefits of combined arms. The infantry help keep out enemy infantry and the armor helps keep away the panzers. The very presence of these tanks also forces the German infantry to pass PAATC before they can enter CC. The big benefit is that once in CC, the infantry gives the German a positive DRM on their CCV attack. For the final version of this defense, consider placing the tanks in between the sangars and advancing the infantry out underneath them. Now there is more than a single squad under each tank; their cover is as good as that of the sangar; and the enemy must worry about entering CC with anything less than several squads of their own. I would hesitate to place any concealed infantry in these hexes, for their -2 Ambush DRM will be nullified by the +2 for vehicle, possibly

another +1 for BU, and could also suffer positive modifiers for the condition of the infantry in the hex. Don't forget you can always drop concealment prior to any Ambush rolls if it is apparent you would be at a disadvantage on these rolls. Such a decision would be most appropriate of the British, opting to stand up and fight like men instead of slinking into battle.

Just a word of caution about any ideas of counter-attack. There will probably be times when you are sure the best thing to do is run off into the enemy rear and wreck all his halftracks. Just think of all those points! Well, that opportunity might happen, but I think it unlikely. The halftracks will usually be in motion, you must consider the dust and your own motion as well as the small targets, and weight these against the detriment to your summit defense any armored departures will entail. For that matter, only the Stuart is fast enough to catch the halftracks. Let's imagine you can spare it and send it on a hunt for points. It catches the halftracks by surprise, but still must roll "eyes" to hit an adjacent motion half-track (+2 motion, +1 small target, +1 dust, +4 for Case C). Should it hit it, the TK# is "11", and that should bring four or six points. But at what risk does it run this halftrack gauntlet? The in-motion HT cannot make a TK attempt since Motion status is a form of halved firepower, but it could shoot at the exposed crew of the Stuart. Probably better, it could first roll a Motion attempt in order to align its VCA with an escape avenue outside the CA of the Stuart. Should the Stuart elect to Bounding Fire, that would free the halftrack to make another free CA spin in Final Fire rather than return fire in order to face yet another direction. The halftracks could also swarm the tank; a "3" or "4" TK number versus its rear armor might actually do it in. But the most likely event will see the halftracks run away to the protective cover of the German tanks and the Marder.

A counterattack by the entire armored force, however, will be something worthwhile upon occasion. But I advise against it until such time as the enemy advance has been halted. Best to secure the defense before taking up the attack yourself. Should the German falter, it would be wise to hit back before he recovers his composure. Just make sure it's not a premature move on your part. Sending a few tanks out into the fray, away from the protection of the infantry, would be the easiest way to lose a won-game. Sending them out to maul the last few survivors of an already crushed opponent, though, would be a great way to end a winner and put the enemy out of their misery.

German Advantages: Leaders; Firepower; Overrun; Weather.

I'll pick the side with the two -2 leaders on the attack nearly every day. All three armor leaders should probably go in the Mk IIIs, but once in awhile it might be productive to fool your opponent and put one in a halftrack. Coupled with a squad and LMG, this makes for a 16(-1) (or even -2) overrun attack from an unexpected source. Very good for finishing off broken positions, as well as for pulling adjacent to hexes in which you placed an AFV with enemy infantry and blasting away with 20(-1) fire in your DFPh. But the 9-2 infantry leader is your best unit, able to encourage most any troops to enter CC with enemy AFVs, and usually helping to dispose of them once there.

The overwhelming thing about the German firepower is the many AFV machineguns. Some 88 factors here, which can be driven up to the enemy lines and wielded immediately to compensate for the lack of any great amount of infantry firepower. Add the two 75mm guns, the IFE from the Mk IIs and even some 50mm fire, and it is obvious there is plenty of punch in this armored force—maybe enough to win without the infantry if only it weren't for the undeniable deterioration of the panzers as

the British guns begin to take their toll. And the tanks won't simply stand and fire either. Because they must pave the way for the foot soldiers to move in and do the final clean-up, some of the panzers will be needed to overrun British infantry. Again, it is the power of the machineguns which makes overruns by the Mk IIIs and Mk IV a "16" table attack, and even the Mk IIs are on the "12" table. The halftracks are only a "6" table attack on their own, but reach the "16" table with a squad and LMG loaded, as mentioned above. These attacks will usually be the key to taking any position you want. Once overrun, your own troops can move up adjacent for an advance in to occupy the hex. To speed up this process against already broken enemy infantry, don't forget that your halftrack passengers which do not fire can unload in the enemy hex itself. Pulling this maneuver in a hex containing Good Order enemy infantry, however, can run the gamut from "act of desperation" to "brilliant move".

Were it not for the unusual weather, this would be a much different battle. As it is, the heavy dust provides excellent cover for both infantry forces as well as some added protection for the armor. It certainly brings the effective range of heavy weapons to a pittance. On that score, it must be considered a heavy German advantage, for it would be difficult to imagine the infantry and halftracks traversing all that open ground intact without the swirling dust. As much as that outright screening, this amount of dust permits the Germans to pick and choose their point of attack. Even if they have lined up on one side and decide to switch to the other, they will be able to make the change without taking undue fire, thanks to the fact that they can maneuver outside of enemy LOS. They must do the attacking, and there is no FFMO to worry about; it is replaced by a +1 TEM for every two hexes of range (FRU). Close Combat is what the German player wants, and it is what he usually gets thanks to the storm.

German Disadvantages: Tough DVP Criteria; Brittle Infantry Force.

I avoided discussing the DVP in the British section so I could cover it here. It's fairly obvious that the British would like to score an insurmountable number of DVP and force the Germans to adopt a reckless demeanor in their attempts to recoup the lost points. It is the German who is stuck with the dilemma of taking those three summit hexes at minimal cost in DVP. To do it he must arrange a series of trade-offs, taking enemy positions one by one with maximum force thrown at each one in order to preserve his force. His losses are certain to be higher though on the run in, so he must overwhelm the enemy in order to take them prisoner whenever possible. This is where Encirclement and surrounding them comes in handy. Without proper use of these advantages to gain extra prisoner points, I fear the German is trusting too much to luck in a fairly equal armor and infantry slugfest.

Despite the wonderful leadership and morale, the scant six 4-6-8s might turn out to be your doom. I believe it would take incredible luck for the British to take them all out before the end of the game, but should they manage to KIA the 9-2, or keep him broken for several turns, the squads might have too much trouble maintaining good order, and with a few of them out of the action over several turns, the remainder may not be able to carry on for the win. The unfortunate part of this is that those squads are needed badly so you can't hide them either. The game can come down to your last remaining squad or half-squad making the final assault on the last summit or on the last enemy tank, trying to get in and score the telling DVP. It's that kind of supreme effort needed from the infantry this time around.

German Attack:

The easiest bit of terrain to cover is in the north, but the flank of choice is the south. This is because

an attack from the south and southwest will keep the Heavy Wind from your eyes. If you proceed around the east of summit 27oAA4 to hit the enemy in the southeast, it will be their eyes taking the abuse from that wind. Notice that the British will likely not place anyone west of the "Y" row, in order to deny you any freedom of movement from your massive platoon on Turn 1. Since the maximum LOS is ten hexes and the platoon can reach only the "N" row on the first turn, you will see units only as far west as the "W" row. Anyone hidden in 28U6 will be placed onboard only if you move within six hexes of it (F11.601), which can't happen until Turn 2 at the earliest.

I don't intend to spend a great deal of time on the deployment of the platoon. There are many ways to arrange it and I'm not 100% happy with any configuration I have found. Just one item to consider is the 13MP maximum speed which allows the platoon to traverse one hammada, with tanks only, without slowing. The halftracks in the rear float back and forth along the line to avoid moving even adjacent to hammada, for moving there would slow progress or chance immobilization. Notice that with the six Mk IIIs in the front line and the other four tanks floating directly behind them, it is possible to skirt around a hammada and scrub hex here and there. When the front row splits to go around such a hex, the tanks are still adjacent to tanks in their rear who are adjacent to both parts of the front line. Then the front line closes ranks and the second line splits around the same hex. The halftracks, of course, must string out two hexes away, but they will eventually have to move adjacent to hammada sooner or later. In the end, there is no truly outstanding deployment I can recommend. I've never seen the British set up everyone beyond the "CC" row, but if they did you would not see them until your Turn 3 movement. They could also be strung out behind the hillocks as far west as 28V0 and you wouldn't be able to see their sangared positions. But I think the reason this defense has never been tried is obvious; it gives away too much for very little gain in time.

By Turn 2 the attack will reach hexrow S and begin to engage the westernmost sangars and any tanks which have ventured out that far. If the enemy are defending the 28oBB6 hillock all the way out to V0, your choice is either to swing around it to the southeast, or move immediately and attack that western outpost with superior force. Remember, anybody who moves directly on the enemy will be in position on Turn 2 at long range, and Turn 3 at close range. Anyone you send around a flank to hit the enemy from the southeast or northeast will not be in position until Turn 4 at the earliest. My choice attack is to crash into the enemy north or south board edge flank with the bulk of my panzers backed by three or four squads with the 9-2, while the remainder swing around the other flank to hit the British from that end. By the time we all are firing, some of the enemy will be taking Encirclement and their rout will be impaired or even non-existent. The two forces continue to chew into the enemy, advancing toward one another in a heavy CC and Overrun-style attack.

A good alternative is to hit with everything you've got at one point. Such a "sledgehammer" should overwhelm the point of attack. Although it concedes the advantages of a two-pronged attack, it can be very effective against a British linear defense, since the enemy on the far side of the line will pay a high-dust DRM to engage you, and so can be mostly ignored while you concentrate all your firepower on closer targets. In this manner, the dust allows you the advantage of dealing with the enemy bit by bit despite their concentrated deployment.

Keep the Marder at long-range, 10 hexes, from the nearest enemy tank. With this weapon protecting the halftracks, and the Mk IIIs up front protect-

ing it, you have something of a leap-frog type attack. The enemy tank will probably fire at the more certain targets—those Mk IIIs—rather than fight the dust in a shot at the Marder. The Marder fires first in your Fire Phase. As soon as it hits a target, you should have a kill. This frees the Mk IIIs to leap ahead and engage the next closest enemy. In a typical turn, some of them will fire and some will move up. One or two each might be Overrunning, and once you've worked into the enemy in this fashion, even the halftracks will be able to come forward and lend their AAMG fire to the cleaning-up process.

The infantry should unload on Turn 2, at least some of them. You might leave a couple aboard for later Overruns, and any detached with a flanking maneuver will naturally still be loaded as well. But those destined to participate in the main push will find themselves unloaded around midboard. This may seem a strange place to unload, but I prefer it for several reasons. They can move as fast on foot as the halftracks can in this heavy dust—actually faster with the Advance Phase included. They are less vulnerable to elimination on foot; there is no halftrack to blow-up around them. And believe me, with loaded infantry the halftracks are the most valuable pieces onboard; the one with the 9-2 aboard is worth 11 points. The points for the halftracks themselves are not something I want to give away, so they will not be exposed to enemy fire so freely. Later on, when things are busier, perhaps they might dash in for some action. At the start, however, there are too many underemployed British guns out there for my taste.

I think a turn or two of armored dueling might be in order if conditions are favorable, but no more than two turns. On Turn 5 at the latest, the final drive must commence in earnest. Overrun the infantry, or even simply drive into their hex if you are out of MP. They won't be able to fire at your infantry, Mk IIs and halftracks which follow. If the enemy tanks are CE, try overrunning them with a panzer which has malfunctioned MA (or even one with functioning MA if you feel like showing him you mean business). Suppose you are facing down a Crusader which has one of your Mk IIIs Acquired. As soon as that Acquired tank tries to move it will get popped. Maybe it would be best to Prep Fire in an attempt to take out the Crusader. Should that fail, how about using other tanks to charge the enemy in an attempt to draw up adjacent to him and pound him with bounding fire? No matter what happens, I bet the Crusader will lose his Acquisition on the first tank. Or how about forming up a platoon on the spot with two Mk IIIs and a Mark II, charging the Mk II into the Crusader's hex, stopping and bounding firing the Mk IIIs at the Crusader point blank. The Mk IIIs have a better chance of hitting the Crusader than it has of hitting the Mk II. At lot to think about here.

This line of thought could go on but I think the point has been made that this wide-open, mobile battle leaves a very great deal of room for the attacker (and the defender as well) to try some tactics that would ordinarily be considered ludicrous. The cover provided by heavy dust is the reason for it. Like imposing the parameters of night upon the gamer, heavy dust forces each player to operate with his learned tactics and accepted maxims ("never rush a HMG in the open . . .") modified by a few simple rules which, for all intents and purposes, make it very nearly an entirely different game.

Conclusion:

The British cling to their sangars and the protection of the tanks, while to the west shadowy forms of the enemy drift into view. By the time they see them, it is almost too late. The wind whips dust through every pore of one's skin; do the enemy feel it too? They come on as though they don't, and it

is soon forgotten as the immediacy of defending oneself leaps up to take precedence over the mindless worries of the infantryman. The afternoon becomes one of fighting closer to the enemy than discretion would dictate. Seen at close proximity, it is evident the dust clings to the enemy as well. We suffer the elements together; they permeate our lives and cover our fallen comrades as one.



Scenario 38 Escape from Derna

Rating: 60% pro-German

Attraction: This is desert fighting in as vast an arena as we'll see in these eight scenarios. The few German defenders cling tenaciously to their scant cover as a virtual parade of British vehicles comes at them. Vehicle Dust makes its first appearance, and coupled with Intense Heat Haze, the defending AT guns often find their shots going astray in between the long-range, in-motion targets and crafty placement of the attacker's smoke.

German Advantages: 37L AT Guns; Open Terrain.

The two advantages work hand-in-hand. The British will have a devil of a time coming across all that open ground in the face of those three 37L guns. (The original playtest version had four of those guns!) Every fire phase all three fire; the average number of non-Intensive Fire shots from these will be six. The six 20L guns of the armored cars and the ten SWs also make life hazardous for the enemy infantry and unarmored/lightly-armored vehicles; but it will be the ATGs which control the enemy tanks. If they can be destroyed, the PSWs should then command the freedom of movement needed to disrupt the enemy and prevent him from exiting enough DVP. That does assume, however, that the British 88s and the portee can also be silenced.

German Disadvantages: Isolated; Heavy Weapons.

I think the Germans are forced to defend in a series of isolated pockets either two, three or four in number. If more than three, there are not enough leaders to go around and I will call that spreading it thin. There is too much ground and too little cover for the Germans to spread out and try to defend a line, or even anything resembling a line. They must cluster around the three leaders; I would even try to get the AT guns in the same general area as a leader and potential ad hoc crews. What this deployment results in, however, is a few small clusters which will be so spread out that they will have difficulty protecting one another. The enemy will be able to concentrate on the one of their choice while remaining far from the others. Some Germans will be forced to set out in the open in order to bring aid to the threatened flank. In this manner, the British will themselves gain some advantage from the open terrain, listed in the preceding section as a German advantage.

For all the decent weapons in the German arsenal, they lack any which offer exceptional killing power. Even the 37Ls can't guarantee a kill against "0" armor or unarmored targets ("9" and "8" TK

numbers respectively). Against the frontal armor of the A13s the TK number is a mere "6" at a 3-18 hex range. These numbers aren't all that bad, but compare them to the British 88's TK number versus the PSW armor of but "1" (12) or the British 40L's against the same target (9), and it is evident the Germans are at a distinct disadvantage in the killing power game. I think this weakness is fairly well offset at first by the high ROF of the German guns, but those AC breakdown numbers of "11" bode ill for their staying power. Also, if the three ATGs actually take their average six shots per fire phase, one of them should break down in the first three turns, but only after or during a stretch of 36 shots! Maybe not a great deal to cheer about for the British after all.

German Defense:

First thought is to put some infantry in the over-lays. The sand and deir offer some protection true, but the hillock on board 27 doesn't help too much unless the British come straight at it so that you can keep it between you and them. Otherwise, the hillock is either outflanked to the north or too far from the action should the enemy head for 26U10 to exit. Its main purpose seems to be to protect the road and to provide a haven for those armored cars until such time as they sally forth to some great purpose. But I want to concentrate my troops more than by splitting them between these three outposts. Therefore, in order to guard both the 26U10 exit area and the road/northern route, I like placing fox-holed troops northeast of the sand, and troops in sangars in the 28FF9-26DD1 area. This group at the intersection of the road and the German set up line covers not only the road but also the northern board edge and the left flank of their comrades to the southwest. One ATG goes in 26oR7, and the other two go in the sangar complex at the junction of the four boards—the "Four Corners" defense.

It is tough to resist convention and not place troops in the sand, deir and hillock; I didn't like it this way the first time either. But I wouldn't recommend it here without good reason. During the playtest, the British attack usually skirted across the west and pushed for an exit at 26U10 (although it was board 27 then and the exit hex was P10). Defenders in the deir and on the hillock were too easily left out as that type of action developed. With the northernmost defenders situated at the four corners, however, they were able to hit any attacker with fire and are only a turn's movement away from reaching the extreme flank on either side. The AT guns have close support from both the infantry and a leader apiece for rally purposes. The foxhole group, adjacent to the sand, provides stiff resistance to any British thrust at that exit area and are still situated in potential Bog hexes. Their foxholes lend a +2 TEM instead of the +1 TEM they would supply if placed in the sand, and the +4 Overrun protection is very tough for the British to overcome.

One of the nicest little coups allowed by this deployment is the HMG in 28GG9, on the road. From here, it can either roll a TH as far away as 28Q1, or can place a Firelane marker in that hex. I doubt any CE AFV or any soft-skinned vehicles will chance to run down that avenue of table "4" attacks. Of course, with two ATGs at the four corners, it might be asking too much to expect the British to come straight down the road. But this at least starts the HMG in a threatening location, from which it can easily enough back into a sangar or foxhole you have spared from the southwestern group. With a leader helping, the HMG could be run down the road to 28Z5 for an advance to Z4, where it will command a great deal of respect from any British on Turn 2 attempting to use the 25oW4-Q1 road. Can the HMG place a Firelane out to 25oX? How about a "2" residual in W4 after the initial 6FP attack? How about combining with a squad for a table "8" attack on the first target

to enter the bridge (hex 25oT2) and leaving a "4" residual in that key hex? Don't forget the ROF too! Well, this all sounds great, but I wouldn't run the HMG out on a limb like this. The initial value of this intimidation would backfire miserably should the British manage to knock out this overextended position. The HMG and leader are simply too valuable throughout the course of the entire game to risk them in such a foolhardy move. That's not to say it will never work; but you are nothing but a "gambler" if you try it. One A13 might be all it takes to run in and overrun you with an "8-1" attack. If that attack fails, it will then shoot off its sD6 in your hex and you can forget that commanding view of the road.

My 37L AT guns will be firing right from the start, unless I've tried to pull a fast one and hidden one in 26E9 or 29AA9. But it would only be on a rare day (or maybe versus Fish) that I'd be willing to do that. The chance for surprise is really not worth forfeiting all the extra shots I might have taken right from the "get-go". Side and rear shots are not all that much better than frontal ones against what the enemy has to offer, so I'll take the greater number of average shots over a smaller number of choice ones. I fully expect to break three AT guns in this scenario, unless the enemy does them in outright. But I also expect to repair at least one, and to score as many Critical Hits as Breakdowns. Not that CHs are all that great here, for the ensuing drifting smoke can provide the British with some excellent cover. The infantry will serve as ad hoc crews whenever needed. The added risk of a Breakdown is as nothing compared to leaving the gun idle. Intensive Fire, however, will be used only in desperation to stop an overrun or at the end of the game.

The armored cars will enter and remain in Motion behind the board 27 hillock. They are the reserve, and will remain in this area until the enemy commits to the attack—probably on Turn 3. From this area, they can move onto the road and charge right through to the 25oQ6-S4 area if the enemy deployment has left an opening. The fire they might put on the overstacked shellhole hex could be enough to win the game. It all depends on how much is there, and how well the British player has protected the ridgeline against this outrageous German tactic. But normally, the armored cars will stay at long range from the British guns, in Motion, and shrouded by vehicle dust and their own sDs. Use of those sDs and the vehicle dust might also come in handy for covering one of your own AT guns or infantry groups which finds itself in trouble. These thinly armored vehicles simply can't take much abuse from the enemy 40L guns; and forget about challenging the 88s on anything but the To Hit table.

Once the enemy drive is in progress, these ACs can make a quick strike at the trucks, Bren carriers and infantry. This, along with some occasional duelling with an outnumbered A13 here or there, will be the primary function of your armored cars. Their best chance are on the IFT versus unescorted infantry and trucks, although I wouldn't hesitate to use them to Overrun those juicy targets as well. Use them to bring Encirclement upon the British and to surround them and void any rout possibilities. The better opponent will protect himself against this, but if the opportunity presents itself, be ready for it.

Expect the final turn or two to be a mad rush of British DVP headed for a fast exit. This is the time when your armored cars or even the infantry might be able to lash out at an unprepared foe as he packs everything in to make good his escape. If you have anything left for this final counterattack, it will probably be the winning difference. Try to establish a firelane across the edge of the board the enemy must traverse on that last turn. Drive your armored cars into the closest exit hexes his infantry can reach. They won't get off the board because they can't

enter your hex during movement. Even a well-placed smoke round or two and some vehicle dust might bring a win by virtue of forcing the enemy to expend too many MP/MF to make it off the playing area. Of course, you can also directly attack the enemy and, catching them with their imposing armor in motion, rip up those last few trucks and lightly-armored vehicles. "It ain't over till it's over, but you can't lose if you've won."

British Advantages: 88s; Vehicle Dust; Smoke; Small Targets.

If you can unlimber them, the 88s command as much respect in this scenario as any weapon in any other situation (at least until we see the Crocodile and the AVRE in action). Nothing else on board even approaches their "13" TK and "16" IFT numbers. These are the only guns which pay no C4 penalty beyond 12 hexes. They stand a fair chance of shelling the German infantry into submission, and can easily dispose of the armored cars if only they can hit them. They also are the best way to retaliate against those enemy 37L AT guns. These big guns will attract much fire from the Germans, might not even make it through the shellhole hex in the first place, and if you do decide to fire from a limbered situation their performance will be curtailed.

Vehicle dust and smoke will be the keys to success in this encounter. You have 24 vehicles to make dust, seven with sDs and five guns to fire smoke. I would even put the 9-1 armor leader in the A13 MkII CS, and make every effort to keep this valuable asset in the game. In addition, there will be some blazing wrecks before too long. Coupled with the non-burning wrecks, there will eventually be a fair amount of cover on this desert battlefield, although some of it at your own expense. Fortunately, many of your vehicles are small targets and will also be in motion almost continuously. This is a game of avoiding hits, for once they have scored on your lighter vehicles, the Germans will usually get the kill.

British Disadvantages: Organization; Shellhole; HE; Tough VC.

I think the toughest obstacle to overcome is the imposing number of vehicle types headed up the escarpment road. There are twelve different types which somehow have to figure out how they will line up and carry the infantry and guns through the shellhole and up to level 4 and there attack the enemy. This is not a situation one would walk into with a casual frame of mind. It involves reading some vehicle notes, checking out the Bog rules, refreshing your memory on the MP costs for fully-tracked vehicles, armored cars and trucks, and lastly for formulating a plan of attack which might easily prove useless by the fortunes encountered in the shellhole hex. The information is all contained in the rules; I won't waste time re-hashing it here. My preference is to approach the whole operation from the point of view that some of the vehicles will bog and some of the other vehicles can help push them out. The most valuable of the "boggers" are the two Quad Fiat tractors towing the 88 Art. I'd like to use the Mk VIB to help push here, but since that AFV is the best in my arsenal for Overruns (the only one which can claim the "16" table), I might hedge that bet and leave behind an A13. Since the 9-1 armor leader in an assisting AFV can (as per the 1989 Errata) modify the unbogging attempts, it might pay to place him in whatever assisting vehicle will be left behind to help, thus yielding a -2 drm for each unbogging attempt. With this combination, one vehicle per turn of your choice will be freed of bog, guaranteed! The carriers can push the 15-cwt trucks but not the 30-cwt ones, so it's best to normally place the bulk of the infantry, leaders and SW in the lighter trucks. They are also small targets, move faster and may (or may not) fool your oppo-

nent who may want to shoot at the potentially bigger prizes (the 30-cwt trucks) thanks to the wonderful innovation in SSR4.

Despite the potential of the 88s, you will be in a major hurting way if they don't make it up the hill and unhook. There is not much else in the British column which can dish out any HE fire. Without the 88s in action, the enemy are free to concentrate on other targets—a nice fringe benefit for them. And since there are nearly three times as many British VP available as they must exit, one might think the Germans need all the help they can get. On the other hand, anyone familiar with the way these scenarios are play-balanced ought to realize that if we start with about 150 DVP and must exit 50, there will probably be about 100 DVP worth of losses and units which cannot exit for various other reasons. For the British, it is a matter of getting out with whatever can make it.

British Attack:

The attack will be as much a flight as an attempt to wage war. The hope is to prevent it from turning into a rout. If the enemy's fire can be screened by smoke, dust, intense heat haze and Motion, so much the better than fighting them. The only clear approach is to create a turmoil of smoke and dust in the 28M2-P0 area to cover the establishment of the 88s in the 28N0 area, or maybe even some spot further to the southeast if a timid enough enemy set-up allows. From that point on, you can deal with any target you like; the 88s will dominate. But the initial hurdle is that shellhole, and it is quite a stumbling block.

The decision of whether or not to send through some tanks before the bulk of the trucks hit that shellhole hex is not as clear cut as it might seem at first glance. You have to face up to the fact that any vehicles which reach the top of the escarpment are really little more than targets the first two turns. The best thing to do about this is to make them more difficult to hit with some smoke and vehicle dust. My favorite lead tank to set-up in 25oU6 is the MkVIB. I expect this low-ground pressure vehicle to traverse the shellhole, reach 25oW2, turn around and enter W3 where it will attempt to fire its sD and end the turn in motion. If successful, there will be vehicle dust in W2 and white dispersed Smoke in W3 which will drift into V2 and U2 at the start of Advancing Fire. The A13s which follow will benefit greatly from this much cover, and pull along the road from U3 to W4 and X3-X2, all firing their sDs when they reach these destinations. They also remain in motion. With a 41% chance of making the sD6 roll, you numbers hounds know there ought to be three dispersed Smoke counters placed by your smoke dischargers. With two drifting smoke hexes for each of these, plus a few vehicle dust counters, the German selection of targets should be severely limited. (Notice that confusion with the vehicle dust counters is easily avoided if you adopt the practice of always pointing the "V" of the dust depiction toward the vehicle which created it, as though the dust were actually billowing out from it.)

The next vehicles through, the Quad FATs towing the 88s, will move up to level 4 only if they will be shielded by smoke and dust. Otherwise, they remain in motion in W6 to await a healthier environment on Turn 2. They couldn't reach the top and unload the guns this turn anyway, at least not within decent range of the Germans, and the main thing is to have them through the shellhole. Naturally enough, you might expect one or both of them to bog with their total +3 DRM. They both make it through only 52% of the time, so it would prove wise to follow them up with a vehicle capable of assisting on the unbogging attempt(s) to follow. Since they should both bog only 7% of the time, I think one pushing AFV is enough. On Turn 2, these 88s plan to find the most appropriate spot to

set up shop for some heavy lecturing to the Germans—lecturing of the HE sort. The very best locations are probably 28W2 and 28X0. From here they can see the entire battlefield except a few hexes behind the other hillock, and they receive the +1 TEM from the hillock sheltering them. But it would be risky for the A13s to create a smoke screen this close to the enemy, and without that smoke the Quad FATs would be sitting ducks out here. Now, if the Germans are holding back by the hillock, you have no worries. But I expect them to be closer than that, and so think it rare that you will make it to this hillock with trucks towing the most potent weapons in the game.

More likely you will be able to move these guns up to about 28N0, as mentioned above. I'd try to situate them in the 13-18 hex range from the enemy concentrations, but remain 17 hexes away from the HMG. Here, you are beyond their squad range and every SW is halved (or too far away as in the case of the 50mm mortars). Even if you opt to Area fire at the foxholes, how many 8(+2) attacks can the enemy pass? With a depletion number of "8", I'd make sure it is used only on the 37L ATGs or the HMG. If your infantry is having trouble getting forward and the 88s are taking fire, try using the 51mm mortars to lay flanking smoke around the 88s. This can curtail the enemy fire without disrupting the channel of fire coming from the guns themselves.

Back at the shellhole, the line continues to plunge through, with first the Portee and then the trucks. The rear consists of the carriers and the armored car. The carriers are not there because I have no appreciation of their value (on the contrary, I love these vehicles) but because part of their role is to push any bogged down 15-cwt trucks out. In the closing stages of the scenario, when things are hectic in the mad dash to victory and most of the British tanks are long gone, I expect these carriers to pose a very real and dangerous threat to the Germans. They are so small and seemingly impotent to the uninitiated that they might slip through and drive off board with their 20 DVP. They might overrun for a 4(-1) in open ground. They can stir up vehicle dust and throw crew smoke. They can drive into an enemy hex, unload and TPBF in the Advance Fire Phase, followed by CC. Or maybe they will drive through your kex to leave vehicle dust there when they stop adjacent and unload in preparation for an advance, after automatically recombining with another carrier crew, for some CC activity. I think these vehicles are incredibly adroit on the battlefield and offer a great package of tactical options to the astute British player.

The armored car, on the other hand, is a vehicle which demands very little respect. It will bog down on a roll of "8" or more (a 41% chance). That's why it is in the rear, where it won't slow important vehicles. The best thing might be for it to immobilize in the shellhole and decrease the VC by a point. But it does provide at least ATR protection in the rear, and might hang back with the 88s just in case those German armored cars breakout and make a run at the guns. At the very end, the Marmon-Herrington car can make a run for the exit and, at the very least, draw fire.

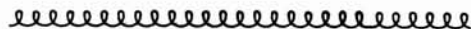
The Portee and the A13 MkII CS tank both should set up to compliment the 88s. I like the 9-1 armor leader in the CS tank so he can help it hit the most threatening target every turn (usually one of the 37Ls). The Portee will keep the German armored cars honest, freeing the 88s to consume their HE shells. Once the trucks start breaking out from the shellhole, you will have to decide on the focus of your attack and head that way immediately. This need for expediency is due to the fact that the infantry will not exit on the trucks. If anyone wants to try doing that, please feel free to experiment. I learned my lesson the hard way over several games (played the scenario "Sunday of the Dead" in this

issue and you'll have an even better opportunity to learn this) and am here to profess that the infantry must unload and run on their own feet or die in the trucks. It's as simple as that. They will have a long way to go, but can expect help from the 88s' covering fire, heat haze, vehicle dust, smoke and their own return fire as they draw nearer to the enemy. They will also gain some advantage from wrecked trucks which have gone ahead and met their doom. Some might even have caught fire and spread a +2 DRM screen across three hexes for you.

You can expect your DVP to come from a few tanks, quite a few empty trucks, some carriers and probably only a miserly squad or two. If the tanks and the carriers don't make it, I doubt you will reach the DVP level needed. Should the Portee or an 88 make it off, it was probably a rout. I can't imagine winning without using these weapons; and if you use them it will be nearly impossible to load them back up and still get them off in time. Of course, the Portee might have remained loaded; but if it's deployed, notice that any truck, except the Portee itself, might hook it up for a quick exit.

Conclusions:

Heat waves shimmer as the desert sun cooks the defenders in their hastily prepared positions. Out of sight to the north, the enemy are frantically manhandling their vehicles past an engineering blunder of monumental scope, telltale sign of the panic they've seen more and more in recent weeks. Forced to commit to the battle piecemeal, the attack commences nonetheless. The anti-tank guns crack and the dust and smoke swirl. Soon the deeper pounding of 88s announces new dangers for the defenders. There are never enough defenders. Never enough guns; never enough soldiers.



Mr. Nixon's in-depth look at the scenarios of WEST OF ALAMEIN will conclude next issue with "Desert Sands", as he turns to the last four scenarios of the newest module.



The
Latest News
In
Competitive
Gaming

Area News

For Today ...
and Tomorrow

BY DONALD S. BURDICK

There's a lot of news to report this time, so I'll get right to it. First an update on the *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* ladder competition that I wrote of last time. The Burdick-Garbutt match was decided in favor of Burdick when Garbutt's Allies surrendered. The other game is still undecided (with the roles reversed), but the tiebreaker system guarantees me a successful title defense. The Grant-Malaska match on Rung #2 is well underway. The winner of that match will challenge me for the title in the second round of games. Dale Garbutt will then occupy the third position on the ladder for the second round. His opponent will depend on whether any others join the ladder in time to participate in the first round.

A ladder system for *STALINGRAD* is in the final stages of formation. By the time this column appears, the *STALINGRAD* ladder will definitely be in place with David Kopp, the current AREA champion, in the top spot. Other Round 1 positions will be determined within the month, based upon the overall AREA ratings of the participants. Likely players include myself, Steven Sutton, Kevin McCarthy and John Grant. Verified AREA members who would like to join the *STALINGRAD* ladder competition should write immediately to Don Greenwood at Avalon Hill. Participation in the ladder tournament does not require a game-specific AREA membership for *STALINGRAD*.

The next ladder system to form will almost certainly be for *WATERLOO*. The current champion, Kevin McCarthy, is definitely interested in establishing a *WATERLOO* ladder. Although the formation process is not as far along at this time as it is for *STALINGRAD*, the *WATERLOO* ladder tournament could easily be ready to begin by the time this column see print. Consequently, again you should write Don Greenwood immediately if you have any interest in participating in a postal *WATERLOO* ladder.

There have been some other post-tournament title matches in various other games represented in the

AREA Championship. Joe Beard is defending his *AFRIKA KORPS* title in a two-game match with Dale Garbutt. A third game will be used as a tiebreaker if necessary. The *ANZIO* tournament was eventually won by Tom Oleson. He and I then had a one-game title match, which I won playing the Allies. We are currently engaged in a rematch with the sides reversed; he has me on the ropes and will probably regain the title. Bruce Remburg won the *PANZERBLITZ* tournament and has already successfully defended his title in a match against Tom Oleson; he is currently participating in a two-game match with Kevin Kinsel. The *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* tournament was won by Pat Flory; Pat has since successfully defended his title in a match with Dale Garbutt.

The *D-DAY* tournament is the only one of the original AREA Championships not yet completed. The Final Round consists of a two-game match between Kevin McCarthy and myself. The two games are in Week 12 and Week 15, and recent action on the mapboards has been intense. When the smoke clears, it may be possible to predict a winner—but for now the outcome in both games is very much in doubt.

For each of these games, the possibility exists to establish a ladder system also. A potential organization for *D-DAY* has been extensively discussed. It seems likely that a *D-DAY* ladder will be set up as soon as the Final Round is completed. Discussions of a preliminary nature have been initiated for ladders in *ANZIO* and *PANZERBLITZ*. Any AREA member who is interested in seeing these processes go forward is encouraged to write to either Don Greenwood or me (1112 Huntsman Drive, Durham, NC 27713).

Lastly, should any of the readership have news that may be of interest to the membership of the AREA, please drop me a line. With your help, I hope for this to become a forum for the AREA in *The GENERAL*.

BROKEN SWORDS

The Minor Neutral Powers 1939-41

By David Meyler

The neutral powers attacked by Germany between 1939 and 1941 together fielded upwards of three million soldiers. However, armed with inferior weapons, often caught isolated and unprepared, and with leadership that sometimes was less than inspiring, the Germans usually made short of these armies. Yet Footnote A38 in the *ASL Rulebook* somewhat overstates its case. On the tactical level the combat was not necessarily one-sided—high motivation at times making up for what these once-neutral soldiers lacked in modern arms. These early campaigns are unfortunately often neglected in wargaming, but there are many interesting tactical situations—as highlighted by the release of *THE LAST HURRAH*. While superior use of mobile forces gave Germany the strategic advantage and the ultimate outcome was never in doubt, the Germans had some hard tactical lessons to learn along the way. This article provides some characteristics for the neutral armies involved, and some unit organization information for their troops.

The Polish Army:

The Polish Army arose out of the chaos that reigned in Eastern Europe at the end of the First World War. Marshal Josef Pilsudski, who eventually became commander-in-chief, had formed a Polish army of exile under Austrian control during the war to fight the Russians. The newly-independent state had hardly been established when conflict erupted with Bolshevik Russia. The Russians were decisively defeated in 1920, although they had advanced as far west as Warsaw. Meanwhile, a vicious, but undeclared, war continued with the Germans along the Silesian frontier as the Poles attempted to push their borders farther west than established at Versailles.

Pilsudski ran Poland as the leader of a military junta that seized power in the 1926 coup until his death in 1935. While the military maintained control, it was not until 1937 that the Polish Army began a belated modernization program. This was only partially complete when hostilities opened on 1 September 1939. The Poles, nevertheless, were dangerously optimistic. They were expecting the Wehrmacht to advance on a broad front in the style of 1918, and felt confident that the Germans could be delayed until their own mobilization was complete and the French could launch a major offensive in the west. Perhaps their successes in the early '20s contributed to this overconfidence, but the Poles had made two fatal miscalculations. The Germans had no intention of refighting 1918; and the French, apparently, had no intention of fighting at all (their "major offensive" never materialized).

The Poles put up a hard fight, although outclassed tactically and at a great disadvantage strategically. None of their fronts remained stable for more than a few hours, and the Poles generally found that they were taking measures that were too late by the time they could be implemented. With years of bitterness between the Poles and Germans, losses were high. In the 36 days of fighting the Poles lost over 66000 killed.

The Polish infantry regiment was much weaker than its German equivalent in terms of numbers and support weapons. With an establishment strength of 1900 men and officers, the regiment comprised three battalions—each of these with three or four companies, including a HMG company. Battalion-level support weapons consisted of 30 LMG (the

Browning M28—a version of the U.S. BAR), 12 HMG (Browning M30) and nine light mortars. At regimental level were six medium mortars, two field guns and nine AT guns.

The pride of the Polish Army, the cavalry, was organized into brigades. Each brigade had three or four cavalry regiments, plus a company of 13 TKS tankettes, an armored car squadron, a cyclist squadron, an ATG platoon, engineers, a rifle battalion and a horse artillery battery (four troops of two guns each). Each regiment had four squadrons and a HMG squadron. Each of these squadrons had three platoons.

The Norwegian Army:

The modern Norwegian Army came into existence when the country declared its independence from Sweden in 1905. As the government considered that defense against a major invader was not possible, not much attention was devoted to the army in official circles. When the Soviet Union invaded neutral Finland, however, the Norwegians did mobilize a sizable force along their northern frontier, but this was disbanded in March 1940 after the Finns signed the armistice with Moscow.

Thus, when the Germans attacked on 8 April 1940, the Norwegian Army was only partly mobilized. In spite of the early loss of Oslo and southern Norway, the Norwegians showed great spirit and withdrew into their mountainous hinterland, joining up with British and French units. The fighting in the north was protracted and resembled a guerrilla war; the difficult terrain and the generally light forces engaged on both sides precluded any major set-piece battles. Thus, although the Norwegians did not capitulate until 9 June, Norwegian losses were less than 1500 killed and wounded.

As for organization, Norway was divided into six districts (or divisions), with headquarters at Halden, Oslo, Kristiansand, Bergen, Trondheim and Harstad. Each district was to mobilize just one field brigade of two regiments, with other units to be raised as required. Some 16 regiments and ancillary units would be available at full mobilization.

Due to the surprise of the German attack, only the 6th brigade at Harstad was fully mobilized. The brigade had two regiments, each with two battalions and a garrison company, plus a battalion of dragoons or cyclists (which served as ski troops in winter) with a motor-machinegun troop, artillery and engineers attached. At full strength, the regiment had 3750 men with 96 LMG (6.5mm

Madsen), 36 HMG (Colt-Browning M29) and eight medium mortars. There were no field guns directly available, and no AT guns at all.

The Danish Army:

Since the disastrous war in 1863 with the Prussians over Schleswig-Holstein, the Danish kingdom had adopted a rigidly neutral stance. The "army" consisted of two divisions, Jutland and Sjaelland, named after their home provinces. The latter, based at Copenhagen, had three regiments (1st, 4th and 5th), while the former was headquartered at Viborg and had four (2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th).

In theory, Danish units were relatively well-equipped. A regiment, about 3000 men, had 256 LMG, 56 HMG, 24 medium mortars, and six AT guns. However, when the Germans struck on 8 April, the Danes just had some 6000 men in arms. No official resistance was put up to the German invasion, but the Danes lost 26 men in the opening skirmishes.

The Dutch Army:

Although some regiments of the Dutch Army have a pedigree dating back to the 1600s, the army of 1940 had its direct roots in the Napoleonic Wars. After the Belgian war of independence, the Dutch essentially stayed out of European power politics. The decade preceding the First World War was the last time a major modernization of the army took place. In 1936, a modernization program was launched, but adequate funding was lacking and most weapons were still of pre-1918 vintage when the storm broke.

The Dutch ordered a full mobilization when the Germans invaded Poland. Unlike the Belgian and French armies, the Dutch had not suffered the terrible losses of the First World War. While the French, and to a lesser extent the Belgians, expected to be attacked—and maybe even expected to lose—the Dutch on the whole thought they would be left alone again. The German invasion of 10 May came as a distinct shock, and this shock was translated into a hostility that the Germans had not expected.

The combination of paratroops and armor quickly knocked the Dutch off balance, although the enemy airborne units in particular suffered very heavy losses. The Dutch actually managed to stabilize the situations, but capitulated after the city of Rotterdam was bombed savagely. Considering the short duration of the campaign—five days—the Dutch losses of 2200 killed are relatively high.

