Cavewars
Tips
p.16

Featuring:

HANNIBAL

Rome vs. Carthage

Series Replay:
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AGE OF RIFLES

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It's in the Deck

Roman Strategy in HANNIBAL: Rome vs. Carthage

By Chris A. Cornaghie and Butch Glankler

*H*ANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE (HRC) is a derivation of the WE THE PEOPLE design by Mark Herman. Like its predecessor, HRC is a game you will find challenging each and every time you play, regardless of the side. Mark Simonitch, game designer of HRC, and Herman cannot be given enough credit for what will become a truly classic war game.

HRC has all the attributes of WE THE PEOPLE (WTP) as described by Andrew R. Maly in his article "Victory in the Colonies" (Volume 29, No. 2): "the mechanics of play require players to be flexible enough to the resources (the strategy cards) to which they are provided each turn. Fog of war is simulated by not knowing the components of your opponent's hand. This combination provides a tense move-countermove game with excellent opportunities for bluff and deception." This is certainly true in HRC.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The victory conditions in HRC are fairly straightforward. Carthage can obtain an instant victory by taking Rome or all Italian provinces except Latium. Rome may obtain an instant victory by taking Carthage or by eliminating Hannibal. Either side may win instantly if his opponent is forced to sue for peace (due to not having any non-walled, non-tribal PC markers for removal due to battle or year-end political repercussions). Should neither side obtain an instant victory during the nine turns of play, victory is determined at the end of play by control of the most Political Point provinces, with Carthage winning in case of a tie. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the number of provinces present in each theatre and the number of friendly Political Control markers (PC) necessary to control the province. Readers should note that not every province on the board is considered for Political Point purposes. Carthage begins the game in control of seven provinces. Rome begins the game in control of nine provinces. Two Political Point provinces begin without either side having control: Gallia Cisalpinia in Italy and Idubeda in Spain. Unless an instant victory occurs each player must defend the provinces already under his or her control and to seize provinces under the enemy's control.

An additional factor, unlike WTP, is that at the end of each turn the side with fewer provinces must remove a number of PCs equal to the province deficit. This aspect can be important in that if a player is required to remove PCs and is unable to do so, the game is lost at that point. As PCs are also lost when battles are lost, the game requires balanced play of both military and political actions.

STRATEGY CARDS

The heart of the HRC system is the play of strategy cards to move generals, place PC markers, and cause events. A dramatic change from WTP is that in HRC, each card may be utilized by either player for placement of PC markers and movement of generals even if the event pertains only to your opponent. (See card section on breakdown.)

COMBAT

The combat system is much like WTP but uses only forty-eight cards of which four cards are the Reserve (wild) cards. Clearly, having more battle cards going into a combat is greatly preferred but the beauty of this system is that the outcome of a battle is never certain. Critical factors are the battle rating and special abilities of each of the generals leading their side in combat. You may have more battle cards than your opponent, but if you are unable to initiate a counterattack, your opponent will find your weak spot or withdraw before you can use them. Also, six of the strategy cards can be used to affect the

battle, often altering the battle in your favor at an unexpected moment.

The location of a battle is important as well. Where an enemy has no route of retreat, a battle may be initiated even under unfavorable terms because the potential for total elimination of the opponent's force is worth the gamble. The ability to withdraw (after battle has been initiated) cannot be overemphasized either. If you are at a disadvantage but have enough battle cards to string the battle out for several rounds, an attempt at withdrawal might be advised, if you are not outclassed by the opposing general (see Table 2).

THE ROMAN PERSPECTIVE

Rome should win! With players of equal ability and experience the Roman player should win about 75 per cent of the time. The Roman side is blessed with a margin of error that the Carthaginian player cannot afford. Hannibal's play must be very precise. This is not to say you can play sloppily as a Roman, but you can survive errors and misfortune much better than your opponent.

As the Roman, you start with many advantages. You have a larger army and get more reinforcements. You are on interior lines and your home provinces are compact and defensible. You have control of the sea, making it possible

ROME vs.

for you to strike the Carthaginians in many places and making it difficult and risky for them to attack by sea. The only way to lose quickly is to lose Rome, but the city is hard to take and the Carthaginians are poor at conducting sieges. You have two ways to win quickly: defeat and kill Hannibal or capture Carthage. Though not easy, both are easier than taking Rome.

Against this the Carthaginians field a smaller army, get fewer reinforcements, and have a difficult-to-defend, bifurcated country. They have only one viable way to invade your territory, a long journey through the Alpine passes which will probably reduce their forces. They are on long exterior lines and sea movement is dangerous.

At the end of the game, you must control more provinces than Carthage. You start with nine of the eighteen that count. You only have to take one more, such as Gallia Cisalpinia, an Italian province which is accessible to the Carthaginians only by mountain passes. Just take that province with a strong army and wait for nine turns. Sound too easy to be true?

Well, looks can be deceiving. Your disadvantages are few, but important. You have poor and uncertain leadership, at least until 211 BC (turn six). The events on the cards don't favor

Karsten fell short of winning the Avalon-Con '96 tournament of HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE by one game—actually, by one event card play. In truth, his major failing then was that he was more familiar with the play of Carthage and less experienced with playing as Rome—the side he played in the tournament final. To lose this game to Karsten is an investment well-spent, as the subtleties of the game flower before you. Unfortunately for us all, he has learned much beyond what he shares in this article which he prepared months ago, but the sting of defeat at AvalonCon '96 leaves his lips sealed until he brings home a plaque. Nonetheless, this is an excellent primer on Carthaginian play.

In 216 BC, on the fields of Cannae, Hannibal dealt the Romans their greatest defeat ever. Hannibal was outnumbered two to one, yet as the day ended, over 70,000 Romans but fewer than 6,000 Carthaginians lay dead. At this time, two years into the campaign, Marharbal, one of Hannibal's best generals, urged that the time was ripe to march directly on Rome and capture the city. Hannibal needed time to weigh the full impact of his victory, and he dismissed Marharbal's guidance. To which Marharbal retorted: "Hannibal, I see that the gods give a man many gifts, but not all. You know how to win a victory, but not how to use one!"

Carthage must be destroyed

...NOT!

By Karsten Engelmann

Carthage -1 5

the Carthaginian Republic. Since the Roman can quickly shift the theater of battle between the two republics, the Carthaginian player, like a good chess player, must continuously watch what the Roman player is doing. Fortunately, even with this powerful mix of capabilities at Rome's disposal, Rome still has vulnerabilities.

One of Rome's vulnerabilities is ineffective projection of its power early in the game. Because Carthage must leave some forces behind to protect the Republic (due to its lack of secure naval movement), an early Roman attack in Africa could be disastrous. I highly recommend that every Roman player try a game where Rome sends T. Longus' army straight into Africa on the first turn. While Rome's strengths may allow it to change the theater of battle, Carthage will generally be able to dictate the pace of the campaign in that theater.

only. Roman players: please skip to the next article.