The core of the field army was formed by 48 infantry regiments, supported by five hussar regiments

Minor Neutral Powers:

Nationality	LG	ELR*	SW** LMG	MMG	HMG	.50 HMG	LT. MTR	ATR	DC***
Poland	6	3	—	11	16	22	12	20	3
Norway	7	3	8	11	16	—	—	—	3
Denmark	8	2	4	10	15	—	—	—	—
Holland	5.5	3	9	11	16	—	—	18+	3
Belgium	6	3	—	10	15	—	6	—	3
Yugoslavia	7.5	2	8	10	16	22	—	—	3
Greece	7	3	10	14	18	24	—	—	3

The Poles and Belgians used BARs as LMGs; hence there is no entry for these nationalities in this column.

*—+1 for elite; -1 for 2nd Line; -2 for mobilizing unit

**—+1 for 2nd Line; +3 for mobilizing unit

***—assault engineer squad (or equivalent)

+—20L ATR

and the partially-mechanized light division. Their infantry regiment had three battalions, each of these with three infantry companies and a HMG company. The standard company, following an almost universal pattern, had three (sometimes four) platoons, each of these with three squads. At full strength a regiment had 2691 men of all ranks, 72 LMG (Lewis M20 or 6.5mm Madsen), 36 HMG (Schwarzlose M08/15), six medium mortars, four field guns and four AT guns. Direct support available to a battalion consisted of just 12 HMG and 24 LMG.

The Belgian Army:

The Belgian Army dates from the war of independence against the Dutch during 1830-31. Although the Dutch won the military advantage, they were forced to withdraw when France threw its support behind the Belgians. French influence remained strong, even in the military. The Belgian Army was virtually destroyed in the First World War, and it was rebuilt largely on the French model. Francophiles also made up 90% of the officer class. Whether Flemish-Walloon tension had a detrimental effect of Belgian performance in 1940 is difficult to tell due to the short duration of the campaign; but the Belgian Army fought well throughout.

Also like the French, the Belgians adopted a "Maginot Line" mentality, modernizing the fortress zone around Liege in the 1920s and 1930s. The center-piece was Eban Emael. Its loss on the first day of the German invasion was a hard psychological blow, even though plans had been made to fall back on the Dyle River in any case. Although steadily pushed back, the Belgian infantry surprised the Germans with their tough resistance. Some 5400 Belgian soldiers were killed in the 18 days of fighting.

The Belgian Army totalled 550000 men, a surprisingly high number for a nation with only eight million citizens. The field army consisted of 22 divisions. These were divided between reserve divisions and active divisions, which were larger and better equipped. An active division had three regiments, each of these with three battalions and a heavy weapons battalion, and included some 108 LMG (Browning M30), 52 HMG (Maxim 08), 108 light mortars, nine medium mortars or infantry guns, and six AT guns. Battalions usually consisted of three companies and a HMG company.

Shortly before the war broke out, a program had been begun to increase the mobility of the army. By 10 May, one of the two divisions of the Ardennes Rifle Corps had been equipped with vehicles, as had both light cavalry divisions. Each active division also had a company of light tanks attached for reconnaissance duties.

The Yugoslav Army:

Yugoslavia was another of the new nations created by the Versailles Treaty. Established as a monarchy, the political situation was far from stable by 1940. By 1941, Yugoslavia was virtually surrounded by German allies, and under heavy pressure signed a pact of alliance with Germany in March. However, a group of dissident army officers had already been planning a coup for some time and promptly overthrew the government. The German reaction was an immediate invasion.

On 6 April the Yugoslav Army found itself spread along a frontier of 2300 kilometers. Militarily and politically, the Yugoslavs were not in any position to offer effective resistance. The Germans struck from their bases in Bulgaria on 6 April, while the Hungarians and Italians joined in a few days later. By 13 April, organized resistance was over and four days later Yugoslavia capitulated.

The standing army in Yugoslavia numbered 148000, with full mobilization totalling 1.4 million

Continued on Page 25, Column 1

Coming Attractions

RED BARRICADES

Welcome back to the streets of Stalingrad—only this time on a scale and intensity which you've probably never before experienced in *ASL RED BARRICADES* will be the system's tenth module, but its first "historical" one. The centerpiece is a large, two-piece (45" x 33") historically accurate map depicting Stalingrad's "Red Barricades" (aka *Barrikady*) Ordnance Factory and surrounding environs. The factory complex alone, exactly adapted to *ASL* scale from wartime German aerial photographs, spans an area approximately 31 hexes by 16 hexes. The largest structure on the map (the mammoth "Assembly Hall") is about eight-by-five hexes—35 hexes total. Further, the mapsheet's grid features a new, one-inch hex for ease of play in those scenarios with high counter density.

For those dyed-in-the-wool *ASL*ers still choking on the word "mapsheet" from the previous paragraph, allow me a brief digression to allay your immediate, primordial reaction of horror. After much deliberation and hesitation, it was decided that an unmounted mapsheet was the best way to produce a map featuring continuous terrain over a large area. Too, because of the system's frequently critical lines-of-sight, there will be no building ends being cut off due to a bad trim job. Conveniently, an additional benefit of this decision was that it shaved at least \$10 off the final retail price.

Besides the map, *RED BARRICADES* features another novelty—*ASL*'s first true Campaign Game. But before I wax prolific on this juicy topic, let me elaborate on the module's other major components, namely:

Two complete counter sheets will be included, completely up to (*ASL*) snuff. You will now have markers for Fortified Building Locations, A-T Ditches, Cellars, Guttered Factories, and Hand-to-Hand Melee. Also included will be the "Perimeter", "Location Control" and "Burnt-Out-Wreck" counters necessary for the Campaign Game, as well as plenty of fresh Russian and German infantry and SW. Two brand-new weapons make their appearance: the Russian *Molotov Projector* (works something like a PIAT) and several *StuG 33B* (actual counters for the AFV referred to in German Vehicle Note #37).

Several standard scenarios (as opposed to those for the Campaign Game) will be included, along with some 18 (at last count) Special Rules in effect during all *RED BARRICADES* scenarios. Most of these scenarios utilize only a portion of the map, but for those of you impatiently awaiting the reprint of *SL Scenario 2000* ("Operation Hubertus"), your wildest nightmares of combat in the rubble-strewn streets come true with its heathen offspring, "The Last Bid" (so big, it will probably cover the better part of two scenario cards), this time on the *actual* terrain on which it transpired.

Chapter O brings the dictums for the map's several new terrain types (debris, railway embankments, interior factory walls, storage tanks, single-hex two-story buildings, and culverts), colorfully detailed in the traditional manner. There are further clarifications (i.e., errata) for the existing rules on Fortified Building Locations, Factories, Rooftops and Armored Cupolas. Also included in the *RED BARRICADES* rules is a section on usage of the

Russians' newest toy, the aforementioned MOL-P support weapon. Last but certainly not least, spanning three-quarters of Chapter O, is section 11: the "RB Campaign Games".

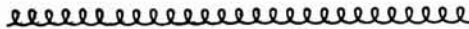
RED BARRICADES actually features three separate Campaign Games (CG), none of which by the way are related to the proposed *ASL* Chapter I "Campaign Game". Instead, these CG are exclusively designed for play on the module's map and provide the devoted *ASL* gamer (game club?) a series of interrelated scenarios. For instance, Campaign Game I simulates the German effort, from 17 October to 29 October, to take the actual factory complex. Each CG-Day promises a possible CG-scenario, depending on if either (or both) side wishes to attack. The scenario "generated" is intended to simulate the most crucial actions taking place in the *Barrikady* on that day, commencing at the moment with the most potential for a breakthrough. Now for the first time in *ASL* there is a "tomorrow". Since surviving units are retained for the next CG scenario, a critical tactical dimension has been simulated: conservation of forces. Gone are the last game-turn, suicidal charges so commonly employed in standard scenarios where you don't have to worry about casualties. The player will frequently find it the "better part of valor" to take a loss on the current day so as to enhance his chances of winning the next.

Besides giving starting forces for each CG and some CG-specific rules and definitions, most of section 11 details a special between-scenario series of steps (known as the "Refit Phase") to "tidy up" the map as well as purchase additional forces for the next scenario of the campaign. For instance, all ongoing melees are resolved, wounded leaders may be evacuated, a side's ELR may be raised (or lowered, God forbid), weather determined, etc. Impatiently awaited by each player will be the step known as "Perimeter Determination", whereby each side stakes claim to the hexes (Strategic Terrain) controlled by it at scenario end, thus largely determining its start line for the next scenario in the campaign. Later, each side *secretly* purchases reinforcements (from a list of historically available units) to supplement their survivors. Instead of buying individual counters as per the standard *ASL* DYO system, however, each player selects his own "Reinforcement Groups". For instance, as the Russian commander you could choose a Guards SMG or Factory Militia company, a T-70 platoon, a Katyusha (OBA) module, or more fortification points (to mention but a few). Since the groups purchased, as well as their actual strength (in terms of MMC, SMC and SW for an infantry company), are unknown to your opponent, the *RED BARRICADES* CG provides a lot of that "Fog of War" so ashamedly missing in most *ASL* scenarios. Imagine the consternation of your tiresome foe when he discovers you've just augmented your OB with a full-strength company of assault engineers with which to burn out those last annoying fortified strongpoints in the southern Foundry Hall!

All in all, I'm quite excited about *RED BARRICADES*. Not only because of the module itself, but

because of what it portends for the future of the *ASL* system. We're already wondering about what "historical module" should be next. Dieppe? Arnhem? Prokhorovka? Tarawa? If you're an *ASL* buff, you've surely got your own ideas. But first—try *RED BARRICADES*. You may find a whole new dimension of enjoyment.

Charles Kibler
October 1989



Broken Swords . . . Cont'd from Page 23

men. However, on the day of invasion, only 400000 conscripts had been called up. The field army comprised 52 regiments in 16 divisions. The regiments had 2400 men each, 168 machineguns and four field guns.

The Germans in their haste were less than systematic in disarming the Yugoslavs, and up to 300000 men are estimated to have kept their arms—forming a considerable pool for the partisan forces that began operating a few months later. Josip Tito's communist force, the most important, eventually numbered 800000. Although an irregular force, Tito set up a regular army organization for his troop. The smallest unit was a "company" of about 80 men. Nine companies formed a battalion, and three battalions a brigade. Until late 1942, when some British aid began to arrive, the partisans relied on former Yugoslavian army weapons and captured equipment (mostly Italian).

The Greek Army:

The Greeks achieved their independence from the Turks in 1830 after almost ten years of fighting. war with Turkey occurred again in 1897, and from

1912 to 1913 Greece participated in the series of conflicts called the Balkan Wars. The Greeks then became somewhat unwilling participants during the First World War, and fought another war against the Turks in 1920-22 (in which the Greeks were worsted).

The interwar period was not one of political stability either. Premier Venizelos, in power from 1916 to 1932, led an abortive coup in 1935. After this, the monarchy was re-established under King George, but General Mextaxas as prime minister ruled as virtual dictator. When the Italians invaded Albania in October 1940, the full Greek Army was mobilized—totalling some 430000 men. In the mountainous region bordering Albania, the Greeks not only held their own but pushed back the ill-prepared Italians. Nevertheless, neither of the belligerents were adequately prepared for the harsh conditions, and the Greeks suffered 60000 casualties over the winter.

When the German invasion came in April 1941, the Greek Army was not in the best position to oppose it. German mechanized units quickly cut off the Greek forces in Macedonia, forcing their surrender. The remaining forces, with their British allies, retreated south. Here the "Army of Epirus" surrendered on 20 April, and the British began to evacuate the mainland two days later. The Greeks suffered 15700 casualties against the Germans.

The Greeks proved to be more effective in the mountains fighting a guerrilla war, although the partisan forces were split between a number of opposing factions. The communists were the first to organize an effective military force—ELAS—in February 1942 (eventually fielding 25000 men). The British belatedly sponsored a right-wing coalition of monarchists and adherents of the former Metaxas administration—EDES-EKKA—with 5000 fighters. The two factions initially maintained an uneasy alliance, but from October 1943 through February

1944, an all-out civil war broke out between ELAS and EDES-EKKA. The Germans were the main beneficiaries, regaining a foothold in the mountains and using the schism to recruit a large number of anti-communist collaborators.

The formal organization of the Greek Army in 1941 shows the paper strength of an infantry regiment was 1100 men and 58 officers. Support weapons consisted of 36 LMG (Hotchkiss 8mm), eight HMG (St. Etienne M07), four medium mortars and two field or mountain guns. Regiments comprised two battalions, each with three rifle companies and a HMG company. The two cavalry regiments each had four sabre squadrons, a machinegun troop (with 12 HMG) and four mortars. Like the Yugoslav partisans, the various Greek freedom fighter factions were armed with captured or ex-Greek Army weapons, or weapons delivered by the anti-Nazi powers.

Conclusion:

To conclude, the chart on Page 22 provides a more detailed breakdown of the characteristics of the various minor allied forces based on actual performance. It may be used to replace or supplement the information provided in *ASL* for DYO scenarios. It is hoped that this chart might encourage more players to experiment with the play of the Minor Allies, and help guide would-be scenario designers when crafting more tactical problems for we hard-core devotees.



FAME & FORTUNE

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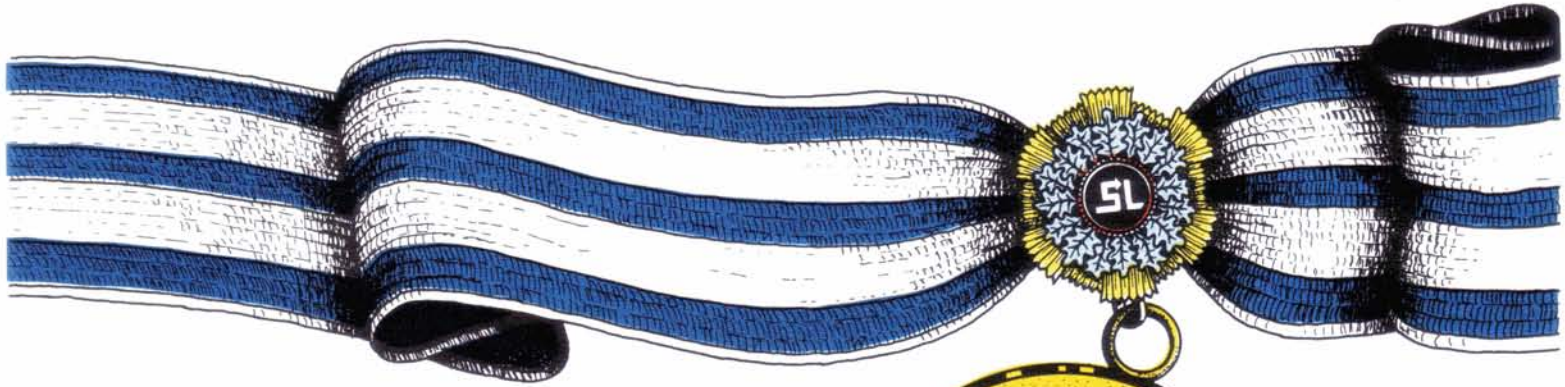


CONTEST #148

There is an old homily that claims, "if you know what can happen, it will." Never was that more true than in *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*, where a "working" knowledge of the rules gives one an edge that the best of luck cannot overcome. To that end, for Contest 148, we devised a couple of questions to test the readers' adroitness with both the rules and probabilities concerning Critical Hits. All errata published to date (i.e. that of 1987, as well as relevant Q/As in both *The GENERAL* and the *1989 ASL Annual*) is to be taken into account. To enter, simply supply the answers to the following:

- 1) What is the highest Original DR that will cause a CH when firing at a single squad in a hex that is not overstacked? What conditions are required for such a result?
- 2) What are two situations in the game in which an Original Dr of "2" can never result in a CH against a Vehicle Target Type?

The answers must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive a merchandise credit voucher from The Avalon Hill Game Company. To be valid, an issue entry must include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole and a listing of the three best articles in the judgement of the contestant. The solution to Contest 148 will appear in Vol. 26, #1 and the list of winners in Vol. 26, #2 of *The GENERAL*.



Squad Leader Clinic

MAN VERSUS TANK

By Jon Mishcon

Throughout World War II men, armed with hand weapons, were forced to engage attacking tanks at point-blank range. The task was daunting. Tanks were designed to be impervious to all rifle-caliber weapons and to shrapnel. Nonetheless, brave men were repeatedly able to overcome AFVs. I recall a photo of a much-decorated instructor showing combat troops how he was able to destroy multiple tanks in close action. This article is a brief overview of the inherent tools that individuals used to defeat tanks, and how they are reflected in *ASL*. (I'll deal with ranged light AT weapons in another article.)

First, a quick overview of how tanks cope with attacking infantry. The whole business of melee is generally bad for tankers, so they work to keep assaulting men at a distance. Naturally the tank's superior mobility and ranged fire give it the edge here. Once infantry can close, then the tank's foremost weakness is limited visibility. *ASL* reflects this by always giving the attacking infantry first "shot" in CC. If the tank can survive this CC, it has a few weapons it can bring to bear at close range (and some it can't). The main gun is simply worthless; once inside ten yards, you'd literally have to hit the target smack on with the round. Forget it. Any bow-mounted weapons (MGs or other) are almost equally valueless. Pivoting the tank is so cumbersome that almost any man can dart away. This leaves you with the turret-mounted MGs (AA, front and possibly rear and/or independent), "pistol ports", and close-defense weapons.

Turret-top AAMGs are a mixed blessing. They swivel rapidly and don't require any movement of the tank or turret. However, everyone who has seen

a John Wayne movie knows that the open turret is a natural target for every incoming grenade in creation. *ASL* nicely reflects this by allowing AAMGs to be used in CC, but penalizing the OT or CE AFV. Generally speaking, we never use AAMGs unless there is a Hero riding the tank.

Coaxial, rear and independent turret MGs are the mainstay of tank defense. Some of the early Russian tanks have such potent MG fire that, if they survive the initial CC attack, the tank has a good chance of taking out the infantry. The reason that independent and rear turret MGs tended to disappear was that the value of such guns was far outweighed by the number of men required to man them. Tankers found it better just to keep their distance rather than carry those extra MGs.

Pistol ports are just what you might think. A small hole, usually with a sliding cover, that allows a crewman to fire a small-caliber weapon out of the tank. As one can imagine, the accuracy of such fire leaves a lot to be desired. The inherent weakness of the armor in that location was felt to be such a liability that pistol ports quickly faded from use.

Close defense weapons are the modification of the inherent smoke mortar that, in some tanks, allows the weapon to fire a short-range grenade. The shrapnel could be quite lethal to anyone around the tank. Naturally, the major drawback of this weapon was its lack of discrimination. Any supporting infantry suffered equally.

And the best defense a tank has is supporting infantry. By covering the tank's flanks, friendly infantry make any attempt to actually clamber onto the tank most difficult. *ASL* reflects this by modifying any CC against a tank that has infantry in close

support.

The last defense a tank has is simply to stay tough to hit. Staying in Motion may reduce the effectiveness of the tank's MGs, but certainly also makes it much tougher to catch. This also shows up in the *ASL* modifiers.

Having reviewed the tank's defenses, we turn to the attacking infantry. First, you have to get your infantry into the hex with the tank. Before any assault by infantry can be made, they must summon up the "moxie" to actually go toe-to-toe with the monster. *ASL* requires, quite properly, a Task Check for a "normal" infantry unit (not SMC, Fanatic or Berserk) to enter an AFV's location. This is often the greatest impediment to the destruction of the tank. Failure to pass the PAATC causes the infantry unit to become pinned. One must count on having half your infantry not make the PAATC.

Once in the hex, the attacking infantry is pretty much forced to use high explosives. Bottled gasoline ("Molotov cocktails") set a tank alight, but the inherent risk of carting around such a fragile device makes this a weapon of Home Guard units. Explosives can be mines, grenades, or even loose plastic explosive. The British actually issued cloth bags (the No. 82, of Gammon, grenade), equipped with an all-ways fuse, that could be used against tanks by stuffing it with plastic explosive. As every UK paratrooper was issued sticks of plastique, the bags became a kind of freeform antitank grenade.

The best kind of explosive against tanks is a shaped-charge device. This kind of weapon was reviewed in an earlier article (Vol. 24, No. 6) but, in brief, the shape of the explosive in the device focuses the force of the detonation in one direction.

Nice for blowing a hole through tough plate. It is also important to recall that once adjacent to the tank, the attackers need not try to overcome the thick frontal armor. Engine grills and drive wheels, as well as the lighter-armored flank and rear, were all fair game.

Keeping the explosives in contact with the tank surface was another problem. The Germans were able to jam mines under the turret of some early Russian models. The Germans also issued magnetic AT mines that combined the best aspects of shaped-charge weapons with a device that stuck to the target. The Japanese simply mounted explosives on a pole that was thrust against the side of a tank and detonated by the bearer. Often very tough on the guy carrying the pole. Most of the time there are plenty of nooks to wedge the explosive in place. *ASL* reflects this all by just saying that some assaults are failures.

The bottom line is that a single squad, with a morale of "7", has about 50% chance of passing the PAATC. Then, if it enters the hex, about a one-third chance of immobilizing or destroying the AFV. That means if you decide to run up to a tank in order to destroy it, the tank is going to get all the defensive fire it can muster, and then any surviving infantry squad has but a 16% chance of doing something nasty to the tank. How can players improve these odds?

What works best depends on the situation and the nationality. Our standard tricks include:

When in doubt, take cover. There is almost no reason why some squads shouldn't gain Concealment and the stay concealed. There are three benefits from this. First, the likelihood of Ambushing (A11.4) the tank is great; +3 drm is common for the tank and Concealed infantry has at least a -2 drm. If you do ambush the tank, that gives you an additional -1 DRM in CC. Failure to ambush still allows the infantry the first pop (A11.34). Second, any defensive fire is halved versus Concealed units, even in CC. Last, the tank is likely to concentrate its defensive fire against your leader. If three units are Concealed, picking out your leader(s) is tough. Don't forget you can take Assault Movement and remain concealed (if in cover).

Go with units most likely to win. Squads always over HS; "8" morale over "7"; assault engineers or fanatic if you got 'em. Recall that a fanatic squad is immune to PAATC; that means your kill chances just doubled. Always use more than one SMC

whenever possible. You may not have a fanatic squad, but you probably have two leaders. Using multiple SMC can be critical. A single leader has no better than one chance in 36 of affecting the tank. Two SMCs have a base chance of 1-in-12 and now leadership may be applied (A11.5 and A11.51). That means a -2 leader with a hero has a better than 40% chance of whacking the AFV—and no PAATC.

Street-fighting when there is no street! Every player using tanks works hard to avoid those neat traps where there is a road with buildings on both sides. Many maneuver attempts to get around these pinch points force the tank in VBM. Every AFV attacked in VBM is automatically subject to the penalties of street-fighting if attacked by infantry in the hex being bypassed (A11.8). Look closely at those edge hexes.

Smoke 'em if you got 'em. If you must run up to a tank, then you must do so with a number of units. Often the tank commander will allow the first squad to run up in order to fire upon any leaders or Concealed units held back. If you do get adjacent, always try for smoke. Smoke not only impedes the tank's defensive fire, but may allow Concealed units to move adjacent without loss of Concealment. This tactic really works well for those units that have a smoke dr of "2" or more.

Give them the wave. Human wave attacks for the Russians (and Banzai charges for the Japanese) are frequently overlooked. The 8MF is nice, but immunity to PAATC is nicer (A25.231).

Rule B13.7 makes it pretty clear that there is no reason not to declare ATMM use for every CC attack in which their use is allowed. I always shudder whenever I see German players forget to call for their use in late-war scenarios.

Last ditch. If it looks like the attacker is going to try and slip off the map, the defender is well advised to sit on the exit hex. Try and dig foxholes in the open alongside obstacles near the exit edge. Better yet, if the exit is a road, you plant yourself right on it. The gambit here is the forced Overrun. If the exit is a road, then the attacker must plan to spend 25% of his MP just to overrun you. If the overrun doesn't affect you, then you get a reaction shot.

Players will find a new scenario ("Soldiers of Destruction") on the insert that will allow them to try some of the ideas noted herein. The next installment will carry our thoughts on it, as usual. By then, you'll have had plenty of opportunities to test our

suggestions for facing down tanks with soldiers.



This note continues the series of commentaries in the Clinic pertaining to the scenarios published with the previous installment of this column (Vol. 25, No. 3 in this case). The intent is to provide the *ASL* player with one of numerous possibilities for defensive setup, attacker initial placement, and basic tactical approaches for both. Having had several months to examine your own approaches to our Clinic scenarios, the reader can now compare his findings with our summation.

After Action Report— First Crisis at AG North

GERMAN: In 4I4, facing H4 and H3: one SPW 251/1 with 37L ATG and crew, the 8-1 leader, two 4-6-7 squads, one LMG and one DC. In hex 5Q6, facing R5/R6: another SPW 251/1, the 9-1, two squads with LMG and DC. Place one PzKpW III G in 4O9 (facing P8/P9), one in 4Q3 (with armor leader, facing R2/R3) and one in 4Q4 (R3/R4).

RUSSIAN: All vehicles to enter line abreast across most of the east edge of Board 4.

ATTACKER'S TACTICS: Moving the tanks, without infantry support, into the face of combined German infantry, guns and tanks is almost sure disaster. I don't care how strong you think you are, the Germans will chew up the Russians. Take your time. Move up that infantry. Look for isolated enemy tanks or guns that you can confront with your KVs. Don't forget the Commissar (A25.22) and Human Wave rules. You don't have to commit to exiting off Board 4 or 5 till you see his AA gun unlimbered. When you do, make your run for the exit first send off an infantry assault to draw fire. Then trundle forward the KVs. Last, send out the BT-7s.

DEFENDER'S TACTICS: I like to drop the AA gun in 4C7. Unlimber ASAP. You can't take a chance he'll move to overwhelm your best gun. Leaders get the DCs. Try to knock out a T-26S quickly. That may force him to tie up another tank for platoon movement. Finally, if he stays in motion, don't be afraid to move right up with your tanks and shoot to immobilize his.



ASL Annual '89

\$10 Retail

Billed "for Squad Leader Enthusiasts", this 64-page magazine is loaded with articles and historical data relating strictly to the *Squad Leader* and *Advanced Squad Leader* game systems. It features 18 scenarios—meaning, 18 different games that can be played by owners of *SL/ASL*. The many articles offer insights for play and food for thought; the **ASL Annual '89** may become the Genesis of the *SL/ASL* bible. Unencumbered with outside advertising, the **ASL Annual '89** is the first in a yearly series of "guides" no serious *SL/ASL* gamer should be without.

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WITH ROMMEL (AND MONTY) IN THE DESERT

A Study of Axis and Allied Play in PAA

By Martin Shaw

To the gamer who has little knowledge of desert warfare circa 1941, *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* is apt to be a little bewildering. Even to those experienced gamers whose historical knowledge is more complete, the first encounter with a wargame boasting units with movement factors of 50 or 60 must be disconcerting, perhaps even discouraging. It would be a great shame, however, if any such gamer allowed himself to be deterred from further investigation, for *PAA* is one of the most exciting and intriguing games yet to appear on the market.

As many will have observed already, I have borrowed the title for this article from Heinz Schmidt's excellent book (*With Rommel in the Desert*). *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* rewards background reading. Like Rommel, you can profit from the principle of mass, outflanking maneuvers, the destruction of enemy armor when it is employed piecemeal, and even learn to appreciate the critical role of supplies and how important it is never to be distracted from your main goal. We will take up all these points again shortly.

Having now read a little of the desert war, you study the rules manual. Which rules to play? I always advise the beginner to start out with only the basic rules and leave the optional ones until later. This article, however, assumes that all optional rules are in play (with the exception of 19.4—Reaction Movement). I would particularly recommend the use of the Italian Infantry Reliability rule (19.5) for newcomers, noting that from the very outset Italian infantry may not attack if stacked alone unless they are in Attack or Maximum Attack Supply.

The layout of the *PAA* mapboard is first-class, but there is one "Player aid" missing—a road-distance chart. I have supplied one below that I have always found invaluable in play, and it will save the reader much laborious counting of hexes.

AXIS PLAY

So we come to peer over Rommel's shoulder and see what the prospects are for the German player in *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA*. Your objective, as that German player, is nothing less than a "Decisive Victory", the capture of Alexandria and the destruction of the Allied army. For a skillful player, this is by no means a far-fetched goal.

Victory Conditions in most games are all about numbers, but you need not concern yourself too much with these, although you might like to know the relative combat strength points of the opposing armies. The Axis build up to 66 SP by Turn 10 (January 1942), with 89 SP all told (assuming no optional reinforcements are incorporated and the Malta invasion is not attempted). The Allied player can amass 81 SP by Turn 10, assuming—realistically—that two 3-50 (armor) units are left in the Cadre Box throughout, that his "Option A" reinforcements are included on Turn 8, and that Replacements are always sufficient to meet losses. In reality, Allied losses always outweigh replacements available, so that the relative figures of 66 and 81 are liable to be much closer—the Axis figure often surpassing the Allied total before Turn 10, which is why a seizure of Tobruk in 1941 must be followed by a vigorous pursuit of the Allied army back to their El Alamein positions. By game end, still on the false assumption that replacements meet battlefield losses,

and that no further optional reinforcements are drawn in, the Allies can accumulate a theoretical total of 123. Comparing this to the Axis end game total, you will see that the Axis player commences the game already in possession of a "Marginal Victory", but that if the Allies retain Tobruk throughout (or over 21 player turns—see Rule 18.0), the game is a draw.

What are the advantages inherent when in command of the famed Afrika Korps? Unlike the Allied player, you are not burdened by Command Control problems; you can move all of your units and attack most of the time, and those that can not attack (usually the Italian infantry) can be used to form an effective screen on the flank. Throughout most of the game, you possess the largest individual units on the board—the invaluable 4-60s. Massed together, these have tremendous punch and can counterattack with devastating force (at four times their face value, unlike Allied brigades which strike back at only twice their SP). You also have the advantage of possessing the weakest units on the board: the Italian 1-40 infantry. These units are ideal for staffing the front line, so that any Allied counter-attack, when it comes, bites first into cheap, easily replaced units while the German regiments wait behind the front line, ready to lash out at the 8th Army spearheads.

However, the most decisive advantage available to the Axis player is that German units, unlike Allied (or for that matter, Italian) formations, may deliberately put themselves out of supply. This enables individual German regiments at a critical moment to hook widely round Allied positions to interrupt their supply lines, often throwing large numbers of Allied units out of supply.

A good example of this is provided in Figure 1. In this promising position, in order to surround Tobruk and to forestall the Allied forces massing to the east from launching a damaging counterattack, the Axis player dispatches the 2-60 regiment from hex 1518 and, making full use of what tracks are available, hooks it around to hex 1338, between Sidi Barrani and Matruh at a cost of 57 Movement Points; now, once Tobruk is sealed in, every Allied unit on the board (excepting those few in Tobruk, Bardia and the Alexandria Base) will find itself cut off from its supply source. The two 2-50 brigades behind the escarpment of hex 1727, whose defense

strength—unsupplied during the upcoming combat phase—will be reduced to a factor of "2", form the target for the overwhelming Axis attack that seals off Tobruk. Note too that in the subsequent Allied turn, the units in Bardia will not be able to sortie, since such a move would place them instantly out of supply (only units directly in the Bardia hex are in General Supply).

So much for the natural advantages accruing to the Axis player; what of fighting techniques that seek to maximize these advantages? It behooves the German player to keep his largest units together, in fact to build up the most powerful stacks possible so as to increase his chances of implementing overrun attacks. Bear in mind that a compilation of two 4-60 units and a 3-60, advancing in General Supply only, has an attack strength of "6" (fractions rounded up as per 8.32), sufficient to overrun a lone 2-50 Allied brigade which may have thought itself protecting adequately a vital flank. In his initial set-up, the German player will place the truck and supply units in the easternmost hex of El Aghelia (0703)—these pieces don't count towards stacking limits remember—and on top of them the three most potent units available at the start: 4-60, 3-60, 3-40. By the end of his second turn, the Axis player will have created a stack of the 4-60 and two 3-60s; and by the end of the third turn, he'll have a stack of two 4-60s and a 3-60 . . . the best possible. My advice is to keep such important units as close to the coast as possible where they can scarcely be outflanked. When not actually involved in combat, treat them as Rommel did his heavy units—hold them behind the front as a mobile reserve. Always keep it in mind that if the Allies succeed in cutting the German infantry off from their critical supply sources, the resulting situation for you will be critical indeed.

Material losses as a result of combat are inevitable, but the Axis player must consider carefully which units can best afford to be damaged or lost. Whilst German infantry and Italian armor cannot possibly be replaced until near the end of the game, Replacement points are readily available for Italian infantry and German armor. A sound tactic is to try and advance after combat stacks of German armor or Italian infantry so as to prevent stacks of German infantry or Italian armor, which remain

Road-Distance Chart

	0702	1906	2319	1925	1730	1634	1440	1351
0702	XX	15	31	40	46	53	60	72
1906	15	XX	16	25	31	38	45	57
2319	31	16	XX	09	15	22	29	41
1925	40	25	09	XX	06	13	20	32
1730	46	31	15	06	XX	07	14	26
1634	53	38	22	13	07	XX	07	19
1440	60	45	29	20	14	07	XX	12
1351	72	57	41	32	26	19	12	XX

0702—El Aghelia
1906—Bengasi
2319—Derna
1925—Tobruk
1730—Bardia
1634—Sidi Barrani
1440—Matruh
1351—Alexandria

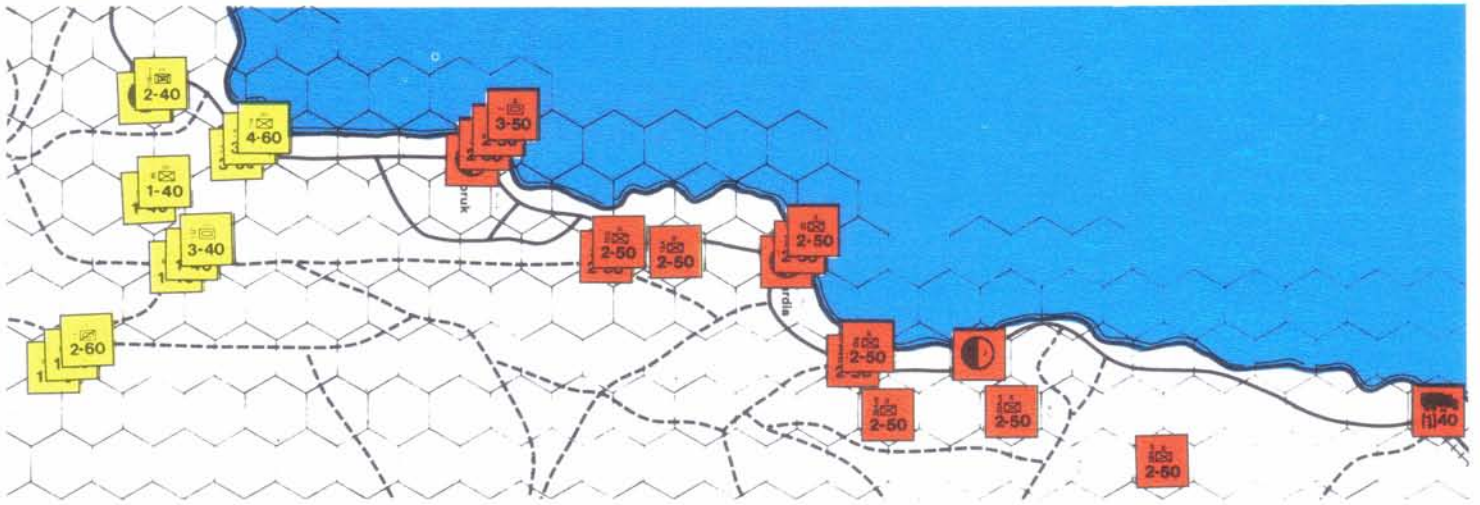


Figure 1: Positions at the start of Axis Turn 3.

behind in their original hexes and which may in fact have provided much of the firepower for the attack, from being counterattacked during the upcoming Allied turn.

A final but very important tactic is the use of the Italian infantry to provide a flanking or front-line screen. As I mentioned earlier (and as was their role historically), such units can shield heavier Axis units from damage by absorbing the brunt of any Allied attack. The procedure for setting up such a screen is simple. Take note first of the largest British stack on the board as this will determine the strength of the individual stacks in your screen. For example, an Allied composition of a 3-50 and two 2-50s will have an attack strength, in General Supply, of "4"—enough to overrun a solitary 1-40, but not two such units stacked together. Consider next the proximity of Allied supply units and whether there is the possibility of your being overrun by brigades in attack supply. If you choose your ground carefully, you will be able to economize on the forces used in such screens and create long flanks that cannot possibly be turned by Allied units (they may never deliberately place themselves out of supply).

Let us turn now to a brief discussion of the general strategy the German player should employ. After you have played the game a few times, you may come to realize that Tobruk is the key to the whole campaign. If you can snatch the fortress during the first half of the game, then you must sweep on at once towards Alexandria to deliver the knock-out blow before the Allies have time to build up their numbers. In the days when I was encountering only soft Allied resistance at the club, I devised an ideal time-table for the Axis player, which ran as follows: during the opening turn you overrun the two supply units (usually those on 1406 and 1511) and place the starting Axis supply unit in the region of 2109. On Turn 2, after the Allied units have run back pell-mell to the safety of Halfaya Pass (1530-1531), invest Tobruk. By this, I mean actually enter the Fort-Controlled hexes. This is an important tactic, as clear possession of all three is a prerequisite for launching a successful attack against Tobruk itself. If you do not occupy the Fort-Controlled hexes when you have the chance, the Allied player may move forces out of Tobruk to lay claim to one of them simply to delay your assault on the port itself by a turn. You will, of course, not be able by the second turn to place such forces against Tobruk as can launch an adequate assault against it; so you need only place there sufficient numbers to ward off any Allied counterattack. For example, if the Allies have seven SP in Tobruk, move 15 Axis SP into the three Fort-Controlled hexes, preventing the permissible Allied counterattack from attaining even the "0" column on the CRT.

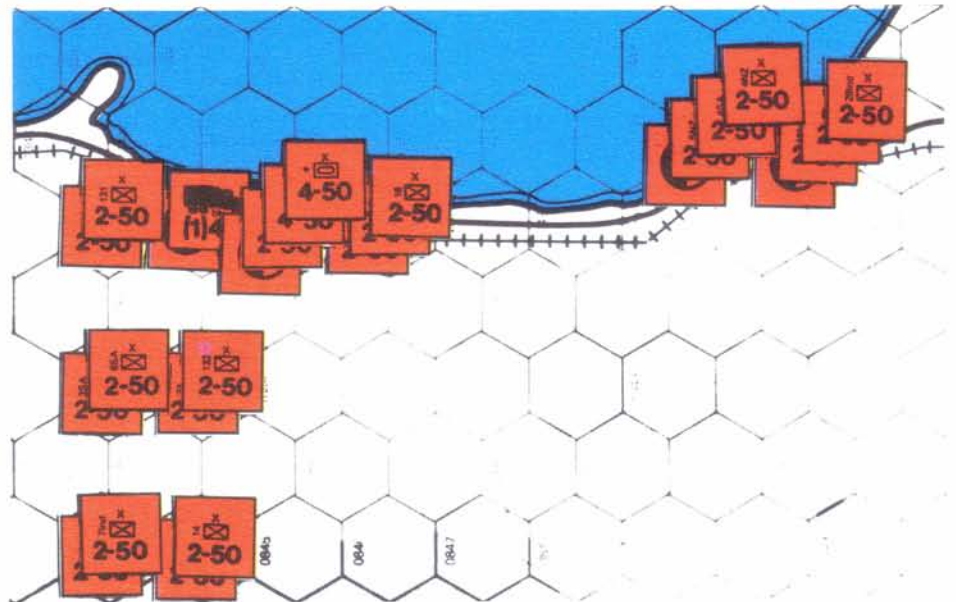
On Turn 3, while holding Tobruk besieged and accumulating sufficient strength and supply to enable the fort to be stormed, the Axis formations push on to the pass. On the fourth turn, Tobruk is attacked. By expending a supply unit to grant Maximum Attack Supply, the Axis can achieve an overall strength of 40 (two 3-50, 2-50 quintupled), yielding a 66% chance of success outright. If successful, the Axis player consolidates around Tobruk on the following turns and grounds ten Italian SP to create the second truck he will need to carry his supply units forward to the El Alamein battlefield. Having beaten off the inevitable Allied counterattack over turns 6-8, and during the following two turns having driven the Allies out of Bardia and through Halfaya Pass, the Axis player pursues them towards Alexandria to find the enemy blocking his path in the region of El Alamein (loosely this refers to any position that has as its northern boundary the road between Matruh and El Alamein).

Although the El Alamein position may be a tough nut to crack, Allied dispositions there are likely to be truly solid only if they are deploying in the second half of this game. In any case, the Allied player may be so dismayed by his long retreat and disoriented by the unfamiliar terrain that he will set up his defenses erroneously, as is the case in Figure 2 where the Allied player has been pushed beyond Matruh as early as Game Turn 9. A largely intact Afrika Korps is in pursuit with its spearhead on Sidi Barrani (1634) along with a supply unit, where the Allies made a rearguard stand on the previous turn.

But this defensive set-up, on the surface solid, reveals several mistakes. There is no need to place Allied units in the rough, where they are liable to find themselves out of supply. Allied units in reserve (for example, those on 1245 and 1246) should be kept in the Alexandria Home Base where they can form a proper mobile reserve. Stacked elsewhere, they are liable to find themselves immobilized by Command Control problems and left behind when the defense is forced to shift backwards. But the worst error the Allied player has made is that he has put up a screen of double 2-50 stacks, imagining that this is sufficient for them to be immune to overruns, when in fact they can more readily be assaulted during the upcoming Combat Phase by Axis units in General Supply. The prevalence of attacks in General Supply incidentally are what distinguish the "El Alamein Positions" from any others on the board since, because supply units can only be advanced along the coastal road, any attacks launched from south of hexrow 1000 find themselves more than eight hexes from the nearest supply unit.

The Axis player duly profits from the poor dispositions of the Allied forces. The double 2-50s on 1243 are dislodged by Afrika Korps elements moving up to hexes 1342, 1242 and 1143—with the latter set to advance after combat in accordance with the principles laid down earlier in screening off precious Italian armor and German infantry with blocks of German armor and/or Italian infantry—especially

Figure 2: "El Alamein" Position at end of Allied Turn 9.



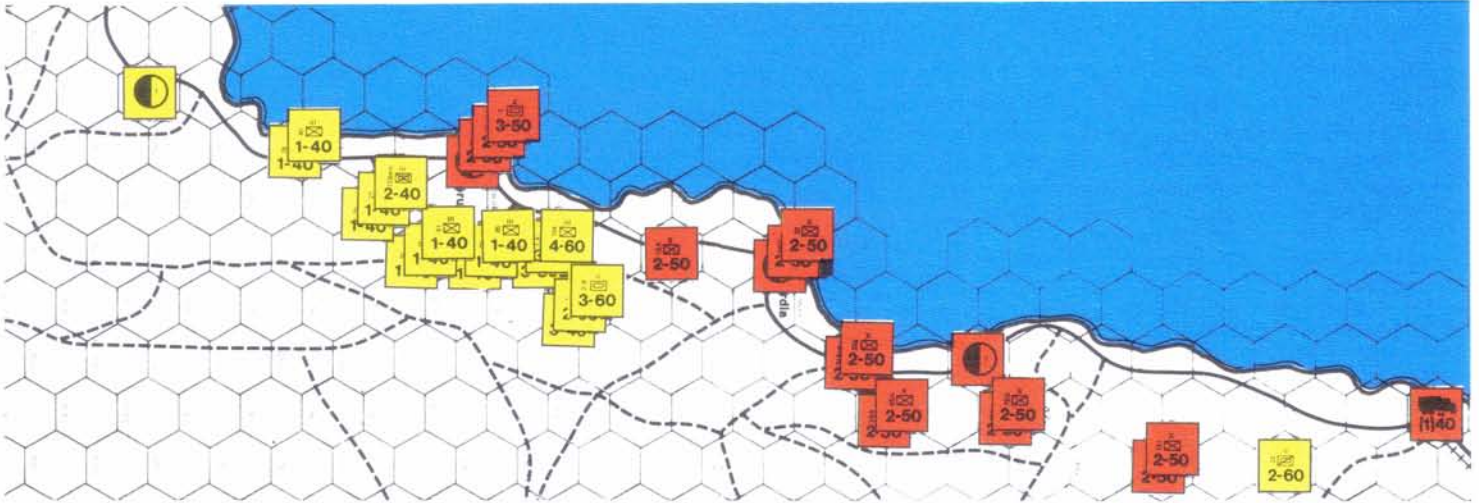


Figure 3: Positions at start of Allied Turn 4.

during a battle of attrition such as this at El Alamein. The double 2-50 stack at 1043 incurs a similar fate. The Axis player completes his move by running a 2-60/1-40 combination onto the rough at hex 08141. Of course, the Axis player ignores the Allied units stranded—now that they are out of supply, they will not be able to move, attack or interfere in any way with the advance upon Alexandria. Although the German offensive is being undertaken this turn in General Supply, if the Allied units haven't given ground by the end of the following turn, the assault can be renewed in Attack or Maximum Attack Supply.

In the event the Axis attacks on this turn have achieved all their objectives and the Allied player was obliged to withdraw closer to the El Alamein station, the next turn the Axis can dislodge the Allies and force them to capitulate. Such is the dream plan for the Axis player in *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA*. However, it is not always so easy.

ALLIED PLAY

It can be easily deduced from all that I have discussed thus far that commanding the Allied armies is an extremely difficult task in this game. But those would-be Montgomerys who have read the foregoing should at least have an adequate view of their opponent's strengths and weaknesses. The prime objective of the Allied player is to hold on to Tobruk. For as long as possible. I will explain in more detail how this might be accomplished shortly.

Figure 4: Positions at end of Allied Movement Phase, Turn 2.



As a secondary objective, the Allied player should have in view the destruction of those units which the German can least easily replace—the German infantry and Italian armor. The destruction or isolation of the 4-60 units in particular can break the back of the Afrika Korps.

Luckily the Axis player does not hold all the best cards in *PAA*. The Allied player enjoys the advantage of possessing two supply termini: the Alexandria Home Base and Tobruk. This then merely underscores the importance of Tobruk. Even if the units around it are cut off from Alexandria, they can still draw supply from the coastal fortress. This implies that the Tobruk defenses may be something more formidable than merely units stacked in the fort hex itself (1925).

Note that units (even supply) may be dispatched the more quickly to the front along the railroad to Matruh, and by sea lanes to the ports of Bardia and Tobruk. You will find sea movement playing a particularly important role in reinforcing the garrison at Tobruk, and therefore it behooves you by the end of each turn to ensure that you are deploying the best combination of available units in the Alexandria port hex ready for sea transport the next turn.

There is always a lot of talk about the Allies enjoying a numerical superiority over the Axis in this game. Given that your units are both inherently slower and weaker than most of the enemy units on the board, and bearing in mind the problems you may have with Command Control, my advice is to treat this notion of numerical superiority with some scepticism. It is not a bad policy to concentrate throughout the first two-thirds of the game on

minimizing losses and building up large reserves. By augmenting units as soon as permissible, you should build up one potent stack of units that obliges the Axis player to field stronger and ever stronger stacks in his front line screen, drawing units away from his attacks elsewhere.

In the opening phase of the game, when the German forces break into Cyrenacia, the British player will be thrown onto the defensive. It makes sense at this stage to place the bulk of your units inside forts and behind escarpment hexsides. Note particularly the continuous line of escarpments between Tobruk and Bardia, and between Bardia and Sidi Barrani. You will soon find yourself being compelled to deliver a counterstroke when it is finally a question of relieving Tobruk or of destroying sufficient Italian infantry along the front to prevent the Axis player from grounding Italian forces to procure his second truck, or even to make small gains that can threaten the Axis flank south of Tobruk. During these limited offensive operations, as was the case with the Axis player and his 4-60s, you should try and shield your 3-50s from damaging counterattacks. Remember that only these 3-50 units may later be augmented into the highly useful 4-50 and 5-50 formations.

The cornerstone of Allied strategy is the retention of Tobruk. The most obvious means of doing this is by garrisoning the fort hex as heavily as possible, moving in 3-50 armor units as soon as they become available. If Tobruk becomes surrounded early in the game and the Axis occupy the three Fort-Controlled hexes, this is unlikely to succeed however. Consider the chart below:

Table of Comparative Axis and Allied Strength at Tobruk:

Turn	3	4	5	6
Allies (x5)	35	40	45	45
Axis (x2)	43	49	50	53
Chance of Axis Success	33%	66%	—	—

This chart assumes that the strongest units available are employed by each side and that Allied units are quintupled by the fort hex and Axis units are double by the expenditure of a supply unit (except in hex 1824 where the escarpment hexside reduces the assaulting units to their usual strength). From the Allied point of view, the above is useful because it indicates that Turn 4 is the moment of greatest danger and preparations should be made accordingly. Unfortunately, the chart is also somewhat misleading because it does not take into account the possibility of some of the 3-50 units that need to be conveyed into Tobruk being held up elsewhere by Command Control problems and the garrison being dangerously weakened thereby. Secondly, the chart only deals with the possibility of an outright Axis victory. In reality, the Axis player may assault Tobruk two or three times in a row with the aim in mind of eliminating part of the garrison each time and hoping that reinforcing units (which may be coming by sea now) are frozen by Command Control restraints in the Bardia or Alexandria ports.

The surest means of safeguarding Tobruk lies in the fact of physically occupying one of the Fort-Controlled hexes (usually 1825). This may be achieved either by piling up a strong group there behind the escarpment hexside (which could even include some of the armor originally intended for Tobruk) or by expending a supply unit in Tobruk to enable part of the garrison to blast their way into one the hexes. This last points up the importance of always keeping a supply unit in Tobruk; such an attack can yield the additional bonus of destroying one of the larger German units (even the destruction of one 3-60 German armor unit, which may not be replaced until the end of Turn 5 can seriously weaken the Axis drive on Tobruk). An example of such a breakout is found in my Figure 3, which is actually a continuation of the sample game discussed in Figure 1.

The Axis player (in this hypothetical game) has completed his last turn by destroying the double 2-50s on hex 1727, but without advancing after combat. Suffering from no critical control problems, the Allied riposte is to shift the 3-50 and two 2-50s from Tobruk into hex 1825 and to then convoy into the fort behind them the 3-50 from Alexandria and a 2-50 from Bardia. By expending the supply unit in the fort, the former Tobruk garrison attacks the triple 1-40 Italian infantry group behind the escarpment on 1725, giving them an Attack Superiority of "4"—sufficient to guarantee the capture of 1725 (which a 2-50 duly occupies), abruptly cutting off from their supply source the mighty Axis stacks in 1726 and 1626. The tables have been turned!

The Allies round off their turn by moving the supply unit from the Alexandria Home Base along the rail line to Matruh, restoring supply to the front line through the supply unit on hex 1533, which reactivates as it is once more within 20 hexes of the nearest supply unit (Matruh), which is in turn within 20 hexes of the supply terminus at Alexandria.

By careful use of your supply units, and by doing everything possible to hold Tobruk, the Allied player has a fair chance of defeating the Axis in *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA*. Keep in mind a few simple precepts, and be prepared to take advantage of any errors Rommel may make. As for instance, in the following.

A SAMPLE GAME

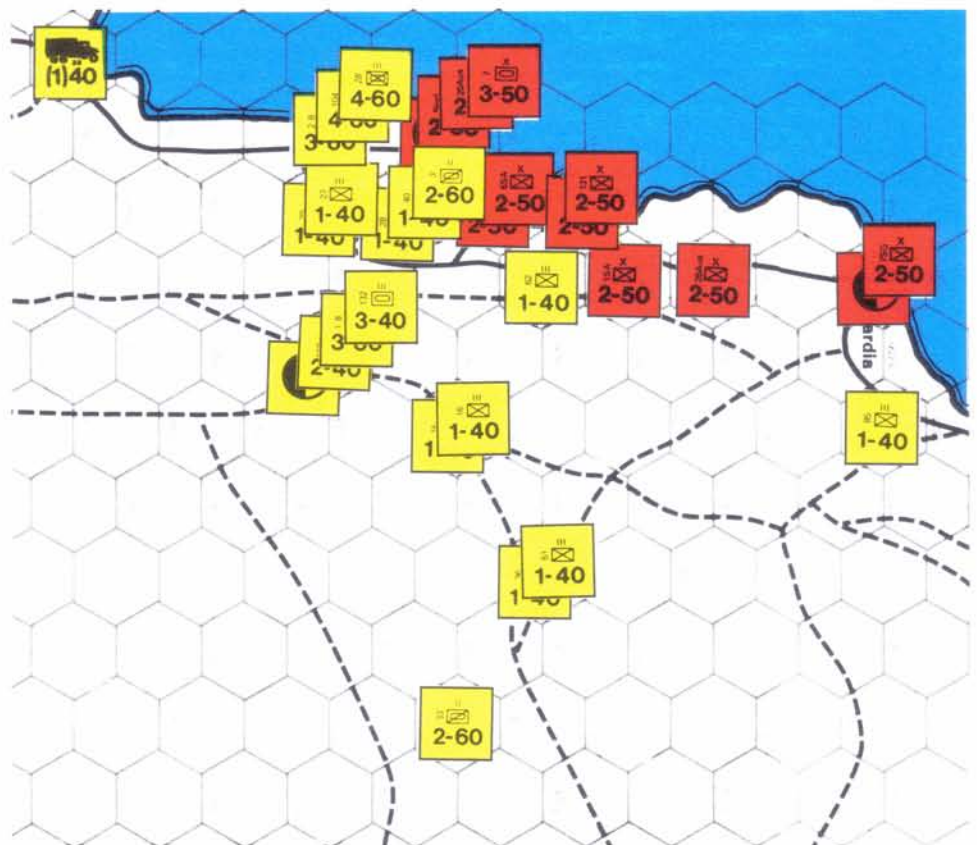
I want to focus on the opening Allied moves in *PAA* which might lead to some interesting scenes. A contrived "sample" game serves best to make my points. Random Command Control restraints

will always throw up different problems for the Allied player at the very start of the game, but it is worth looking at what could be achieved under optimum conditions. Most of the British set-up is pre-determined and can but wait the German cyclone. The British player deploys his opening reserves in Alexandria as follows: three 2-50s in 1350; three 2-50s in 1351; and two 2-50s in 1352. By the law of averages, at least one of these hexes will be affected by Command Control problems. It best suits the Allied player if that hex is 1352; let us assume it is so (since in a sample game, we can assume anything we want).

After glancing at the Axis set-up in the El Agheila Home Base and noting the size of his most powerful stack (which ought to have a combat factor of "10") in order to gauge its overrun potential, the Allied player moves his forces as follows. The single units from hexes 1807 and 0803 fall back onto the supply unit at 1511; the unit from Tobruk moves up to 1911; the one from 1725 to 1913. Two of the units starting on 1350 reach 2110 (expending all 50 movement points), the other advancing to 1815. The three units starting in 1351 make up the screen to the south by deploying on hexes 1617, 1520 and 1523. The truck races up from Matruh to cover the supply unit in hex 2111. The advantages of these moves are that no units may be overrun. Although the supply unit on hex 1406 is freely conceded, the Axis forces will have to fight for possession of the dump at 1511. Meantime, the truck has moved up onto the supply unit at 2111, ready to carry it away next turn, and the two units on hex 2110 adequately screen it from interference.

Radical alternatives (such as a plan to move three units onto the supply at 1406) are less likely to succeed because they concede too many gaps and weak points elsewhere. Random Command Control constraints however will always force the Allied player to seek alternative placements, and one of these initial moves is worth considering since it demonstrates what hidden resources there are on the board for the Allies.

Figure 5: Positions at end of Axis Turn 3.



Suppose that instead of the two units at 1352, it is the westernmost Allied unit on 0803 that must be flipped over for lack of command. Now the Allied player moves his units as follows: the one from 1807 advances to 0704; from 1925 to 1912; from 1725 to 1511. Of the three units starting on 1350, two move up to the supply dump at 2111, and the third onto 1914. The five units from 1351 and 1352 deploy themselves in hexes 1716, 1617, 1519, 1521 and 1523. The truck advances onto the supply unit at 2111. The curious looking deployment of Allied 2-50s on hexes 0803 and 0704 is explained by the under-appreciated rule 9.22 ("an overrun may not be executed from any hex which is controlled by enemy units in two or more hexes") which prohibits the powerful Axis stack from overrunning from its starting hex (0703). Rather, it must first reverse away and hook round on the track south of El Agheila to overrun both units before the road can be cleared, requiring in the process the expenditure of 40 movement points, which exhausts the capability of the 3-40 component in the stack. The 4-60 and 3-60, which are still capable of movement, haven't enough left to be able to overrun anything else. Nor can the Axis player muster sufficient combat strength to achieve anything other than securing the supply in 1511. This is precisely the sort of opportunity to disrupt Axis plans that the British player must be constantly on the watch for; each such discomfit, each delay, is another step towards the derailling of the entire Axis game plan and eventual Allied victory.

On his second turn, as he evacuates Cyrenacia, it is vital that the Allied player leave behind him a rearguard road-block on one of the rough hexes west of Derna. The usual choice is 2217. With the nearest Axis supply unit normally no further east than 2109, a single 2-50 on 2217, doubled in defense, will find itself immune from German units attempting to overrun it in General Supply. Should the German supply unit be any closer, then place two 2-50s together in the rough to create the block. The remaining Allied units should retreat behind the safety of the line of escarpments and Fort-Controlled hexes between Tobruk and Bardia (a typical result

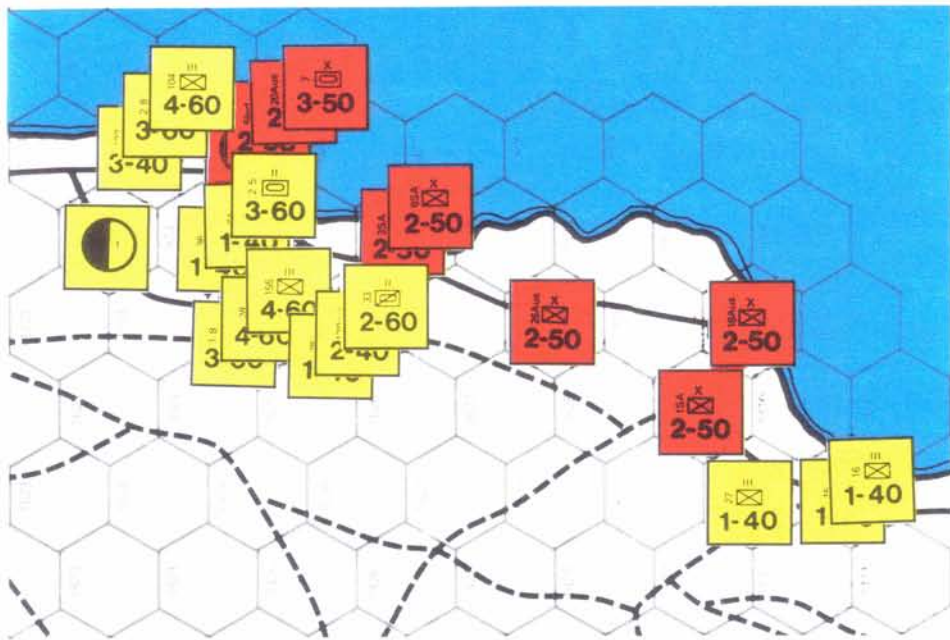


Figure 6: Positions at end of Axis Turn 4.

of such moves is shown in Figure 4). The supply unit at Mechili has been voluntarily destroyed.

On no account should the Allied player be tempted into making a strong rearguard stand in Cyrenacia on his second turn. Consider the following admonitory example. Seeing that the Axis columns overran but failed to capture intact the supply unit at 1511, and that the largest Axis stack had a face-strength of only "9" (4-60, 3-60, 2-40), the Allied player imagined that he could linger another turn in Cyrenacia to save from destruction two units (on hexes 1915 and 1716) which, along with a stack in Alexandria port hex, had been immobilized by Command Control. Accordingly, he added another 2-50 unit to each of those flipped over in 1915 and 1716, and placed a single 2-50 in each for the following hexes: 2015, 1518, 1521, 1524 and 2317. A 2-50 brigade on 1352 remained there to be withdrawn at the end of the turn, along with a unit constructed from replacement points. The truck retired to Matruh as the supply units at 2111 and 1915 were voluntarily destroyed. Tobruk remained empty but for a supply unit.

The Allied player here has considered that where the largest Axis stack (2110) is in Attack Supply, it cannot overrun the double 2-50 stacks within reach, and that where 2-50s are stacked alone and not doubled in defense, Axis units cannot reach them in General Supply. The Allied player imagines that he is safe from harm . . . and yet a real disaster is in the offing. The Axis player carries out a lethal attacking maneuver by moving the German truck and its supply unit up to hex 1410. The new positioning of this supply dump enables the large German stack to reach hex 1517 still in General Supply, and from there to overrun successfully a 2-50 at 1518. Having expended 40 movement points, the Italian 2-40 halts here, the German units moving through the gap they have created to capture Tobruk unopposed and its supply dump. Tobruk is lost and the bulk of the Allied army is stranded in the middle of nowhere.

Be warned! Provided that the Allies create the simple road-block suggested in Figure 4, the Axis player will be forced to content himself with doing no more than destroying that block. The Allied player should never try to do more, and must consolidate his hold on the line of escarpment hexes between Tobruk and Bardia (often on the third turn). The Axis player is now faced with the problem of how best to close in on Tobruk with his nearest supply unit at 2316 to the west of Derna (an impor-

tant legacy of that roadblock). His solution to this dilemma appears in Figure 5.

Note that the units investing Tobruk from hexes 1924 and 1824 deliver an ineffectual attack on the fort hex, but having a face strength of "15" ward off the permissible Allied counterattack at double-strength (14). The solitary Italian infantry unit on hex 1726 throws out a useful ZoC to prevent Allied troop movements between hexes 1825, 1826 and 1727. On account of intervening escarpment hexes, the Italian infantry cannot be overrun by Allied stacks except from hex 1626, hence the Italian infantry placed on 1530 to forestall the 3-50/2-50 stack in Alexandria from executing a possible overrun receiving Attack Supply from the supply unit in Bardia.

On his own fourth turn, the Allied player contents himself with expending the supply unit in Bardia to generate the Maximum Attack Supply necessary to wipe out the 1-40s on hexes 1530 and 1726, and the armor-infantry group in 1824 (the latter achieved with a die roll result of "1"). Command Control constraints prevent the 3-50 and 2-50 and supply unit in Alexandria from moving this turn, and the reinforcements add another 3-50 to this pile. Replacements grant a 3-50 and a 2-50 that join the truck and supply unit in 1350.

Turn 4 has arrived for the Axis player, the turn on which—provided his forces are largely intact and he has free access to all of the Fort-Controlled hexes around Tobruk—he can usually deliver an attack on the fortress with a good chance of success (66%). One of the Fort-Controlled hexes is still occupied by the Allies however, and therefore he must postpone his assault on the port until he has completed the ring around it by seizing hex 1825, eliminating the two 2-50s stacked there (along with one more on 1727). Further, the Axis player intends to carry out the plan of putting out of supply the Allied forces between Tobruk and Bardia. The result of these maneuvers and attacks using Maximum Attack Supply can be seen in Figure 6.

The Axis deployment inside the Fort-Controlled hexes of Tobruk here is particularly interesting. Once again there is sufficient force to forestall the permissible Allied counterattack and, in fact, sufficient strength to forestall any Allied attack out of the fortress on the fifth turn, even were the Allies to exchange the infantry units there for armored ones and to expend the supply unit in order to have a crack at the very tempting target in 1924. The Attack Superiority gained by the Allies would then be no greater than "8", with a die roll of "1" or "2"

necessary to wipe out the 4-60 and 3-40; and if the 4-60 should survive, it counterattacks with an 83% chance of removing the two Allied armor units, making the fall of Tobruk a certainty. Given those circumstances, only a madman would initiate a sortie out of Tobruk itself. And an attack across the escarpment into hex 1824, on the other hand, will destroy the German armor unit there but not recapture the hex. The Axis ring around Tobruk is complete.

The two Italian infantry units have moved across Halfaya Pass to ensure that Allied supply cannot be fed back to the units stranded between Tobruk and Bardia. Note that the Allied brigades cannot leave Bardia (since they immediately place themselves out of supply) unless a supply line can be put through to them from the direction of Alexandria (by moving one unit out to occupy the Fort-Controlled hex 1630, linking hands with a friendly unit in the adjacent hex 1531—an underhanded Allied trick). The truck collects the supply unit from hex 2316 and moves it east to 1823, finishing its journey by retiring to 2007. Replacements are taken in and four Italian 1-40s are rebuilt, leaving only one 2-60 piece in the Cadre Box.

As a result of the foregoing turn, Tobruk has been sealed off from the rest of the Allied army; but providing that the Allied player can reinforce it next turn with two fresh 3-50s, the port will remain invulnerable for the time being. However, because of the possibility of Command Control restraints freezing units at either the Alexandria port or in Tobruk itself (remember, the 2-50s will have to be shipped out to make room for 3-50s coming in), there is already a 33% chance that he may find Tobruk too weakly garrisoned to resist an Axis assault on Turn 5.

I have already examined the Axis pursuit in the event of an early capture of Tobruk. Provided that Command Control does not intervene, and that the Allied player holds on to the coastal port, he should concentrate on building up the strength of his forces in readiness for a Crusader-style operation designed to relieve Tobruk—probably commencing around Turn 8. In the meantime, the British can start nibbling away at the Italian lines around Halfaya Pass, slowly pushing his train of supply units and fighting spearheads around to Bardia. He should take care, however, to always have two 3-50s parked in the Alexandria port hex, ready to be shipped to Tobruk; the German player will most likely now be launching a series of attacks on the fortress, not to capture it outright (since by now that will be impossible), but in the hopes of eliminating part of the garrison whose replacement Command Control might prevent. Such attacks will burn up the Axis supply units faster than they can be replenished; and it will be this factor, as much as the strength of the Allied relief operation, that will drive the Afrika Korps away from Tobruk, back into Cyrenacia.

The Allied pursuit towards El Agheila, when it comes, must be conducted with extreme care. It is easier in *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* than in any other game I know (except chess) to make fatal mistakes. Perhaps that accounts for the great richness and variety of the game, for not only must you study your own general plan of campaign, but you must constantly be on the lookout for tactical weaknesses in your opponent's actions—the exploitation of which may lead to unexpected breakthroughs. And, not only to breakthroughs, but to sometime sudden salvation in moments of great crisis. In this game of desert warfare you should never give up, as it is very easy for you to leave a seeming gap in your lines so your opponent can fatally overextend himself as he rushes through that gap. Victory in *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* will usually go to the bold, but rarely to the reckless. And that, in conclusion, sums up this intriguing, challenging game best of all.



BUT NOT ALONE

Two-Player ST. NAZAIRE

By Marcus Watney

1. INTRODUCTION

The British raid on the Normandie Dock at St. Nazaire surely ranks as one of the most thrilling feats of arms during the course of a war much marked by such acts of heroism. Yet, only one game simulates this classic commando action . . . and it's designed for solitaire play. To spread the pleasure, and the challenge, I offer a variant to Avalon Hill's *RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE*, converting it to a two-player game. Just make a few photocopies of the new German Log provided and institute the following changes to the rules as printed:

2. GAME PIECES

2.13 A German unit of any strength showing an Alarm Level is defined as a "Fresh" unit. Until Alarm Level 5, Fresh units are the *only* Stosstruppen that may move.

4. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

4.1 The German Activation Phase (4.5) is now the first phase of each turn, preceding "Gun/Searchlight Restoration & Searchlight Illumination". While the British player conducts Restoration & Illumination, Harbor Defense, Covering Fire and Dockside Defensive Fire, the German player must *pre-plot* the movement of all his Fresh (and only his Fresh) units. Pre-plotting must be completed before the British player undertakes Naval Movement.

5. PREPARE FOR PLAY

5.1 While the British player may still designate only two Landing Areas, these need not be 336 and 366. Any Area in which a Forced Landing (8.5) could be made may now be selected (EXC: 404 and 405) as a Designated landing Area. This information must be entered secretly on the British Log Sheet. The *Campbeltown* must still land in 111.

The British player may also secretly select new objectives, by reducing the VP value of any square Area objective(s) in Zones 2 and/or 3, and increasing the VP value of any square or hexagonal Area in Zones 1 and/or 4. (For example: the objective 222 could be reduced to three VP for destruction, and these three VP added to the 413.) The value of an existing objective may never be reduced below "1" nor any new objective increased by more than four VP. The new Victory Point values must be recorded on the British Log Sheet, but need not be revealed to the German player until the end of the game.

5.5 Add an identifying letter to each Stosstrupp of each of Alarm Level 1, 2 and 3, so that each Fresh counter of these levels can be uniquely identified by its own alpha-numeric code (i.e., 1A-1R, 2A-2U, 3A-3U). Do not mark the backs of units, nor Remnants, nor Alarm Level 4 and 5 units.

5.6 The German player should have a pencil, and ensure that he has sufficient copies of the German Log Sheet (which accompanies this article).

8. NAVAL MOVEMENT

8.1 *Two MF* to enter or leave any Designated Landing Area in the same Zone if that Landing Area is other than 336 or 366. A Forced Landing (8.5) may be attempted at a Designated Landing Area by any boat, even prior to 0152.

8.5 Instead of the requirement of a dr of "1-2", consult the Forced Landing Table below to determine if the attempt succeeds. (Forced Landings are never permitted in Areas 404 or 405.)

FORCED LANDING TABLE:

MF Available	dr to Succeed
3	1-4
2	1-3
1	1-2
0	1

8.7 **OBSTACLES:** Between 412 and 407, and between 304 and 313, lie underwater obstacles. Any boat in the Avant Port (Zone Z) must cross one of these to enter or leave Areas 403, 305 or 314. To do so, expend all of its movement allowance and roll on the Obstacle Table below. Failure leaves the boat where it began the Naval Movement Phase (i.e., in the Avant Port). Success allows it to reach or depart the selected Area and operate normally. Apply a -1 dr for each previous attempt by this boat to cross this particular obstacle—provided the boat has made no other move since the previous attempt(s). Apply a -1 dr if one of the Areas 403, 305 or 314 has been selected as the Designated Landing Area for this boat. (Players with faulty memories may record the number of attempts next to the boat's name on the British Log Sheet.)

OBSTACLE TABLE:

dr	Result
≤ 1	Success
2	Sinking (7.11)
3-6	Failure

9. GERMAN ACTIVATION

9.1 Note that the German Activation Phase now occurs at the very start of each turn, and pre-plotting must be conducted while the British player is resolving Restoration & Illumination and any Naval Attacks. Pre-plotting must be completed before the British player executes the Naval Movement Phase.

9.3 Whenever a *new* Alarm Level is reached, the German Movement marker is immediately placed on the Movement Track on the space corresponding to this new Alarm Level (at the start of the game, place the marker on the first space, labelled "1"). Once per turn, the German player may *select* the Zone in which a Stosstruppen of known strength is to activate; he rolls only a Selection DR to determine the Area placed in. Each time this option is exercised, the German Movement marker is moved one space lower on the track. When the marker leaves the track, the option is lost until a new Alarm Level is reached. Selection opportunities are not "carried over" from Alarm Level to Alarm Level; whenever a new Alarm Level is reached, unused opportunities are lost.

9.4 The German player now exercises the right to apply this rule or not as he may wish. It is no longer automatic.

10. LAND MOVEMENT

10.2 Ignore the existing rule. All Stosstruppen (including Remnants) have a Movement Factor of "3" but, at Alarm Levels 1-4, *only* "Fresh" units (2.13 above) and Armored Cars may move. Neither Stosstruppen which have been flipped over nor Remnants may move until Alarm Level 5 is reached. If Consolidation (10.6) reintroduces a Fresh Stosstruppen, that unit may again move and at the next Restoration & Illumination Phase will require pre-plotting as if it had just been activated.

10.3 A German unit entering any Area occupied by British Commandos must stop and is automatically "pinned" (10.7 below). If a German unit has insufficient MF to enter a pre-plotted Area because of the presence of Commandos therein, the unit is instead "ambushed" and is immediately eliminated. If a German unit attempts to enter an Over-Water Area that no longer exists, it suffers one casualty and is "pinned" in the previous Area it was ordered to enter. The +1 MF cost to enter an enemy-occupied Area does not apply when leaving a Holding Zone.

Example of a correctly filled-out German Log Sheet, as of the end of the 0140 Turn:

		Raid on St. Nazaire German Log														
		TIME														
UNIT		0128			0134			0140			0146			0152		
IE		439			440	432	447	448	343	332						
II		439			440	432	447	431	425	428	427	321		310	315	
IK		155			143	135	126	115	ELIMINATED							
IM		408			409	413		PINNED								
IP		494	492	261	262	255	256	207	245	232	226	222				
IB					403	404	405	409	415		422			425		
ID					365	212										
IF					233											
IO					155			143	ELIMINATED							
IL								438	ELIMINATED							
IN								471	472	470	468	458	459	448	343	320
IQ								155			143	256	253			

10.4 Ignore the existing rule. Until Alarm Level 4 is reached, German movement must be secretly pre-plotted for each unit (photocopy the German Log Sheet accompanying this article). Moves are pre-plotted before British Commandos move, but executed after. The number of turns for which movement must be pre-plotted depends on the current Alarm Level (consult the Command Control table below). Thus, at Alarm Level 1, a newly activated Stosstruppen requires orders for the current turn and the following two turns. Orders for each move may require the unit to expend up to three MF (or it may, of course, remain in place). Each Area to be entered is identified by its Selection DR number; when a unit halts or does not move, draw a horizontal line through unused boxes on the German Log Sheet. (Players should note that a unit which is plotted to expend all three MF becomes vulnerable to "ambush"—see 10.3 above).

COMMAND CONTROL TABLE:

Alarm Level	Orders Required
1	3 turns
2	2 turns
3	1 turn
4	—
5	—

When a new unit activates, several turns may need to be pre-plotted simultaneously, but other Fresh units may only require one additional turn plotted (none if the Alarm Level has just changed). At Alarm Level 4, pre-plotting is abandoned and the German player may move all Fresh units freely after the British have moved. Flipped Stosstruppen and Remnants may not move until Alarm Level 5 is reached. As per 10.3, no German unit other than Armored Cars (see 10.5 below) may ever leave an Area occupied by Commandos, even if pre-plotted and even if Alarm Level 5 has been reached.

10.41 Delete the existing rules. Pre-plotted movement must be executed without regard to alternative opportunities until the unit is "pinned" (10.7 below) or "ambushed" (10.3 above).

10.5 Armored Cars never require pre-plotted movement, regardless of Alarm Level. Although they must stop upon entering an Area occupied by British Commandos, they are never "pinned". An Armored Car without sufficient MF to enter an Area occupied by British Commandos may not do so, and is therefore never in danger of being ambushed. Armored Cars may depart Areas containing British Commandos if MF allow.

10.6 Consolidation is only conducted at the German player's option. When a Fresh Stosstruppen is returned to the game in this manner, at the next Restoration & Illumination Phase its movement must be pre-plotted as if it had just been activated. [EXC: If an existing Fresh Stosstruppen was part of the Consolidation, that unit's previously pre-plotted movement must be transferred to the newly-created unit.]

10.7 PINNED: Until Alarm Level 4 is reached, a Fresh unit which fails to complete any aspect of its pre-plotted movement, or which is flipped over, or which is replaced by Remnants becomes "pinned". All pre-plotted movement yet to be executed by that unit is erased and the word "Pinned" noted on the German Log for it. Once Alarm Level 4 is reached, Stosstruppen are no longer subject to pinning. When a pinned Fresh Stosstruppen commences a Restoration & Illumination Phase in an Area not containing a British Commando, it "Rallies" automatically and is no longer pinned; its movement must then be pre-

plotted as if it had just been activated. Flipped units and Remnants never "rally" (except indirectly through Consolidation, or when Alarm Level 5 is reached).

11. LAND COMBAT

11.31 German Fire Doctrine is never enforced; the German player may choose his targets freely, subject to 11.2.

11.51 German Fire Doctrine is not used. Provided the Target Area does not also contain a German unit, the German player may choose any eligible target.

12. GERMAN SHIPS

13.21 Stosstruppen on a ship when it withdraws are "pinned" (see 10.7 above), but may be landed in any hexagonal Area. Stosstruppen activated by the last sentence of Rule 13.21 are not pinned and may appear Fresh in any hexagonal Area.

17. PLAYER NOTES

By giving the British player a human—rather than inanimate—opponent, this variant broadens the scope of the excellent *RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE*. The Germans in this version are far more intelligent and deadly than the system-generated response of the solo design, but labor under some restraints still. They can move to better defend important objectives, but once hit tend to go to ground and refuse to budget until rescued by a Fresh unit (two-factor Fresh units are particularly useful for Consolidating with Remnants and so getting these moving again). The German player must also contend with unknown VP areas and additional Landing Zones; 313 and 407 are obvious sites that can be counter-attacked quite quickly, but what about a landing at 164 with the aim of picking up points at 161 and 165? Or will the British go for the big one, across the St. Nazaire Basin—only to find that they have gone a swing bridge too far? In short, the decisions and new possibilities make this fine game even more enjoyable and challenging—and you need never go it alone again.



SQUAD LEADER Modules

Surprising as it may be, quite a few folk still play and introduce their gaming friends to the original *SQUAD LEADER*. In fact, support for the original "Game of WW2 Tactical Warfare" has caused us to reverse our intentions of allowing it to fade away. While it was recommended that those interested in *ASL* might want to start with *SQUAD LEADER* before progressing, it was thought that the further modules—*COI*, *COD* and *GI*—would be superfluous. Once sold out, they were not to be reprinted. However, despite projections, demand for these remained high. So, The Avalon Hill Game Company has now reprinted all four modules of the original system. *SQUAD LEADER* is available for \$30.00; *CROSS OF IRON* for \$24.00; *CRESCENDO OF DOOM* for \$24.00; *G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY* for \$30.00. Any of these may be ordered direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214); please add 10% for shipping and handling. Whether you are an old fan of the system who wants to replace his ragged copy, or a new player just setting out to explore the scope of the original *SQUAD LEADER*, rest assured that these will be available for some time to come.

AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	67	2563YOW	1
2.	D. Burdick	66	2327HHP	2
3.	J. Kreuz	61	2190IGR	3
4.	B. Sinigaglio	52	2179GIJ	4
5.	J. Beard	56	2143IIR	5
6.	J. Noel	20	2118EDJ	6
7.	P. Siragusa	61	2114FHL	7
8.	P. Landry	41	2089IIO	12
9.	P. Flory	43	2074EHL	8
10.	E. Mineman	37	2073DFG	9
11.	P. Gartman	32	2030HHK	10
12.	D. Garbutt	65	2026HJQ	11
13.	C. Corn	16	2017FEA	17
14.	S. Sutton	33	2016GHO	13
15.	R. Beyma	42	2014DDG	14
16.	D. Mattson	9	2011LKX	22
17.	B. Remsburg	50	2005HIR	15
18.	T. Deane	19	1998FCB	16
19.	G. Schnittker	14	1983DFJ	18
20.	R. Berger	7	1964DEF	19
21.	J. Spontak	11	1963DCE	20
22.	L. Barlow	14	1960JKV	21
23.	H. Newby	32	1951VKQ	27
24.	R. Shurdut	12	1951GHM	23
25.	J. Eliason	15	1937FIM	24
26.	F. Reese	47	1931IDJ	25
27.	E. O'Connor	26	1931GHN	26
28.	J. Bjorum	1	1925CEG	—
29.	M. Frisk	21	1944DFJ	28
30.	D. Kopp	12	1902GJO	29
31.	P. DeVolpe	4	1892DFE	30
32.	B. Schoose	6	1891GIM	31
33.	K. McCarthy	21	1882DFZ	32
34.	B. Salvatore	34	1871GKO	33
35.	T. Oleson	76	1858ZZZ	34
36.	D. Greenwood	2	1851GCK	35
37.	F. Preissle	64	1850MOZ	36
38.	J. Campbell	4	1845FED	37
39.	M. Mitchell	4	1816FHN	43
40.	E. Miller	14	1812HKR	39
41.	M. Cox	2	1808GDA	40
42.	G. Smith	21	1799FGM	41
43.	J. Lutz	12	1795HGP	42
44.	W. Scott	64	1790MKW	38
45.	F. Ornstein	1	1786GHM	—
46.	L. Carpenter	12	1781CEF	44
47.	J. Cox	2	1781CEA	45
48.	C. Clemens	1	1777DHK	—
49.	R. Phelps	1	1774HJQ	—
50.	R. Costelloe	7	1774CEH	46

MEET THE 50 . . .

Mr. Leonard Carpenter is 41, married, father of three, holds a BA in Conservation and labors as a novelist in Santa Maria, California.

Favorite Game: WS&IM
 AREA Rated Games: AK, WS&IM, AAOC and TRC
 AREA W-L Record: 12-1
 Gaming Time/Week: 3 hours
 Hobbies: Backpacking, Frisbee
 Pet Peeve: Rules complexity
 % Time PBM: 60%
 Play Preference: FTF

Mr. Carpenter notes some of the less tangible benefits of gaming:

"Gaming has been an enjoyable outlet over the years, but more important, it enhanced certain social and creative skills in me. My first professional writing were my *WS&IM* articles for *The GENERAL*. Going to tournaments and carrying on PBM games was also useful, as were the notions of history and strategy I gained. Some of it may be evident in my "Conan the Barbarian" novels, as well as in my forthcoming book *Metallurge*. Thanks Don Greenwood and everyone at AH."



III
PVT GIONELLI



C:2 CCV:3/-2 KIA:9
ROUT: 0r RNC >1



SGT VILLENEUVE



PANIC:4 CCV:4/-1
ROUT: 0r RNC >4
Reduced Hand Capacity



UP ON THE AFRICAN FRONT

The DESERT WAR Expansion for the UP FRONT Series

By Steve Harvester

DESERT WAR is the latest expansion "gamette" in the *UP FRONT* system. With the addition of France and Italy, the game series now covers all seven major WWII powers. New rules for desert warfare add another dimension of excitement to existing combat scenarios. This article examines the play of the new French and Italian hands in the all-infantry scenarios, and the effect of the desert rules on all five nationalities which engaged in combat in that strange environment.

The Italians

Okay, what's the shortest book in the world. If you answered *Italian War Heroes*, go to the rear of the class. You obviously never heard of Julius Caesar, the Renaissance *condottiere*, or the Ariete Armored Division. Nevertheless, it is true that the Italian squad in *UP FRONT* will have a rough time of it, requiring more skill in handling than that of any squad they face. That is your challenge and the source of the fascination in playing them.