Hindsight is 20-20. Carthage lost, and we know why. Three years into the campaign, Hannibal had crippled one Roman army (on the Trebia river), smashed another (at Lake Trasimene), and annihilated a third (on the fields of Cannae). Yet, still they came. (Rumor has it Hannibal kept muttering "Inconceivable!" until Marharbal exclaimed, "I do not think that word means what you think it means.") Lacking forces to adequately garrison his conquests and isolated from Carthage by both the Roman navy and political opponents in Carthage herself, Hannibal awaited reinforcements that never came. To make a bad situation worse, Scipio Africanus, arguably the greatest strategic visionary and tactical genius Rome produced, entered the scene and quickly destroyed the Carthaginian power bases in Spain and Numidia. In *HRC*, Carthage has several key vulnerabilities: lack of reinforcements, difficulties moving by sea and Scipio Africanus' inevitable arrival.

Carthage's main weakness is a lack of forces. The game begins with a 16:16 ratio of combat

CARTHAGE

In *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE* (HRC), the Carthaginian player will arrive at this same moment of decision—go for a longer-term political victory, or go directly for an assault on Rome. If you wait, Rome may be able to muster her bottomless resources and punish you for your hesitation. Yet, a direct assault on Rome could prove futile and costly, and failure will cripple your long-term prospects.

Although fast-moving and playable, *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE (HRC)* effectively captures the feel of warfare in the ancient world on both a tactical and strategic level. It provides insights into Carthage and Rome's historical positions. As a result, *HRC* is an excellent balance between history and playability.

ROMAN STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES

Sun Tsu, the ancient Chinese strategist, instructs one to know thy enemy. To play the Carthaginians well, you must understand the Romans. The Roman strengths are improving leadership over the course of the game, the ability to generate new forces quickly, a compact and reliable political base, freedom of the seas and Scipio Africanus. These strengths allow the Roman player to counter moves by the Carthaginian player, recover from disaster quickly, and simultaneously threaten all areas of

This lack of initiative is another Roman vulnerability. Rome is often placed in the position of trying to gain the initiative from Carthage. In the first part of the game, before Scipio Africanus arrives, this is difficult to accomplish. Rome will need to spend most of its actions responding to the Carthaginian offensive.

In addition, marching an army out to face Hannibal can prove costly to Rome. This is true despite the bottomless-pit of Roman reinforcements. When the main Roman army is destroyed, not only will Rome be forced to remove multiple political control markers, but also the way to Rome or the rest of Italy will be open. It doesn't help Rome that the strategy cards tend to provide more powerful Carthaginian events than Roman (most of the Roman-specific events are reinforcements).

Until a major disaster befalls the Carthaginian player (or Scipio Africanus enters the game, which is the equivalent of a major disaster), the Roman player will find it difficult to do much more than hold half of Italy and a few islands. Thus, Carthage begins the game with the initiative, and must either seek victory early, or be in a position to withstand the assault of Scipio Africanus and the vengeance-thirsty legions of Rome! To accomplish either objective the Carthaginian must know Carthage's strengths, vulnerabilities and the strategies necessary for victory.

CARTHAGINIAN VULNERABILITIES

Note: This section on Carthaginian vulnerabilities is for the eyes of Carthaginian players

SEQUENCE OF PLAY FOR *HANNIBAL*

REINFORCEMENT PHASE
• Skip this phase in turn 1.
• Carthage places new combat units (CUs) on map (as many as two in Hispania, one in Africa, one with any general).
• Carthage returns displaced generals to map in space with combat units.
• Rome places new combat units on map (and Scipio Africanus + 5 CUs, if turn 6), with at least three of the five CUs placed in Italy.
• Rome designates a general from last turn as Proconsul, removes other consuls/proconsuls (except Scipio Africanus), randomly selects two new consuls, and places these consuls with armies having five or more CUs.

DEAL STRATEGY CARDS
• Deal Strategy Cards to each player for the turn (number depends upon turn, see turn track).

THE STRATEGY PHASE
• Rome announces whether he will seize the first move by playing a campaign card, otherwise Carthage decides who will move first in the turn.
• Players alternate playing a strategy card as either an event or an operation for moving generals or placing political control.

ARMY OPERATION
• Move general and his army. Opponent may attempt to intercept. Carthaginians going by sea must roll to get past Rome's fleet.
• Conduct siege or subjugation, if no battle has been initiated.
• Resolve battle:
   • Carthage has Change of Command die roll option, if two Consuls are in the battle.
   • Attacker declares battle-related cards.
   • Defenders declares battle-related cards.
   • Elephant charge declaration and charge die roll, unless Elephant Fright immediately played before die roll.
   • Deal battle cards, display cards revealed by Spy.
   • Begin battle with attacker playing first card, which defender must match.
   • Defender attempts to gain initiative.
   • Player with initiative always plays card first, which defender must match to avoid losing the battle.
   • After battle is over (either in one army's defeat or successful withdrawal), roll for battle casualties for both sides. A losing army must also suffer losses from the Retreat Table and then retreat. Retreating army loses additional units if retreating over enemy combat units.
   • Loser suffers political consequences of defeat. Game ends with suit for peace if loser does not have sufficient PCs to remove.
• Repeat Army Operation for second or third general, if campaign card was played.
• When both players have played all of their strategy cards, this phase is finished.

WINTER ATTRITION PHASE
• Any armies on unfriendly PCs suffer winter attrition.

POLITICAL ISOLATION REMOVAL PHASE
• Remove isolated Roman PCs (supply traceable to friendly CUs, walled cities, tribes and ports).
• Remove isolated Carthaginian PCs.

VICTORY CHECK
• Carthage wins instant victory if he controls all provinces in Italy except Latium.
• Count a political point for each eligible controlled province.
• Compare point levels and the side with fewer points must remove a number of PCs equal to the point differential. Game ends instantly if that side does not have sufficient non-walled, non-tribal PCs to remove.

END OF TURN
• If the game has not ended, play another turn.

Table 1. Theatres of Action in the Second Punic War
(numerals in parentheses are minimum spaces needed for province control)

POLITICAL POINT PROVINCES				NON-POINT PROVINCES
Spain	**Africa**	**Italy**	**Other**	
Carthaginian at Start:				
Baetica (3)	Carthage (1)			Balearic Is. (1)
Orospeda (3)	Carthaginia (4)			
Celtiberia (3)	E. Numidia (3)			
	W. Numidia (3)			
Roman at Start:				
		Latium (1)	Syracuse (1)	
		Etruria (3)	Sicilia (3)	
		Samnium (3)	Corsica/Sardinia (3)	
		Campania (2)		
		Apulia (3)		
		Lucania (3)		
Uncontrolled at Start:				
Idubeda (4)		Gallia Cisalpinia (3)		Liguria (2)
				Massilia (3)
				Gallia Transalpinia (5)

you. Hannibal and his elephants are very difficult to defeat in battle.

HOW YOU WILL LOSE

1. Hannibal will capture Rome. This is very unlikely, unless you leave Italy untended or he defeats and destroys the army you left to defend it. Even then, Hannibal will probably need the siege train and lots of time.