The Italians, as put forth in *DESERT WAR*, teach experientially the nature of Italian combat problems in WWII. This "learning through suffering" is what makes this system a truly instructional, historical wargame. The Italians suffer from poor leadership (a Morale 3 Squad Leader), poor equipment (rifles that are ineffective at RR1 and machineguns that break down on a red "5" or "6"), and inflexible tactics (a four-card hand with two discards only if no other action is taken). Considering all the above, it is no surprise that their overall morale is also poor: all split-action cards are Cover cards for the Italians. Their 18-man squad breaks at 44% (eight men) losses rather than the effective 60% for the Germans and British, 58% for Americans and 50% for the French. If they are pinned at RR5 to an unpinned enemy (Russian excepted), they surrender. Whereas the British may use Fire cards with FP one greater than that available in the group, the Italians may only use those with FP one or more *less* than a group's

printed capacity. Their average morale is 3.0 (slightly higher than the Americans), but their average Panic level is 2.4—that's 50% lower than any squad they will face.

So why the brave introduction, with reference to Caesar and Ariete? On paper, the Italians have no chance. In action, they will be clear underdogs in any firefight in which they find themselves—but they are far from hopeless. This fighter may have a glass jaw, but you other guys better watch out for the right cross.

I refer to the one unique feature of the Italians: a firebase is possible with, not one, but *two* light MGs. These guns are equivalent to the Japanese LMG. They require no crew; and with the six highest-morale riflemen joining them, they create a group capable of using FP13 cards at RR2. The "right cross"—a successful flanking maneuver—gives this group a game-ending 27FP. (Ignore Rule 46.4, prohibiting two or more LMGs in one group. This rule was necessary to prevent the 1944-45 U.S. marines, with their three BARs, from being unrealistically strong. But the same rule makes the Italians [and the Japanese] unfairly weak. For better balanced play, suspend this rule for these nationalities.)

Unlike their stronger opponents, the Italians do not have the luxury of considering a high-morale maneuver group and a high-FP, lower-morale firebase. Benito was looking for just a few good men, and in the 18-man Italian squad there are eight (excluding the fragile SL). Together, they are a small enough target, with high enough morale and more than enough firepower to win the game—if they can make it intact to RR2. This may seem like putting all one's eggs in one basket, but the Italians only have one egg.

The Italians share a common dilemma with the Japanese and Russians. Their usual opponents will be able to level attacks at RR1 of nine or ten FP. They must close in order to start trading shots on a fairly equal basis. But how?

There are no guarantees in this game, but by far the best opportunity for any of these squads to reach RR2 in good shape is at the moment when the opposing firebase makes its move. Be assured, they will move—both for Victory Points, and to bring their rifles into play at RR1. If the firefight is joined at that range, the chances of the under-armed squad drop to between slim and none. But if you can succeed in moving the groups from RR0 to RR2 at one time, the odds shift drastically in your direction.

A case in point: I was taking a Russian squad up a Hill on patrol when they came under typical withering German LMG fire at RR0. I was able to rally all but one rifleman, when the Krauts leaped forward, expecting to finish us off at RR1. I had one Movement card and a lot of garbage in my hand. There was nothing for it but to voluntarily Panic the pinned man and move into the great unknown at RR2. The Germans slipped into Brush, and I remained moving so I could make a complete-hand discard. German fire pinned my group again, but not before they had found some Woods to hide in. Now the shoe was on the other foot. At RR2, my firepower was higher than his and my Morale average a full point better. My sacrifice of a single rifleman was well rewarded.

The Italians, with lower morale and an unimpressive maneuver group, need even more luck and skill than do the Russians. After putting my best eight men in a flanking position relative to the enemy firebase, I spread my remaining ten troopers in three small groups, with the Morale-3 SL in Group D. These three groups essentially tell their opposing numbers, "don't shoot—we're not worth it!" Trying to mass them for a charge is only an invitation to slaughter and an early loss.

I will spend the early rounds of the game discarding in search of the crucial cards I must have to make my one and only advance successful: a Movement card, some terrain, and some combination of Concealed, Rally and Fire cards useful at RR2. With

CLOSING THE RANGE

No task is more daunting, and no success more sweet, than closing the range with an outgunned squad. I define as "outgunned" squads whose rifles are ineffective at RR1 versus squads whose rifles can be used at that range. I also include those whose rifles are equal to their current opponents but who face a much better machinegun and/or fixed defensive position. Russians, Japanese and Italians are almost always outgunned, as are all Allied squads when facing the German LMG.

The key to successfully closing the range lies in the initial squad deployment. For beginners whose familiarity with the UP FRONT card deck is still uncertain, the standard formations first suggested back in Mr. Greenwood's article in Vol. 21, No. 1 of *THE GENERAL* are useful. For those expert enough to have a surer sense of battlefield timing, I believe I have come up with a radically different approach which will greatly improve the chances of winning with an outgunned squad.

Squad deployment involves a fine balancing of offensive and defensive considerations. Unlike most Avalon Hill wargames, adding another unit to the UP FRONT group does not necessarily strengthen both its offensive and defensive capabilities. In *UF-BANZ-DW*, a RNC is drawn for each member of a group which is being fired upon. A solitary soldier firing at a ten-man group draws ten cards, if he happens to have a playable Fire card. If even one man in the group is pinned, the whole group suffers substantial penalties. The group cannot entrench; it cannot remove Wire cards played on its position; it cannot move (although you may play terrain cards if moving already). The only alternative to a Rally card is the desperate act of voluntarily panicking the pinned men and losing them for the game. Therefore, while each additional man in a group increases its potential firepower, it also increases the group's vulnerability at the same time. The lower the morale of the additional man, the higher the price paid in group fragility in exchange for that extra gun.

When playing a squad with few movement opportunities, such as the French or Americans, it is tempting to consider creating a ten-man firebase and gambling that fate will produce an early Movement card combined with some strong terrain for cover. Once ensconced at RR1 in Woods or Building or on a Hill, such a group with its RR1 firepower of "11" or "12" would seem tough to dislodge. That was, in fact, my early tactic with the French. But while often effective against the Italians, such a play against the Germans is extremely problematic. A 4-6 German formation has more than enough firepower potential at RR1 to keep plenty of lead flying towards the Allied firebase, with ten chances of a pin each attack. The smaller, tougher German firebase is far more likely to stay unpinned, free to entrench, remove Wire, move in flanking positions, and use its full firepower potential. The Allied group, on the other hand, is likely to spend lots of time looking for Rally cards while slowly degenerating into a paralyzed, helpless mob.

My new approach with outgunned squads is one I call "clustering". I use the full four-group width of the UP FRONT battlefield to initially deploy small, low-FP, hard-to-pin clusters of two to six men each. Only after reaching good terrain at RR1 do I use individual transfers to augment my offensive punch. Here is the full procedure for the cluster formation:

1) Form the five or six highest-morale men (excluding the SL) into a firebase as Group B. This group will always include the ASL for smoke and/or individual transfers, and usually the LMG or BAR. You want the smallest, toughest possible target which can still cause your opponent trouble if he moves forward too freely.

2) Place the SL in Group D with one or two low-morale men. A third man in this group will lower the odds of a Sniper drawing a bead on Sarge from 50% down to 33%. This group's main task is to keep the SL out of trouble. They may also draw sniper fire away from Group B, which rarely has time for a sniper check. Group D may well put the enemy sniper to bed for keeps. Odd jobs for Group D include using up surplus Movement cards with sideways movement, or a daring dash forward into a Gully for some victory points; expending useless Smoke cards, if the SL has that capability; and playing low Fire cards, freeing up the firebase for other actions and shifting the risk of a malfunction to where it will hurt the least.

(The only nationality with which I will risk placing the SL with Group A, using the leader as an active combatant, are the Japanese with Okimoto, and the British with Vasey against the Japanese or Italians. The Morale 3 and Morale 4 SLs need all the peace and quiet you can possibly provide them—so they go in Group D.)



Mannlicher-Carcano M 91/41

Range	Firepower
0	0
1	0
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	3

3) The remaining men are split evenly between groups A and C, with the braver lads in Group A ready to challenge a charge towards victory conditions by any enemy maneuver group.

The way these principles might be played out in the Patrol Scenario are illustrated in the accompanying chart. Compared to traditional groupings, clusters appear so weak offensively that no hope of victory would seem possible. For a neophyte unsure of his card play, this is undoubtably true. But for experienced players, clusters offer the best way to even up the odds against superior long-range firepower.

First, consider that outgunned squads cannot, by definition, expect to win an early firefight between groups of equal size. The standard six-to-ten man firebase will almost never get to use its full potential firepower. They only allow each firecard played by the superior enemy to wreak maximum possible havoc. The outgunned squad must avoid such unequal contests and bend its entire will to the single preliminary objective of closing the range in good terrain with minimum casualties.

The early portion of the game for outgunned squads will consist of edging first one cluster forward, then another, all the while waiting for the critical moment when Group B can advance with greatest certainty into strong RR1 terrain. The optimal situation would be towards the end of the first deck, with all the Stream and Wire cards accounted for, a playable -3 Building in hand, and the enemy firebase partially pinned. All this rarely happens at once, of course, but it's good to keep in mind what you are aiming for.

Once (if ever) all four clusters have reached RR1, the real strength of the compact firebase with maximum supporting groups becomes apparent. With the ASL in Group B, individual transfers from A to B and from C to B are both allowable. Such transfers utilize a Movement card without the risk of intervening Wire or Stream. The compact firebase, now firmly established in VP-producing terrain, can gradually become a big firebase as Fire cards require and Movement cards permit.

Of course, your ASL is mortal, and if killed your SL will need to leave his safe perch on the right flank if you want to keep reinforcements coming. (But then, I didn't claim this was the perfect strategy—just the best I've come up with for outgunned squads.) Most outgunned squads are superior in numbers to their opponents, and often are blessed with higher morale as well. The outnumbered squad cannot allow a slugging match with all groups at RR2 to each other to continue indefinitely; the larger squad will win on Aggressive-action points if he does. Sooner or later, he will be forced to make that terrible leap to RR3. When he does, you must be ready for him.

For the endgame, have in hand at least one Fire card useable at RR3 of FP6 or higher. Ideally, two such cards and/or Wire or Stream should be retained. That's enough to overwhelm the high Concealment card he surely has in hand and force him to choose between rallying on the move at RR3 or arriving in terrain pinned and unable to return effective fire. After that, your patience throughout the game will pay juicy dividends as you play one Fire card after another on your opponent's stricken group. Very soon he will want to resign. Don't let him! You waited a long time for this and you deserve to savor every minute. Enjoy the feeling of bettering the superior enemy with your outgunned squad.

extra Movement cards, I may move a low-morale group forward, just to keep heat off my firebase. With 18 men, I do have some cannon fodder available.

Having arrived safely at RR2, the firefight can continue on fairly equal terms. Now you can start looking for another kind of "pat" hand: terrain, a Concealed or Rally card, a Flank card, and a F7 or F8 card. Playing one of these babies is the equivalent in chess of saying "Mate in four". Now that you can use any Fire card in the deck, you simply keep shooting longer than he can keep rallying. With two LMGs, you've got what it takes to make quick mincemeat of anyone—even the British.

As if the Italians didn't have enough problems, they also have to deal with a special Surrender rule applicable only to them. They are more subject to capture anyway due to their Rout numbers; but in addition to this, any group which is totally pinned at any range will surrender! Fortunately, this isn't as devastating as it appears because they are not irretrievably lost until an opponent infiltrates the group to capture them. So long as they keep their distance, the Italians can regain their nerve by transfer of an unpinned man into the afflicted group. This little national quirk does discourage use of small groups or sending a group alone far ahead of the others.

The French

The French squad underwent an extreme metamorphosis during playtesting. Originally, the French played with a five-card hand. One discard was permitted, only when no other action was taken. Commenting on this at the time, I wrote:

The French squad makes a great history lesson, but a lousy hour of play. Here's the history lesson: give soldiers the best equipment, fine morale, strong numbers, and no flexibility in tactics. Then watch them die. The French squad in this system is like the kid in high school with the sign on his back reading "Kick Me". He's a good-looking, helpless giant.

There are 12 men in the French squad. Eleven carry bolt-action rifles equal to those of the British or Germans. The Chatelleraut LMG is a fine weapon, more powerful at RR5 than the German MG34 when the firepower of the riflemen not needed to crew it is added in. The average French morale is 3.2, equal to the Germans and better than the British or Americans. They can put out 14FP at RR1 and 15FP at RR2, where most games are decided—that's better than the Germans by two FP. Nevertheless, the French are by far the worst squad to handle of the seven.

Their fatal flaw was inflexibility. They had a five-card hand, and use of the German split-action cards. But they can make only one discard, and that only when no other action is taken. Combine this with a Morale 3 SL, a squad that breaks with just six men lost (out of twelve) and an average Panic level of just 3.8 and you have a debacle waiting to happen.

The first time I playtested the French, I knew instinctively they would need to make just one move—to RR1 in good terrain. Then I hoped to win by attrition with my better weapons. I also saw that this move would have to be made ultra-safe: moving out of covering terrain with a second Movement card, Woods or Hill, and Concealed, Rally or a good RR1 Fire card in hand. "If this group gets pinned in the open," I thought, "their chances of getting out alive are as good as a chicken's at Frank Perdue's place." So, to make the anticipated advance as safe as I could, I made a sideways move in place towards a Woods I had in hand.

They never made it to the Woods. Generally speaking, I don't worry about Wire dropped on my groups at RR0. Enemy fire is too light at that range to discomfit me much while I find the Movement

Cluster Formations for Scenario A:

Nationality	Personality Cards in Group:			
	A	B	C	D
Italian	6-7-11-12	2-3-4-8-9-18	10-13-14-16	1-5-15-17
Japanese	1-5-8	2-3-4-6-7	10-11-13	9-12
French	6-8-12	2-3-4-7-9	10-11	1-5
British	6-8	2-3-4-5	9-10	1-7
American	5-7	2-3-4-9-11	8-12	1-6-10
Russian	5-6-15	2-3-4-8-12-13	7-11-14	1-9-10
German	never outgunned in the Patrol Scenario			

card necessary to free myself. But the French are not your "general" combat squad. While I started searching, one card at a time, for a Movement card, the Germans moved forward, found a Wall, and started blasting away with 9FP. While I started searching, one card at a time, for a Rally card, the Germans moved forward with their maneuver group and hit me with a crossfire: FP3, then FP9. By the time they had run out of Fire cards, I had run out of men. It was the shortest game of *UP FRONT* I had ever played—or should I say, endured.

Since my playtesting was not done at Central HQ in Baltimore, I do not know the reasons behind giving the French a sixth card. Did the five-card French hand represent a historically inaccurate picture of actual combat capability? Or was the squad simply no fun to play? My own interest in *UP FRONT* centers on its high level of excitement. From that point of view, this change is all for the better, whatever the historical accuracy.

The six-card French squad retains all the other features mentioned above: 12 well-equipped men with relatively good morale and use of the German split-action cards. Their weaknesses remain the low panic values, a squad that breaks easily (at six rather than seven losses), a Morale-3 SL, and of course the single discard. With a five-card hand, the discard limitation was nearly always fatal; the availability of that sixth card changes things enormously.

Like the Americans, British and Italians, the French discard at the cost of doing absolutely nothing else that turn. The French pay twice, however, because they will take in half the cards the others will for the same number of turns lost. It is therefore twice as important for the French to have some action available to them each turn. As long as they can keep *playing* cards, the fact that they can only discard one will be irrelevant.

Here is the significance of that sixth card in the French hand: every time the French are fired on, there is a 16.7% higher chance they will have a Concealed card to play. Every time a man is pinned, there is the same increased possibility of a Rally card in hand. The same holds true for groups needing to move, needing to fire, looking for terrain, and every other action in *UP FRONT*. Over the course of a game, the cumulative effect is enormous. If a full three-deck game is played out, 486 cards will pass through play. Discounting cards used for RNC/RPC, somewhere between 150 and 200 cards will pass through each player's hand. On average, a player with six cards will have the appropriate card at the right moment 25-30 times more often per game than a player with five cards and the same number of chances. ("Same number of chances" explains why the German five-card hand is still the best; they can take one or more actions *and* still discard every turn, making a three-card German draw more the norm than the exception.)

The six-card French, therefore, are nobody's patsy. If you can keep them moving, they should win as often as not. If they get pinned in the open without a Rally, they may never get out. So, advance with caution. Keep a Movement card in reserve as long as there is Wire unaccounted for. Remember that the Germans—your usual enemy—can hit you with pinning fire and a Wire or Stream all at once, so you'd best pin their firebase or have a darn good Concealment card in hand before advancing. Against the Italians, on the other hand, advance to RR1 and destroy them.

The Fiery Sands

When your *UP FRONT* opponent agrees to play a scenario with you employing the new *DESERT WAR* terrain rules, you enter a whole new world. The Woods, Buildings and Walls you hold in your hand become something entirely different from what

the pictures indicate. This can produce some amusing situations. In my first desert playtest, my opponent laid a Stream card on my advancing group; the smirk on his face disappeared when I reminded him that my group was now in a Wadi with a -1 protection against all attacks! Later on, I placed a second Wadi on my own group. In the desert, any cover at all is a godsend.

The best cover is now an Oasis—unless, of course, it's a mirage. A Woods card is removed from play if discarded or played as a RPC/RNC. But if held in hand, it may be played on a moving group. A black RNC lands them in entrenchable -2 terrain, with a +1 for Morale and Panic ratings due to the secure water supply. Such an opportunity is well worth the 50% chance your group will instead find itself a red RNC, and be left clutching at a mirage while still moving.

Entrenching in general is more difficult in the desert. In *UP FRONT*'s original terrain, any "0" RNC would result in successful entrenching—a 27% likelihood. In the desert, a "1" RNC is required; you'll get one 22% of the time. On a Hill (usually a dune crest or rocky outcropping in the desert), a Black "1" RNC is needed—hardly worth trying for at 11%. Still, the +1 attack modification is potentially decisive in a game where your opponent will more often than not be running over open sand. On the other hand, -2 Buildings (now Escarpment) cannot be entrenched in; digging into solid rock is rarely helpful I guess.

Walls are now called "Ridges", but retain all the properties of their original designation. Marsh (now representing Soft Sand) cannot be rejected. Unlike Marsh, afflicted groups can fire their weapons normally. But they get no protection either, except a -1 on HE attacks, and cannot entrench. Vehicles and Infantry Guns would do well to stay out of it: the vehicles must make a Bog Check with a two-column shift to the left; Guns must make a Morale Check immediately upon entry, and after each Movement card they play while still in Soft Sand. You get out the same way you get out of a Marsh—slowly.

Wadis (the Stream cards) prevent a direct advance, but otherwise aid the occupant. There is no fire restriction out, and a -1 on any fire in. No Ford card is needed, but exit must be made with the sideways play of a Movement card.

By far the most interesting variation on the standard *UP FRONT* play is the new use for the two Minefield cards. Minefields were used extensively in the desert, but so were "dummy minefields". In desert scenarios, therefore, the Minefields are always in play—but not always real. A player can always reject a Minefield card discarded upon him, but if he accepts it he must immediately draw a RNC to determine if it is a fake or not. If he draws a red or black "0", or any red RNC, he has proven himself to be a daring and brilliant tactician. If he draws a black RNC of "1" or higher, he has made what is likely to be his last mistake. This minefield choice will reward players able to keep track of red and black RNCs over the course of a deck.

For those of us who prefer to play on instinct, such a risk should be taken only if the rewards are very, very high. I might chance a Minefield if I was about to achieve the Victory Conditions, or lay down a devastating Flank attack. Otherwise, I'll choose the better part of valor.

New rules on weapon malfunctions may seem innocuous at first, but in fact they cut the Italian's chances of winning in a desert scenario by about half. That's because all weapons have their breakdown range increased by one, and the Italian LMGs will suffer far more than those of their opponents. All German, British and American weapons normally break with a red "6" RNC; make that a red "5-6" in the desert, and their breakdown odds go from 1.9% to 4.9%. The Italian LMGs go from

4.9% to 9.9%. Firing at a six-man group, the chances of firing through the whole group without a breakdown are about 50-50; and the weapon which breaks will be a LMG approximately 64% of the time. If the Italians fire at RR0 or RR1, any malfunction applies automatically to the LMG. Italians in the desert would do well to hold their fire unless the potential effect is lethal. That, of course, will allow their opponent almost unhindered maneuver at RR0 and RR1. Until he's counted a good number of high red RNCs go by, however, the Italian player really has no choice.

The new joker in the pack is the possibility of a "Sandstorm" at the end of every deck. If a black "6" RNC is drawn, the game ends as the elements take over. Victory points are then used to determine the winner at that point. An ultra-cautious player might, taking this possibility into account, make sure that none of his groups are moving at the end of each deck to ensure the maximum possible VP in case of a storm. But as far as I'm concerned, any squad leader who would delay an advance because of a 1.9% possibility should stick to safer games—like tic-tac-toe.

Shifting Sands, Shifting Tactics

Because of their fragile LMGs, desert terrain has a more drastic effect on the Italians than on any other nationality. But each squad must make some adjustments; here are a few points:

The Germans:

One hidden advantage the Germans enjoy in regular terrain is their ability, when nothing better offers, to attempt entrenchments and still make a discard. All opponents other than the Russians must choose between the two. This edge is made smaller in the desert, since those extra entrenching attempts will be successful less often.

A second debit is the comparative unimportance of submachine gun fire in desert terrain. With covering terrain so hard to find, the chances of a fire-fight erupting at RR4 or closer are much smaller than they would be in northern climes. In a normal patrol, I will often put both MPs in my German maneuver group, giving them FP16 at RR5. In the desert, I will always use the ASL or SL to crew the LMG, recognizing that the MPs will likely never fire.

Outweighing these problems by far is the vastly increased importance of fire effectiveness at RR0. The German ability to put out four FP at long range is magnified in terrain which will normally allow attacks to come in at full value. It is more likely than ever, in desert scenarios, that the Germans will thoroughly pin their enemy at RR0 and then move unhindered to RR1 for the kill with 9FP or more. With Streams no longer a threat to such an advance, only the Wire cards and Minefield cards are available to a pinned defender hoping to save himself from disaster. The Germans are, in any terrain, still the best. In the desert, they are better yet.

The Americans:

If the lessened importance of MP fire is a bother for the Germans, it is doubly a pain for the GIs. Their BAR needs no crew, leaving them with two men who will likely do nothing in the desert but toss smoke grenades. As with the Germans, I will often put both MPs together in normal terrain for potential killing fire at RR5. This despite the fact that it will leave my firebase without possible smoke cover in emergencies. (I don't worry about this with the Germans; they get use of smoke less often—and need it less often than that.) In the desert, the ASL always accompanies the firebase for smoke use. With entrenching more difficult and natural cover at a premium, the large American smoke capacity becomes magnified in its importance. They

will need it to reach RR1 against the Germans—an advance which they must be less conservative in making, now that they are likely sitting in the open while bullets start to fly. Against the Italians, try a ten-man firebase with FP11. You may well destroy them at RR1 before they can make an effective response.

The British:

The British have only one MP to regret having, and they share the big American supply of smoke grenades. Their Bren gun can attack with 3FP at RR0, second only to the German MG34. Like the Americans, their inability to both attempt entrenching and discard will hurt less in the desert. The biggest drawback they face are lack of numbers and an inflexible five-card hand. If the Germans fire at RR0, they have less chance than the Americans of finding the Concealed, Rally and return Fire cards needed to come through it intact to RR1. With just ten men to deploy, the British player cannot emulate the American tactic of either starting the firebase in A and switching a maneuver group from C to D (see my piece in Vol. 25, No. 3) or putting the firebase in C where it can outflank a German Group B and not be outflanked itself. The British must form a firebase with firepower at least equal to the Germans', and then hope that they get the good terrain and Fire cards first.

Against the Italians, British (as well as American) prospects are naturally much higher. The Italian LMGs can together put out FP3 at RR0, but they would be crazy to try. Any intelligent Italian player will hold his fire until RR2, so that if a malfunction does occur it won't necessarily be a LMG that goes. That gives you the opportunity to advance unhindered to RR1 and rip them apart before they fire a shot. Just be sure they are well-pinned before you advance, to avoid a simultaneous move forward by the Italians. At RR2, they have more guns than anyone.

Loose Ends Department

Two minor annoyances left over from *UP FRONT/BANZAI* are cleared up with the addition of *DESERT WAR*. First, it is no longer necessary to pile two range chits on top of one another when advancing beyond Range 5. The new counters include Range chits which will carry you through Range 9.

Second, you can now pit every nation's squad against every other with proper OB for each historically relevant scenario. With *DESERT WAR*, you possess a complete cross-referencing of nationalities with scenarios.

Scenarios

The French and Italians carry all their weaknesses into any scenario you may choose, but those weaknesses will be partially compensated for by reinforced squads or the parameters of some engagements, and exaggerated by others. The following suggestions will help you adjust more quickly to the national quirks as you try each scenario for the first time with the "minor Major Powers".

City Fight:

Thankfully, Italian Demo Charges are just as deadly as anyone else's. Nevertheless, they actually have less chance of winning this scenario than they do of a standard Patrol. The Italians are granted a Morale "4" SL and 22 men. That still leaves the Italians with one machine pistol. The Germans, by contrast, carry five; the Americans and Soviets each have four. The Italians should therefore try to engage in a firefight at RR3, where rifles are at two FP and MPs are at one. Their DC becomes a defensive weapon, to be used against enemy maneuver

groups who succeed in closing to RR5. Maneuver groups generally number four or five men, and may well be fewer by the time they reach you. That makes them easier to infiltrate than a large group; the attempt should be made while they are still moving, despite the two-column shift penalty. Especially for the Italians, who surrender if pinned and infiltrated, getting the first blast in is crucial.

The French, on the other hand, very possibly have the best city-fighting squad in the game. To compensate for their lack of a MP, they are given a 13th man (Morale 5), plus the usual Demo Charge. I suspect that the designers didn't reckon with the fact that, except in rare instances, an *UP FRONT* submachine-gun is much inferior to a blot-action rifle. (The rare instances are those found in the Paratroop Drop and Surprise scenarios, where an MP gunner can suddenly appear at pointblank range without having to survive unanswered rifle and MG fire at RR0 through RR3; otherwise, unless you get all the Gully cards in the deck, the MP-bearing man is going to catch a lot of lead before he starts dishing any out.)

In the City Fight, the French can set up an attack group of five men with an average morale of 4.4. They will be lead by Cpl. Dubois for smoke cover, individual transfers, and use of the "Rally All" card. They will also carry the Demo Charge. The City Fight French SL is Morale 4, so you enjoy the option of risking him with the firebase and kicking the RR1 support up to FP10. Even with three groups, the RR2 firepower will be FP9, enough to battle the Germans on even terms while the tough guys inch their way forward. (Against the Italians, just advance to RR1 and destroy them.)

Assaulting a Pillbox:

Francophiles might hope that defending a piece of the Maginot Line would be one scenario in which the French would do well. Such is not the case. Pillbox defense requires fast shifting by individual transfers from one threatened flank to the other. No nationality is less suited for such rapid maneuver. If the French, who are given just nine men plus a LMG, form a large firebase in A and put the SL and a low-morale man in the pillbox, they will quickly be outflanked by a high-morale group C advancing with a -1 RR differential to the French firebase. If they put two men each in Groups A and B, and six men in Group C with the LMG, a direct assault on the pillbox from A will likely get to killing range before much of the Group C men can shift right. Remember that the attackers can make use of Wire cards, forcing the French to keep one Movement in reserve at nearly all times. To give them any chance at all, require the attacker to set up first—unrealistic as that is.

The Italians, by contrast, do quite well as pillbox defenders, doubly well if this is an Italian pillbox rather than a North African fortification. They retain their two LMGs and a 15-man squad. Since the attackers must close the range to put their heavy weapons to use, some very effective fire can be laid down. I put the low-morale SL in the pillbox with the two LMGs and shift the LMGs left or right to meet whichever threat presents itself. If the 12 riflemen are split evenly between Groups A and C, they will carry a potential 13FP at RR2 (and of 21 at RR3) once joined by the LMGs.

This is one scenario where, as attackers, the lack of machine pistols really hurts the French and Italians. Their flamethrowers are just as effective as any other, though the Italians do suffer from having theirs handled by a Morale 3 soldier. But the backup MP fire at RR5 will be sorely missed, if the attackers get that far. A four-man German, Russian or American group with three MPs and a flamethrower can put out FP9 at RR4; at RR5 it leaps to FP27 with no reduction for terrain. Since the Italians would be mad to send their Morale 3

SL into the cannon's maw, their four-man group would be the same as that of the French: FP6 at RR4 and much less likelihood of pinning the enemy firebase before getting to use a theoretical FP20 at RR5. It takes only one buddy with a MP to bring a FT attack up to 17FP; two riflemen must survive to allow a French attack at 18FP or an Italian one at 17FP.

All this makes the role of the French and Italian firebase vital for any success as attackers. Both have the potential to use FP18 cards at RR3, and all effort must go to establishing the firebase at this range before any serious threat with the FT or DC can be mounted. If they can plant themselves at that range in good terrain, the chances of an upset loom large.

Rear Guard Action:

I can see no earthly reason for anyone other than a masochist to try playing the French in this scenario. In this chase, Movement cards are at a premium for both sides, and the defender is further constrained by his need for cards with a red RNC. The French will do slightly better as attackers, aided as they are by a good mortar and rifles effective at RR1. But it's a luckless German who won't pull away from this squad long before they are able to effect sustained pinning fire.

The Italians have a two-card discard to help them flee, but they are hampered (perhaps fatally) by a near-useless mortar on the attack. The Brixia has a hit effect of just one, and requires a RNC of "2" at RR0 for a hit. Combine that with machineguns that break down and rifles that fire only at RR2 and you have all the makings of a very futile pursuit.

Paratroop Drop:

Admit it, you didn't know the Italians *had* paratroops. With their 16 men and Morale 4 SL, they have an excellent chance of winning this scenario, even though they are shortchanged in DYO points.

The paratroopers win this fast-paced conflict by getting five men, unpinned and uninfiltred in covering terrain, to RR3. This requires at least one individual transfer among the required four groups before a winning group can be formed. The Italians *start out* with four four-man groups. They also benefit from elite status: they may use German split-action cards and do not surrender when pinned. The defenders can often destroy one Italian group as they land, given a high Fire card and a RR4 or RR5 range. But they will be hard-pressed to stop all the threats which will simultaneously present themselves. For those of us with an Italian heritage, *this* is the scenario to play. Now, should you historian-types tell us about the real Italian daredevils?

This scenario affords the French squad its best opportunity for defeating the Germans. The defender in this scenario has an excellent chance of catching at least two enemy troopers in the open at RR4 or RR5 at the start. With a high Fire card or two, plus infiltration opportunities, these can be dispatched quickly. Especially effective is dropping the German LMG up close and infiltrating its position before he can find a "loader". Then, when the position is taken, the LMG changes hands too. The German paratroop squad has smaller FP at long range than German regulars. If the French can knock off two or three troopers at the outset, they are less likely to be pinned and wired than in other situations, and more likely to put their excellent RR1 and RR2 FP to good use.

Both French and Italians defend with their standard squads, and here the French immobility will hurt them less than in other situations. They can form a firebase at Group B strong enough to use any Fire card against a group landing at RR4 or RR5. Bring the strongest enemy group into close range, even if you momentarily lack that killer card. If you can

knock off the paratrooper SL or ASL and 30% or 40% of his total strength in the early going, your twelve guys will have an excellent chance of beating his six or seven. The Italians, with their 40FP at RR4 and 59FP at RR5 (assuming three groups) should do very well as defenders also. For both squads, the challenge will be moving forward to get close range against the remaining paratroopers after the first group is annihilated. The Italians will be hampered by their small hand and enormous supply of Cover cards. The French will be worse off with their one-card discard. And Italian morale is so fragile that even the low FP attacks the paratroopers can generate may well paralyze them. A fascinating struggle for both sides.

Elite Troops on the Attack:

The benefits accruing to the *Bersaglieri* are identical to those of the paratroopers mentioned above. The reinforced 20-man squad includes a Morale 4 SL. Their challenge, like that of elite Russians and Japanese in this scenario, will be getting past RR1 against a defender with no incentive to move forward himself. It will be impossible to "guarantee" a safe advance with a four-card hand, but the attempt must be made. I would form four groups, each capable of winning the scenario, and try one advance after another. When I'm as sure as I will ever be that the defender has spent his bullets, I will move my LMGs forward to whatever terrain I've been able to save. If they can make it to RR2, my hopes rise sharply.

Italian Second Line troops (Blackshirts) may only discard one card per turn, and only if they take no other action. Their hopes rest on numbers and their two LMGs. Unfortunately, most attacking Elite squads will have enough firepower at RR1 to make mincemeat of your bully-boys before they can fire a shot. To have a chance, therefore, you must try to make the same simultaneous jump forward with your firebase as is necessary in a Patrol. But now you have just one new card per turn to find the necessary Movement and terrain cards. Your chances are slim, but you get two tries. And, if you fail, will anyone fault you? On the other hand, a victory with the Blackshirts will be remembered for a long, long time.

With French Elite troops (Legionnaires), you enjoy tactical flexibility besides the high morale and firepower. The 14-man Elite squad substitutes a Morale 4 SL for the basic one (Morale 3), and adds two more Morale 3 riflemen. More important, Legionnaires may take one action and still make a discard each turn. This creates the potential for a pinning-fire and Wire/Stream discard combination—often decisive when accomplished at RR1 or closer. It also allows for doubled card flow when a necessary Movement, Rally or Fire card is not in hand. Playing the Legionnaires is great fun, often setting me to wondering what might have been if all the troops facing Guderian in 1940 had been trained with similar *elan*. (A two-year war; no Iron Curtain; no atomic bomb; oh well . . .)

French Second-Line troops suffer only by switching a Morale-3 man for the Morale-5 man on the basic squad, and by treating all split-action cards as Cover cards. With their six-card hand and good rifles, they should do best by holding fast at RR0 with a ten-man firebase and the SL and a Morale-1 man as Group A.

Partisans:

Both the French and Italians offer Freedom Fighters, although the Italians are limited to post-1943 actions. The French are rarely bothered by the restriction on actions to one less than their number of groups, since they don't have the flexibility necessary to handle a three-group setup in any case. Reducing their already-low Panic values by one per man,

however, is a severe drawback. Combined with their difficulty in finding Rally cards, any pinned partisan group is likely a dead partisan group. Keep maneuver to an absolute minimum. If you are lucky enough to start the game with covering terrain, dig in and force the Germans to come to you. A seven-man Group B can put out 9FP at RR1—but be careful about using Concealed cards to augment an Ambush fire attack. Unless you are sure the result will thoroughly pin the attackers, you will need every augmented Concealment card you can get to prevent being pinned. For you a successful Rally is a rare and wonderful accomplishment. Your limited card flow will make it unlikely that you will see many opportunities for Sniper fire or Booby Traps, so blast away and try not to think about Gestapo reprisals tomorrow.

Surprise Attack:

Both French and Italians use their basic squad in this nerve-wracking scenario. The French share with the Germans the dubious distinction of being most-likely-to-be-massacred. They will be discarding one card at a time while they search for the FP1 or Hero card which will begin to free them. The sentry's ability to be able to fire at RR1 can be decisive, if you are lucky enough to have a card he can use while the attackers are still at that range.

The Italians can discard twice as fast, but from a four-card hand which is likely to be loaded with Cover cards. Their sentry cannot fire until the enemy reaches RR2. This is potentially the most humiliating scenario to play as the Italians, since they are more likely to get into a "surrender" situation (pinned and infiltrated) here than in any other contest. If they can manage to Rally their two LMGs in a -3 Building, however, a good resistance can be mounted.

The French make poor attackers for the same reason they are poor on defense; they will be searching one card at a time for the Movement needed to set up an effective ambush. With other nationalities, I bring both my firebase and infiltration group to RR2 before doubling the sentry's chances of firing by moving either group closer. With the French, I cannot count on getting four Movement cards before the enemy is aroused. I will set up a ten-man firebase in a flanking position relative to the defender's main group and move them, if possible, to good terrain at RR3. I will then try to win by massive firepower alone. The Italians have so many men that two big groups are unavoidable. With their two-card discard capability, they have a decent chance of getting both groups to RR3. The lack of MPs and poor infiltration ability (plus the prospect of untimely surrenders) causes me to halt both groups here and look for high Fire cards. With 20FP for both groups, my chances are good if I get this far.

Team Play

By now it should be clear that playing the French or Italians will pose a challenge for the most accomplished master, even against a first-time player. That is their main attraction for the true aficionado. But there are two other possibilities which should not go unmentioned: the two are great fun in a match against each other; and Team Play with the Italians and Germans facing off against one or another of the Allies is a fascinating encounter.

A French versus Italian matchup has a lot in common with a French farce or an Italian opera—great heroics, tremendous errors, and balance in the end. I remember an Italian fire attack that began at 7FP and ended up at -1 FP as one weapon after another malfunctioned. In the same game, the French sat around at RR5 to a pinned Italian group for five turns and couldn't force a surrender because they were all pinned too, and could not come up with a single Rally card! The humor in these situations

may be hard for those not among the *cognoscenti* to appreciate, but for those of us in the know it's a laugh riot.

A German/Italian team, on the other hand, is a very serious matter. In the desert they make a formidable pair; out of it, they are odds-on favorite to win against either the British or American squads. The Axis tactics revolve around two unique features of the rules for team play: the ability to fire across the LOS divider in almost all scenarios, at RR0; and the ability of each squad to transfer all or part of its group next to the LOS divider into the partner's squad.

The German LMG (with 4FP at RR0) is able in team play to fire at any group of either enemy squad with powerful effect. Outside the desert, the two Italian LMGs combined are just as strong. The Axis thus has enhanced potential for pinning both enemy firebases at RR0, allowing their own to advance unhindered. The transfer capability is a boon to the Axis team, since Italians transferred to the German player inherit the German hand capacity and flexibility. This offers a magnificent opportunity for defeating the Allies in detail. You can have, in effect, two firebases assaulting one Allied squad while a third Italian firebase holds the other enemy squad at bay. Once the first bunch is dispatched, it's time to switch back and complete the rout with supporting LMG fire.

The Allies will not passively allow all this switching back and forth to go unchallenged, of course. If they can avoid being pinned by long-range fire, they can probably destroy the Italian firebase before the full squad can return to reinforce them. They are more likely than the Italians to find the two Movement cards needed to pull off a transfer of their own. The possibilities are endless in team play, and well worth the added complexity.

UP FRONT has been, since its beginnings, the fastest-playing, most intense, and—on the psychological level—most realistic wargame on the market. With the addition of *DESERT WAR*, it is also the most complete. You can now reproduce any conflict of major WWII powers, on any front, of that gigantic struggle. To handle all the nations and environments for the Patrol scenario alone would require twenty rounds of play. It is different from any other kind of game you may be familiar with; if you haven't tried it already, I enthusiastically invite you to begin.



NEW TOLL-FREE NUMBER

It should be noted, for those who may wish to avail themselves of the ability to order Avalon Hill products by phone, that we have a new toll-free number: 1-800-999-3222. (Note that this is available *only* to those calling from outside Maryland.) With any major credit card, you may save yourself the hassle and expense of mailing in your direct order. As an added advantage, your order will be processed much faster, bringing you that "hot" new release before your friends can pick up their copies at the local hobby store. It should be stressed that the toll-free number is for use for by-mail direct orders only; for all other business, please use our Avalon Hill regular phone number (301-254-9200).

It might also be of interest to some that we have a FAX number, for use in transmitting hard-copy. If you've the capability to FAX your orders, you might wish to make note of our FAX: 301-254-0991. Again, this applies to credit card (American Express, MasterCard, Visa) orders only. Of course, the FAX number may be used to transmit other material as well (although, in the case of article submissions, this might get a bit expensive).

Since it will take some time for the toll-free number to be changed and to add our FAX number on all our literature, it might behoove regular customers to jot these new numbers down. However, both are in effect now. If you've tried to call our toll-free number recently and had no answer, it's because you should have called:

1-800-999-3222

Dear Rex,

I finally got around to comparing the solution for the *TAC AIR* contest to the one I submitted. Needless-to-say, I was pleased to see that mine came very close to the "official" (forward) setup. It's nice to know that I'm not completely out-to-lunch.

There were a couple of significant differences, tactically speaking. I don't like the setup for the helo squadrons—I think they are too close to the center. I prefer to put them on the flanks; from there, they can threaten to encircle and hit the Soviet's soft "underbelly". Or they can be pulled back into the center. Putting them in the center increases the time required to flank the Pact units, and telegraphs their intentions by at least a turn. From the flanks, the helos can circle past the Pact short-ranged ADA and nail any exposed soft targets, or reinforce the center, very quickly.

I definitely do not agree with the Hawk battery's setup in R20. The woods in Q20 prevents the battery's fire into the northwestern corner of the map (9.1.2: Special Blocked Air Defense Lines of Sight). Given the movement/fire restrictions of this unit, it could be disastrous if it had to be moved during play to correct this error. I positioned the Hawk battery in Q20, which allows it to cover the entire forward area.

One possible Pact thrust is one regiment down the Hassfurt/Zeil valley, with the other two performing a frontal ("holding") assault on the cavalry line centered on hex row T. The Hawks would have to be moved from R20 to provide air defense to cavalry units sent to block the valley. Depending on the timing, this could allow Pact CAS a free turn to either weaken the main line for a breakthrough or help clear a block in the valley for the flank maneuver.

To sum up, the Hawk battery should be in Q20. This removes any need to move it in response to the Pact's maneuvers, except to evacuate. Thanks for listening.

Victor Lewington
Debert, Nova Scotia

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

On the day I receive *THE GENERAL*, all known preoccupations with the drudgery of life cease. Instead, I pour over each article regardless of my interest and my imagination takes over. In other words, I enjoy my subscription! The purpose of this letter is not to praise your magazine, however, but to follow up on a topic that appeared in your Vol. 25, No. 3 issue, "Lost in the Fog".

Brent McKee's article nicely summarized a short-coming of all games with perfect information; a strategy can be developed which guarantees success regardless of future outcomes. Reality does not have this attribute. In particular, Brent discussed the ability of the omniscient player to control his or her units with no dissension. His example of General Ewell's hesitation at Gettysburg is one of many classic instances of subordinates exercising judgement that in hindsight was erroneous—but they were there and the superior was not. Unfortunately, Brent does not discuss a technique to overcome this defect. The following reviews some methods that your readers may wish to explore. I consider myself qualified only in that I do actively try to develop war games. I currently am developing a strategic simulation of Vietnam; in that era, many units did fail to respond to superiors, especially in the later stages (post-Tet). To ignore this aspect would be a fatal flaw in both realism and playability.

For any wargame, there are many techniques possible to simulate uncertainty over a unit's ability to respond to orders from superiors. One technique is to require units to check for the ability to perform extraordinary tasks (i.e., the "task check" in *ASL*). A more general technique would be to assign all units an "initiative rating". For computer simulations, each unit would have to pass a random roll to determine if it would respond to the orders during a given time segment; for board games, this would be asking too much of the players. Rather, board wargamers could use this to represent the number of actions a unit may conduct during a time segment before it "hesitated".

A second category of techniques is to limit the number of units controllable by a player in any time segment. The *FIREPOWER* game system utilizes this method, but it does not allow for deviations from the fixed number.

Letters to the Editor . . .

A third technique is the use of leader units. In *WAR & PEACE*, most units may not move unless accompanied by a leader. *GETTYSBURG '77* has even more leadership influences that reduce the unilateral control by the player. Other possible techniques would have the combat resolution matrix explicitly produce a "No Engagement" result (1776) or random default actions due to a specific result (*SL/ASL* with recall), etc. In fact, most of the Avalon Hill games do attempt to represent the "fog of war"; the only flaw is that they cannot capture all types without losing playability. I suggest that, if it matters that much, the reader can make up optional rules and report these to *THE GENERAL* for universal use.

Steven Zatyko, Jr.
Skaneateles, New York

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

Thank you for publishing my article "Keep on Truk-In" in Volume 25, No. 4 of *THE GENERAL*. Please allow me to correct a few significant errors that crept in:

Page 37, Column 1, first full paragraph, line 18—should begin "northeast", not "northwest".

Page 38, third column, third paragraph should begin: "But the IJN cannot afford to lose three or four . . ."

Page 40, third column, second full paragraph, second sentence should read, "If your Turn 6 POC analysis . . ."

Page 42, second column, third full paragraph should begin: "If you don't control Indonesia or the Marshalls [on Turn 2] and still have 5 or 6 LBA left on Turn 3, put them all in Hawaii and hope for the best. The IJN's entire fleet will usually win, but if it doesn't the IJN should probably resign. If you still have 4-5 carriers left, consider sending one or two (unsupported by surface ships) to join the LBA in Hawaii—if the first round . . ."

Page 43, first column, fourth full paragraph, eighth line should read ". . . Turn 6 as in the 'concede 29 POC' type . . ."

Page 44, second column, first full paragraph, second sentence should end with "balanced", not "unbalanced".

Alan Applebaum
Somerville, Massachusetts

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

As a faithful buyer of *THE GENERAL* for the past year and owner of several hundred dollars worth of Avalon Hill games, I feel a need to tell you one problem of this hobby and offer some constructive suggestions.

For the past five years I have enjoyed your games to the fullest. I own every type of AH game there is, including *WAR AT SEA*, all seven *ASL* modules, and a half-dozen Victory games (which I think are almost as good as yours). However, there is one catch in this "average" gamer description—I just turned 15 years old. A short time back, another 15-year-old from Iowa addressed the flagrant age-bias in gaming and, although you did print his letter I have yet to see any other words on the subject from anyone in *THE GENERAL*.

One example of this age-bias is the weird occurrence that happened to me a week ago. After having an Opponents Wanted ad in issue 25-3 for *ASL* players, I received a phone call about it. The man on the other end didn't identify himself or ask any questions besides, "How old are you?" After my reply of "15", he laughed and hung up. I think this issue deserves some space, perhaps in the AH Philosophy, encouraging older players to try playing with us teens—just once perhaps, and see what happens—it might surprise them. One can be assured that a younger player will try his darndest to show his skill.

The next thing, besides some mention in the magazine, that Avalon Hill must do is gear itself towards younger players even more. Several writers in your 25th Anniversary issue suggested that simple, fun games should be made to in-

roduce folks to our hobby. Act on this! And please don't cite *DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD*, either. I hardly consider that appropriate for my age group. I can tell you from down here in the trenches that most teens don't make the jump from D&D to *ANZIO* because they have this view of wargames—fostered by many of you older folk—as simulations that require hours of rules reading, heavy analysis, and number-crunching. Some suggestions:

1. Make more of the fun, multi-player games like *ENEMY IN SIGHT* and *KREMLIN*. My fantasy-gaming friends here are slowly being converted to wargames like *ENEMY IN SIGHT* and *DIPLOMACY*. Teenagers are much more social than the over-30 crowd and truly enjoy the multi-player games. Some new "classics" are also needed to introduce those of my age group to gaming—like *TACTICS* and *AFRIKA KORPS* did for you oldsters.

2. Run some contests for young players. Maybe a separate contest in every other issue just for young gamers involving either simple games, or on the "classics". We have too much of disadvantage now because of little experience. No need for prizes—that alone might keep the older readers out—just some recognition is fine.

3. Include more younger players in the play-testing. It seems like every *ASL* module has the same old crop of playtesters. Give Mark Nixon or Jim Stahler a break for a while and let some young people try their hand. It can't hurt to use fifteen of the old-boys club and maybe five new guys, right? Don't tell me that they might be too immature to handle it. Any teen who is devoted enough to save money for games and smart enough to be able to play them not only shows dedication, but certainly enough intelligence to handle a playtest. Practically all of the big names in wargaming started in the '60s with the classics when they were youngsters. What will happen when they start fading away?

By the way, I'd just like to set the record straight on the maturity and intelligence of young gamers. Most of the prejudices young gamers face seem to be based on experiences of older gamers at conventions years ago. Just as judgements on blacks' intelligence shouldn't be based on that of their slave ancestors, our maturity and ability should not be based on a 13-year-old D&D fanatic who played *STALINGRAD* against at the 1973 Gen Con. Do you view all wargamers from Iowa critically because of a bad experience with one? Or judge all female gamers a certain way because of one female opponent? Etc.

Well, that is about it. Thanks very much for everything; all of you have given me hours of pleasure. Also, I would like to compliment Mr. Martin on the incredible change in *THE GENERAL* the past couple of years. After looking at a few two- and three-year old issues I realized that most all of the readers' complaints no longer exist today. Good luck, and as long as you make wargames, some of us will Buy 'em!

Aaron Schwobel
Kalamazoo, Michigan

It does continue to amaze me that so many adults (in age only, it appears) who decry the greying and diminishing numbers of our fellow hobbyists also turn their backs on the younger players. They denigrate their abilities and intelligence loudly and often, and so manage to help accelerate the problems they wring their hands over. I've had the pleasure of playing against a number of young players, at conventions, by post, and in social gatherings in my hometown. Those who have taken the time to learn to play wargames are invariably skilled and devoted to this hobby (more than many "adults" I've faced), although they may lack polish as yet. But, of course, that polish comes with experience—which they can't get unless they play against many gamers of all ages and backgrounds.

*As for what we can do here at Avalon Hill, I think the release of games such as *ENEMY IN SIGHT*, *GETTYSBURG '88*, *PLATOON*, and others is a step in the right direction. Certainly I am making a conscious effort to feature and cover some of these titles in *THE GENERAL*. And, I'd here like to encourage any younger wargamers who might wish to playtest new titles not to hesitate to write us offering the services of their group. Don Greenwood, Bob McNamara, Craig Taylor and I would most assuredly value your*

*opinions and input on *ASL*, or any of the projects under way. After all, the impetus for the initial growth of this hobby, and most of the creativity and enthusiasm in design and playtesting, came from a bunch of teenagers back in the late '50s and early '60s. Have we so forgotten our roots that we now drive away those who have as much to contribute in the future—simply because they haven't graduated from high school yet?*

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin,

I have played Avalon Hill games since I was ten—20 years of happy gaming. While wargaming seems to attract its share of eccentrics, most wargamers I've met have been kind, gracious individuals. This makes a recent event even more disheartening.

After 20 years of solitary play and only occasional FTF gaming, I placed an Opponents Wanted ad in the most recent *GENERAL*. Either you or I goofed, because my address contained one number that was slightly inaccurate. Last week I received a letter addressed to precisely this inaccurate address (my postman took some initiative). It arrived only days after *THE GENERAL* reached subscribers' homes and before it reached the hobby shops. Its postmark was from Atlanta. It didn't take Sherlock Holmes to figure out the letter was from a *GENERAL* subscriber in the Atlanta area.

It was a chain letter. Now, I realize chain letters are just a nuisance and rank significantly below homelessness and AIDS in importance. But I was incensed that a wargamer would victimize a fellow hobbyist with this sort of harassment, and use *THE GENERAL* as his accomplice. If there is anything you can do about this situation, let me know; I am sending a xerox of the address on the letter in case there's a way you can trace it.

On a more positive note, my compliments on *THE GENERAL*. It is better than ever, as are the wonderful new games *TAHGC* is releasing. Keep it up.

Michael E. King
Fort Mitchell, Kentucky

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin,

I keep telling myself that I am too old for this habit, but everytime my subscription to *THE GENERAL* expires I end up renewing it (as I recently did). When the first issue of the new subscription got here, I found that one of the two issues I missed was of particular interest. I am enclosing your re-subscription letter and hoping that you'll honor my request for the missed issue. While I am at it, I am ordering the new *UP FRONT* expansion module. I rarely play anymore, but have never lost interest in the hobby. My son will be turning seven next month and perhaps he will enjoy it all too, as I have—going back to *TACTICS II* sometime in the early '60s.

THE GENERAL remains an excellent publication. I enjoy it cover to cover when it arrives. The "Meet the 50" feature reminds me that regular people with responsible jobs still like games. It's comforting! The older I get, the more interested I get in simpler games. The card games are very good; the dinosaur game has worked well. But the very thought of *ASL* causes gas.

The last issue of *THE GENERAL* (25-4) reminded me how much we used to play *WS&M* when all us college chums first got married and before the kids, divorces and corporate transfers all but eliminated that special comradeship. Keep up the good work with the magazine. Thanks for the entertainment, and good times, and memories.

Les Swanson
Richardson, Texas

In those instances where a renewing subscriber might have missed one or two issues, Avalon Hill still offers a slight break on the price of replacing these. However, if readers will glance over the "Back Issues" listing elsewhere in this issue, it should be noted that our surplus stocks of a number of recent issues have already been sold out. While this is certainly gratifying to those of us who labor on the magazine, it does mean that many folk who might wish to learn more about one of the new games we've featured are out of luck. The moral: if you wish to obtain a copy of a recent issue, please order it quickly, for sales of recent back issues have increased significantly. As much as we'd wish otherwise, the fact that you may be a long-time subscriber has no bearing, for we can't supply what we do not have.

SPECIAL AIR SERVICE

The SAS and FIREPOWER

By James P. Werbaneth



Many countries have special operations forces. However, the British *Special Air Service* (SAS) meets such high standards of excellence and has accumulated such an impressive record of accomplishment that it is probably the best in the world at this time. It has a unique ability to perform a wide variety of tasks in almost any environment, and with the utmost secrecy and discretion when necessary.

The SAS's origin lies in the disbanding of the Layforce Commando in Africa early in World War II. A Layforce officer, Lieutenant David Stirling, during his idle period, originated the concept of a small special forces unit raiding behind the extended Axis supply lines, inserted by parachute and not requiring a standard Commando's naval support. Stirling's new unit would rely on individual initiative and "natural fighter" characteristics to give it the effectiveness of a much larger force. The basic unit was to be a "team" of four soldiers. This number was chosen as, although leaders are important to any military organization, Stirling wished to inhibit the development of lower-level leaders who might suppress initiative in others. Thus, the four-man unit that was to become basic to the SAS was less a standard military unit than a highly-cohesive team of highly-motivated individuals.

The Special Air Service could not have come into existence without Stirling's own audacity. Recovering in a Cairo hospital from a parachute mishap, the junior officer paid an unannounced and quite uninvited visit to GHQ Cairo and Lt.-General Neil Ritchie, deputy to the Middle East theater commander, Sir Claude Auchinleck. He would have seen the latter, but Auchinleck was not in the office, so Stirling had to be satisfied with Ritchie. Both generals were highly impressed by Stirling's proposal. Stirling was promoted to Captain and allowed to recruit 66 other Layforce alumni. In order to confuse Axis intelligence of its actual strength, the new unit was given the rather grandiose name of "Special Air Service" in 1941.

It quickly began operations against enemy aircraft in concert with the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG). Before the end of the war in the desert, the SAS had destroyed over 400 enemy planes, plus much other war material. In August 1942, it was augmented by 60 French paratroopers and given regimental status as the "1st SAS Regiment."

Not always did it meet with success. Early raids were hampered by weather and a lack of special operations training among ranking staff officers, both of which resulted in unnecessary casualties. David Stirling himself was captured in Tunisia, and his subsequent escape attempts earned him a place in Colditz. His brother William raised and com-

manded a second SAS regiment in pre-invasion raids on Sicily and Italy, then operations in Greece, the Adriatic and Aegean.

Both regiments were called to England in March 1944 and expanded with French and Belgian volunteers—and a long-range communications unit—thus becoming the "1st SAS Brigade." Soon after, the Brigade began parachuting teams into France to aid the resistance and to prepare for the coming Normandy landings. By the time of the invasion, there were about 40 SAS bases scattered throughout France. From them, mainly four-man patrols harassed German communications and acquired intelligence (including valuable targeting information for the RAF).

In the crucible of World War II, another distinguishing trait of the SAS emerged. David Stirling wrote after the war:

The traditional idea of a crack regiment was one officered by the aristocracy and, indeed, these regiments deservedly won great renown . . . In the SAS we share with the Brigade of Guards a deep respect for quality, but we have an entirely different outlook.

We believe, as did the ancient Greeks who originated the word "aristocracy", that every man with the right attitude and talents, regardless of his birth and riches, has a capacity in his own lifetime of reaching that status in its true sense . . . All ranks in the SAS are "one company" in which a sense of class is both alien and ludicrous.

The later incarnation of the SAS would continue its egalitarianism, unusual for the British Army. In time, even formal rank would become less an indicator of deference and seniority than one of responsibility and achievement in the SAS aristocracy, by no means preventing the use of first names between officers and troopers for instance. Sometimes mistaken for slackness, like the sometimes scruffy appearance of SAS men, it is a sign of the nearly familial cohesiveness of a body of true professionals.

Special forces are often resented by the conventional arms for siphoning off the best soldiers and best potential leaders. Also, orthodox soldiers who rightly believe that conventional units bear the brunt of prosecuting a war look askance at the notoriety of the special forces, whose contributions are often difficult to measure.

So it was at the close of the Second World War, when all British Army special and covert units, denigrated as "mobs for jobs", were disbanded. The SAS did not escape, although a reserve "Territorial 21 SAS" was formed in 1947 to give Britain some special forces capability. In the decades to come, this reacceptance of Stirling's concept would serve Britain well. With the decline of the colonial order, the SAS would allow London to protect its interests where it could no longer dominate. The SAS would also see highly controversial though extremely important service in the United Kingdom itself.

COUNTERINSURGENCY & REINCARNATION

When the SAS was reborn, it was for counterinsurgency—a function that it would perform for decades to come. Indirectly it owed its rebirth to the destabilization of the European empires in

Asia by the Japanese, and to the Malayan Communists. Since the 1930s there had been a small Communist party in Malaya (MCP), a group dominated by ethnic Chinese. During World War II it became an effective force in anti-Japanese resistance with close cooperation with the Special Operations Executive (SOE). The highly competent MCP leader, Chin Peng, was honored by the British Empire and participation in the Victory Parade in London.

Post-war Malaya remained economically, socially and politically disrupted by the Japanese 1942 victory however. In 1947, Chin Peng took advantage of this by reactivating his wartime organizations and beginning an insurgency. Much of the early Communist effort was centered around terrorism, although in its first year the "Malayan People's Anti-British Army" was able to organize 4000 guerrillas into eight regional regiments.

The initial British effort depended on an inadequate police force. The military units were small and scattered, and the British themselves were slow to realize the danger of the rebellion. In 1948 the High Commissioner, Sir Edward Gent, declared a state of emergency and the legislature passed an "Emergency Regulations Act" providing for draconian penalties for aiding the rebels, now fighting as the *Malayan Races Liberation Army* (MRLA).

For the next two years, the British counterinsurgency was difficult. Reinforcement by veteran constables from Palestine did not entirely rectify police shortcomings. Military operations tended to use too much force, too late to accomplish anything. For example, one battalion—the Green Howards—spent most of the last four months of 1949 in the jungle, but managed to kill only a single guerrilla!

The turning point for the war, and for the still dormant SAS, came in 1951. The then Director of Operations in Malaya, Sir Harald Briggs, submitted what would come to be known as the "Briggs Plan". He saw the war as a competition in government, and that the British could offer more to the people than any possible insurgent group, thus denying "hearts and minds" to the enemy. Villagers were to be moved to more easily defended and controlled centers and rebel food supplies interdicted. In sum, the MRLA was supposed to be deprived of the bulk of its support, and the benefits of remaining support were to be also denied.

Implementing the Briggs Plan would require a new special forces unit. Not coincidentally, one of Briggs' chief collaborators was a former SAS brigade commander named J.M. "Mad Mike" Calvert. It followed that the new unit was to be called the "Malayan Scouts (SAS)". Calvert saw this as precedent for other irregular warfare units, raised locally at times of crisis and then dissolved when their work was done. The Malayan Scouts (SAS) was not supposed to survive the MRLA for long.

The new unit was formed into three disparate squadrons. "A Squadron" consisted of a motley mixture of special forces veterans, regular army misfits, and even ten French Foreign Legion deserters who jumped ship en route to Indochina. "B Squadron" was drawn from the Territorial 21 SAS, diverted from a projected role in the Korean War. A recruitment drive in Rhodesia provided the manpower for "C Squadron". Supporting these squadrons were Chinese interpreters from Hong Kong (former colleagues of Calvert's Burma actions

against the Japanese) and native trackers from Borneo.

The 21st SAS troopers and the Rhodesians were appalled by the unprofessional, undisciplined outlook and demeanor of A Squadron. In time, A Squadron's problems spread with the dilution of B Squadron by new recruits. A prank in 1953 in which some drunken B Squadron men welcomed their new commander with a large bomb in the officers' mess resulted in the immediate expulsion of the Senior NCO and some 16 others back to their old units, which led to a sharp drop in disciplinary problems in B Squadron. It also established the role of expulsion from the SAS, in effect disownment by an extended and adoptive family, as the ultimate and most feared punishment in the unit.

The Malayan Scouts (SAS) took the Briggs Plan deep into the jungle. Heavily-laden groups of up to 14 troopers penetrated into the interior to set up bases, from which three- and four-man teams fanned out to interdict MRLA logistic routes. The SAS was also instrumental in taking civic and self-defense programs to the aboriginals, who had been universally terrorized into supporting the Communists. The effort benefitted from the SAS expansion to four squadrons in late 1951, although fever and exhaustion forced Calvert's return to Britain about this time.

The Malayan campaign marked the birth of the inventiveness that has become integral to the SAS identity. This unit pioneered the use of helicopter resupply (originally provided by the Royal Navy), although this was too noisy and prone to alerting any Communists in the area of British activity. Starting in February 1952, it developed a technique called "tree-jumping" to parachute into the jungle. By this method, a parachutist became purposely snagged in the high tree tops and then lowered himself to the ground with long straps or cords. Although its first use did not result in casualties, tree-jumping was extremely hazardous and wisely not used in other jungle campaigns.

One inventive attempt to relieve the burden of supply from the backs of the troopers was the use of elephants. The main obstacle to elephant transport lay not in finding the animals, but acquiring the required *insurance!* This required negotiating a maze of army red tape, but the Malayan Scouts (SAS) were equal to even that task. Unfortunately, the at last properly-insured elephants refused to enter the jungle. The SAS found hacking out airstrips more successful for supply.

Between the work of the SAS and the newer regular force strategy of operating in broken-down units, and the Briggs Plan to sway the villagers, the MRLA was steadily driven back and defeated. Despite the escape of Chin Peng, the last phase of the war was over by 1960.

The end of the Malayan war also nearly saw the end of the SAS. The July 1957 defense budget cuts forced the amalgamation of many British regiments and almost claimed the SAS. In a compromise, the Malayan Scouts (SAS) entered the permanent order of battle as the "22 SAS". The conditions were that the SAS *not* engage in continuous action in the Third World, and that its strength be reduced from the four squadrons then in Malaya to two.

Meeting the last condition was surprisingly easy due to the unit's depleted strength and the role of the non-British contingents. A, B and D squadrons were amalgamated into A and D. A New Zealand squadron was sent home. Previously returned to Rhodesia, C squadron was downgraded in size for several years. (It was later expanded into the Rhodesian SAS Regiment, operating separately from the British SAS before and after the 1964 unilateral declaration of independence by that country.)

The 22nd SAS still had a precarious hold on life however. After Malaya, the SAS officers began the practice of volunteering for any and all conflicts and

taking on new functions to justify its existence. Aggressive lobbying for deployment to Borneo in 1963 to fight Indonesia not only insured the regiment's survival, but caused the restoration of the lost squadrons and the discarding of the ban on Third World campaigning.

The next real opportunity for SAS counterinsurgency operations occurred in 1964, when a rebellion broke out in South Arabia (South Yemen). The on-going war in Borneo already had 22nd SAS occupied in a far different environment, but the unit was able to fight in South Arabia by rotating squadrons between the two campaigns.

Whereas British counterinsurgency in Malaya had been a major success, albeit one long in the offing, in South Arabia it was a preordained failure due to lack of prospects for popular support and British political mistakes. Contributing to the unrest was the shotgun marriage from 1959 of the backcountry shiekdoms with urban Aden. The establishment of the Middle East Command Headquarters at Aden helped generate even more intense opposition to British presence.

Contributing further were a number of external factors. The hereditary Iman of (North) Yemen was deposed in September 1962 by leftist army officers, although he continued to resist with a British-sponsored guerrilla war. The new republic was quickly consolidated with the help of Egyptian troops. North Yemen and Egypt incited and supported the growing rebellion in the South Arabian Federation, as did the Soviet Union. There is some evidence that the KGB, helped by the British traitor Kim Philby, played a major role in the destabilization of Yemen.

London aggravated the political situation. The British government decided in July 1964 to give South Arabia its independence in 1968, retaining Aden to support its commitments in Singapore and Hong Kong. In February 1966, Harold Wilson's Labour government announced that, in fact, Aden would be evacuated at the independence. Then, the next February saw the withdrawal deadline moved up to November 1967. Thus Britain squandered its credibility and appeared determined to lose and leave as early as possible.

The A Squadron of 22nd SAS arrived in April 1964. Intelligent aggressiveness is a key SAS asset, but the first actions in Yemen indicate that aggressiveness is a double-edged weapon when it is less than prudent. The SAS was not prudent this time. Despite blistering temperatures, it refused a significant period of acclimatization, preferring to go to work immediately. Thus it entered, unprepared, into one of the most overambitious operations in its post-World War II history.

The Radfan Hills were the key to controlling the border with North Yemen and interdicting rebel supplies. The British planned to seize two hilltops called "Rice Bowl" and "Cap Badge" with a force of SAS, two battalions of the local Federal Regular Army (FRA) infantry, elements of the 45th Royal Marine Commando, a troop of Royal Engineers, a Royal Artillery battery, a Royal Tank Regiment and a small force from the Parachute Regiment. The Marines were assigned to march up the Dhala Road through hostile territory and take the more northerly Rice Bowl. A Parachute Regiment company was to drop at the foot of Cap Badge. Both actions were to take place at night. Normally the para's own pathfinder company would advance in and set up the drop zone, but here the job went to a nine-man SAS patrol under Captain Robin Edwards.

The Edwards patrol set out on 29 April 1964. However, it quickly was discovered by hostile tribesmen and forced into a battle that its demanding march schedule could not allow for. The patrol came close to annihilation, with Edwards and his radioman being killed and beheaded. "Who dares wins," is the revealing motto of the SAS, but in

the Radfans it dared too much. As for the operation, the Marines and paras eventually had to mount a six-week, peak-by-peak drive to subdue the seriously underestimated opposition in the Radfans.

The SAS also participated in urban covert action in the port of Aden and in strikes against rebel bases in the Dhofar province of the neighboring Kingdom of Oman. That realm was seriously misruled by the reactionary and aged Sultan Sa'id bin Taimur, a key British ally, and would figure prominently in the SAS's history. The Dhofari rebels, allied with those in South Arabia, were able to escape from an SAS-Irish Guards frontal assault quite opposed to the SAS way of thinking.

The British left Aden on 29 November 1967. The Cairo-backed *Front for the Liberation of South Yemen* (FLOSY) was defeated in a fratricidal war by its erstwhile Communist allies, the *National Liberation Front* (NLF). In the end, an important Indian Ocean state entered the Communist bloc and the USSR gained an extremely valuable port.

In contrast with South Arabia, the 22nd SAS's involvement in Oman was very successful. The 1966 incursion failed to round up the Dhofar rebels, but this was a mere sideshow to the greater struggle in South Arabia, and Sultan Sa'id's regime would have only provoked more rebellion anyway. More significant was the Jabal Akhdar campaign.

Jabal Akhdar (literally *Green Mountain*) is a high plateau in northern Oman actually hospitable to human habitation, in stark contrast to the rest of the coastal regions. Oman's climate is so hot and miserable that an old Iranian proverb calls the country a prelude to Hell. However, the sides of Jabal Akhdar are so rugged and conducive to the defense that it had not been militarily conquered in over 900 years, when the Persians did so only at great cost.

The A Squadron arrived on 9 January 1959 to spearhead a British-Omani drive onto the plateau. Due to the British domestic political climate, the suppression of the rebellion had to be quick and nearly bloodless from a British point of view, despite a determined and copiously armed enemy. The SAS pulled it off. Marching at night and relying on audacity, the troopers opened Jabal Akhdar to the conventional forces, scaled the highest peak, and routed the tribesmen with only three SAS dead. Four years of Omani and British failure in the area ended with a bold stroke that was spectacularly successful both militarily and politically. It also enhanced the SAS's reputation as *the* force able to undertake difficult assignments.

If Oman's physical climate was awful, the human element was worse. Sultan Sa'id was an old autocrat more suited to the 12th Century than the 20th, although to suggest so might be unfair to the notable medieval Arab rulers (who were more enlightened). Sa'id refused to allow such "amenities" as schools or hospitals in his kingdom, and reserved the right to be arbiter of every major and minor decision. Omanis who wanted an education had to travel to other Arab countries, or the Soviet bloc, becoming political exiles in the process. Exacerbating matters even further was the Sultan's rather nasty habit of collectively punishing communities where violations of his many anti-modernity edicts occurred by cementing over their wells. The level of political discussion was crude and tended to involve guns. It is a wonder that Oman did not suffer from constant rebellion in every region. Not that Sa'id had much to do on the personal level with the suffering of his people. He ruled through a strata of foreigners, including a mercenary Arab and Pakistani army with many British officers.

Oman's importance to Britain stemmed from its control of the Musandam Peninsula, a spit of land jutting into the Straits of Hormuz, making Oman a key to Western oil supplies. Too, oil was discovered in commercial quantities in Oman itself in

1964. This threatened to thrust the kingdom into the modern world, although Sa'id was less than enthusiastic. As he told the British economist John Townsend, sent to advise in its exploitation, "Our people are not yet ready for development."

Trouble began in the Dhofar province in 1965, when Iraqi-trained natives commenced a sporadic guerrilla war. Dhofar, the biblical land of "Ophir", is a guerrilla's dream of hills, numerous ravines and caves, and monsoon-watered lush vegetation in the narrow coastal strip. The people are warlike and harsh, with traditional ties to those of South Yemen, and have the tendency to view the Sultan of Oman as a distant and contemptible figure.

Nor was the slowly growing Dhofar rebellion the only threat. Within a year, Sa'id weathered an assassination attempt by his own palace guards (who managed to miss at point-blank range while he was inspecting them). Legend states that the Sultan left his wounded Pakistani guard commander and drove himself to the main army garrison, where he said in perfect English to the British commander, "We seem to be having a little trouble down at the palace; I wonder if you would be so good as to come down?" Opposition continued to mount throughout the next five years. In Dhofar, the insurgents benefitted from South Yemen independence and the installation of a Communist regime there. Britain became more concerned about the security of the Strait of Hormuz and less with that of the ruler of Oman.

One conspiracy finally came to a head on 23 July 1970. Sheikh Braik bin Hamud al-Ghafari, the governor of Dhofar, strode into the royal palace at Salalah and demanded that Sa'id abdicate. Also in on the plot were Braik's good friend Qaboos, the son and heir of the Sultan, and certain key British administrators. The Sultan reacted to Braik's affront by taking a pistol from his desk and shooting. Braik was wounded by one bullet, another killed an unfortunate servant, and Sa'id managed to shoot himself in the foot and stomach! That night he surrendered to a British colonel and abdicated in favor of Qaboos. Sa'id and Braik were flown to a hospital in a neighboring country in the same jet, separated only by a curtain. Later the RAF flew the deposed ruler to London; Sa'id died there two years later.

At this time the SAS was undergoing a trying period of relative inactivity. The wars in South Yemen and Borneo were over, and the unit had not yet become involved in the affair in Northern Ireland in a big way. It spent its time testing weapons and prison security, and acting as bodyguards for British officials. The SAS also trained foreign special forces and police forces, including the Shah of Iran's. There were the inevitable rumors that British special forces had no future and that the SAS would be eliminated. Oman gave the 22nd SAS what it needed and valued most—a chance to prove itself in combat once more.

Immediately after the palace coup, an SAS team arrived in Oman. It provided an instant, trustworthy bodyguard for the new Sultan. Qaboos was also presented with a preformulated SAS "win strategy" for the Dhofar rebellion. It embraced four elements: 1) a medical campaign to bring basic care to the province's 50000 people; 2) a veterinary assistance program to improve the quality of the livestock and improve water supplies; 3) an intelligence effort, supporting military activities and targeting enemy cohesion and morale; and 4) "psychological warfare" to induce surrender, including civic action programs and amnesty that could outbid anything the opposition could offer, echoing the principles of the Briggs Plan.

One of the first SAS operations in Dhofar was a leaflet drop. It resulted in the surrender of Muhammed Suhail, one of the best rebel commanders. A farmer-soldier in the British-officered Trucial Oman Scouts who then received officer's

training at Aldershot, Suhail had been disillusioned by Sa'id's regime upon his return from Britain. With Qaboos now in power, he believed that matters had changed for the better and came in to work with the SAS and the monarch's SAS-led intelligence staff.

Soon the SAS strategy began to bear other fruit. Guerrillas were surrendering at progressively increasing rates. The most useful were screened with the help of Suhail and organized into irregular counter-guerrilla units called *firqas*, which were then trained by a British Army team drawn from the 22nd SAS. The *firqas* were one of the most effective means of fighting the insurgents, if they were coupled with conventional units and if they could overcome their tendency to surrender the natural advantages of speed and surprise by calling for extensive fire support. *Firqas* also sparked debate in the SAS over their proper level of logistical support due to the fact that they sometimes extravagantly wasted ammunition.

The defections that filled the ranks of the *firqas* caused some friction within the rebel camp between the Islamic fundamentalist faction and the *Dhofar Liberation Front* (DLF), a Marxist-Leninist organization. Open fighting occurred between the factions, causing further desertions, thus establishing a vicious cycle.

The SAS too had to walk a fine political line. Unlike the other Britons in Oman, its troopers were answerable only to London, without formal subordination to Qaboos. Perhaps more important was the reluctance of the British public to support "dirty little wars in distant places", or at least the wars that it knew about. So the SAS role had to be again a discreet one with fairly small presence, especially in the beginning, and few casualties.

It was this need for discretion that kept the decisive battle of the war from being widely publicized. It luckily occurred when G Squadron had just arrived to relieve B Squadron, so two SAS squadrons were in the country instead of the usual one. An elite force of the DLF was assembled to attack the *firqa* training center at Mirbat on 18 July 1972. Some 250 guerrillas armed with AK47 assault rifles, a variety of machineguns, mortars (up to 82mm), two 75mm recoilless rifles and one "Carl Gustav" rocket-launcher split into ten-man teams. They launched an uncharacteristic frontal attack on the town.

Facing this assault was the ten-man British Army trianing team from B Squadron, 30 soldiers from Northern Oman armed with .303 rifles, 40 *firqa* members with FN rifles and light machineguns, and 25 policemen of the Dhofar Gendarmerie with FNs. The heavy weapons consisted of an old 25-iber artillery piece and a .50 caliber machinegun and a single 81mm mortar belonging to the SAS.

The attack was determined, and the DLF rebels were seemingly willing to pay the price in blood to take Mirbat. The fortunate presence of G Squadron had its effect when the new unit made a timely intervention by helicopter. In the end the losses were two SAS dead and two seriously wounded. The Dhofar Gendarmes lost one man dead and another wounded, and one soldier of the Oman artillery was killed. The bloodiness of the battle is better illustrated by its catastrophic effects on the DLF force. Thirty rebel corpses and ten wounded were left behind during the withdrawal, although the rebels admitted losing far more than that. Likely wounds caused more deaths later. Defeat sparked more desertion and additional fractional strife within the rebel force killed still more. In the end, less than half the assault force survived.

The rebel cause now went from bad to worse. By the start of 1975, they were being pressed inexorably toward the South Yemeni border by the SAS, *firqas*, Omani regulars, and even units from Jordan and Iran. A January SAS-*firqa* strike near the

frontier degenerated into a battle of attrition among the caves, one the DLF lost, suffering a blow to its prestige as serious as Mirbat.

The allies used advanced surveillance devices and airpower to seal the border with South Yemen. The Yemenis reacted by using their own heavy artillery against the Omani side. However, the last open route into Dhofar was cut in October 1975, thus insuring the allied victory. The war ended a few months later with a ceasefire between Oman and South Yemen. Today Oman remains a traditionally-ruled country, though Sultan Qaboos is far more tolerant of the fruits of the modern world than was his father. In the era of the rise of Khomeini and the Gulf War, with their unpleasant ramifications for the Western oil imports, the victory in the Dhofar (spearheaded so efficiently and quietly by the 22nd SAS) is more important than ever.

URBAN COVERT ACTION

By no means is the SAS limited to operations in sparsely-populated tropical jungles or blazingly hot, waterless mountains. It has shown a major capability for functioning in cities as well. Its first real taste of urban covert operations came in Aden. While FLOSY and the NLF fought in the mountains, their urban terrorist wings were active in the crucial port city. They struck, to a large extent, at the meager British intelligence capability by killing Special Branch officers and their Yemeni contacts.

The SAS adopted a countermeasure dubbed "counter-gangs" or, in SAS parlance, *Keeni-Meeni*, a term of Swahili origin for the stealthy movement of a snake through the grass. This method had, in other wars, involved sending out teams of loyal natives and former rebels led by British officers who blended into the local population, striking at enemy targets that presented themselves. It was a lethal form of undercover work liable to become even more dangerous if, unknown to each other, two units chanced to operate in the same "parish" and mistook each other for real terrorists. The technique was not new. It had been used before against the Mau Mau (where the SAS made a brief appearance). Similar "Q" units operated in Cyprus and Palestine, although in the latter the participants tended to be Palestine policemen who were also wartime SAS veterans.

This was the approach taken in Aden, where Britain's eagerness to leave gave little hope of "turning" terrorists; why defect to an enemy who is going to leave the country in a few years in any case. Therefore the counter-gangs were manned by SAS troopers. The first criterion for membership was an Arab-looking appearance. Fijians, long an important component of the SAS, qualified often because of their swarthy complexion, despite their generally taller builds. Europeans with Semitic-looking features were selected, though a deep suntan could be necessary. The second important qualification was an ability to pull a pistol from the folds of the voluminous local clothing and shoot it accurately, quickly.

The 22nd SAS had some dramatic successes. Once, two Fijians sitting in an unmarked civilian car saw two Arabs approaching with guns drawn. The troopers were the only ones to get a chance to shoot. At another time, a counter-gang made one of its few arrests, of a Yemeni "Cairo Grenadier". These brave warriors favored grenade attacks against parties of school children. The prisoner was subsequently shot to death while escaping en route to the SAS headquarters for interrogation. Indicating the product of bungled British policy, he was later identified as an FRA corporal, one of a growing number of "loyal" Arabs who had turned and were working for the rebels.

Nonetheless, 22nd SAS officers did not perceive any great short-term benefit from *Keeni-Meeni* in Aden. What it did achieve was the acquisition of

skill and experience in working in an urban environment; and among the SAS new and potentially valuable skills are always welcome.

Other regiments put out undercover patrols of their own, and although they might have lacked the skills for such work, they were sometimes more successful than the SAS. The Prince of Wales' Own Regiment of Yorkshire copied the SAS technique of using a man in uniform or European civilian dress as terrorist "bait", and its Major H.M. Tillotson won the British Empire Medal for his role as a decoy. Although two of its men were once seriously wounded by a SAS counter-gang, a ten-man team of the Royal Anglian Regiment captured large numbers of weapons and 14 terrorists during a single six-month tour of duty.

The activities of the SAS in Aden merely provided background for the next urban area of operations for them—Northern Ireland. Whereas Aden had been a lost cause from the start, Britain was not going to give up in Ulster. Not a vestige of colonialism, this was an integral part of the United Kingdom.

The eruption of the "Troubles" coincided with the assumption of one more role by the SAS. As the older intelligence services moved into the fields of technical and signal intelligence ("sigint"), the SAS took on the traditional intelligence function of running human agents. More than solely the best special forces unit, it also now became an espionage body. The SAS involvement in Northern Ireland is unusual in that the unit did not ask for it. The SAS had volunteered for the conflicts in South Yemen, Borneo and Oman, and would later volunteer for service in the Falklands, but had the Troubles thrust upon it.

The first unit sent to Northern Ireland in 1969 was D Squadron of 22nd SAS. There it performed the intelligence-oriented role of stopping arms shipments to the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) from the Republic of Ireland to the south. This mission was cut short by the squadron's transfer to Oman.

The 22nd SAS was officially kept out of Ulster for a number of years after this initial brief involvement. The Dhofar war was the chief military reason. More important was the perception in London that an acknowledged SAS presence in Ireland would be a "political liability". Supporting this attitude was IRA propaganda, reflecting widespread beliefs on the rebel side, depicting the SAS as the deadly boogey-man of the British Army. Both Catholics and Protestants nicknamed it the "Special Assassination Squad" and regarded it as so discreet that when the SAS was publically recommitted there, there was a common belief that it had never really been withdrawn.

But the 22nd SAS did return in January 1978, in response to a series of Loyalist murders that enraged the Protestants. Although the Dhofar rebellion had officially ended in 1976, the SAS had a commitment to help guard the border for some time after which it had honored (so it was not as unemployed as the Labour government thought). Furthermore, the Troubles were the first episode in which the SAS would be employed in the British Isles, often in civilian clothing—something that David Stirling had always opposed. However, the unit's fearsome reputation among the IRA proved a military asset.

Not welcoming the SAS with open arms were the various intelligence agencies already working in the province. These had developed some effective methods of their own, such as the Military Reconnaissance Force ("Fred's"), turned IRA terrorists who worked as double agents for the Parachute Regiment. The police and intelligence services regarded the re-introduction of the SAS as an indictment of their own performance, and rightly felt they had a lot of ground to make up before becoming effective. The lone exception appears to

have been M.I.6, the foreign intelligence agency of Britain, which had had a close working relationship with the SAS in the past.

Complicating matters further was the legal status of the military. The civil authority was ultimately supreme, prohibiting the use of unprovoked gunfire and imposing strict rules of engagement, the violation of which could (and has) resulted in criminal proceedings. Said one trooper, "Letting the opposition shoot first is what we call the Irish Dimension." Moreover, the SAS was specifically barred from going south of the border. Ironically, in the readily conceded territory in South Arabia, the SAS was allowed to shoot at Yemeni terrorists at will, whereas in a war that Britain could not consider conceding, the unit was heavily restricted and left open to legal second-guessing.

It is a tribute to the effectiveness of the SAS that it has been able to live up to its reputation. Despite official prohibitions, troopers have crossed into Ireland to pick up Provos (members of the IRA) who are said to have "strayed" North. Other IRA men have been found unconscious and holding liquor bottles on the British side of the border. Likewise, the restrictive rules of engagement have not prevented the SAS from exercising considerable ambush skills; and the SAS has certainly fulfilled its intelligence role.

Sometimes the 22nd SAS has shown an interesting ability to subtly undermine the IRA. In one case, an SAS surveillance team foiled a pre-dawn bombing by tampering with the driver's alarm clock so that he awoke too late to make the rendezvous. British intelligence propaganda loudly supported the notion that the Provos were military incompetents who could not even make it to their own bombings on time. Far from amused, the humiliated IRA had the hapless driver shot.