2. Hannibal will force a political defeat by controlling so many provinces that you cannot take off enough PCs. Remember each province you lose to Carthage is really two PCs, not one. If the province count is 8-10 against you, then you lose two PCs per game turn. If you lose another, then it's 7-11 against and you lose four per game turn, which is starting to get rough. If it's 6-12, you lose six every turn. Two turns like that may be your demise. You begin the game with only 26 removable PCs and a number of pro-Carthaginian events will undermine that control. Losses for the year-end province count combined with PCs you lose for losing battles (and you will lose most of the battles) will combine to force your surrender.

3. Hannibal will take all Italian provinces except Latium. With a few battle successes, Hannibal may be able to march at will up and down the boot, gaining control of the non-walled provinces. Then, the "Capua Sides with Carthage" event puts Carthage only one space away from victory (Neapolis, which is much easier to besiege than Rome).

LEADERS

Your greatest weakness is your leadership. You are at the mercy of the draw (political whim) in determining your two supreme leaders (Consuls) every turn. These two outrank the Proconsul you choose to keep, creating movement rigidities for your armies. None of your leaders is a match for Hannibal in an even battle (although Scipio Africanus comes close). Then again, you never really plan to fight an even battle anyway. The secret is make the most of what you get and rely upon your deep manpower reserves to win a war of attrition. The choice of which leader to keep as Proconsul should get easier in the later stages of the war.

Table 2. The Better Part of Valor: Withdrawal
(percentage chance of successful withdrawal per attempt)

Withdrawing General's Rating:	Against Opposing General's Pursuit Rating:			
	1	2	3	4
4	55.6%	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%
3	41.7	33.3	25.0	16.7
2	27.8	22.2	16.7	11.1
1	13.9	11.1	8.3	5.6
Including Seizure of <u>Initiative</u>:				
4	37.0	29.6	22.2	14.8
3	20.8	16.7	12.5	8.3
2	9.3	7.4	5.6	3.7
1	2.3	1.9	1.4	0.9

Main Cast, in Order of Appearance:

E-DTO, D6-CRT, Princess Leisure, Darsc Vaporware, Newb Gamebuyer, Uncle Nogame, Aunt Be, Hexi Gon (Board) Gaming, Governor Toggle, Ram Solo, and the ever-present, Imperative Profit.

[Prologue]
. . . in a game room near, near to you . . .

STRATEGY WARS

It is a period of mail-order game boutiques. An alliance of freelancers has put together the perfect design in an attempt to capture the imperative profit. To deal with this improbability, the Empire has constructed a new sales vehicle, the Mallstar, a short-shelf-life game outlet, with the power to destroy whole game companies in a single month.

The alliance has won its first victory, stealing the distribution cap. The Empire's sinister agents pursue Princess Leisure, who runs home to GAMA with this vital information, the key to restoring Freedom in the Galaxy. . .

[Act I. Scene on the upload]
E-DTO: They've shut down the main reactor. We'll be destroyed for sure. This is madness. We're doomed. There'll be no escape for the Princess this time.
Darsc Vaporware [barking orders]: Commander, tear this code apart until you've found the engine. Bring me the programmers, I want them alive.
Princess Leisure: Darsc Vaporware, I never thought you'd be so bold. This is a demo disk, under the protection of the Intellectual Property Right.
Vapor: You're on no mercy mission, this time. You are part of the Perfect Design Alliance and a traitor.
Bit Actor: Holding her is dangerous.
Vapor: She's my only link to finding their wallets.

[Scene on the download]
D6-CRT: Bleedeep, bip.
E-DTO: Do you think they'll melt us down?
Uncle Nogame to CCGer: What I really need is a droid who understands the binary language of web printing.
Newb Gamebuyer: Uncle Nogame, this D6 unit has a bad column shift.
Nogame: Hey, what are you trying to push on us?
E-DTO: I can't abide those CCGers.
Nogame to Newb: You can waste time with playtesting when you're done with your chores.
Newb: I guess I'm going nowhere.
E-DTO: Where are we? I've lost track between all the issues and volumes, what with the Perfect Design and all.
Newb [with excitement]: You know of the game publishing business?
E-DTO: That is how we came into your service, if you catch my meaning. This D6 unit thinks he belongs to someone called Hexi Gon Gaming.
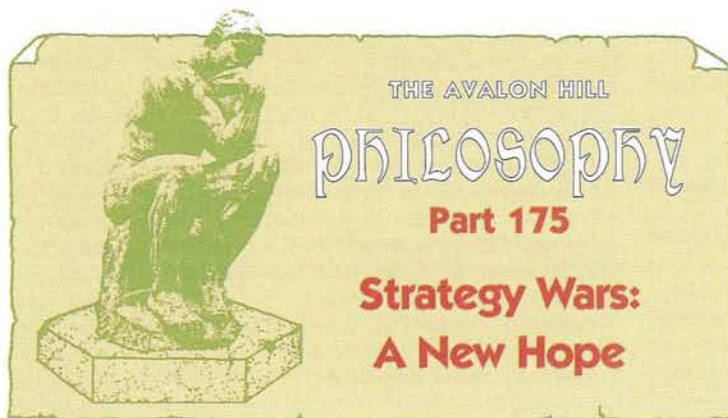
Newb: Hexi Gon? I wonder if he means Board...Board Gaming?
Nogame: I don't think he exists any more. He died about the same time as role-playing. Forget him.
Aunt Be: Newb can't stay here forever. All his friends have left. Newb's just not a baseball card trader. He has too much of his father in him.

[Scene at the next zip drive: old man discovering prone Newb and nearby droids]
Board Gaming [Looking at D6-CRT]: Come here, my little friend. Don't be afraid. Don't worry, he'll be all right. The CCG wastes are not to be travelled lightly.
Newb Gamebuyer [Awakening]: Board? . . . Board! Boy, I'm glad I've found you. This D6 unit claims he is the property of Hexi Gon Gaming. My uncle says he's dead.
Board: He's not dead, not yet, at least.
Newb: You know him?
Board: Of course I know him. He's me. I haven't gone by that name since . . oh, since the RPG wars.
Newb: You fought in the RPG wars?
Board: Yes, I was a Freelance Designer, as was your father. He would have wanted you to have this blank counter sheet—an elegant weapon for a more civilized age. The Freelance Designers fought for history and thought, before the dark times—before the Empire. Your father was killed by a young pupil of mine, Darsc Vaporware. Vapor was seduced by the dark side of The Strategic Thought. Hmmm, I seem to have rolled this D6.
D6-CRT [playing back recording of **Princess Leisure**]: . . . You must see that this D6 unit gets to my father on GAMA. I have placed information vital to the Perfect Design in this D6-CRT. Help me Hexi Gon Gaming. You're my only hope.
Board: You must learn about The Strategic Thought, Newb, if we are going to help her.
Newb: Me? I can't get involved with thinking, late-night gaming, summer conventions or buying magazine subscriptions.
Board: You must do what you feel is right, of course.

[Act II. Scene aboard the Mallstar]
Henchman: This video card is the ultimate force in the universe. I say we use it.
Darsc Vaporware: Don't be so proud of this technological terror you've constructed. Its power is insignificant to the power of the Strategic Thought.