The SAS retains a major, covert role in Northern Ireland. Because it is a unit highly given to secrecy in a shadow war, it may be some time before the SAS contribution becomes fully known—if ever.

THE RECONNAISSANCE CAMPAIGNS

The SAS took part in two campaigns in which its most important initial function was the acquisition of tactical and strategic intelligence, with an offensive irregular campaign following. These took place notably in Borneo and in the Falklands.

The Borneo "Confrontation" (as it is euphemistically called) was the result of the ambitions of Indonesia's president Achmed Sukarno, nicknamed the "Mad Doctor" by British forces in the area. It began with a series of indigenous but Indonesian-instigated guerrilla attacks in Brunei on 8 December 1962. A scratch force drawn from the Gurkhas, 45th Royal Marine Commando and the Queen's Own Highlanders put it down quickly and freed the rebels' European hostages. Yet it was obvious that a larger struggle was in the works.

The 22nd SAS was then constrained by the late-50s force reductions and non-interventionist doctrine. Also with a bearing on the future was a debate between two factions within the SAS community itself. The "Europeans" believed that the SAS future depended on finding a place in the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR), conducting reconnaissance and deep penetration in any general European war. The "Third Worlders" advocated involvement in real, immediate wars in the Third World instead of suffocating the 22nd SAS under the conventional army bureaucracy; some troopers argued that they had joined the SAS to escape BAOR. Others, outside the SAS, questioned the unit's utility and even proposed absorbing the remaining squadrons into the 16th Independent Parachute Brigade.

The "Europeans" had won this argument by the time of the Brunei unrest; 22nd SAS was being re-equipped for service in Europe and was training with American special service forces. This included

language and medical training in the United States that was unavailable in Britain, impressing the army establishment and gaining some respectability in Whitehall. With the commencement of the Borneo "war", the 22nd SAS commander—Lt.-Colonel Bob Woodhouse—lobbied for his unit's commitment. He argued that it could hone its jungle skills and, more important, provide dependable radio communications under extremely difficult atmospheric conditions. The SAS had just received a new transceiver, and Woodhouse had been studying the problems of long-distance communications in a nuclear environment. The SAS was sent to Borneo in January 1963.

Its first mission was establishing an intelligence cordon between Brunei and the British dependencies of North Borneo and Sarawak on one side and the Indonesian-held bulk of the island on the other. The border was over 700 miles long, and impossible to monitor with the handful of men available. The task could not have been accomplished without the active assistance of a network of natives. Many SAS troopers spoke the Malay tongue shared with the peoples of Malaya, thus expediting this cooperation. Also, Borneoese had worked with the unit before against the MRLA, and the SAS was able to work with many of its old colleagues. Further aiding the British cause was that most of the native peoples tended to look on it favorably.

This last condition was not taken for granted, however. British units engaged in civic action programs, and the authority and dignity of traditional tribal leaders was upheld as a matter of policy and practice. The "Confrontation" was not a British insurgency problem, as the enemy were Indonesian regulars who infiltrated into the British-defended enclaves. But the emphasis on local popular involvement and the perceived need to maintain the favor of the natives made it resemble one in response.

Significant to the SAS role was the participation of its offspring from elsewhere in the Commonwealth. Australia sent its 1st SAS Squadron, and present also was the 1st Ranger Squadron of the New Zealand SAS. These units would later use their Borneo experience to good effect in Vietnam. Of further significance was 22nd SAS use of the ArmaLite assault rifle (AR15, M-16) for the first time, establishing a practice of using American weapons that would be observed in the Falklands. Most important was the expansion of 22nd SAS as a long-term effort to strengthen Britain's special forces capability and ability to act in the Third World. B Squadron was restored through recruitment from BAOR. The Parachute Regiment's Guards Independent (pathfinder) Company went to Borneo to learn SAS-type roles, eventually becoming the nucleus of G Squadron.

The SAS function was one of recon and intelligence, with combat generally indicating that something had gone wrong. That changed as the war went on. The British slowly adopted a more active strategy, penetrating progressively deeper into Indonesia territory to ambush enemy columns and attack their bases. The SAS was in the forefront of the new British strategy. Due to political considerations, secrecy was paramount.

This shift in British strategy put great pressure on Indonesia. Sukarno's failures in Borneo and elsewhere led to the ruin of his reputation, and a March 1966 coup reduced him to a mere figurehead. An Indonesian-Malayan agreement in the fall ended the fighting. The conflict had been kept within limits by British discretion in general, and the SAS ability to cover its tracks in particular. Had the existence of the cross-border "killer teams" been provable to the outside world, it would have been a more acrimonious and probably longer and deadlier war. An ability to maintain secrets was thus a military and political boon.

The Falklands War was fought not against infiltrators in a steaming jungle, but against conventional forces in a cold, dark and treeless archipelago. Again the 22nd SAS volunteered to counter the Argentine gambit, sending two squadrons under its commander, Lt.-Colonel Mike Rose. G Squadron was embarked on the naval task force at Ascension Island; and D Squadron went ahead of the main force with M Company of the 42nd Royal Marine Commando and a party from the Royal Navy's Special Boat Section (SBS) to retake South Georgia.

At a meeting on the HMS *Hermes* on 16 April 1982, the role of the SAS and SBS was defined as having two parts: intelligence gathering and interdiction of Argentine forces, both before and after the counter-invasion. This was hindered by some tension between the SAS and the Royal Navy. For the 22nd SAS circumvented the formal chain of command by maintaining its own satellite links with its headquarters at Hereford, and the navy's HQ in London by relay. The Marine ground commander, Major-Gen. Jeremy Moore, resented this and believed that the SAS operated under its own authority at times rather than his, as ordered. Moreover, the informal appearance and behavior of the troopers disconcerted many naval officers and ranks aboard ship.

SAS relations with the SBS also encountered some obstacles, especially after post-invasion SAS and SBS patrols opened fire on each other by mistake (resulting in the death of one SBS Marine). There was a pre-existing rivalry between the units stemming from the army unit's greater notoriety, despite their remarkable similarities in organization, equipment, function and philosophy. Not too much should be made of this however, as cooperation between the two forces during and after the Falklands War was in the main exemplary, leading to the establishment of a joint headquarters responsible for all British special operations forces.

The first SAS operation was a near disaster, reflecting the same disregard for limitations that afflicted the Edwards patrol. Participating in the retaking of South Georgia, Captain John Hamilton insisted on landing his mountain troops on Fortuna Glacier on 21 April despite expert Royal Navy warnings of intolerable weather. That his command was not annihilated by exposure was due to the skill and perseverance of the Royal Navy helicopter pilot that evacuated it. Boat landings of SAS teams were likewise eventful, but not quite so potentially catastrophic. In the end, the defenders of isolated South Georgia surrendered to the SAS-SBS-Marine force.

On 1 May, the special forces teams were landed in the Falklands themselves by helicopter pilots wearing advanced American night-vision goggles. Six SBS teams were landed, primarily around potential landing sites. Three SAS teams were sent to West Falkland, and four to East Falkland. Their mission was reconnaissance of the Argentine forces. "We started out with a blank map of the Falklands," explained Brigadier Julian Thompson of the 3rd Commando Brigade, "and fired special forces like a shotgun across the islands to see what they found."

What they found was a defending enemy force with ample equipment equal or better in quality to that of the British. However, the Argentine line infantry were obviously sloppy, badly trained and clothed, incompetently led, and suffering from both poor morale and brittle unit cohesiveness. These traits would manifest themselves in combat, especially at Goose Green on 28 May. But SAS appraisals were sometimes regarded unfavorably by the soldiers and marines who would find the enemy something more than a pushover.

The most hazardous SAS operation of the war was surely its surveillance of mainland Argentine airfields, made all the more chancey by the absence of "burst" communications equipment. The SAS gave the Harrier pilots on *Hermes* and *Invincible*

vital seconds to intercept airstrikes, although discovery would have seriously undercut Britain's public assertion to be the unprovoked victim of Argentine aggression.

The 22nd SAS was the bane of Argentine airpower in the islands as well. General Mario Menendez relied on locally-based airplanes for fire support, and on a helicopter force to react to any invasion airmobility. Both had to be neutralized, and the SAS volunteered. On the night of 14 May, exactly one week before the 3rd Marine Brigade came ashore at San Carlos, 56 D Squadron troopers helicoptered to Pebble Island to hit Menendez's *Pucara* strike planes. In a brilliant raid, they destroyed all 11 aircraft and the fuel dump, catching the defenders by complete surprise. A half-hearted Argentinian counterattack collapsed when the officer leading it was killed. The British were extracted by helicopter in a Force 9 gale, with a total loss of only two wounded.

The Argentine helicopter force was destroyed as well. A four-man team from G Squadron (under Captain Alwin Wight) followed the unit through minefields and enemy positions for 26 days. Twice they called in Harrier airstrikes, only to have the targets fly away before the jets arrived. On the third try, the Argentines were caught on the ground and most of the helicopters destroyed. The Argentines were now deprived of their ability to meet the invasion rapidly, and on 28 May only two copters were available to reinforce Goose Green when the BBC stupidly announced the paras' attack in advance.

The SAS supported the San Carlos landing with as impressive firepower display near Darwin, making the defenders believe that a full-fledged British battalion was present there. Recon duties continued, and it was the SAS that made possible the risky but productive seizure of Mount Kent. After all this, the biggest loss of SAS personnel came not from enemy fire but from an albatross; the sea bird collided with a helicopter on 19 May, killing 18 veteran troopers in the resulting crash.

The special forces in the Falklands War had their problems (as shown by the SAS-SBS firefight and troubles on South Georgia). But they did everything that was asked of them and were instrumental in offsetting the significant quantitative Argentine edge in aircraft and ground forces. This is one of the primary reasons for the impressive British victory.

A DANGEROUS WORLD

The 1980s have not seen the SAS confined to urban covert action in Northern Ireland or supporting conventional warfare in the South Atlantic. The unit has taken on new tasks, sometimes even more crucial and less manpower-intensive than its older ones.

In July 1981, a team under Major Ian Crooke, 22nd SAS second-in-command, slipped into the West African country of Gambia to put down a Libyan-inspired coup against President Dawda Jawara. The troopers freed four hostages (including the president's wife and hospitalized child), then led a Senegalese assault on Banjul airport that took this key objective and so broke the back of the rebellion. All this was accomplished by Crooke and two other SAS troopers.

Significant is the fact that the operation was carried out despite the nervousness and indecision of Western civilian authorities. The United States dispatched "Delta Force" (one more SAS offspring) to Senegal, but the State Department got cold feet and ordered the unit recalled. The British Foreign Office likewise worried about the SAS presence in Banjul and demanded regular updates. The 22nd SAS HQ at Hereford frustrated them by claiming that all contact had been lost because of poor communications—although Crooke reported to his superiors regularly with a portable satellite uplink.

The SAS returned to Africa in July 1982 to track down the Zimbabwean kidnappers of two Britons, two Australians and two Americans. The task was complicated by the Zimbabwean government's refusal to accept outside help, stemming from pride blinding reason and despite an inability to deal with the problem by itself. Once again three troopers used a scheduled commercial flight to Bulawayo. By contrast Delta Force flew military transport to Ascension and returned home when it could not get permission to enter Zimbabwe. The British team avoided the mistake of asking. The British soldiers stayed in the country for several weeks, but this time they were unsuccessful and the victims were never seen again.

The SAS has an exceedingly vital role in British counterinsurgency these days. In the wake of the Munich Olympics, 22nd SAS set up a "Counter-Revolutionary Warfare" (CRW) wing of about 20 men, later expanded to a full squadron of about 80. It is intended as a counter-terrorist quick reaction force available 24 hours a day.

Since it expects to carry out many of its operations by night, the CRW unit practices a great deal wearing night-vision goggles. The SAS has also developed a special stun grenade called the "flash-bang". First acquired in the '70s, the original model used thousands of magnesium particles ignited by fulminate of mercury to create a deafening roar and light equivalent to that from a 50000-watt bulb. It was first used by the SAS in support of an assault by the West German *Grenzschutzgruppe 9* (GSG-9) unit on a hijacked Lufthansa jet in Somalia in 1977. A new "flash-bang" now going into service explodes six or seven times in four seconds for even greater effect.

The CRW unit performed a hostage rescue in London on 5 May 1980. On 30 April, a group of terrorists from the previously unknown, Iraqi-backed *Democratic Front for the Liberation of Arabistan* seized the Iranian embassy at Princes Gate. The British tried negotiating with the Arabs, let by one Salim Towfigh (aka "Oan"). Infuriated by delays in meeting his demands, Oan killed press attache Abbas Lavasani and rolled his body down the front steps for the television cameras. Prime Minister Thatcher called for the SAS.

It had not been idle. Immediately after the embassy seizure, the CRW unit went to London on its own initiative. There it planted tiny listening devices and cameras in the embassy walls and those of a building next door. It commenced practicing assaults on mock-ups of the building.

The upcoming attack was accomplished by a troubling variation on the Irish "dimension". Legally, in counter-terrorist situations, the SAS is subordinate to the civic authority, to which it provides advice and, upon request, assistance. After an assault, a police investigation would determine whether the SAS had used "excessive force" resulting in unnecessary deaths. The civil authority complicated matters even more by telling the troopers that terrorist prisoners would be a liability, making Britain itself an inviting target for their colleagues. The SAS officers were understandably concerned. It was finally assured that so long as its men acted in self defense, there would be no problems from the police and it was free to *not* take prisoners.

The television cameras were cleared from the area just before the 5 May attack. But one was smuggled back in and so permitted millions to watch the CRW unit prepare for and launch a surprise operation—in living color. Had the terrorists been watching TV, the SAS would have had a debacle on its hands and a massacre of the hostages to live with.

At about 0700, shaped-charges blew in the building's heavily reinforced windows. A critical planning error caused one SAS group to find itself in a room with neither hostages nor Arab terrorists, nor a route to the rest of the building. This allowed

the terrorists to shoot several hostages. Other troopers, preparing their way with "flash-bangs", made it to the critical rooms. The terrorists resisted with gunfire and a grenade, wounding three more hostages. When failure became inevitable, they tried to escape by mingling with their victims. This did not prevent all but one terrorist from being killed.

As promised, there were no unpleasant legal problems, although some hostages claimed that surrendered terrorists were executed on the spot. This can be readily explained by the "Stockholm Syndrome", in which over a period of time terrorists and hostages come to identify strongly with each other. Also, despite SAS emphasis on the use of minimal force, one Arab corpse reportedly had 82 bullet wounds. The Princes Gate assault was conducted under very complicated tactical and legal conditions; it was not a model of efficiency in which everything goes right, but then war never is. And the struggle against international terrorism is very much a war.

The 22nd SAS saw some unpublished service in Central America in 1983. Formerly British Honduras, Belize continued to rely on Britain for its security independence. To counter recurring Guatemalan claims to Belizean territory, Britain stations troops and Harriers in the country, which the SAS also uses as a training ground. Since the mid-1960s, Guatemala has fought four insurgent groups, now united at the prodding of Castro under the *Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity*. By 1983 the guerrillas and Cuba had established a supply line for Soviet arms from bases in northern Belize and along a trail hacked out through the jungle to Guatemala. In that year the SAS troopers were sent to Belize. They quickly and quietly drove the Communists and their supply route out of the country, killing several Cubans in the process. In sharp contrast with US policy in this region, this was done with the utmost discretion—and without informing Parliament.

The SAS still has a prominent place in NATO war plans as well, despite the apparent decisive victory of the "Third Worlders" at the time of the Borneo war. The 21st SAS and a newer Territorial unit, 23rd SAS, are trained and intended for protracted use behind Soviet lines, harassing supply and communications. The 22nd SAS would be directed against specific strategic targets.

CONCLUSIONS

Why has the SAS been so successful? It selects what it perceives as the best volunteers and subjects them to intense training—but then so does every other special forces unit in the world worthy of the name. Its cohesiveness is very high; but this doesn't explain everything either, although cohesiveness is normally one of the best indicators of quality.

One of the primary reasons for the SAS excellent record is that it is a special forces unit, and *nothing* else. This may sound obvious, but many other special forces cannot credibly make this claim. For example, the US Army Ranger battalions are special forces units, but maintain a second role as especially elite airborne infantry, a role the Rangers assumed in the invasion of Grenada. The SAS may be troopers who operate dismounted and with infantry-type weaponry, but they are not infantry. It does not pretend to be able to seize and hold ground on its own against determined enemy opposition. The SAS makes it easier for others to do this, even to the point of raising and leading local units to do the job. As a non-infantry force, the SAS is able to achieve success by means other than the traditional infantryman's keys of firepower and mobility. It relies on diplomacy, surprise, inventiveness and stealth—although the SAS can move fast and hit hard when called upon to do so.

A second reason for excellence is that the SAS leadership has exhibited great political acumen. Many soldiers from the ancients to the current

generation competing for a share of a limited defense dollar (or pound or ruble) have appreciated the need for political skill, and some have exhibited it. What makes the SAS unique is the breadth of its political sensitivity. Its methods of counterinsurgency, enunciated in the Briggs Plan and the Dhofar strategy, emphasize political action at the lowest level, as did its actions in Borneo.

The SAS is also able to meet the demands of macropolitics. Troopers in the interior of Borneo and in mainland Argentina served British diplomatic needs by doing their military jobs without being caught. The same applied to Belize, where Britain was able to frustrate Cuban ambitions without running the dangers of a public clash.

Some of the most important SAS political accomplishments occur in the United Kingdom itself. A legal system is the adjudication and enforcement mechanism of a political system, and in Northern Ireland and in its counterterrorist function the SAS has been able to thread the hazards of a legal system that, for very good reasons, frequently conflicts with purely military considerations.

In a more subtle arena of political conflict, the SAS has survived and indeed flourished amid British military bureaucratic competition. The SAS has had setbacks, but it has not been disbanded since World War II, or absorbed by the paras as so often proposed. The main reason for this independence is that the unit has been able to justify its existence when necessary by assuming a new role or volunteering for a war. What was reborn as a counterinsurgency unit also became a spy agency, reconnaissance unit, urban counterterrorist force, and now a counterterrorist unit. The SAS is always able to make itself too valuable to downgrade.

The last, but one of the most crucial, reasons for its success is the relationship between the SAS collective identity and the identities of its individuals. Almost every military service imposes its own group identity onto the individual soldier, making him less an individual than a part of a greater entity. He embraces the traditions, ritual and accoutrements of that organization and subordinates himself to it. This can make for very fine professional units; the United States Marine Corps, the British Guards regiments, and the French Foreign Legion come to mind as examples.

The Special Air Service takes a dramatically different approach. It wants recruits who can make good decisions on their own under the most trying conditions, who are driven individuals able to start and finish a task without relying on leaders to keep them going, and who can function well nonetheless on a team. They are thus strong individuals who often do not take completely to the conventional military notion of subordination to a group. The SAS troopers are participants rather than subjects.

The SAS derives its identity from those of its members. It volunteers for difficult tasks partially because its troopers are the type of soldier who would do so. If they were not, they would never have volunteered for and passed the grueling qualification process. The SAS seeks practical answers to immediate problems. Colonel Charlie Beckwith, the founder of Delta Force who spent a year with the 22nd SAS in the early '60s as part of an Anglo-American exchange program, typified the unit as one of "doers". Hence David Stirling's explicit rejection of class as a relevant military consideration. Deference on a basis other than the SAS "aristocracy" would not only help stifle the most prized individual qualities, but diminish the unit's reliance on rationality.

The manifestations of the SAS value of beneficial individual characteristics sometimes appall more orthodox soldiers. An SAS trooper called what is generally regarded as military standards of neatness and personal appearance "unimportant" when Beckwith tried to have a barracks straightened away.

What was taken with deadly seriousness, however, was training in practical military skills. In the same vein, the apparent slob on their way to the Falklands demonstrated the highest levels of professionalism when facing the enemy. To the SAS trooper, and therefore to the SAS as a whole, being a good soldier is of far greater importance than being a neat one.

Such an approach would not work in very many other professional units. In a force where there is a mixture of the self-driven and those who rely on leaders for the simplest decisions, the hard-working and the naturally lazy both, the intelligent and those who may not be, and every category between, the result would be a unit in which outward sloppiness reflects deeper problems. The SAS gets away with such conduct because its raw material is of extremely high quality. The trick is leaving such men free to be as good as they can be.

SCENARIO DESIGN GUIDELINES

On one hand the history of the SAS presents a scenario designer's dream in that it could operate in virtually every type of environment, from the North German Plain to the barren Falklands, against a wide variety of enemies. The historical engagements can generate a fairly large number of varied *FIREPOWER* scenarios, and hypothetical conflicts can spawn a practically unlimited quantity. On the other hand, one runs into the inherent limitations of the game. *FIREPOWER* is an excellent simulation of conventional and guerrilla actions, but is unable to credibly represent the *Keeni-Meeni* and almost all of the dirty, shadow war in Northern Ireland.

Hostage rescues, though an important part of the SAS repertoire, are similarly difficult, with the added problems of play balance intruding. A counterterrorist rescue is ideally a situation in which the assault team's training, equipment and intelligence are so overwhelming that the terrorists have little real ability to survive. A rescue in which the issue is in doubt implies that the attackers have made a mistake or met an unforeseen obstacle.

Furthermore, in many modern SAS operations combat is something to be avoided at almost any cost. This was especially true of the defensive phase of the Borneo campaign and the surveillance operations of the Falklands War, particularly those on the mainland. But all this still leaves a wide range of possible scenarios. When combat is necessary, the SAS engages readily and tends to do very well indeed.

The SAS soldier is unlike almost every other in *FIREPOWER*, and the scenarios should reflect this. Therefore, all SAS soldiers have a movement allowance of 5 points, regardless of rank. Dominating leaders are rare, unusual for an elite unit, so there should be few leaders (other than perhaps one C per scenario). The basic SAS unit is not a squad, but a four-man "patrol". Patrols should have at least three, and generally four, Actions per Impulse Phase. SAS units are immune to chit loss from casualties and never suffer Panic, although any non-SAS units in the scenario are susceptible to both.

Most SAS equipment follows the British listing in the Battle Manual. The L1A1 has been the basic shoulder weapon, with the M-16A1 used in Borneo, the Falklands and apparently in most other cases in the 1980s. American grenade launchers are also apparent fixtures today. The MP5 submachinegun (SMG10; treat as the M4) is the primary anti-terrorist weapon. The new XL85 assault rifle, the first such British weapon to use full automatic fire, should also be considered available starting in the late 1980s. Treat this as the FNC (RFL10). SBS units appear to be armed and organized identically to those of the SAS.

A special weapon for the SAS that players may wish to experiment with is the "flash-bang". The original model (FBG1) is identical to the HGN5, except that instead of the standard blast, it will stun all soldiers inside a room, tunnel, pillbox, bunker and any vehicle except a truck. STUN is as normal, except that posture is *not* affected. Any wall is sufficient to shield others from its effects. The second, later, model (FBG2) is the same as the FBG1 except that stunned units are not allowed to change status the first Impulse after use.

Both lose effectiveness when used outside of confined spaces. They stun all units in the same location of the same hex only. In this case, treat the FBG2 as the FBG1. FBG1 is worth three points; FBG2 is worth five.

The following optional rules are highly recommended, and in many cases in these scenarios some are mandatory:

- 16.2—Assorted Firing Modifiers
- 16.4—Suppression by Non-Automatic Weapons
- 16.6—Pinned and Inactive Status
- 16.7.2—Optional Nightsight Rules
- 16.8—Extra Personal Weapons
- 16.9—Standing Behind "2" Height Cover
- 21.—Fires
- 23.—Wounds and Cover
- 24.—Morale

Victory Conditions of the following scenarios are consistent with the Victory Conditions rules on page 42 of the *FIREPOWER* Battle Manual. For scenarios in which victory points are awarded, each player receives one point for each eliminated or wounded enemy soldier, and two points for each captured.

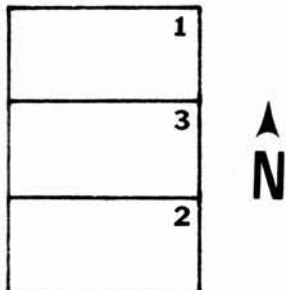
SCENARIOS

The following scenarios depict historical SAS actions and battles, along with one hypothetical one.

"EDWARDS PATROL DISCOVERED 1964"

An SAS team under Captain Robin Edwards was assigned to lead in the capture of a position called "Cap Badge" in the Radfan Hills of South Arabia. The climate and ill-health of one trooper made timely arrival at the ridge impossible, and the Edwards patrol was caught by hostile Yemeni tribesmen near the village of Sh'ib Taym. The troopers benefitted from two old sangars (small stone fortifications erected at an earlier time by the Arabs). The Yemenis had the advantage of numbers, accurate .303 rifles, and the fact that their enemies had no escape route. Both sides settled in for a long sniping battle.

A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN: Treat all hexes as rough. Ignore all walls, fences, hedges, buildings and well. Hills on panel 1 are height "4"; all others are height "2". Roads are unpaved.



B. SPECIAL RULES: Game length is 5 Turns. The British may *not* exit the mapboard; the Yemenis may exit off any edge.

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 1.

FIRES (OP): Dry.

C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. Attackers: Yemeni Tribesmen set up second on any whole or half-hex of panel 2 (371-358-13 points).

1st Yemeni Tribal Squad: 4/2; 1C, 1S; 10×RFL7.

2nd Yemeni Tribal Squad: 4/2; 1S; 9×RFL7.

3rd Yemeni Tribal Squad: 4/2; 1S; 9×RFL7.

Extra Equipment: 1×BNC, 1×SHG, 10×HGN3 ("G" only).

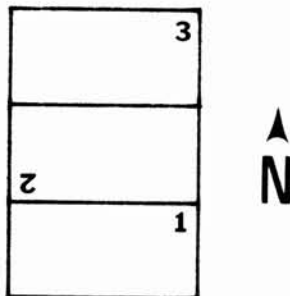
b. Defenders: British Edwards SAS Patrol sets up first in hexes 1S8 and/or 1T8: 4/3; 1C; 1×LMG15, 8×RFL18; 1×NC, 27×HGN3 and/or HGN5, 1×PST (for LMG); 2×SFX (these represent the sangars, treat as SFX except that height "1" and "-1" deep and can accommodate five soldiers each) (290-253-37 points).

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Victory Points are not awarded. The British player wins if any two Yemeni squads are panicked at the end of the game. The Yemeni player wins if five or more British soldiers are wounded or eliminated at the end of the game. If both, or neither, satisfy their victory conditions, the scenario ends in a draw.

"MIRBAT 1972"

The decisive battle in the Dhofar insurgency came when the Dhofar Liberation Front committed its best units in a frontal assault on the firqa training center at Mirbat. Here, SAS troopers and firqa members hold the center against a determined DLF attack.

A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN: Ignore all trees, hedges, fences and free-standing walls. Buildings are of mud construction. Hills on panel 3 are height "2"; ignore all other hills. Depressions are height "-1". Wire exists in all hexes of hexrow 6 of panel 2 (mark the breaches with wire markers).



B. SPECIAL RULES: Game Length is 6 Turns. DLF units may exit off the south mapboard edge; the British-firqa units off the north edge. The DLF is considered to have one MRT13 with unlimited "G" ammo (no "M") off the mapboard. Before the first Impulse Phase of each turn, the DLF player rolls one die: on "1-4", the DLF player fires one round, checking for accuracy and spread; on "5-6", the British player fires the DLF mortar (simulating undependable DLF coordination), also checking for accuracy and spread; on "7-10", the mortar is silent.

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 1.

FIRES (OP): Dry.

C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. Attackers: Dhofar Liberation Front guerrillas set up second in any whole hex of panel 1 (767-665-102 points).

1st DLF Guerrilla Squad: 4/2; 1C, 1S; 1×PST3, 10×RFL1.

2nd DLF Guerrilla Squad: 4/2; 1S; 1×LMG20, 9×RFL1.

3rd DLF Guerrilla Squad: 4/2; 1S; 1×LMG20, 9×RFL1.

Extra Equipment: 2×PST3 (for LMG), 60×HGN3 ("G" only), 10×DMO

b. Defenders: SAS-firqa soldiers set up first in any whole hex of panel 3 (434-348-92 points).

SAS Patrol: 3/4; 1S; 1×MMG1, 3×RFL18; 1×BNC, 1×PST2 (for MMG), 10×HGN3 and/or HGN5, 3×RGN2 and/or RGN4.

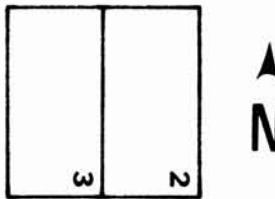
Firqa Squad: 3/2; 1S; 10×RFL18; 10×HGN3 and/or HGN5.

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: The DLF player wins by controlling any two buildings on panel 3 at the end of the game. The British player wins by avoiding DLF victory conditions.

"PEBBLE ISLAND 1982"

In the Falklands, one of the most important functions of the 22nd SAS was countering Argentine airpower. This mainly involved surveillance of enemy facilities in the war zone and Argentina itself. Here two SAS patrols have been discovered by Argentine forces.

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



B. SPECIAL RULES: Game Length is 5 Turns. The British units may exit off any half-hex of hexrow A on either panel. Argentines may exit off any half-hex of hexrow GG on either panel. Mines are placed anywhere on either panel by the Argentine player before British deployment. British SAS then set up first in any whole hex of either panel, hexrows A-M inclusive. Argentine soldiers set up second in any whole hex on either panel, hexrows W-FF inclusive.

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 3 (Night).

FIRES (OP): Wet.

C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. British SAS: (363-313-50 points).

1st SAS Patrol (+): 3/4; 1C; 1×RFL10+GLR3, 4×RFL10.

2nd SAS Patrol: 3/4; 1×RFL10+GLR3, 3×RFL10.

Extra Equipment and Ammo: 1×BNC, 9×NST, 30×HGN3 and/or HGN5, 10×GLR3AMO. (Note that all RFL10 are M16A1.)

b. Argentine Army Patrols: (363-251-112 points).

1st Infantry Squad: 3/2; 1C, 1S; 1×LMG3, 8×RFL5, 2×SMG10.

2nd Infantry Squad (-): 3/2; 1S; 5×RFL5, 1×PST2.

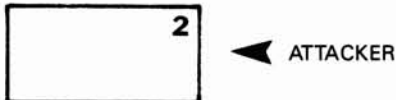
Extra Equipment: 3×BNC, 4×NST, 5×BDA, 1×PST2 (for LMG), 4×PMN1, 5×RGN2 and/or RGN4, 3×DFX, 46×HGN3 and/or HGN5, 6×WIR.

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Each side receives victory points. The Argentine player receives two points for each unwounded soldier on the opposite (i.e., past the mapboard fold) side of the mapboard at the end of the game. The British player receives two points for each soldier exited, regardless of wounds, on Turn 5 only.

“BELIZE 1983”

Few military units in the free world are as capable as the SAS of operating secretly. When Marxist Guatemalan rebels and their Cuban allies established themselves in the jungles of Belize, that Central American country's sponsors in London sent in troopers from the 22nd SAS. The Communist presence was eliminated without fanfare.

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



All dark green, as well as tree hexes, are considered tree hexes. Ignore fences. Hills are height “1”.

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

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 3 (Night).

FIRES (OP): Dry.

C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. Attackers: Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP) with Cuban support (422-318-104).

1st EGP Squad: 3/2; 1S; 9×RFL10.

2nd EGP Squad: 3/2; 1S; 1×GLR2, 8×RFL10.

Cuban Infantry Squad: 4/3; 1C, 1S, 1A; 1×LMG21, 1×MPL20, 6×RFL1, 1×PST4; 1×BPD.

Extra Equipment and Ammo: 3×PST3 (for LMG, MPL, GLR), 3×GLR3AMO (“G” only), 5×MPL20AMO, 88×HGN3 (“G” only for EGP units).

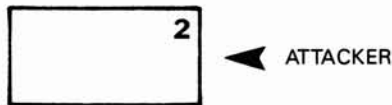
b. Defenders: British SAS Patrol: 3/4; 1×RFL10+GLR3, 3×RFL10; 20×HGN3 and/or HGN5, 4×NST, 4×PNS, 1×SHG; 8×GLR3AMO, 1×PMN2, 1×BPD (236-183-53 points).

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Each player receives two victory points for each surviving soldier exited off the mapboard during Turn 3. Defending soldiers must exit off the long sides of the mapboard and attacking soldiers off the short sides to receive these points.

“SOMEWHERE IN GERMANY 19--”

The reservists of the 21st SAS and 23rd SAS would be sent to West Germany to perform “stay behind” operations against any advancing Soviet army's rear, should war break out on the Central Front. Here, an ambush by Territorial SAS troopers against third-echelon Soviet soldiers—reservists themselves—making a security sweep is sprung in overrun West Germany.

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



The fence is of stone construction.

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

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 3 (Night).

FIRES (OP): Normal.

C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. Attackers: Soviet Army Reservists (455-347-108 points).

1st Motorized Rifle Squad (Includes BTR60PB crew): 4/2; 1C, 1S, 1A; 2×LMG4, 1×MPL20, 5×RFL1, 4×SMG11; 1×IFV6 (BTR60PB).

1st Motorized Rifle Squad (-; Includes BTR60PB crew): 4/2; 1S, 1A; 1×LMG4, 1×MPL20, 4×RFL1, 2×SMG11; 1×IFV6 (BTR60PB).

Extra Equipment and Ammo: 1×BNC, 5×PST3 (for LMG, MPL), 10×MPL20AMO, 60×HGN3, 16×BDA.

b. Defenders: British SAS (205-129-73 points).

1st SAS Patrol: 3/3; 1C; 1×GLR2, 4×RFL10 (XL85).

2nd SAS Patrol: 3/3; 1×GLR2, 3×RFL10 (XL85).

Extra Equipment and Ammo: 18×GLR2AMO, 2×BPD, 7×NST, 7×PNS, 30×HGN3 and/or HGN5, 2×PST2 (for GLR).

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Each player receives two victory points for each surviving soldier exited off the mapboard during Turn 3. Defending soldiers must exit off the long sides of the mapboard and attacking soldiers off the short sides to receive these points.

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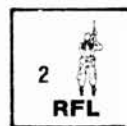
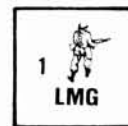
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AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 4

volunteer to run one. Again, it is the spirit of fellowship and common interest that bonds the attendees together. If you have ever passed up the chance to attend one of these regional conventions, you owe it to yourself—just once—to experience what fun wargaming can truly be.

And, I've found, the organizers of these small conventions are among the more selfless found in our hobby. Make no mistake, no one ever got rich running one of these. Indeed, the *successful* small conventions just manage to break even (whatever “profit” they show is usually taken up by the postage necessary to spread word of the results of this year's event and next year's plans). These fellows are putting in the hours, and putting up with the hassles, simply to help promote our pastime and to provide us—the players—with some pleasure. Many of these small conventions are the work of game clubs, and no better way do I know to spread the gospel and perhaps gather a few new members. Since this seems to be the prime motivation, the organizers usually strive to keep the costs that the convention-goer must bear low to encourage attendance. Often held at local schools, college campuses or inexpensive motels, these “cons” are affordable for the casual wargamer, as well as the hard-core for whom cost (when applied to their hobby) is no object.

All the above is not to denigrate the “monster” conventions. They are still the place to “see and be seen” each summer. There you will meet the “movers and shakers” of the industry, and be privy to their gossip and rumors. There you will meet the new titles, not yet on the shelves back home. There you will meet such a bewildering array of games, played by such a variety of gamers, that you will barely be able to sample them in the hectic too-few hours.

But . . . by offering a focal point for the faithful, one accessible and affordable to almost anyone, the small regional and specialized game conventions are, to me, the heartbeat of our hobby. Like the amateur hobby press, these may have some rough edges (often, like Fish's *Oktobefest*, smoothed as the organizers gain experience). Yet, nothing is more heartening than to learn you are not alone in this curious devotion. Too, there is no better place to hone your skills than in face-to-face competition, in an atmosphere devoid of the hustle and bustle of an ORIGINS or GENCON. Why, the sheer exuberance of the folk at the small wargame conventions is alone worth the effort of attending. Take a moment, look over the “Convention Calender” in this issue, and see if there isn't one nearby that you might sample.



PAX DISCORDIA

Trying to Cut Through the Chaos

By Kenneth Campbell

I like history. I like multi-player games that are full of possibilities. I like multi-player games that don't involve player elimination. It was natural that I would like *PAX BRITANNICA*.

As a game, it has both good and bad points. But that doesn't matter here; this is not a review or a critical analysis. This article is meant for those who already enjoy the game. The object of this article is to present a concise overview of the game and some of its strategies. Anyone who has played the game more than once will admit that there is just so much happening, and the systems involved are so unique, that it is very easy to become swamped by the furious action. Hopefully, by assimilating some of the following, readers will be able to make better use of some of the nuances in this game.

The first thing to appreciate is the differences in potential and power between each active nation. Because of this, every colonial empire will have its own particular strategy. Let's look at some basic numbers:

	Controls	Investments
Great Britain	43	20
France	20	18
Germany	20	18
United States	16	15
Japan	10	12
Italy	8	10
Russia	7	10
Austria-Hungary	4	5
Spain	6	2
Netherlands	4	2
Belgium	3	3
Portugal	3	2

If a nation has placed all its "Investment" markers at full strength (i.e., Influence side up), it is doing something right. Having met with such success, the nation should begin working toward protecting its Influences and keeping the capital flowing (buying VP where applicable). If a nation has placed all its Control markers at their full strength, that player should be revered for all eternity—and should certainly win the game.

While the above markers are the measure of empire, they are bound to generate conflict. Unless a nation has some military might (or is at least strongly allied to a nation that does), it will find itself continually being forced to downgrade the status markers. While each power can build army and navy units as it chooses, be aware that it is restricted (again) to the counter mix. Here is the breakdown:

	Extent of Arms			Total Strength
	1s	3s	10s	
Great Britain	32	14	15	224
France	20	10	10	150
Germany	15	10	8	125
United States	12	10	8	122
Japan	10	8	8	114
Italy	8	8	8	112
Russia	7	8	8	111
Austria-Hungary	4	1	4	47
Spain	4	3	0	13
Netherlands	6	2	0	12
Belgium	4	2	0	10
Portugal	5	1	0	8

For the major players, we have effectively four tiers: 1) Great Britain, 2) France, 3) Germany and the USA, 4) Japan, Italy and Russia. Of course, in all these tables, readers are reminded that Austria and Germany, while played by the same person, are distinct entities.

Pay particular attention to the "1s" units column in the above. These one-strength point units are critical to all the player-nations. As land units (regiments), they provide "policing" for the empire and serve as cheap garrisons. As naval units (squadrons), they provide the means and mass for widespread blockading actions against your enemies' colonial holdings. While everyone has use for them, Britain and France may need them the most to keep their dangerous reputations alive. And if Germany wants to join their ranks in the big leagues, it will have to construct a lot of naval units. Naval power is the key to this game—if not directly through use in a war, then through the ever present threat of its use. Without a navy, you have no clout. It is true that large army units are useful, particularly for action in China, India, Turkey, etc.; but it will be the navies that establish the great colonial holdings.

This brings us right to the subject of War. To put it simply: War is Deadly. What you have worked so hard and long to put together can be undone in a flash. There won't be a lot of wars during the average game, but when they do occur the results are bound to be dramatic. If you lose a major naval engagement, your opponent will have complete freedom to go about and blockade every one of your overseas colonies, forcing their surrender, and not stopping this course until you have lost everything. There is no rule that forces him to make peace with you until you have lost all Controlled holdings (or he can't make any attack/blockade during three consecutive turns).

(Mind you, you can whine and plead and beg, or make terrible threats to be an implacable foe for the rest of the game if he doesn't negotiate, but only the latter has any chance of success. In truth, this threat is nothing to be taken lightly. Such an enemy, believing he has no chance of winning can take down another. He could purposely become the "Fourth European Power" in some war you started but expected not to escalate—and having been the "First European Power", you are culpable and take the triple penalty. Or he can snipe and block and connive to undercut your position in alliance with other leaders. Unless it is very late in the game, an unswerving enemy will almost always prevent a victory. Keep that in mind when pursuing a victorious military campaign. You may not want to hurt the defeated too badly.)

A tactic common among beginners in preparing for a war is the "arms race". Basically, they spend a lot of money on the military, hoping to snatch an advantage in the ensuing struggle. Usually, the race will be of a naval character and aimed against Great Britain. If the latter is true, the British player will probably be forced to respond. (Historically, Britain wanted to maintain a superiority over the next two strongest nations combined.) That response will either be in the form of construction or of a lightening strike at the offending power with the aim of reducing its fleet. Watch out for both occurrences. While the unattractiveness of a British naval strike is obvious, that of the arms race is less so. Look at this:

	Cost	VP Cost
Great Britain	30	3
France	30	4.3
Germany	30	6
United States	30	7.5
Japan	30	10
Russia	30	10
Italy	30	15

From the above, we can see that the cost of a 10-strength naval unit is the same for everyone. This alone is discouraging; who can expect to outstrip Britain's income? But the real lesson here lies in the second column. If the money spent for a 10-strength naval unit was instead used to buy Victory Points (VP), this column lists how much each nation would get. Therefore, *an arms race costs more VPs for some nations than others*. Italy and Japan are sacrificing a great deal more than Britain or France by participating in an arms race. In effect, while Britain does not want to lose its naval edge, it doesn't mind seeing the smaller powers spending on military forces rather than VP.