Henchman: Your sorcerers ways haven't helped us dig out the crash bu . . . [choked off]
Vapor: I find your lack of faith distressing.
Governor Toggle: Stop it. This bickering is pointless.

[Scene logging on]
Hexi Gon Gaming: Hacker Haven. You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy.
Password Tender [jeering at the droids]: Hey, we don't serve their kind here. They'll have to wait outside.
Ram Solo: You've never heard of the Hiller Compiler? She made the Reich run in 8 parsecs. She does 60 megahertz past the expanded memory. She's fast enough for you, old man. What's the cargo.
Hexi Gon: Us...two droids...and no data sharing.
Ram: Some kind of imperative trouble, eh? It'll cost you. I want ten per cent of Upfront.
Newb Gamebuyer [Rising]: What? We don't have to sit here and take this. We can reprint our whole game line for that price.
Ram: Yeah, kid? But who'll convert them. You?
Newb: You betcha. I'm not such a bad programmer, myself.
Hexi Gon [Steadying Newb]: We can pay you two offices now—and 15 per cent, when you complete the compilation.

[Scene fielding bug reports]
Newb Gamebuyer [mocking]: I thought you could outrun them!
Ram Solo: I know a few bells and whistles. We'll sell these CDs.
    You can forget your troubles with those crash bugs. I told you I'd debug them. [Nobody acknowledges him.] Don't everybody thank me at once.
Hexi Gon Gaming [to Newb]: Remember, a Freelance Designer can feel the Strategic Thought flowing through him.
Ram: Hokie counter art and old mapsheets are no match for a good high-speed CD-ROM drive in your pentium, kid.
Newb: You don't believe in the Strategic Thought, do you Ram?
Ram: I've been all over computer gaming reviews, kid, and I haven't yet seen anything to make me believe that there is some all-powerful Strategic Thought controlling my actions.
Hexi Gon: Try it without the joystick and mouse, Newb.
Newb: But without the pointer icon, how am I to see where to shoot?
Hexi Gon: Stretch out with your mind, Newb.
Newb: You know, I could almost see the point of gaming without a remote.
Hexi Gon: That's good, Newb. You've taken your first step into a larger thinking process.

[Scene at credit approval machine]
Governor Toggle [surprised anger]: She lied to us!
Darsc Vaporware: I told you she would never consciously betray the expiration date of the Perfect Design contract.

THE AVALON HILL
PHILOSOPHY
Part 175
**Strategy Wars:
A New Hope**

(Continued from pg. 6)

Starting Leaders

Publius Scipio gets to move with two-point operations cards when in Hispania. Don't make this guy the Proconsul unless he is already in Hispania and doing well.

Titus Longus (2-1) gets to counterattack on die roll of 1 or 2 if he is the original attacker (big whoop). Keep him as Proconsul for the second turn, only because he is easier to move than Scipio. *[My nickname for him is Forever Long-With-Us, because it always seems that he is drawn as a new consul repeatedly and at awkward times. My advice is to keep him training an army in a sideshow theatre to keep him from commanding an important army in battle. Sicily or Sardinia are about all he can handle, so think twice before you reduce your presence in Sicily below 5 CUs, the minimum necessary for a Consular army.—SKT]*

Keep 'em

Marcellus gets a +1 when besieging with a campaign card, moves fairly easily, and reacts well. Your best leader outside of Scipio Africanus, Marcellus can fight Hannibal, but his best use is for the potential surprise attack on Carthage or New Carthage. He could also be used to return Syracusa or Capua to the fold if they stray. Keep him in most instances, but especially when you anticipate a crucial siege operation in the year.

Gaius Nero gets to move six spaces with a campaign card. One of the best Roman leaders, when not fighting Hannibal, he is highly effective at reconvincing local leaders of the wisdom of allegiance to Rome. Nero is our personal favorite. He moves six spaces with nine different cards (campaigns and force marches). Usually you will have at least one of these in any given hand. With seven of those cards he can move twice by sea (going to get men and bringing them back, or landing troops at two different locations). Don't use him to counter Hannibal, but to attack Africa or Hispania. He can meet Mago or Hanno on even terms. Keep him as proconsul.

Gaius Flaminus (2-2) gets to pursue on a 1 through 4. Flaminus, though not Hannibal's equal, could be used effectively if Hannibal has been reduced. His ability might keep Hannibal from withdrawing from an unfavorable battle long enough to actually beat him. Keep him unless you also have Marcellus or Nero.

Retire 'em

Fabius Maximus (3-3) gets to retreat before battle easily on a 1 through 5, but can't leave Italy. He has good ability to react and counterattack, might foil the elephants, and can lead Hannibal on a merry chase when retreating. Keep him if in command of the key army facing Hannibal, otherwise his strategic immobility is too much of a handicap.

Terentius Varro (1-1) gets to intercept on 1 through 4, but doesn't fight well. He has his uses, especially with moving troops around quickly. Leaders like Varro don't at first seem like good choices, but Varro besieges just as well as most and can do it more often because of his excellent strategy rating. If unopposed, he can convert provinces to your control much more easily than Paulus and Fabius. Varro can always move, no matter how bad your hand. Keep him in certain situations.

Aemilius Paulus (3-2) gets to counterattack on 1 through 3 when he is the original defender. Rarely keep him as proconsul.

The Savior

Scipio Africanus gets to besiege twice when using a force march card. He doesn't arrive until turn six, but he is clearly your best leader.

Leadership Issues

The Proconsul appointment is situational. If you have an army of 3 CUs, you will have to make its commander Proconsul unless you want the army to go uncommanded. You must place reinforcements before you draw Consuls. You prefer having several locations for placement of the Consuls to take the most advantage out of your placement choice.

On occasion, it is clear that the Proconsul will have nothing to command, due to consular command rules. In such a situation, you should throw away your best leaders, keep a bad one, and thereby increase your chances of redrawing better Consuls for the year. There are few things worse than watching Marcellus play waterboy for T. Longus, because the army is too small to split off an effective command for Marcellus.

GEOGRAPHY

Italy

Your starting area is compact and approachable by land only by way of Alpine mountain passes, which usually cause heavy attrition. From Rome, you can reach every location in Italy in a single move by land or sea save one, Taurini. You will be able to build a five-point army in an unbesieged Rome each game turn, if necessary.

Some of your provinces are almost impervious to attack. Latium consists only of the walled city of Rome and has the Latium militia to bolster the defense. Campania consists of two walled cities (however, one can switch to the Carthaginian cause with the play of an event card).

The straits between Sicily and Italy are guarded by two walled cities that you control; both must be controlled to move by land, yielding little chance of a Carthaginian move between them. Almost anywhere that you park an army will give you a chance to intercept Hannibal as he tries to move up or down the narrow boot of Italy. Ariminum is particularly important in that it blocks Hannibal's only route out of Cisalpinia that doesn't involve the attrition of crossing a mountain pass. An army at Boii can intercept Hannibal if he tries to enter Gallia Cisalpina across a pass. (Note that Hannibal can sidestep your Boii army by entering Italy through Liguria, however).

There are some weaknesses. Cisalpinia contains two tribes that support Hannibal and make Roman control of the province difficult. You should strive to remove the Boii if possible. The Bruttium tribe in the south is another sore spot helpful to Hannibal. They too should be removed as soon as possible. The walled city of Tarentum can be captured by play of an event card. The Adriatic Pirate card will allow a small Carthaginian force to invade (or leave) southern Italy without rolling on the otherwise deadly Naval Combat chart.

Otherwise, Italy is a poor place for Hannibal militarily. Its geography relegates his best advantage, mobility, to a less important role. All but one of the provinces start Roman.

Why does Hannibal come to Italy, if the deck is so stacked against him? Well, it really isn't. A couple of event cards remove your PCs or replace yours with his. He is able to leave behind combat units (CUs) to convert your PCs to his if he covers them adequately so that he can intercept your attempts to overrun them. Five of your provinces are easy to convert (only 3 PCs are needed for control). Lastly, it is his only choice, if he wants to win the game.

Rome's Island Possessions

The three non-Latin provinces (Sicily, Corsica/Sardinia and Syracuse) are important to you for total province count. However, you can gain only a single battle card for controlling the province where the battle occurs. They are approachable only by sea, which you generally control although not as well as around Italian ports. You can reach any location in a single sea move from Rome just like the rest of your empire.

Unfortunately, all three can be put into revolt with event cards. Play PCs when it happens or send a small army to take them back.

Syracuse consists of one strong, walled city (which can be made to switch sides by play of an event card). If this occurs you should send a small force to retake it, if possible. In addition to being a politically important province, it allows the Carthaginians safer sea movement.

Africa

The Carthaginians are much stronger here than they appear. They could get as many as six extra cards in battle, making Hanno's starting army stronger than either of Rome's starting armies.

Ironically, Africa is also Carthage's greatest weakness. The Numidian provinces, which supply four battle cards between them, can be put into revolt and turned to your advantage with luck and skillful play. The Numidian Allies Desert card can turn a battle to your advantage.

A Carthaginian army in Carthage cannot reach the port of Icosium in a single move without a Force March card or a hazardous naval move. This port makes it a good place to start an African campaign. However, many a Carthaginian player will send Mago back to Africa (or replace a displaced Mago there). Mago can base his army in Carthage, knowing that his naval move to Icosium will not be sunk, or in Thabraca which is within a four-space move of all but one deserted, inland space in Africa, while still being next to Carthage for interception of a direct Roman landing.

Even against Carthaginian opposition, it is still a good plan to move at least a small army to western Numidia. If Mago or Hanno marches to attack you, then it will be out of place to defend Carthage from a seaborne assault. If he ignores your western threat, you may be able to convert Numidia and reduce his battle card count. In any event, if he is marching around Africa, that leaves fewer moves for Hannibal to march around Italy.

Hispania

Hispania is not where the Romans should be fighting. No quick victory can be found here. Instead, you may dissipate your forces. The only time to go to Hispania is when Cato has convinced the Senate not to invade Africa.

Hispania consists of four provinces, three of which are Carthaginian-controlled at the start. A good Carthaginian player will probably place PCs in the ports of Idubeda as his first move. This keeps you from engaging in a meaningful political war in Hispania without an assist from an army.

Once Hannibal leaves Hispania, it appears very weak because Hasdrubal only has two CUs. But if he controls all the provinces he has nine battle cards. Your army could be annihilated here in unfriendly country with nowhere to retreat. Hasdrubal can reach anywhere in Hispania in a single move from New Carthage, so step carefully.

Only one province can be put into revolt, and it is without a port. It's only a minor annoyance to the Carthaginians unless you have enough force to make it stick.

Nevertheless, there are some things you can do in Hispania to swing the war to your advantage. Half of the Carthaginian reinforcements come from Hispania. The defeat of Hasdrubal and capture of New Carthage will put considerable pressure on the Carthaginians to win the war quickly, which might force a fatal mistake. If you do capture New Carthage, converting Hispania to Roman control will quickly wear down the Carthaginians in the PC war.

Liguria

You have no reason to enter this province. Neutral though they may be, those tribes are a useful attrition threat to marching Carthaginians, making them more valuable to you as independent tribes than as a controlled province.

Gallia Transalpinia

Unless you are chasing a fleeing Hannibal, you have no business entering this province. The back door to Hispania isn't worth using, the Romans should always stay near the coast. On the other hand, your early political moves in the first year should seek to stockpile a few PCs here for loss when your armies start faltering before Hannibal.

Massilia

You should play PCs here, too. If you control it, the extra battle card can help if you use the port of Emporiea as your real entrance to (and retreat route from) Hispania. PCs removed from this province are painless compared to those from Italy.

Balearic Islands

Although not a real province, with a diplomacy card, you can swing the value of the Balearic Slingers card in your favor by converting the PC.

POLITICAL CONTROL

The rather mundane placement of PCs may not be as flashy as the battles, but it is more important in the long run. This is something all too easily overlooked by inexperienced Romans. Hannibal will constantly be trying to force you to use cards for movement instead of PC placement.

Your mission is to get and keep political control. If Hannibal ignores Idubeda, you should play PCs there at once to gain one or more ports for supply. Even if all your provinces and his are full, you can place control markers in provinces like Massilia. Later these will pay off when you must remove PC markers.

Use the revolt cards carefully. The revolts don't often change his PCs to yours, but they do leave a province up for grabs. Usually a revolt should be your last card played, because, even if you don't get the province, he won't either. At worst, the Carthaginian will have to play some cards to return the province to his control, which keeps Hannibal from roaming about Italy instead.