Get used to measuring things not only in pounds, but in VPs as well, and you are half-way home to mastering *PAX BRITANNICA*. There are several tables included here listing various items and areas by their VP-cost equivalent. Studying these can set your feet on the path. Now let's look at each major power, with the points made above always in mind.

GREAT BRITAIN

In Our Most Splendid Isolation

1837-1901: Queen Victoria

1901-1910: King Edward VII

1910-1936: King George V

"Splendid isolation" is none too foolish a course for the British ship-of-state to pursue in this game. Alliances should be carefully considered. The alliance structure that caused the Great War is evidence of the danger: an Austro-Hungarian move against Serbia brought the inevitable Russian response, which precipitated a German reaction, which obliged France to help its ally, and so on. Alliances are necessary to the weak, and Great Britain may find them convenient only in that when broken the tension index rises (an early end in sight). And, of course, what can be coerced from one's allies.

An early end to the game promises success for Great Britain. Let's look at the numbers. As the game opens in 1880, this is how the major powers stack up in terms of Victory Points:

Great Britain	95
France	31
United States	15
Germany	0
Japan	0
Russia	0
Italy	0

In other words, if the game ends before it begins, the British player has a smashing victory. This is important information and should influence the attitude everyone has toward Britain. (While some may come to Britain's defense by pointing out that Britain's divisor of ten makes it much harder to buy VP, they should also note that, by this measure, it costs Great Britain *less* to buy things; a Possession marker costs Britain four VP, but it costs the USA ten and Italy twenty!)

As Great Britain is everywhere ("the sun never sets"), it is difficult to speak in any detail about strategy. One can summarize by saying that it is wide open. There are many paths to choose from. But, it is best to work from the top down. Develop your strategy before you start to play, answering the most basic questions: Am I going to play an aggressive Britain or a peaceful one? Am I going to play a withdrawn Britain or a meddling one? Am I going to define early who is a friend and who isn't? (This latter will define what regions of the world

you focus upon. For example, if Japan is going to be very friendly, and you have decided that France and the USA are not, you may not want to irritate relations with Japan by clumsily stepping into its spheres of influence in the Far East.)

The point is that it is much too easy to be dazzled by Britain's naval clout and fall into the trap of concentrating on disconnected or local conflicts, never developing any grand plans but simply reacting to the instigations of the others. Although it needn't always be so, Britain can make things *Happen*, manipulating the other powers to do things they would not otherwise do—things that are of a benefit to Britain. Wars can be encouraged, even funded, with you secretly maneuvering the combatants. This is "divide and rule", and this should be one of your prime plays.

Although the combinations of which powers to turn against one another are subject to various conditions, it is almost always in Britain's favor to have France and Germany at odds (if not France at odds with the entire world). Combined, they can cause Britain considerable trouble, both militarily and politically. There is some "natural" animosity between them (Germany gaining two VPs per turn if France is isolated) and Britain should try to exploit this. While it may seem at first that any rapprochement with France will be impossible, this is far from true. Great Britain and France did historically meet in 1904, the "Entente Cordiale". Further, France may be of help in preventing Germany from building fleets (if you have any interest in trying to earn those bonus VP that come if Germany has no fleet markers—naval 10-point units).

Great Britain can (cautiously, now, cautiously) treat with other powers. The danger is that she can be maneuvered through some diplomatic acrobatics into the receiving end of a very bad war (for example, alone against France, Russia, Japan and the USA). But, if one keeps a wary eye for those sort of tricks and traps, one will find that almost every major nation has something to offer in the way of help. Note that Britain may find France, Japan and Italy interested in defensive alliances, as each of them gains two VP per turn from such agreements.

An early source of conflict is probably going to be the fate of Egypt. Egypt is potentially an explosive area, so be aware of how the alliance situation is sizing up. Unless Britain has a plan that dictates otherwise, Egypt is essential to the Empire. Historically, Britain did get a protectorate here, although it came as a result of a deal with France over Morocco. Make your deals, whatever, to secure Egypt for Britain. It is necessary if Britain envisions a "Cairo-to-Cape" plan. Historically, this was attempted: Somalia 1884, Bechuanaland 1885, Kenya 1886, Rhodesia 1888, Uganda 1895, Sudan 1899, and from 1899-1902 the Boer War brought the conquest of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Only German intrusion into Tanganyika (German East Africa) thwarted the north-south plan.

A word on British relations with Russia is in order. Being landlocked, Russia has the special advantage of being almost immune to any British naval action. Generally speaking, Russia will expand directly over land. Therefore, in the event of war, Britain cannot apply its mass blockade routine, thereby forcing the surrender of all the enemy's colonies. Since Russia is connected by land routes, all their colonies are always in supply. This is an important point for the British player to grasp. Russia has little to fear from Britain, but Britain has much to fear from Russia—viz., India. If Britain were ever to lose the Indian holdings, she loses 50 VP as a penalty (not to mention the 31 VP full possession of India is worth at game's end). Be forewarned; if Anglo-Russian relations are bad, if Russia is apparently conducting a massive build-up of army corps and receiving money from another power,

Great Britain had best avoid giving Russia any excuse for war lest a struggle in India be unleashed. (By not giving Russia that excuse, you are seriously frustrating her, for all those monies spent on army corps don't do a bit of good if they can't go anywhere.) With all this in mind, the wisdom of taking Baluchistan early and keeping Afghanistan neutral is clear. If Russia moves in on Afghanistan, watch out.

As mentioned before, it is too easy to become over-interested in Britain's military might. A real strength for Great Britain (as well as for France and Germany, and later the United States) is her omnipresent merchant fleet. Via this tool, there is no place in the world out of the reach of British commerce. Starting right away in 1880, Britain should establish markets in South and Central America. These markets are vital to economic growth, Victory Points, and excuses to intervene if unrest should threaten in these independent countries. China can provide another rich market source, though these investments will eventually have to be backed by troops.

FRANCE

Banker to the World

1879-1887: Jules Grevy
 1887-1894: Sadi Carnot
 1894-1895: Jean Casimir-Perier
 1895-1899: Felix Faure
 1899-1906: Emile Loubet
 1906-1913: Armand Fallieres
 1913-1920: Raymond Poincare

The defeat in the 1870-71 war with Prussia-Germany brought the end of the Second Empire (Napoleon III). Officially born in 1875, the Third Republic is the only European power without a ruling aristocracy. But the Republic suffers from considerable internal division (the chaos of Monarchists and Bonapartists and Orleanists, and Opportunists, and Legitimists, etc.). It was in the hope of diverting attention from these domestic squabbles that France aggressively pursued its "Second Colonial Empire".

As a convenience, the Second Colonial Empire can be said to have begun with the subjugation of Algiers in 1830. Historically, France then expanded into Tunisia (1881), out of Senegambia and Algiers into West Africa (all those little twos and threes on the map), Indochina (1887), Madagascar (1896), and Morocco (1912). A move into the Soudan in 1898 brought on a crisis with Great Britain from which France backed down.

Generally speaking, France wants a longer game than Great Britain, but shorter than anyone else does. This is not all that easy to accomplish. Control over such things is usually illusory. But, to encourage victory, the overall plan is to seek: 1) to "constrain" Britain, turning world opinion against it even if presenting a friendly face; and 2) to maneuver Britain into a position where it is the cause of the war that is long enough to push the tension index to 100 (thereby crippling Britain with a triple penalty).

As concerns the first, the idea is to opportunistically exploit every British mistake and highlight every bullying move the British player makes. This is situation-specific, of course, but the objective is to focus attention on Britain. Once you have established markets around the world, use the considerable French funds to "buy" friends. With the second objective in mind, it is best to stay out of that final war, letting others go to bat for you (others that France has bankrolled, others who have a grievance with Britain).

French realms of expansion are almost as unlimited as Great Britain's. Generally, however, unless unusual opportunities present themselves, France will concentrate on Africa and the Far East.

The old colony of Cochin China provides a splendid base out of which to launch any imperialistic designs on the Far East. It is economically bountiful; strategically, it provides an excellent naval base between the Indian Ocean and the eastern seas; it gives France a connection to both Indochina and Burma. Indochina should early on in the game be taken control of by France, for through it France will have a direct say in the affairs of China (Kwang Si and Yunnan). Burma is another matter, one that should be given serious thought. In the event of a war with Britain, the French can seriously threaten India from Burma (especially if the Russians do the same from the north—the powerful Indian Army would be sorely tried by a concerted French-Russian attack). Note, however, that any attempt at Control by any power in Burma always gives Britain a *casus belli*; so be ready for war when you move on Burma.

Another area for Franco-English conflict and hostility is Egypt. The whole world does not revolve around Egypt, and the French player may just have to take a deep breath and let it go to the British. A war on the first turn of the game will seriously push the tension index up, so France had better win that war quickly if it wants to win the game. (Mind you, the British player had better realize that a France that gets crippled beyond any chance of victory is a very dangerous enemy; France can fund the world quite sufficiently for some smaller power to be elevated to victory. Britain wants France alive and self-interested.) So France should try to work for a compromise solution in Egypt, perhaps employing what political clout Italy carries to reach this end (Italy gains bonus VP if no one Controls Egypt).

Reflecting the politics of Europe, France gains VP via defensive alliances with Russia and Great Britain. Historically, France and Russia established very good relations in the 1890s. France loaned Russia large sums of money. Of course, if you want to duplicate this make sure you get something concrete out of the deal: perhaps you should encourage Russia towards Afghanistan, or the Balkans and Turkey (depending on the larger political picture). Since Russia also gains VP from a defensive alliance, you should have no problem here. Great Britain may be another matter. The "Entente Cordial" can be a useful tool for both parties; the combined Anglo-French fleet is very imposing indeed. Via this, France may find it a lot easier to accomplish other aims, easier to manipulate other powers. Also, Anglo-French cooperation will probably keep the tension index from running away, preventing a pre-mature Great War.

The powerful French merchant fleet should be employed immediately, and France should establish markets everywhere. As a special note, the French player should be aware that neither Algeria nor Senegambia will ever go into unrest. In Algiers, this is due to the constant presence of the Foreign Legion, which actively recruited and assimilated the populace. In Senegambia, it was due to the very enlightened French rule, the acceptance of the "colored Frenchmen" policy.

GERMANY

In Search of an Empire

1871-1888: Kaiser Wilhelm I
 1888-1918: Kaiser Wilhelm II

Germany has only just become a unified nation—the combination of many smaller German states, dominated by the Kingdom of Prussia. Since the fall of Napoleon I, Prussia had been increasingly important in the German Confederation. With the defeat of Austria in 1866 and the defeat of France in 1871, the German Confederation was transformed into the "Second German Reich".

Germany expects some sort of French retaliation for that war. This is a reality of the European

political scene, and is simulated in the game by the German desire to keep France politically isolated (and, hence, theoretically incapable of revenge). Historically, it was Otto von Bismarck who succeeded in this: in 1881 he renewed the "League of the Three Emperors" (an alliance between Germany, Austro-Hungary and Russia); in 1882 he masterminded the "Triple Alliance" (Germany, Austro-Hungary, Italy); he kept Germany and Russia from collision in the Balkans by the "Reinsurance Treaty" of 1887 (with its secret clause about Russia having rights to the Dardanelles). Germany benefited enormously from this man's deft political talents, and his dismissal in 1890 by Wilhelm II was the beginning of Germany's diplomatic decline. By 1894, France was no longer isolated, Russia having turned to France. Bismarck made Germany the pre-eminent mediator in the world (e.g., his handling of the Kongo Conference in 1884-85).

Now, the player may not have (nor even want) the skill to mediate all the world's problems. While it isn't necessary, it certainly helps if Germany expects to isolate France from all alliances. And it would be of great use in coming to terms with Russia over the Balkans. Both Austria-Hungary and Russia face the same problems of constriction; every way they turn, they run into interference. In Austria's case, it is acute; it has no merchant fleet, therefore it cannot expand overseas and is forced to look only to Europe. Because the Balkan states are independent and sovereign nations, there has to be an excuse of unrest to move on these areas. And when this unrest occurs, it is very likely that Russia is going to want to get involved (particularly in Rumania, where any Control attempt gives Russia an automatic *casus belli*). To avoid all this, from the game's opening the German and Russian players should forge an understanding of who gets what in southeast Europe. Likewise, the two should do the same with the Ottoman Empire (remember that Russia also has a *casus belli* against any nation which attempts to Control Anatolia). With these points attended to, it is both likely and beneficial for Germany and Russia to ally.

The other great concern for the German is (like everybody else) Great Britain. In both world wars, it has happened that Britain was opposed to Germany. It need not have been that way. Before World War I (indeed, even before World War II), there were strong pro-German groups in English politics. Had Germany been less blatantly aggressive in its naval policies (as it had been since Bismarck's fall), the two nations could have maintained relations on very good terms. Britain can be exceedingly valuable to Germany in its quest for a colonial empire.

Historically, Germany has sought to become an "equal partner" with Britain. To accomplish this task, Germany sought to increase its navy, not so much to rival Britain's but rather to become a force strong enough to combine with another fleet and thereby challenge English mastery of the seas. Of course, rather than bring about any understanding, it merely hastened the "Entente Cordial". The German player has to decide early in the game how belligerent he plans to be. And, being realistic, he often has to be belligerent. It often happens that Germany gets locked out of the choice colonial sites and is forced into confrontation with other powers. Hopefully, Germany can convince everyone that any fighting only helps Britain. If not, Germany needs its fleet. But this can lead to confrontation with Britain (as well as raising the tension index).

It is useful to establish good relations with Japan. In the scramble for territory in the East, Japan is often confronted with one power—and not wishing to provoke Britain or France, it will choose to face Germany. Early frustration of Japanese plans can be damaging to German interests. Try to support his actions.

Germany and Italy can also possibly find common ground, perhaps allying to better gain some pieces of Africa before France and Britain swallow it up. Maybe helping keep Egypt uncontrolled will bring Italy to your camp.

Germany quickly rose to be the strongest industrial nation in Europe before the war. In foreign trade it competed with Britain (see all those merchant fleets). In the game, without establishment of markets, Germany will find itself losing. Like Russia and Japan and Italy, Germany starts with absolutely no colonies, yet it has a divisor number of "5". This is due to its large merchant fleet. Use it; exploit all your advantages.

Austria-Hungary: another German advantage. With the signing of the "Dual Alliance" in 1879, Austria-Hungary became increasingly dependent on Germany. In *PAX BRITANNICA*, this defensive

Unrest

The chance of any one area going into "Unrest", giving the Great Powers their window of opportunity to intervene, can vary considerably. Overall, each area falls into one of four categories: High Risk, Medium Risk, Low Risk and No Risk:

High Risk

Afghanistan
Anatolia
Egypt
Orange Free State
Philippines
Transvaal

Low Risk

Abyssinia
Bechuanaland
Brazil
Central China
Cochin China
Dutch East Indies
Eritrea
Formosa
Kansu
Kenya
Morocco
Nigeria
Port Arthur
Shang-Hai
Siam
Tanganyika
Tibet
Tunis
Venezuela
Argentina
Bolivia
Burma
Chile
Colombia
Ecuador
Federated Malay States
Fukien
Kwang-Si
Manchuria
Mongolia
Peru
Quwait
Shant-Tung
Szech-Wan
Taureg
Tripoli

No Risk

Alaska
Algiers
Bismarck Archipelago
Fiji
Hong Kong
New Hebrides
Senegambia

Obviously, what does not appear above are those with medium risk of Unrest. Generally, a medium-risk area is twice as likely to get Unrest as a low-risk area, and a high-risk area twice as likely as one with medium risk. Those areas listed as "No Risk" will never go into rebellion.

One can see that South America, as a whole, is a low-risk region and a good one to invest in. China can also be considered low risk (only Yunnan, Inner Mongolia and Sin-Kiang are rated medium), although the chance of a "Boxer Rebellion" must temper this evaluation. India is another matter, every part of it is at medium risk; one can expect some trouble in India at some point in the game. The same goes for all of Central America. Players are advised to keep an eye on high-risk areas—both when independent and when occupied.

By keeping these categories in mind, accomplished players can better plan the progress of their empire-building. And can better plan for the opportunities Unrest can provide.

alliance is irrevocable and gives Germany the advantage that only one European power can ever declare war on it, unless the other doesn't mind causing the Great War. Austria provides you with two foreign office incomes. Certainly it is true that Austrian income cannot buy German protectorates et. al.; but it can buy German VP. Once Austria has established Influences in Serbia and Rumania, start buying. Note that Austria-Hungary gets an automatic *casus belli* should any other power attempt to Control either Serbia or Rumania.

UNITED STATES

America to the Americans

1877-1881: Rutherford Hayes
1881-1885: Chester Arthur
1885-1889: Grover Cleveland
1889-1893: Benjamin Harrison
1893-1897: Grover Cleveland
1897-1901: William McKinley
1901-1909: Theodore Roosevelt
1909-1913: William Taft
1913-1921: Woodrow Wilson

With the North triumphant in the Civil War, the United States now entered onto the world stage through its industrial might. Throughout the game, the US merchant fleet will grow, opening up the possibilities for many new markets. Break into markets in Central America early, and develop South American markets.

Involvement in Latin America provides increased wealth, but it also keeps the US involved with any Control attempts by other powers in this region. This is something that the US player doesn't want (it earns him 10 VP if successful), and it should be made clear that the US is prepared to go to war in such an event. Unless the US has an Influence in the area, they have no *casus belli* for war.

A similar area for American attention might be China. By establishing Influence in China, the US player will be involved in any rebellion. Provided that there are American troops in China when the rebellion is quashed (thus are the Philippines important as an American base), the US can go out of its way to sabotage any partitioning of China. And, if there are no foreign controls in China (except Hong Kong) at the game's end, the US player garners another ten VP.

That's 20 VP already!

Another goal for the American to work for is a war with Spain. It is very likely that the "Yellow Journalism" event will occur, and the US must be prepared. It is possible to take all Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines if the material is at hand: two task forces and two regiments to the Philippines, two task forces and two divisions to Cuba, and two regiments to Puerto Rico. That means at least three task forces, two divisions and four regiments have to be built. Make sure this war is over quickly, before Spain can mobilize its home forces.

Fortunately, by the nature of this war, no outside power can intervene (the major power in this instance has the *casus belli* against the minor, so no third power can "defend the rights" of the minor as would be the case otherwise). Note also that it could be possible to convince others to support you if you call a Congress over your *casus belli* with Spain. They might wish to avoid the higher tension increase that war would bring; try to convince them that a US presence in the Philippines would help curb the British in the East. Make some promises about helping in any war against Britain (being a non-European power, the US can threaten to join any war without escalating it into a Great War). It is possible you could "get away with the goods" here without ever having to pay for anything.

So, without even getting involved in regular colonial imperialism, America has earned 62.5 VP (full possession of those three Spanish holdings nets

42.5)! This is quite impressive. Add Alaska and Hawaii, and the total rises to 87.5. Combine this with an extensive trade network and one can see that the US doesn't need much imperial land-grabbing. Therefore, any they do engage in is simply so much gravy.

But what the US does need is time to develop all this. The American player does not want a Great War before Turn 6 or so, and should work to keep the peace in a world where other powers are involved. Make an early grab for Hawaii, preferably on the first turn. It should not go to Japan under any circumstances. In 1884, Japan will get another merchant fleet and will have the capacity to take Hawaii. Likewise, there is no good excuse for the US not to be the first to construct a Central American canal (another 15 VP).

The US player should be aware that if any other nation attempts to plant a Control anywhere in Central America, the US will have a *casus belli* against that nation. Make sure the other players are aware of both this and the fact that you mean it. It often happens that the other powers become so involved with affairs in Africa, Asia and Oceania they forget all about the Americas, not wanting to aggravate the neutral US. Since the threat implicit is worth anything only if America has some military punch, be sure to have a reasonable fighting force at hand.

Again, appear resolute and play up the fact that the US can get involved in a war without escalating it to a world event and ending the game.

JAPAN

Red Sun Rising

1867-1912: Emperor Mutsuhito

Until 1853, Japan remained unwelcoming to all foreign elements. The beginning of modern Japan could be dated to the last Shogunate in 1867. *Meiji Tenno* means the "enlightened reign of the emperor", and it begins in 1867. Japan's leaders realized that unless they adopted some western ways, the nation could be swallowed up by the Great Powers. No one, however, could foresee the speed with which Japan would rise to their ranks.

Without a doubt, the Japanese player wants a long game. The merchant fleet will gradually blossom, permitting Japan access to markets that will swell the coffers and permit considerable buying of VP. Japan has to buy her VP. There isn't enough territory about to give it a powerful empire relative to France or England, who will have—if nothing else—all of Africa. If Japan does get full possession of Korea, Formosa, Indochina and Sarawak, it has gained 80 VP. But, the chances of getting all those are slim, requiring some very nimble diplomacy (with Russia for Korea, with France for Indochina, and with anybody for Formosa and Sarawak).

China is a primary interest for Japan. Not only is it a market and a potential source of provinces to conquer, but Japan can earn a bonus of ten VP if no other power Controls any part of China proper. Since Japan itself has to Control at least one area itself to gain this (unlike the bonus for the US), this is somewhat tricky. Japan has to hope for an early rebellion in China that Japan can exploit by itself. Therefore, work toward keeping the westerners out of China. Explain to them that they will probably bicker so much about partitioning it that no one will get anything. Make it look like you don't want much, just that small concession. You wouldn't necessarily mind a bit of western Influence, though. It does hasten a rebellion. But Japan must strive to strike a balance in China.

The Japanese player should work toward perhaps "buying" Cochin China and the rights to Indochina from France. For assurances of Japanese military aid against Britain, or some sort of territorial trade, the French player might just consider this. It can't

Purchase Cost for Markers in VP Equivalents:							
		GB	FR	GE	US	RU/JA	IT
Military:	1s	0.3	0.43	0.6	0.75	1.0	1.5
	3s	1.0	1.43	2.0	2.75	3.33	5.0
	10s	3.0	4.29	6.0	7.5	10.0	15.0
Interest		0.5	0.71	1.0	1.25	1.67	2.5
Influence		1.0	1.43	2.0	2.5	3.33	5.0
Protectorate		2.0	2.86	4.0	5.0	6.67	10.0
Possession		4.0	5.71	8.0	10.0	13.33	20.0
Dominion/State		6.0			15.0		

hurt to try. Otherwise, plan for a war against the French with the object of capturing these areas. By having no other power controlling Formosa, Cochin China, Indochina or Siam, Japan gains five bonus VP. An anti-French policy should also please Britain, perhaps enough to give Japan a defensive alliance, which is worth another two VP/turn. While it would be nicer to fight the French late in the game, you may not get the opportunity more than once, so take it when you can.

The Germans should be dealt with early in the game. They usually get involved within Japan's sphere of interest at some point. If Japan is going to be either anti-French or anti-British, the Germans are a good ally and would probably be thankful for any cooperation in achieving its imperialistic designs. And, unless it is clumsily getting in your way, there is little to be gained from conflict with Germany. Convince him to stay out of China.

Russia is likely to be your prime enemy. Russia will undoubtedly intervene in China, and also in Korea. Do not give in on Korea! A co-dominion may be feasible, but you had better get something in return for this concession (like promises to stay out of China, or perhaps wads of cash), because you can defeat Russia in Korea if need be.

Keep the US out of the Pacific whenever possible. Push for them to leave the Philippines to the Spanish.

RUSSIA

In Search of a Border

1881-1894: Czar Alexander III

1894-1917: Czar Nicholas II

Since its glory at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, when it was the "liberator of Europe", Czarist Russia had been steadily declining. Where Alexander I was a liberal, his successor Nicholas I was a conservative and employed harsh means to maintain the status-quo that had been crumbling since the French Revolution. Russian dominance in Europe came to an end with the Crimean War of 1853-56. Internal problems continued to fester (that horrible event: Peasant Agitation!). In the hopes of distracting attention, Russia here hopes to gain some prestige by conquest.

Conquest, not colonies, is what Russia is about in *PAX BRITANNICA*. With a maximum of three merchant fleets, Russia is pretty much confined and concentrated. But that is little comfort when one considers that in the west are the independent Balkans and Ottoman Empire, in the east are China and Japan, and to the south lies British India. The only easy conquest that Russia is going to get all game long is Turcomania. This is not at all reassuring, but it is important that Russian players understand the task ahead involves some hard work.

First, Russia should try hard to come to an understanding with Japan over Korea. Work for a co-dominion. A Russo-Japanese war only helps the likes of Britain and France, who want a short game and would like to see Russia and/or Japan injured. Don't give up your involvement in China easily. Influences in Manchuria, Mongolia and Sin-Kiang are worth 17 VP at game's end, as well as providing a steady income.

Second, keeping in mind how "friendly" Japan was, Russia should establish some "ground rules" for dealing with Germany concerning the Balkans and Turkey. Here, each side has a powerful army (Germany through Austria-Hungary). But Russia should guard against losing hers (let's see, that's three corps at 30 each for 90, or 30 VP lost). Hopefully, the German player will be prepared to be on good terms with you and grant you a lot if you agree to oppose his enemy (which is bound to be Britain or France). Demand Anatolia. Growl about your powerful army ready to descend on India. Ask for money.

Always ask for money. From everybody.

Russia needs a powerful army. A navy you can live without, but an imposing ground force is a top priority. All your conquests are bound to be against sizable foes—be it Japan, China, Turkey, India or Austria-Hungary. Never fear; the army won't go to waste. Your job is to make sure the money is used successfully. It is for this reason that you need money. If Germany won't give you any, go to France, offering a defensive alliance, offering to help in an attack against India, offering anything that will tempt him—but get the funding to build Russian corps. *Don't* get sleazy and use this income to buy VP.

This is not to say Russia should never buy VP. Just buy them later in the game, when you have established some markets and buy them with your own cash. Next, talk to Britain. Do not be bullied. See if you can get Afghanistan without a fight. It isn't worth much economically. Remind Britain of this, looking very innocent all the while. If Britain is not about to give Afghanistan to you gratis, appear understanding and sympathetic and prepare to go to war for it. Build up your corps with foreign monies; you are going to need them. Britain has a *casus belli* against any power that attempts to Control Afghanistan. Unless you are prepared, you'll be caught in a very embarrassing war.

The point to all this is simple: India. Worth 31 VP to Great Britain, it is worth 103 VP to Russia! The conquest of India is an old Russia dream (much like the Dardanelles). It may certainly remain that, but the pursuit of it will bring lots of income your way to help construct an army you can use in places other than India, if it comes to that. And, giving Britain cause for fright may just see the British player trying to placate you by appeasement elsewhere: Turkey, Persia, Manchuria, Korea. Regardless, pressure on India will make you a key player in the game, and that is half the fun. More opportunities come to key players.

Historically, Persia went into unrest in 1906, which resulted in Russia and Britain quickly concluding the Treaty of St. Petersburg arranging a co-protectorate. But, there is no reason for Russia to give in on this in this game. Any Control attempt by Britain in Persia is a *casus belli*. If there is a powerful army just waiting to descend on India, Britain will think twice about taking advantage of Persian unrest. (Of course, none of this is at all possible if Russia hasn't first taken Turcomania; do so early in the game for it is strategically important.)

Protect your rights in Turkey at all times. While it may not happen, the possibility of establishing

Victory Points gained for Status/Time:

Great Britain:	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	0.2	0.4	0.8	1.0
L2	0.4	0.8	1.6	2.0
L3	0.6	1.2	2.4	3.0
L4	0.8	1.6	3.2	4.0
L5	1.0	2.0	4.0	5.0
L6	1.2	2.4	4.8	6.0
L7	1.4	2.8	5.6	7.0
L8	1.6	3.2	6.4	8.0
L9	1.8	3.6	7.2	9.0

France	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	0.3	0.6	1.1	1.4
L2	0.6	1.1	2.3	2.9
L3	0.9	1.7	3.4	4.3
L4	1.1	2.3	4.6	5.7
L5	1.4	2.9	5.7	7.1
L6	1.7	3.4	6.9	8.6
L7	2.0	4.0	8.0	10.0
L8	2.3	4.6	9.1	11.4
L9	2.6	5.1	10.3	12.9

Germany:	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	0.4	0.8	1.6	2.0
L2	0.8	1.6	3.2	4.0
L3	1.2	2.4	4.8	6.0
L4	1.6	3.2	6.4	8.0
L5	2.0	4.0	8.0	10.0
L6	2.4	4.8	9.6	12.0
L7	2.8	5.6	11.2	14.0
L8	3.2	6.4	12.8	16.0
L9	3.6	7.2	14.4	18.0

Russia:	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	0.7	1.3	2.6	3.3
L2	1.3	2.7	5.4	6.7
L3	2.0	4.0	8.0	10.0
L4	2.7	5.3	10.6	13.3
L5	3.3	6.7	13.4	16.7
L6	4.0	8.0	16.0	20.0
L7	4.7	9.3	18.6	23.3
L8	5.3	10.7	21.4	26.7
L9	6.0	12.0	24.0	30.0

United States:	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	0.5	1.0	2.0	2.5
L2	1.0	2.0	4.0	5.0
L3	1.5	3.0	6.0	7.5
L4	2.0	4.0	8.0	10.0
L5	2.5	5.0	10.0	12.5
L6	3.0	6.0	12.0	15.0
L7	3.5	7.0	14.0	17.5
L8	4.0	8.0	16.0	20.0
L9	4.5	9.0	18.0	22.5

Japan:	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	0.7	1.3	2.6	3.3
L2	1.3	2.7	5.4	6.7
L3	2.0	4.0	8.0	10.0
L4	2.7	5.3	10.6	13.3
L5	3.3	6.7	13.4	16.7
L6	4.0	8.0	16.0	20.0
L7	4.7	9.3	18.6	23.3
L8	5.3	10.7	21.4	26.7
L9	6.0	12.0	24.0	30.0

Italy:	INT	INF	PROT	POSS
L1	1.0	2.0	4.0	5.0
L2	2.0	4.0	8.0	10.0
L3	3.0	6.0	12.0	15.0
L4	4.0	8.0	16.0	20.0
L5	5.0	10.0	20.0	25.0
L6	6.0	12.0	24.0	30.0
L7	7.0	14.0	28.0	35.0
L8	8.0	16.0	32.0	40.0
L9	9.0	18.0	36.0	45.0

control in Anatolia would be a sad thing to miss. From Anatolia, a whole new world for expansion opens. Establish a market for trade there. Negotiate to keep other powers out of the Ottoman Empire altogether. This is necessary; otherwise you can always be kept out of Anatolia by others. The moment it goes into unrest and you move in the troops, another player can toss in an Influence, giving him a *casus belli* and a recourse to Congress. In the Congress of Europe, you will certainly be denied. This is precisely what happened in the 1878 Congress of Berlin.

Once you have found out how you stand with Japan, Germany/Austria, and France, make your move. Establish markets in Anatolia, Rumania and Manchuria, three areas critical to Russia. (While Afghanistan is critical, it doesn't warrant immediate investment; besides, you needn't protect it as such, always having a *casus belli* should Britain make a move.) Start building up your army. Being opportunistic, Russia has to be ready from the start to exploit any possibility.

Even if the opportunities don't seem to be presenting themselves, sit back and work for world peace. Keep the game alive. Not only does it give you longer to await the opportune moment, the next gain from your Influences in Rumania, Bulgaria, Anatolia, Persia and Manchuria alone will be 30 pounds, or ten VP.

As a last note, remember that you also have a *casus belli* against any foreign Controls in Sin-Kiang, Mongolia or Manchuria as well as Rumania and Anatolia. Eventually, you'll find a use for that massive army.

ITALY

Last but not Least

1878-1900: King Humbert I

1900-1946: King Emmanuel III

The Kingdom of Italy was established in 1861, largely through the impetus of Sardinia-Piedmont (under Prime Minister Camillo di Cavour). Sardinia, by playing France and Austria off against each other, gained the support of most of the small states, militarily conquering the rest over a period of time. By 1880, Italy was beginning a period of industrial development that enabled it to entertain imperialistic notions. There was a growing nationalism manifested in the "Irredenta", a movement aiming to unify all Italian peoples in one state—to win, through war if necessary, all the "unredeemed territories of Italian ethnic composition".

Not a prime instigator of events, Italy is still great fun to play in *PAX BRITANNICA*. The object is to get involved with as many things as possible. Remember, weak as it may be, Italy can become that "fourth player" who turns a local conflict into the Great War. Without a doubt, I always prefer the seven-player version of the game. The inclusion of Italy into the maneuvering is a source of surprise time and again.

As Italy is not likely to end up with an empire that rivals Britain's in territory or income, there has to be a different measure of success. Of course, that is the divisor number ("2"). Even an unimposing empire consisting of holdings in the likes of Tunis, Eritrea and Berbera will net an end result of 65 VP. But, remember that each possession market amounts to 20 VP spent. Plus, there is the maintenance costs. (The moral here is that possessions are only worth the effort if the income generated will warrant them). Thus Italy should place its Controls early to gain the cash early.

Here is an interesting statistic: If she never establishes a Control, invests the money in VP every turn, and the game goes for ten turns, Italy will have accumulated 150 VP. While this is impressive, it by no means guarantees Italian victory. The British Empire alone can swell to that size, which won't

account for British investments in VP or other bonuses that accrue from "active" play. Not to mention the fact that if Britain and France have any say about it, the game will end far earlier than Turn 10.

Clearly, Italy has to find the right balance between buying VP and establishing Influences in lucrative areas. Established early in the game, these Influences will pay for themselves, then pay for VP above the foreign office income. Further, the Italian should think twice about establishing any Controls in areas since, with bad luck on a die roll, he may end up far worse off. Control, if done at all, should be saved until the very end.

The flaw in all this is obvious. Influences are subject to elimination when other powers take over an area. Before they have even paid for themselves, you may find your markets disappearing. Not only that, the process involves an increase in the tension index—moving the game toward a quicker end. Italy still must actively negotiate to protect its investments; it cannot simply ignore what is happening on the board while garnering income and VP. You may find your opponents willing to grant what they see as trifling concessions, because most players may not appreciate their value to Italy.

Actively pursue a defensive treaty with Great Britain; the two VP per turn are well worth it. Also, give your best shot at keeping the Mediterranean free of imperialists. Remember, if Greece, Egypt, Tunis and Anatolia are not controlled at game's end, you earn a bonus of 10 VP. (In effect, you are interested in keeping the Ottoman Empire intact, if it isn't to fall to you.)

CHINA

Since the Opium War (1840-42), which demonstrated the Western military superiority, the Manchu Empire had been open to the rest of the world. The sudden intrusion of Western capitalism with its cheap imports destroyed the crafts and trades in the Empire. The Christian missionaries further disrupted the basic fabric of the culture. As the standard of living dropped and social conditions were aggravated, a revolutionary intelligentsia formed in the port cities. Since the Great Powers were heavy-handed in their policies towards China, it was inevitable that revolutionary cadres would incite a popular rebellion.

In the game, should that happen, each involved power had best have its holdings well-garrisoned or face being ejected from the Manchu Empire. The obvious point is that, if you are going to dabble in China, be prepared to invest heavily in it. It should be noted that a bonus of 30 VP will be given to any player that controls at least three Chinese areas if no other (including the minor powers) has any Control in China (ignoring Hong Kong). And, if taking the American role, remember that the US is interested in there being no Controls established in the Empire. All this is some incentive for opportunists.

Chance of Chinese Rebellion:

Index Level	Percent Chance
30-39	3%
40-49	8%
50-59	16%
60-69	30%
70-79	40%
80-89	58%
90+	72%

Each turn, players will be made aware of the starting "Chinese Resentment Index"; as it climbs, so does the chance of open rebellion in China. Each

Sports Special



STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL

Part One

By Jim Burnett

There have been few games in the Avalon Hill sports stable that have undergone more improvements over the years than *STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL*. The current fifth edition has gone even further to relieve some of the confusion and results of the original. Each edition in the line has bettered the earlier, so the fifth is as accurate a representation of NFL football as can be found in a game. As with all the statistical games in the AH line, there are two major influencing factors: the player cards, and the *Fast Action Cards* (FACs). Since the player cards are generated based on the season's performance of players, the results of any game are heavily dependent on the quality of the teams selected. This apparently will cause the superior team from a particular season to always defeat one which did not finish as well. Just as in actual football, however, this is not always the case. The FACs will contribute their random effects to frustrate those who think they have a surety in the game. As a player, therefore, you must understand the operations and probabilities of the FACs.

We will break up this article into two segments for reasons of available space. These sections will, roughly, cover the running game in this issue, and the passing game in the next. The information on the FACs will apply to both portions.

The FAC deck contains 109 cards, of which 13 are "Z" cards. Experience in many games has shown that the typical game will run through about five decks. All the probabilities listed below will use this assumption. Any overtime play will not be computed since Sudden Death is just that, and we must expect the computed odds to hold. The other assumption used is that only the 96 regular cards affect the statistics. Since "Z" cards are resolved separately from regular plays, we will give them their own section.

Both the "Run" (1-12) and "Pass" (1-48) Random Numbers are fully and smoothly distributed over the deck. The cumulative probabilities for these cards are given in Table 1. Note that the odds on any Pass card is 2.08% and on any Run is 8.33%. We list the percentages cumulatively since the information of value is the chance of drawing a card which is equal to or greater than a certain number. In some instances, you may wish to invert or reposition the numbers to obtain the desired result. For example, an interception possibility for a defensive back of "45-48" would be translated to the "4" line, for an 8.33% chance.

Table 1: Cumulative Percentages for Pass and Run Random Numbers

P#-R#	%	P#-R#	%	P#-R#	%
1	2.08	17	35.42	33	68.75
2	4.17	18	37.50	34	70.83
3	6.25	19	39.58	35	72.92
4-1	8.33	20-5	41.67	36-9	75.00
5	10.42	21	43.75	37	77.08
6	12.50	22	45.83	38	79.17
7	14.58	23	47.92	39	81.25
8-2	16.67	24-6	50.00	40-10	83.33
9	18.75	25	52.08	41	85.42
10	20.83	26	54.17	42	87.50
11	22.92	27	56.25	43	89.58
12-3	25.00	28-7	58.33	44-11	91.67
13	27.08	29	60.42	45	93.75
14	29.17	30	62.50	46	95.83
15	31.25	31	64.58	47	97.92
16-4	33.33	32-8	66.67	48-12	100.00

The possible calls for running plays are listed below in Figure 1 by the type of Run. Of the 96 cards, there is an even 48-48 split between cards which are favorable to the offense and those for the defense. Each running play is broken down into occurrences throughout the deck; thus the listings defensively are for the boxes keyed on, and offensively are the blockers used. Additionally included are the times a play goes out of bounds (*) and the number of optional out-of-bounds (**).

Table 2 breaks down the data on running plays favorable to the offense by the total number of times a particular position is called upon to block. We will assume a two-back offense for the purpose of this illustration. The insertion of a third back for short-yardage situations would naturally increase the importance of the other two. Likewise a single back will be without his blocker and would have to hope the defense was keying on the pass. What is evident here is that the center of the line carries most of the load. Even on "Sweep" plays you can see the effects of the pulling guards. Your running game will largely depend on the strength of your center and guards and their replacements.

Table 2: Number of Times and Percentage each player's Blocking Value is used.

Total	B	LE	LT	LG	C	RG	RT	RE
222	24	10	26	42	42	42	26	10
%	11	4	12	19	19	19	12	4

Conversely, the defensive keys are listed in Table 3, showing the defender the areas of possible trouble if positions are open. Of the 256 different occurrences of boxes listed on the cards, the 4-3 defense (ABDEFHJ) has one or more boxes named for 176 selections (or 67.6%), but the 3-4 (ACEFGIJ) has

only 144 (or 56.25%). Breaking down the results even further, against the sweeps (128 occurrences), the 4-3 has 112 (87.5%) while the 3-4 has 80 (62.5%). Similarly, the inside game has the same number of calls, but each defense is keyed half the time. Assuming equality of tackling values, the best place to run is inside; and if you must run sweeps, do it against the 3-4. Also highlighted here are the places where the defense, expecting run, should fill in or double up. The 3-4 needs to cover B and D (strong for both inside and outside games) and the 4-3 player might wish to move the middle linebacker up to box C to fill in the middle. Available defensive backs should fill boxes G, H or I. Obviously, most of these moves will be made at the expense of pass defense.

Table 3: Number of Times and Percentage each Defensive Box is called.

Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
256	24	48	48	24	8	16	16	16	8	8
%	9	18	18	9	3	6	6	6	3	3

This concludes our coverage of the running game. In the next issue (Vol. 26, No. 1) of *THE GENERAL* we will consider the passing game, and a few other features of the new *STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL*. ☆

ALL-STAR REPLAY

For those readers who follow Mr. Burnett's column "Sports Special" but who may not be familiar with the defunct *ALL-STAR REPLAY*, it was an irregular periodical edited (at various times) by Bruce Milligan or Joe Balkoski. The following is a listing of the contents for the nine issues of *ALL-STAR REPLAY* for which back issues remain in stock. Common abbreviations are used for the sports games, to wit: Baseball Strategy—*BbSt*; Basketball Strategy—*BkSt*; Bowl Bound—*BB*; Challenge Bridge—*CB*; Football Strategy—*FbSt*; Paydirt—*PD*; Pennant Race—*PR*; Pro Golf—*PG*; Speed Circuit—*SC*; Statist-Pro Baseball—*SPBb*; Statist-Pro Basketball—*SPBk*; Statist-Pro Football—*SPFb*; Superstar Baseball—*SB*; Title Bout—*TB*; USAC Auto Racing—*USAC*; Win, Place & Show—*WP&S*. The subject code is also fairly straightforward: History/Statistics—*H*; Play—*P*; Variant—*V*; Design—*D*; Strategy—*S*. We should note that many of these issues contained new cards/charts for use with a published variant. Readers wishing to obtain one or more of these back issues of *ALL-STAR REPLAY* may obtain them direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214) for \$4.00 each plus the usual 10% shipping and handling. (Maryland residents, please add 5% state sales tax.)