Don't overlook the two diplomacy cards. They should never be used to move armies. A key PC switched from his to yours can be critical. A province could change hands, whole groups of PCs can be wiped out if the crucial supply chain to their position is interrupted.
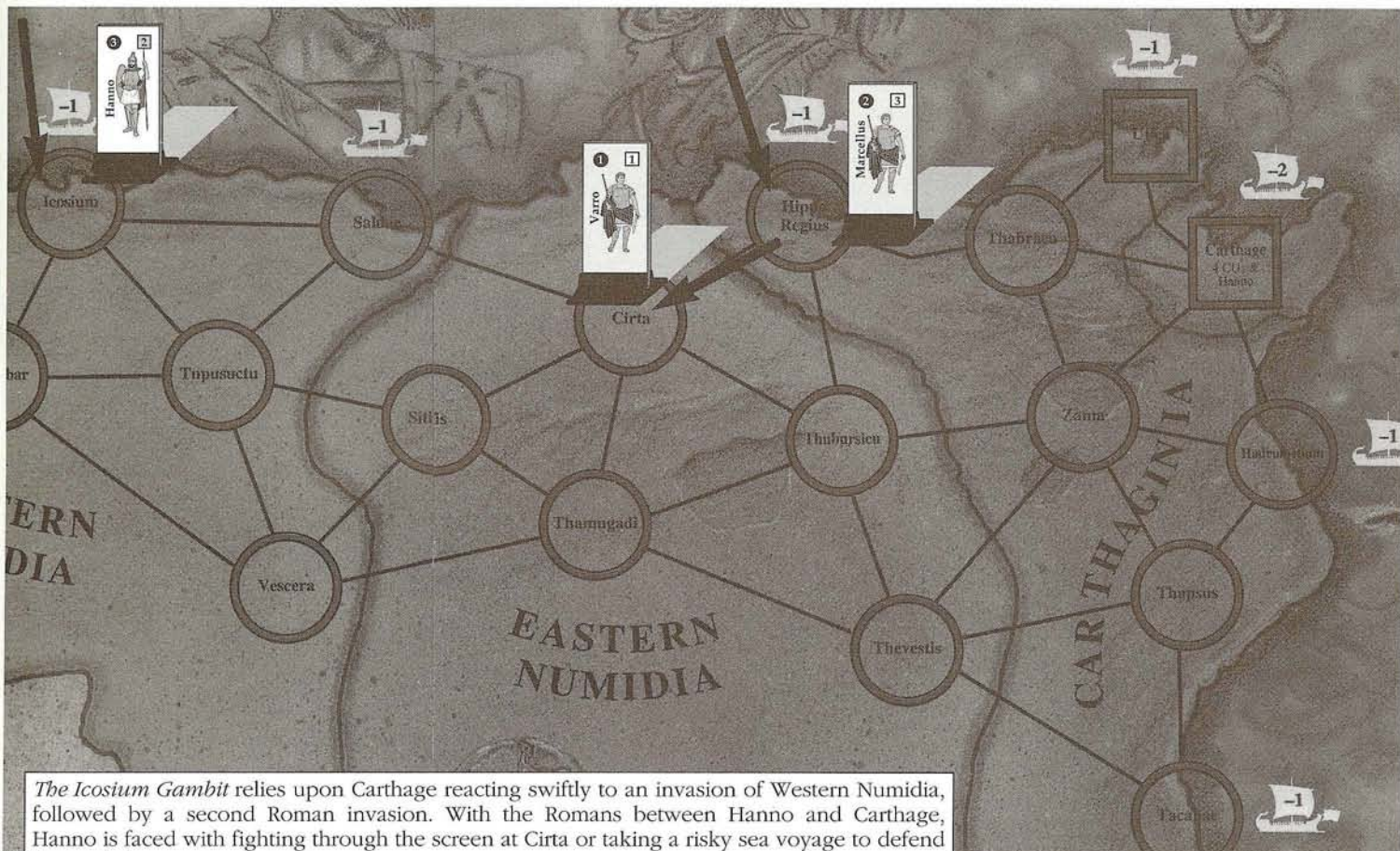
The Icosium Gambit relies upon Carthage reacting swiftly to an invasion of Western Numidia, followed by a second Roman invasion. With the Romans between Hanno and Carthage, Hanno is faced with fighting through the screen at Cirta or taking a risky sea voyage to defend the capital.

In your choices for card play, political placement should always come before risky adventures to Africa or hopeful attempts to trap Hannibal. Despite the possibility for an instant victory, you should expect that a crafty and patient Carthaginian probably won't fall into any of your traps.

The Golden Rule of *HRC* is, "when in doubt, place PCs." A PC placed on the board is certain, battle is always a risk.

TACTICS

Most of the games that Hannibal loses are not so much due to great Roman play, but impatient, impetuous Carthaginian play. Do everything in your power to further this tendency in your opponent. Many Carthaginian players feel that they must win before Scipio Africanus shows up on turn six. This isn't really true, but don't dissuade your opponent from believing this if he does.

The Icosium Gambit

Try to lure the covering army away by invading Western Numidia. If he goes for it, your best bet is a Campaign card with Marcellus moving directly to Carthage and besieging it. Follow this on the next round with the Treachery Within City card (two rolls on the siege table). This is the ideal attack and not likely to happen, but there are other variations. For instance, two leaders could go to eastern Africa, one would try to intercept (Varro would be good at this) the returning Mago/Hanno force and the other would prosecute the siege.

A force landing at Hippo Regius and moving to Cirta has a chance to intercept any force trying to move past it on land while blocking the most direct route back to Carthage. If you have time, convert Hippo Regius and/or Cirta to your control so that you have somewhere to retreat later in the turn.

If the Carthaginians won't be lured away, try to take over all of Numidia and then use the Numidian allies to beat them in battle before besieging Carthage.

The Icosium Gambit relies upon Hannibal's ego. Can he live down avoiding battle when the impetuous Varro intercepts and joins Fabius in Falerii?

Taurini Trap

If you have enough three-point operations to place PCs and move Scipio in the first year, you have a chance to trap and possibly destroy Hannibal. First place PCs in all three empty spaces in Cisalpinia, then move Scipio's army to Boii. If Hannibal attempts to cross the alps to Taurini, then you can try to intercept him. If you do, he will be faced with backing down and recrossing the alps (taking his attrition roll a second time) or fighting a battle. If he tries to move to the Insubrians, a successful interception leaves him with no retreat from the ensuing battle (you should leave a CU on Boii when you intercept). If you fail to intercept, Hannibal crosses the alps into unfriendly territory.

Note that the wise Hannibal player probably won't even attempt to cross in Cisalpinia if you placed PCs and an army there. He will sidestep your force in Cisalpinia and cross through Liguria. Of course, the risk of this forward position is that Hannibal eventually could trap you with nowhere to retreat.

One of the more favored Carthaginian plays is to ignore Hispania on the first card play and play three PCs in Cisalpinia instead (I think this is the best play). If the Carthaginians do this forget the Taurini Trap. Don't even think about sending Scipio to Cisalpinia. Plan to delay his advance into the rest of Italy.

The Roman Headbanger

Let Hannibal besiege Rome. If he doesn't have the Siege Engine or the Treachery Within City card he will be hard pressed to capture Rome. Two-thirds of his rolls cost him men, only one third will gain him one of the three required siege points against Rome. It also helps if you have the Opposing Fleet Breaks Siege or the Surprise Sortie cards. The Epidemic card can be useful, too. Once he has softened up himself, you can attack with four extra battle cards (two for militia in Latium and two for Allied Italian Provinces).

The Unmanly Retreat

Certain people, when fooled, will not back down. Suppose you have armies placed as shown in the figure to the left:

Hannibal with 8 CUs + 2 elephants

Consul Fabius with 7 CUs

Proconsul Varro with 7 CUs

Hannibal decides to move to Fabius' location. He expects Fabius, outnumbered 14 battle cards (8 CUs +4 general +2 provinces) to 12 (7 CUs +3 general +2 provinces) to withdraw possibly to Proconsul Varro's location. If he doesn't, Hannibal has a four-card advantage, not counting the effects of the elephant charge. If he tries to avoid battle and fails, then Hannibal will have a five-card advantage.

However, let us suppose that you don't take the percentage play and instead decide to have Varro intercept at Fabius' location. If successful, you have the four-card advantage, 20 (14 CUs +3 Fabius +2 province cards +1 for interception) to Hannibal's 16.

The "manly" Hannibal, not happy at having forgotten Varro's ability, may decide to fight, thinking his elephants might reduce the advan-

tage to only two cards and confident in his ability to counterattack. The wise Hannibal will not take this chance, choosing instead to return to his previous space during the move. Though he may have forgotten about Varro, he will take the wasted move in stride and soldier on.

BATTLE TACTICS

Why is Hannibal so hard to beat? The elephants can potentially cause you to lose cards. The probe card special ability is a big help, too. However, the main factor in Hannibal's battle success is his superior tactical rating. This allows him to seize the initiative and counterattack most of the time. Hannibal's ability to counterattack gives him the chance to discover your weakness before you discover his. It will also give him a better chance to withdraw and escape pursuit. He is more likely to stop you from withdrawing as well. Don't underestimate this ability; he can and will beat you even though he has less cards that you do. Follow these tips in battle against Hannibal.

1. Don't attack Hannibal with leaders whose tactical rating is one or two. You need at least a three. You might fight with a tactical rating of two but you would need about a six-card advantage in a medium-size battle. Any smaller advantage is likely to lose an army at a small cost to Hannibal.

2. If you have a tactical rating of three, you need a four-card advantage. Take into account the possible card loss due to elephants.

3. Have one or more good battle event cards. The spy is among the best, allowing you to see half his hand. Various allies' desert cards are useful, too. If you have the Ally Defects card, don't rush to use it. Wait until you need it, like when you know that his next attack will beat you. Then the theft will have a higher chance of helping your hand.

4. If you have probe cards, use them early. You might pull his before he has a chance to use his special ability.

5. Otherwise, use the frontal assaults, if you have them. Hannibal's probe can't counter this.

6. Because Hannibal is likely to counterattack anyway, you need not worry too much about using the double envelopments (which automatically transfer the initiative to the defender).

7. If you have a glaring weakness, plan to withdraw at every opportunity. Hannibal is much more likely to hit your weakness before you find his.

PLAYING YOUR OPERATIONS

Don't just react; be proactive. At the start of each year, look over your hand and the map to decide on one objective you think you can accomplish. This objective should further one of your main goals—trap and defeat Hannibal, capture Carthage or gain more political control.

Usually, your plan will involve at least one key card. Figure out which steps are necessary to make it happen. Figure out which cards are essential and in what order they must be played.
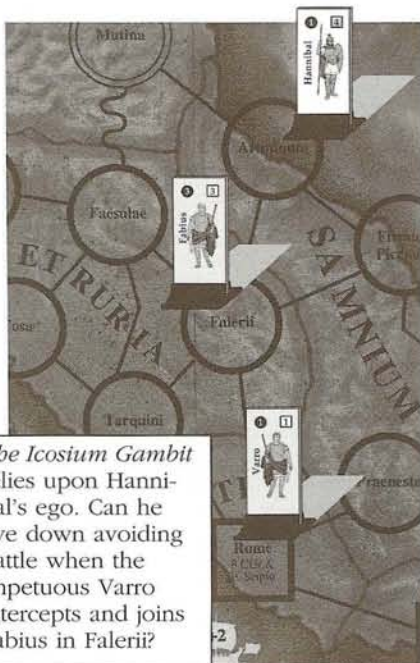
No plan survives contact with the enemy. Don't expect to accomplish your objectives every year, especially any that require most of your cards.

KNOW WHEN TO HOLD 'EM

I've played a dozen or more different games based on the Second Punic War. Some were good, many weren't so good, but none was more fun than *HRC*. Why? The simplicity of the system frees me from tedious counting and calculation. However, the biggest element is the uncertainty inherent in the card play.

Like poker, and unlike most wargames, you can bluff. You can play on the fears and suspicions of your opponent. The mannerisms around the poker table can be more important than the actual cards in determining who goes home with the cash. So too it is in *HRC*.

Make him think you've got that Elephant Fright card by pulling a card from your hand and setting it aside just before battle. Maybe, just maybe, he won't use his elephants in a close battle.

When you get a new hand, look at Africa, look at your hand, look at Africa again. Maybe,

just maybe, Mago reinforcements in Africa won't go to Hannibal this year.

Crude? Sure. So is counting out ten dollars worth of chips when it's not your turn to bet in poker—crude, but effective.

Ironically, the more experienced your opponent is with the game, the better this works. Make him think. Make him decide. Make him re-think that decision. The more he thinks, the more chance there is he might fold when he has the high hand.

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CARTHAGE
(Continued from pg. 5)

units. Several combat units will be lost crossing the Alps. Turn reinforcements for Carthage are four combat units, versus Rome's five. Carthage loses a reinforcement if she loses New Carthage, and another if she loses Baetica, making Hispania a key pillar of Carthaginian power. Additionally, only one of the reinforcements she does receive may be placed anywhere (usually in Italy). This means reinforcements from the Event cards become a vital source of combat forces for the Carthaginian expeditionary forces.

Lack of reinforcements does not fully describe Carthage's manpower shortage. Roman strategic mobility forces Carthage to keep combat units in both Spain and Africa, while Rome may concentrate her strength in Italy. Further, much of the Carthaginian Republic's strength in Spain and Africa is a result of battle cards received for controlled areas. As the number of controlled areas falls, Carthage's strength in a theater quickly declines.

The lack of strategic mobility between the two sections of the Carthaginian Republic and the liberated areas of the Italian peninsula is Carthage's second greatest weakness. Because of Mago's special ability (-1 die roll modifier to naval combat), Mago must be left behind in Spain to facilitate the safe movement of reserve forces between New Carthage (Spain) and Carthage (Africa). This will leave Hasdrubal to defend Spain, while Hanno defends Africa until Mago arrives. Hannibal and Gisgo should be moved to Italy. Once in Italy, the only acceptable way to receive reinforcements from Africa/Spain is to have additional die roll modifiers on the naval combat system. This, unfortunately, is best done in the south of Italy where Hannibal has fewer options for movement.

To make the situation worse, halfway through the game, just when the Carthaginian player begins to smell victory, the greatest threat to the Carthaginian Republic, Scipio Africanus, enters the game.

This is what the Carthaginian player has awaiting for him from turn six until the end of the game. With Scipio, Rome has the choice of going for a showdown battle with Hannibal, or destroying those parts of the Carthaginian Republic where Hannibal is not. Expect the Roman to exploit Scipio to the fullest. With a full army Scipio is difficult to stop. Thus, much as Rome will do with respect to Hannibal, the Carthaginian must avoid fighting Scipio. Press

Rome on fronts where Scipio is not. Avoid losing forces to Scipio, even if this means retreating from Spain.

CARTHAGINIAN STRENGTHS

The most important Carthaginian strength is initiative. The Carthaginian begins the game with the initiative and has the ability to force the Roman player to play a card first throughout the game. It is, in fact, this ability to set the pace of the game that will deliver victory to the Carthaginian player.