- Vol. 2, #1: *SPBb*—H, V; *SB*—D; *SC*—V; *CB*—P; *BB*—H, V; *FbSt*—P; *SPBk*—V
- Vol. 2, #2: *FbSt*—P, V; *BB*—P, V; *SPBk*—V; *BkSt*—V; *SC*—V; *CB*—P; *TB*—V, H; *BbSt*—V; *USAC*—D; *WP&S*—V
- Vol. 2, #3: *TB*—V, H; *BB*—V, D; *SPBb*—V, P; *CB*—P; *SC*—V, P; *SPBk*—V; *WP&S*—V
- Vol. 4, #1: *PG*—H, V, D; *SB*—P; *WP&S*—V; *TB*—V; *BkSt*—P
- Vol. 4, #2: *SPBb*—H, V; *SPBk*—P; *WP&S*—V; *TB*—V; *FbSt*—P; *SC*—H
- Vol. 4, #3: *PD*—H, V; *SPFb*—P, V; *WP&S*—V; *TB*—V; *SC*—H
- Vol. 4, #4: *WP&S*—V, P; *TB*—V; *PR*—D, V; *SPBb*—P; *PG*—D; *PD*—V; *BB*—V
- Vol. 4, #5: *PR*—H, V; *WP&S*—V; *PG*—P, V; *SC*—P, V; *TB*—V; *SPFb*—V; *BkSt*—V
- Vol. 4, #6: *SB*—H, V, P; *PR*—P, V; *WP&S*—V; *TB*—D

	DEFENSE										OFFENSE										OOB						
	A	B	C	D	E	AF	BG	CH	DI	EJ	Break	LT	LG	C	RG	RT	LT	LE	LE	LG	B2	RG	RE	RE	RT	*	**
SL	16	16				8	8				3	10	11				8	5	5		6					19	30
IL		16	16					8	8		3	8	10	13						8	6					1	3
IR			16	16					8	8	3			13	10	8				6	8					1	3
SR				16	16					8	8	3				11	10				6		5	5	8	16	29

Figure 1: Number of Times each Card comes up when Run is called.

Pax Discordia . . . Cont'd from Page 53

turn there will also be one random choice for rebellion. Note that all actions taken in a turn will affect that turn's chance of rebellion breaking out. The resentment index is raised by foreign intervention; and physical troop occupation of areas of the Empire proper will do the most damage to peace.

While China may be something of a beast, it is recommended that you get involved if possible. Place Influence markers in China proper. Keep troops nearby, ready to step in immediately upon rebellion. The main reason: once China is defeated (and it should be), all powers with troops in the country have the power of veto in the ensuing partition. Thus, even the lowly regiment you have in some forgotten corner gives you the right to stop any province (like Manchuria, or possible Central China if there is a second rebellion) going to an unfriendly power. If this seems at all unfair, please note it is historically accurate—mutual suspicion prevented any partition after the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.

So, with the exception of Italy perhaps, virtually every player will cast an eye at China sooner or later. Your play here, and your interaction with the other players that involvement forces, will do much to determine the course of your game.

CONCLUSION

PAX BRITANNICA is the best boardgame available for this period, one that has made many converts. The thoughts and suggestions included here barely begin to delve the depth of strategy in the game. At best, these are offered as guidelines for the new player and reminders for the experienced.



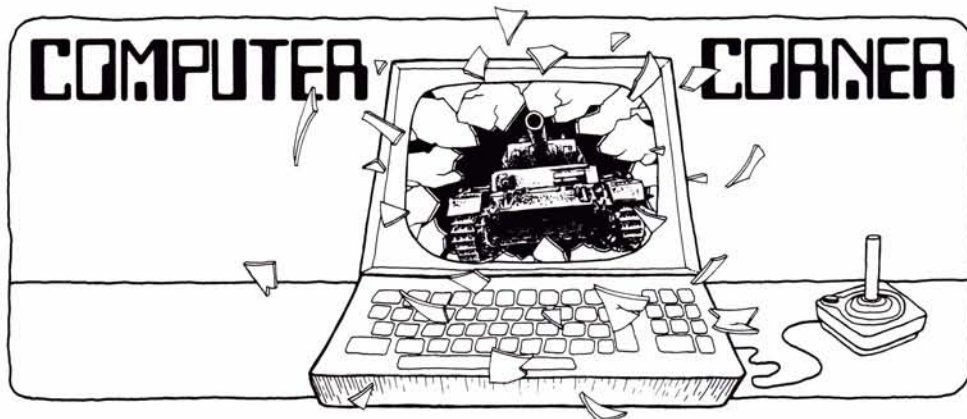
SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed: 98

Total Responses: 367

Rank:	Title	Pub	Rank Times		
			Last	On	Freq.
			Time	List	Ratio
1.	Enemy in Sight	AH	—	1	3.6
2.	Advanced SL	AH	1	20	3.0
3.	WS&IM	AH	—	1	2.2
4.	Diplomacy	AH	5	21	2.1
5.	Russian Front	AH	—	1	2.0
6.	B-17	AH	6	2	1.9
7.	Squad Leader	AH	7	49	1.8
8.	Air Force	AH	2	2	1.7
9.	Flat Top	AH	11	3	1.6
10.	TP: Stalingrad	AH	—	1	1.6
11.	World in Flames	ADG	—	1	1.5
12.	Gettysburg '88	AH	20	2	1.4
13.	Guns of August	AH	—	1	1.4
14.	Tac Air	AH	8	3	1.4
15.	Up Front	AH	10	7	1.3
16.	VITP	AH	16	2	1.2
17.	Empires in Arms	AH	17	12	1.1
18.	Kremlin	AH	—	1	1.1
19.	MBT	AH	—	1	1.0
20.	Russian Campaign	AH	4	49	1.0

Once again we are treated to a sign of the changing times, for *THIRD REICH*—which had appeared on 48 consecutive listings—failed to make the cut this time; and *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* garnered just enough to edge it out in doing so. It appears that a new batch of favorites, with the occasional "hot" new release, are dominating the players' attention. Notable among the former are *ASL*, *DIPLOMACY* and *EMPIRES IN ARMS*, a most eclectic group comprising a 25-year old veteran and two updates of previously-popular game systems. Riding high this time, no doubt on the strength of recent coverage in these pages, are *ENEMY IN SIGHT* and *WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN*. But it seems obvious to this interested observer, that the hobbyists are more inclined to try their hand at unusual and unique wargame designs—and there are certainly no shortages of those these days.



Beyond SUPER SUNDAY

By John Huff

Many computer game enthusiasts have purchased and enjoyed our ground-breaking *SUPER SUNDAY* game for the IBM, Apple II and Commodore 64 computers. A few years ago we released supplemental disks for the Apple and C-64 versions called *THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER*, or simply the *GENERAL MANAGER* Disk. The utilities provided with this disk expand the scope of the game from simple head-to-head competition to running an entire league. Several groups of computer football fans have already established *SUPER SUNDAY* leagues, and have satisfied their secret desire to manage and coach a pro-football team.

The program itself uses a combination of icons and menus to provide a friendly and comfortable interface between the computer and the user. Extensive use is made of the color capabilities of the computer to keep the screens clear and readable. The capabilities provided the player start with the ability to automatically record offensive and defensive stats for individual teams at the conclusion of each game. Unlike similar programs, after the game the data remains in the computer until you save it. So, if you haven't prepared a disk to accept the data in advance, there is still time.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the game, *SUPER SUNDAY* gives the player the chance to watch the 20 greatest Super Bowl contenders, computer analyzed to perform (with the proper guidance) just as they did in real life. In the original game, you could match up any team against any other (regardless of year) and finally resolve once and for all who the "best of the best" really is. *SUPER SUNDAY* is really three games in one. You can play head-to-head against another live opponent in the two-player version, or play solitaire against the computer (which is programmed to react to your strategy), or set the computer to auto-play and simply watch the results as a spectator. Regardless of which version, you will be amazed at the graphics. *SUPER SUNDAY* is the only statistically authentic game to give you all 22 players on the screen at once going through the actual play in animated action. The season disks each bring all 28 teams from a single year (at the moment, from 1984 through 1988) to the screen, allowing you to now pit them against each other or against a team from a different disk in the series.

With the *GENERAL MANAGER* disk, you may create as many leagues as you like, each with two conferences of three divisions each. Each division may have up to six teams. The traditional cities can be used, or a more generic identification system is offered. The teams you create can be played the same as the teams provided on the various game and season disks. This gives the league players the ability

to run a draft and play out their own dream seasons. Finally, all rosters, statistics and league standings can be printed out easily at any time. With these capabilities (and more), *SUPER SUNDAY* can be taken to the max for home football gaming.

For those who have always dreamed of the perfect football team, the "Trade Players" option is available. Using this, you make up a team, give it the name of your choice, and then swap into it those actual players you wish to use. You may take players from any of the season disks for *SUPER SUNDAY* or any of the 38 past Super Bowl contenders. It gives the stat fans the ultimate in fantasy football. *SUPER SUNDAY* is available for \$19.99, the season disks for \$20.00, and the *GENERAL MANAGER* disk for \$30.00.

Progress Report

On the new games front, lot's of stuff in the works:

COMBOTS (Commodore 64)

By the time you read this, *COMBOTS* should be available. The game was described in my last column, and more kinds of fun in one tactical combat game is hard to get. (Visualize a game which combines tactics, hide-'n-go-seek, capture the flag, and an erector set in one package and you'll get the idea!)

LEGENDS OF THE LOST REALM (Macintosh)

Like *COMBOTS*, you can best see for yourself by playing this one. It is now available, and the first supplemental scenario (The Wilderlands) should be on the market soon. The "Wilderlands" takes the adventurers from the Sorcerer's Stronghold into the wild forests and mountains of Tagor Dal. There, they must find the wise men and ancient masters who can help them continue their quest for the lost staves. Survival skills play an important role in this adventure. Dress warmly and drink plenty of liquids.

Computer *THIRD REICH* (Atari ST)

At the time of this writing, it is getting ready to enter beta testing. If all goes well, it should be available in the early winter—with the first conversions (Amiga, Macintosh and PC) following in the near future.

Computer *ACQUIRE* (PC)

A faithful rendering of the popular financial game. This state-of-the-art conversion has a smooth user-interface as well as a stable of computer players. The level of skill of the computer players (as well as their strategies) vary from game to game, and even the most demanding *ACQUIRE* player will have to keep his (or her) eyes open. Up to six players (both human and/or computer) can play at one time.

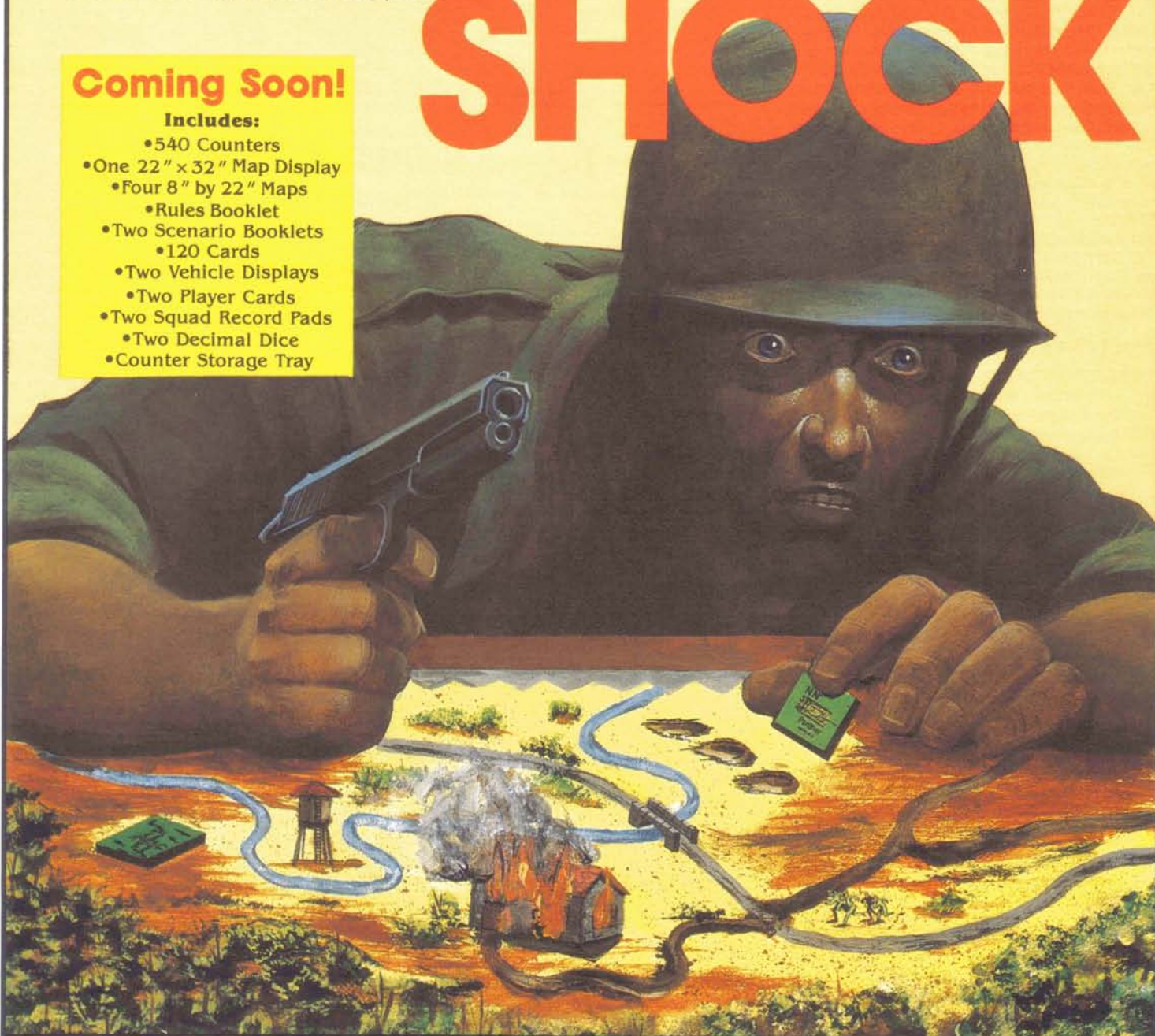
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**On the Horizon
3rd Fleet**

Details upcoming
in future
Issues of
The GENERAL

Our salty look at some popular games, old and new, of the struggles for the sealanes in Vol. 25, No. 4 brought a favorable response—an Overall Rating of 3.14 for the issue featuring *ENEMY IN SIGHT*. As only to be expected, the pieces on that game (both the play of it and the historical basis for it) grabbed the top two slots among the polling for “best article”. As for the rest of the articles, based on a random sampling of two hundred responses from the readership, the ratings for all are as follows:

THAT SINKING FEELING	252
THE SHIPS OF THE ENEMY	208
KEEP ON TRUK-IN'	152
SIGNAL CLOSE ACTION	127
SIGNAL 27	100
COMMAND PRESSURES	96
THE AGE OF SAIL	81
VIVA LA REVOLUTION	60
THE CONTINENTALS	53
RIDING THE EXPRESS	31
AH PHILOSOPHY	20
COMING ATTRACTIONS	9
COMPUTER CORNER	6
SPORTS SPECIAL	5

The post of *Boardman Number Custodian* is likely the most important in the postal *DIPLOMACY* hobby, for it is he who keeps track of all “rated” games. This is a volunteer position, one sometimes that seems more of a hassle than it is worth. But the *DIP* hobby has been blessed with a line of selfless, and accomplished, gamers willing to spend their time overseeing rather than playing. The latest of these fine gentlemen, Steve Heinowski, is stepping down and, as it is required of the BNC to recruit his own replacement, he has selected Don Williams (1521 West Avenue J-8 #163, Lancaster, CA 93534) to serve. Henceforth, those GMs looking for start numbers and guidelines are urged to contact Mr. Williams, whose many years in the hobby makes him eminently qualified to provide such.

Still another mainstay of the *DIPLOMACY* hobby—*The Zine Register*—is undergoing a change of editorship. After several years of sterling service, Ken Peel is stepping down from the post. Replacing him will be Tom Nash (5512 Pilgrim Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21214). For those looking to get involved in the postal *DIP* hobby, the thrice-yearly *Zine Register* is a must. It lists all of the known (to the editor, anyway) amateur publications devoted to our most-popular multi-player game. Each entry carries subscription information, any pbm games with openings available, and a capsule review/commentary. Some readers may be amazed at the active postal hobby these represent, and at the fact that *DIPLOMACY* is not the only multi-player game reported upon in these various ‘zines. If you happen to be a fan of *TITAN*, *KINGMAKER*,

Infiltrator's Report

SOURCE OF THE NILE, or even *Scrabble*, you'll find that there are kindred souls out there in the *DIP* hobby. So, if you are looking for some challenging play in GameMastered 'zine format, check out *The Zine Register*; at last report, each issue cost \$1.50.

Not to be outdone by the *DIP* or *3R* fanatics, the fans of *ASL* now have their own national organization—"The ASL Players Association"—founded by Bill Conner and Pierce Ostrander. The premier issue of *In Contact*, its newsletter, was released at ORIGINS this past summer. This four-page publication, with six new scenarios on heavy stock, is devoted to keeping the elite up-to-date on events, news and debates in the world of *ASL*. The cost of an annual membership in the "ASLPA" is \$3.00, and brings a subscription to *In Contact*. We have been informed that only enough copies to provide for the membership will be produced of each issue, so individual copies will not be available. For more information on the organization or its newsletter, readers are urged to write to Bill Conner, P.O. Box 4114, Youngstown, OH 44515.

Another book of interest to our readership has recently been released—the *Game Collector's Guide Vol. 1—Wargames* (by Tom Slizewski). It is a 140-page, 200-photo, soft-bound compendium of all the wargames published to date, along with listings of some of the supportive materials for the wargaming hobby (periodicals and such). Obviously, the products of Avalon Hill are featured prominently; but listed also are the obscure, and hard-to-find, titles from small companies. If you've a few old wargames you might want to sell, or if you are a collector looking to check your collection, or if you simply want to spark some memories of forgotten favorites, the *Game Collector's Guide—Wargames* is a good buy. It is available from Panzer Press (11530 West 8th Place, Arvada, CO 80005) for \$9.95 (plus \$2.00 postage/handling).

We thought we were being clever with Contest #146, but it seems that we weren't clever enough. Of the several dozen entries we received, 21 players tumbled to the fact that Player B would be the favorite to amass 100 points by first dismantling the *Fougueux* and then blasting the *Achille* after breaking the line of Player A. We were once again forced to fall back on the old practice of a random drawing. The winners, each to receive a merchandised credit from Avalon Hill, are: Jeff Blohm, Wheeling, IL; David Chapel, Phoenix, AZ; Gary Gandy, Florence, AL; Chris Geggus, Romford, Essex, UK; Tom

Hannen, Beavercreek, OH; Kevin Lorenz, Appleton, WI; Robert Nansteel, Valley Park, MO; Phil Rennett, Fairfax, VA; Jason Robert, Northridge, CA; David Townsend, Falls Church, VA.

The solution to Contest #147 demanded some knowledge of two aspects of *GETTYSBURG '88*: movement bonuses (3b1 and 3b2) and Double Range Artillery (optional rule 10b). The solution also features a return to that hoary old tactic, the "Soak-Off". In seeking to gain the greatest VP possible on the 12th game turn, the Confederate player looks to fashion attacks that seek to eliminate Union units. To that end, we made the following moves:

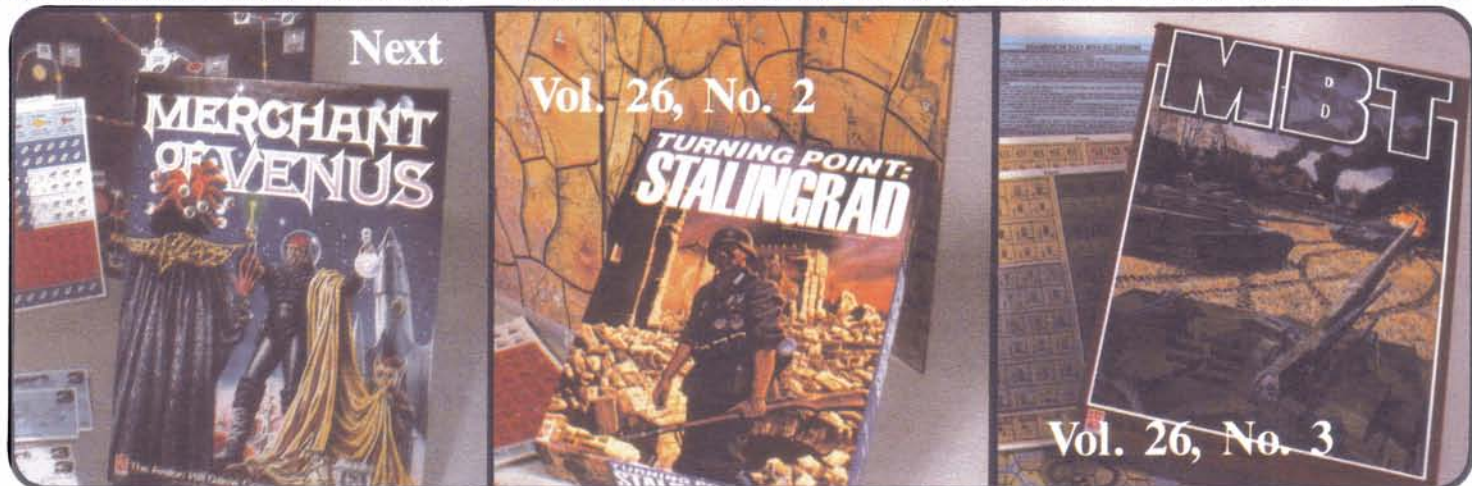
Rodes—M2	Longstreet—O10
Dance—M2	Early—O7
Ewell—M2	Johnson—O9
Anderson—N5	Nelson—N2
Heth—P3	Lee—O9
Hill—N5	McIntosh—N5
Alexander—N4	Pender—O9
McLaws—O10	Hood—O10
Eshleman—O8	

and the following attacks:

- #1: Eshlemen [+2] vs. Martin [+3]
 #2: Alexander [+1] vs. Sickles (Birney + Humphreys) [+9]
 #3: Ewell (Rodes + Dance) [+8] vs. Meade (Steinwehr + Osborne) [+3]
 #4: Hill (Anderson + McIntosh) [+7] vs. Ayres [+1]
 #5: Longstreet (Hood + McLaws) [+8] vs. Hancock (Gibbon + Hazard) [+2]
 #6: Lee (Johnson + Pender) [+8] vs. Hays [+4]

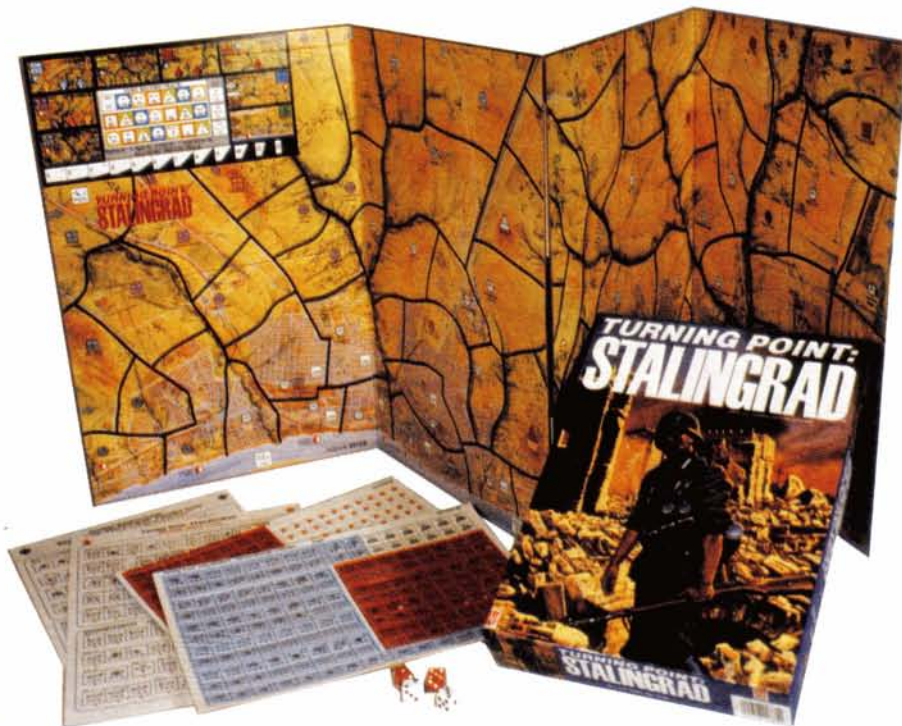
As will be noted, Eshleman peels off the batteries of Martin so that the Union gunners may not contribute their fire to Hays' defense; players will find all other Union defensive fire to be blocked or out of range. Meanwhile, Alexander sacrifices himself to "soak-off" Sickles, allowing Hill to concentrate on Ayres. The combats are resolved in the order given, in the hopes of drawing the Initiative Chit from the Union player. Lee's attack on Hays is the closest (in terms of modifiers) and the most crucial for positioning prior to the next turn; if at all possible, the Confederate player wants the chit in his hand when it is settled.

If the last four attacks turn in the Confederate's favor (two-step losses on the Union), Hazard, Hays, Ayres and Osborne will all be eliminated and bring the Confederate player eight VP (as well as shattering the Union flanks and opening the possibility for a Rebel capture of Culp's Hill next turn). Should Eshleman and Alexander both go down in their diversionary attacks, the Union will gain four VP. Note that no other two-step loss is possible for the Confederates and in all a grey unit is present that can absorb the step-loss without being eliminated. With the best results, the Confederate player will have gained +8 VP; with the worse, he will have lost an equal number. A calculation of the odds of various configurations of results shows that the Confederate player looks to see a five-VP point swing in his favor in this turn of *GETTYSBURG '88*.



You, Too, Can Refight the Turning Point of WWII!

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Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate space to the right ("1" equating to excellent; "5", average; "9", terrible). EXCEPTION: Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes necessary to play the game, in ten-minute increments. (Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of HITLER'S WAR, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 24, No. 5. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for Complexity, Year of Publication and Type (2P=two player; MP=multi-player; SO=solitaire) have been provided for your information.

- 1. Overall Value _____
- 2. Components _____
- 2a. Mapboard _____
- 2b. Counters _____
- 2c. Rulebook _____
- 3. Complexity _____
- 3a. Avalon Hill Complexity 8
- 4. Completeness _____
- 5. Playability _____
- 5a. Excitement Level _____
- 5b. Play Balance _____
- 6. Authenticity _____
- 7. Game Length _____
- 7a. Shortest _____
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- 8. Year of Publication 1988
- 9. Type SO

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WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

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

We aren't asking you to subjectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or fewer) games which you've spent the most time playing since you received your last issue of The GENERAL. With the collation of these responses, we can generate a consensus list of what's being played by our readership. This list can serve both as a guide for us (for coverage in these pages) and others (convention organizers spring instantly to mind). The degree of correlation between this listing, the Best Sellers Lists, and the RBG should prove extremely interesting.

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

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

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- 1. Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on this form or a facsimile and must be accompanied by a 50¢ token fee. No refunds. Payment may be made in uncanceled U.S. postage stamps.
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- 4. Please PRINT. If your ad is illegible, it will not be printed.
- 5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed within our limited space, we request that you use official state and game abbreviations. Don't list your entire collection, list only those you are most interested in locating opponents for.

Advanced Squad Leader—ASL, Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Arab-Israeli Wars—AIW, Blitzkrieg—BL, Britannia—BRIT, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, D-Day—DD, Devil's Den—DEV, Diplomacy—DIP, Empires in Arms—EIA, Enemy in Sight—EIS, Firepower—FP, Flat Top—FT, Flight Leader, FL, Fortress Europa—FE, France 40—FR, Gettysburg—GE, Gladiator—GL, Guns of August—GOA, Hitler's War—HW, Kremlin—KREM, Kingmaker—KM, Knights of the Air—KOTA, Luftwaffe—LW, Magic Realm—MR, Merchant of Venus—MOV, Midway—MD, Naval War—NW, Panzerarmee Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, PanzerGruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Patton's Best—PAT, Platoon—PLA, Raid on St. Nazaire—RSN, Rail Baron—RB, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Russian Front—RF, Stellar Conquest—SC, Squad Leader—SL, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Tac Air—TA, Tactics II—TAC, Third Reich—3R, Thunder at Cassino—CASS, Titan—TT, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

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CONTEST 148

Enter your answers to the questions found on Page 24:

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

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

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

NAME _____
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Baltimore Man Hides Ballplayers In Secret Warehouse

His name is Jim (*last name withheld to protect the guilty*). Jim is guilty of an oversight. He forgot he put a skid of **Statis Pro Baseball and Football Player Cards** in a warehouse hidden away in east Baltimore.

His assistant, Stan, stumbled upon them by accident one night while looking for a nice, quiet, out-of-the-way romantic spot.

"Eureka," stammered Stan, who immediately took a vacation week to play **Statis Pro** games using Player Cards of all those past seasons he had just found. Lorraine, his date, wasn't overly thrilled, but whiled away the days sorting out thousands of player cards into complete sets that date back to 1978 for baseball and 1981 for football.

"It will take Avalon Hill months to sell all these," laments Lorraine.

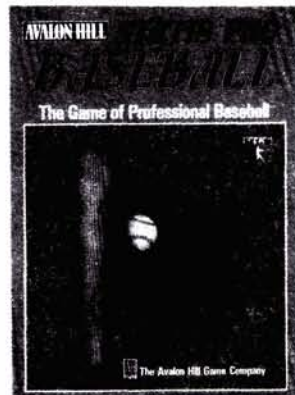
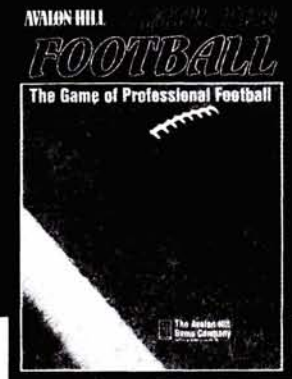
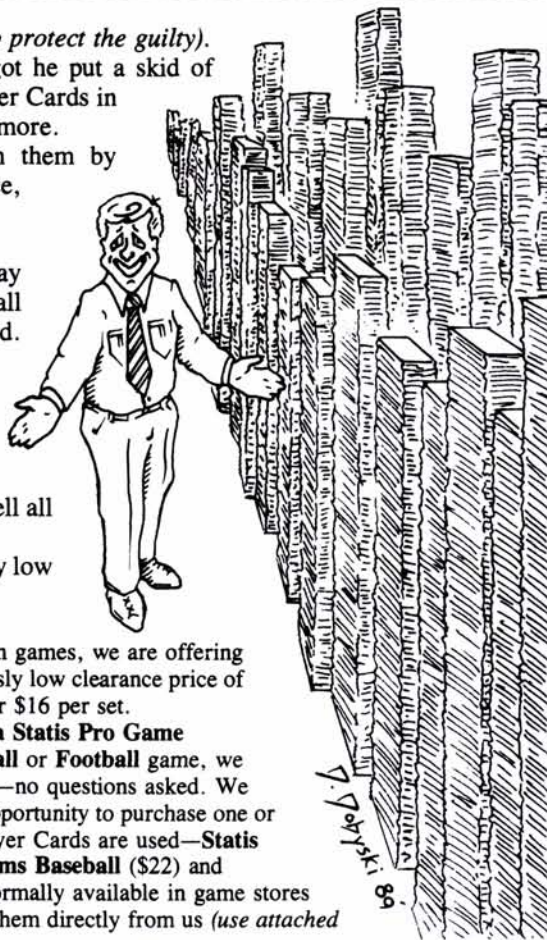
"Not if we offer them at a ridiculously low clearance price," Stan states.

Discovery Becomes Your Bonanza

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| <input type="checkbox"/> '80 Season | <input type="checkbox"/> '82 Season |
| <input type="checkbox"/> '83 Season | <input type="checkbox"/> '83 Season |
| <input type="checkbox"/> '84 Season | <input type="checkbox"/> '85 Season |
| <input type="checkbox"/> '85 Season | <input type="checkbox"/> '86 Season |
| <input type="checkbox"/> '86 Season | <input type="checkbox"/> '87 Season |
| <input type="checkbox"/> '87 Season | <input type="checkbox"/> '87 Season |

I think I'd have more fun if I also owned the game. Please send me the games checked off at prices indicated plus postage (10% USA; 20% Canada, Mexico; 30% foreign).

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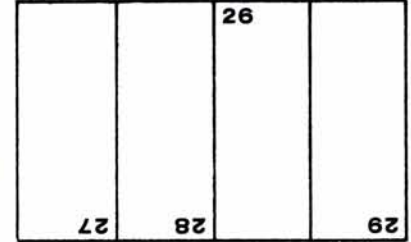
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ASL SCENARIO G9 SUNDAY OF THE DEAD



7 miles south of SIDI REZEGH, LIBYA, 23 November 1941: Early on the morning of the 23rd—day six of Operation Crusader—the 5th South African Infantry Brigade was preparing to assault Point 178 just to its north, when the 15th Panzer Division, moving southwesterly with Panzer Regiment 5 of the 21st Panzer Division following, unexpectedly (from both sides' point of view) smashed into its southern end, scattering most of its transport and supply vehicles. The Germans suffered some losses in the encounter but, largely ignoring the Brigade, rolled on for several more miles before disappearing into a low, marshy area. The South Africans, heavily reinforced but as yet largely unblooded, redeployed for all-round defense and sat tensely in the open desert as enemy artillery began firing on them from both the north and southwest. An attack appeared imminent from either or both directions.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

- ♣ Both British OBA modules have scarce ammo.
- ⊙ In the Victory Conditions, change " ≥ 100 " to " ≥ 115 ".

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win immediately when they have amassed ≥ 100 DVP and all British (A25.4) Guns (including vehicular) have been eliminated (by any means) or captured. Such VP are gained for Casualties and for German units/Guns Exited off the north edge of the playing area. A vehicle carrying neither an Inherent crew nor any Good Order German Personnel does not count for Exit VP.

TURN RECORD CHART

⊙ SOUTH AFRICAN Sets Up First [124]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	END
♣ GERMAN Moves First [260]										

Elements of the 1st South African Irish Infantry Regiment, 3rd S.A. Antitank Battery, and 9th S.A. Field Battery [ELR: 2] set up on boards 26, 27 and 28, on/north-of an imaginary line drawn between the center dots of hexes 26A6 and 27Q1. See SSR 2-4: {SAN: 2}

4 ² -5-7	2-2-8	8-1	8-0	7-0	6-14	4-12	2-7	1-12	51 [2-1]
10	3						3	2	2

Composite squadron of the 22nd Armoured Brigade enters on Turn 3, as per SSR 6, along the west edge of board 27 and/or the north edge of board(s) 27/28:

88	40L	Sangar	40L	40L
3	2	14	3	3

Elements of Bataillon I, Infanterie Regiment (mot) 115 [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 along the south edge of boards 26 and 29, as per SSR 5 and 6: {SAN: 2}

4 ² -8-8	8-1	8-1	8-0	3-8	3-8	50mm	1-12	37L	16	16	24	28
20	2	2	2	6	3	3		5	4	3	2	6

Elements of Bataillon II, Panzer Regiment 8, and of Panzerjaegerabteilung 33, enter where indicated on/after Turn 2 (all, some or none may enter on each Turn):

Along the east edge of board 29 on/south-of hexrow N, as per SSR 6:

75*	14	14	13	13	14	9-2	9-1
5	4	4					

Along the south edge of boards 26 and 29, as per SSR 5 and 6:

16PP	18	50L	2-2-8
3	3	3	

SPECIAL RULES:

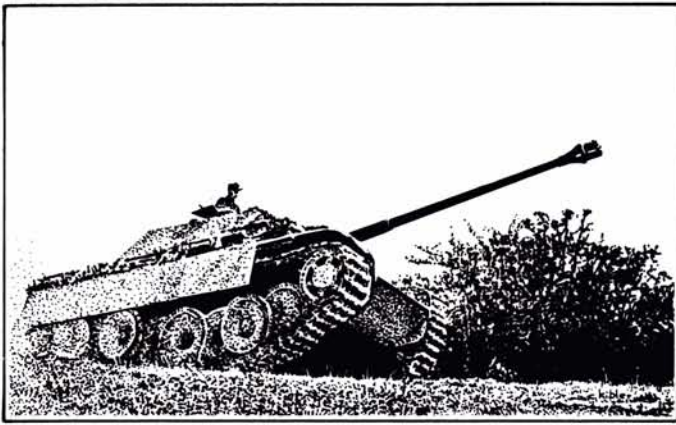
1. EC are Moist, with a Heavy Wind blowing from the west at start.
2. The South Africans receive two modules of 80+mm OBA directed by Offboard Observers at level 0. Each of these modules receives two Pre-Registered hexes (C1.73) that can be used for Barrage (E12.1), but no Pre-Registered hex may be < 10 hexes from an edge hex of the playing area's south edge. The Germans receive one module of 100+mm OBA with Scarce Ammo, directed by an Offboard Observer at level 0. The hex containing each Offboard Observer is secretly recorded by the owning player prior to setup. The British Observers must be on different boards in edge-hexes of the playing area's north edge, and the German Observer must be in an edge-hex of the playing area's south edge.
3. Neither HIP, Emplacement nor Bore Sighting is allowed.
4. All Portees must set up with their AT guns loaded on them; these AT may not be unloaded.
5. All German Personnel must enter as Passengers. Of the German vehicles allowed to enter "along the south edge of boards 26 and 29" on a given turn, at least half must do so via board 26.
6. In its MPH of entry, a vehicle that enters from offboard can expend no more MP than one-half (FRD) of its printed allotment.

AFTERMATH: Once out of sight, the Germans linked up with the Italian Ariete Division, did an about-face, and regrouped as per the orders of Gen. Cruwell, commander of the Afrika Korps. He intended to use this entire force to quickly push the South Africans onto the German defenses at the escarpment around Pt. 178. The plan was to form up all the tanks line abreast and simply charge, with a line of infantry in their vehicles and then a number of artillery and AT batteries following. Ariete was to provide flank protection on the far left. The attack commenced shortly after 1500 hours and moved swiftly to the northeast, immediately drawing artillery and, as the range closed, AT fire. As the defensive fire increased in intensity, the attackers slackened their pace and their lines began to break up and intermingle. Instead of following the tanks of Panzer Regiment 8, Rifle Regiment 115 found itself beside them on the extreme German left (with Ariete nowhere to be seen); as it bypassed the southwestern corner of the South African "square" it exposed itself to murderous flanking fire and began to falter. At this moment the remnants of the 22nd Armoured Brigade, which had been sitting off to the west guarding the South Africans' flank, charged toward the German infantry. This achieved little, however, as the Germans spotted the move and quickly shifted tanks and AT guns to deal with it. Nor were the South Africans remaining unscathed, for one by one their guns were falling silent as they were destroyed or ran out of ammunition. Ultimately, the weight of German armor could not be denied, and as the panzers rolled into their perimeter the relatively defenseless infantry began to flee or surrender. By nightfall, in the words of the 1st South African Division, its 5th Brigade "had ceased to exist as a fighting formation . . .". But the Afrika Korps had won a Pyrrhic victory, for its casualties had been heavy (critically so among officers and NCOs), and its tank write-offs (72 out of 162) the worst yet of any single day in the campaign. These largely irreparable losses on "Totensonntag"—Sunday of the Dead, Germany's day of honor for those who fell in WWI—were to be sorely felt in the next two weeks of Operation Crusader.

SOLDIERS OF DESTRUCTION

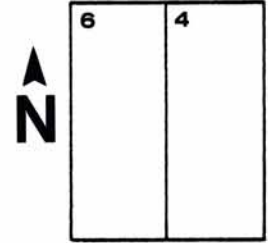


ASL SCENARIO N



RADZYMIN, POLAND, 10 October 1944: The men of the SS Totenkopf Division had stalled the advance of the Fifth Guards Tank Army in late September. Then, silence. No fighting had occurred for the past three weeks. It seemed like a dream. Time to sleep; time to write; time to mend clothing; time to listen to the birds sing. Replacements arrived; weapons were stripped and cleaned. It was too good, too unreal. A feeling of unease pervaded the encampment. There was almost a sigh of relief as the dull thunder of the Russian advance began again.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

♣ Add a 6-5-8 and a PSK to the German OB.

★ Substitute four IS-2 for the four T-34/85 tanks in the Russian OB.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win immediately upon Exiting ≥ 26 VP off the south edge (see SSR 2).

TURN RECORD CHART

♣ GERMAN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
★ RUSSIAN Moves First								

Elements of SS-Panzer Division 3 "Totenkopf" [ELR: 5] set up on/south-of hexrow Q: {SAN: 3}

5 2

Advance Elements of the Fifth Guards Tank Army [ELR: 3] set up on/north-of hexrow I: {SAN: 2}

8 4

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. Prisoners do not count for VP purposes.

AFTERMATH: The three-week lull around Warsaw ended abruptly with the fury of the renewed Russian offensive. By sheer weight of numbers, the Fifth Guards Tank Army pressed the SS units back 30 kilometers northwest to the confluence of the Vistula and the Bug. There, the SS Totenkopf Division held until the Soviets had exhausted themselves, late in October 1944. Afterwards, another long period of quiet fell as both battered combatants strove to recoup the strength that once had been theirs for the coming effort.