Another key to Carthaginian victory in *HRC* is flexibility. Let Rome commit herself for the turn before you divulge your own plan. It is often possible to spoil with the play of just one card a plan requiring the use of three or four strategy cards. If you play a revolt at the end of a turn (when you have the last card or even an extra one), you can follow it up by going first next turn to secure the area.

As the Carthaginian player in *HRC*, remember to apply this concept: card draw luck will come and go, but never let your opponent sense your weakness. You may start with terrible cards. Ensure that the Roman never knows what kind of cards you have. Patience will pay off. Don't worry if the entire first turn is spent using a weak hand to counter a strong Roman hand. The tide will change; make the most of what you have.

Of course, the most obvious strength is Hannibal, himself. After the end of the Second Punic War, Scipio Africanus and Hannibal met in Syria. It is here, we are told, that Scipio asked Hannibal who he thought was the greatest general in history. "Alexander the Great," Hannibal replied, adding that with only a small force he defeated armies many times greater in number than his own, and that he overran the remotest regions of the earth. Asked whom he would put next, Hannibal thought for a moment and said "Pyrrhus" (the King of Epirus who had invaded Italy in 280 BC), citing his brilliant judgment in his choice of ground and his careful disposition of his troops. The Roman pressed on (Scipio was clearly seeking for a compliment): "And the third?" Hannibal replied, "Myself without a doubt." Scipio laughed, "And what would you have said had you beaten me?" "Then," replied the Carthaginian, "I would have placed myself first of all commanders."

However, Hannibal is also Carthage's biggest liability, for lost battles involving Hannibal soon spell disaster.

In sum, let Rome go first in most turns (this maintains the initiative). Conserve your cards for a quick and decisive situation. Keep the Roman guessing about where you will focus next. Determine what the Roman player is trying to achieve this turn. Always be flexible—losing one or two areas in one turn might give you an opportunity to lay the groundwork for victory next turn.

CARTHAGINIAN GOALS

During the first turn, secure your political base. Gain control of Idubeda and Gallia Cisalpinia. Then, place political control markers around Massilia. Although Gallia Transalpinia and Massilia are not counted for victory purposes, they are a good reserve for political markers to lose when necessary. It is better to take Political Control markers (PCs) off of these areas than areas which are counted for political points toward victory. Good Carthaginian play will keep the Roman player out of these areas, thus requiring Rome to remove PCs from its valuable areas, when it loses battles and the turn-end point count.

To achieve victory, you must win tactical battles in order to quickly erode Rome's political base. The most common path to victory is for Rome to sue for peace for lacking PCs to remove (with the final battles being desperate Roman stabs at Carthage or Hannibal). Don't be afraid to fight at uneven odds, especially if you can force a battle by interception. This may weaken the Roman player in an unfavorable location, and it will stop him short of executing his plans (even a defeat against a large army intercepted on your PC marker can be costly to the Roman, if he cannot move again before winter). If the Roman player has a poor commander and the battle is unfavorable, Hannibal should withdraw right away.

Battle planning is the key to this game. Plan your entire battle, including when to cut your losses and run. I generally like to play the second-most-numerous card I have to see how the Roman player responds. Since conventional wisdom suggests using your most plentiful card, you may deceive the Roman player about your real strength. Remember that you are not required to match a card. You may find it more advantageous to accept a loss (for instance, when you both have 12+ cards, you have no Double Envelopment cards, and he attacks with a less-damaging tactic or any time he attacks with a Probe and you think your hand is too balanced to win).

HANNIBAL'S AXIOMS

With experience under his belt, what words of wisdom would Hannibal utter to a Carthaginian player?

1. Begin the game by securing your political base. Move first on the first turn, play a three-point operation card, place two PCs in Dertosa and Ilerda in Idubeda to cut off Roman supply to that province, and place one PC in Mutina or Taurini in Gallia Cisalpinia to gain control of that area.

2. Leave Mago behind in Spain at first. He is needed to transfer units or to invade the south of Italy.

3. Be careful when you move me into Italy. You will take casualties crossing the Alps. Crossing early in the turn will give the Roman player opportunities to attack when you are weak and will leave Spain more vulnerable.

4. Always use the Messenger Intercepts card to take a Roman card, but wait until late in the turn to play it. If the Roman player moved first, this will give you three unopposed card plays at the end of the turn. If he used a card as a counter card, that will give you the last four plays.

5. Open the war on multiple fronts. A force in Sicily eventually will be necessary to protect Syracuse anyway.

6. If you must commit the forces in Spain outside of Spain, leave a general in Gades, not in New Carthage. This port is great for movement, and requires the Roman to take both New Carthage and Gades to knock you out of Spain and to eliminate your key reinforcement sources. Leaving a general in New Carthage allows the Roman player to concentrate on one objective. Remember that once a siege of New Carthage has begun, you can only add both Hispanic reinforcements to an *unbesieged* general in Spain.

7. Don't conduct sieges. There are only two cities you should ever besiege, Rome and Naples. Naples is a good siege because the Roman player will be cowering in Rome. Play of the Capua card along with control of Naples will give you Campania, and often the game (as all other areas of Italy are easily controlled).

8. Manipulate the system. Think of ingenious ways to use the cards (such as moving a force from southern Italy with the Adriatic pirates to Cosa in Etruria where Hannibal may be in need of reinforcements).

9. Leave combat units in key spaces before departing. A single combat unit can get overrun, but a single combat unit can support cut-off PCs. A single CU also prevents a PC from being flipped or removed during a revolt.

10. Leave at least one general in each theater. If you move all generals out of Spain, the Roman player will take New Carthage. This will make it nearly impossible to get back into Spain plus it cuts down your reinforcements.

11. Regardless of your original strategy, play the cards you have. Many players get upset because they can't make the cards quite "fit" their strategy. The cards dictate the best strategy. You must find the best combination of plays with them.

OPENING MOVES

Some players (especially new ones) are somewhat at a loss on how to play the first turn. The cards should map your strategy out for you. In general, though, here is what your first card plays should be. Go first and play three PC markers. Next move Hannibal down to New Carthage, drop off Mago, and move back to Saguntum. With the third card, move Hannibal with Gisco and ten troops to Narbo. This leaves you with four cards. Unless you are lucky enough to have a Force March card, you require two cards to move Hannibal into Italy. It will take one more card to gain control of Idubeda, although this is optional in the first year. The remainder of your hand may be used as responses to revolts or may give you key reinforcements or other useful events.

FINAL ADVICE

Remember that to take up successfully the Carthaginian standard in *HRC*, you must out-guess your opponent. You must know your opponent. You must know your own strengths and weaknesses. If the chance for sudden victory ever arises, seize the opportunity. Rome's reserve of manpower and leadership is deep. Your time is short. I cannot tell you how many times I have hesitated, like Hannibal did, only to see the Roman behemoth rise again to crush the Carthaginian Republic.

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BATTLE TACTICS IN HANNIBAL

By Michael Anchors
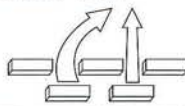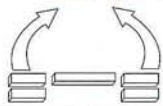
The first thing I do when I buy a new game is to try to work out an unbeatable, perfect plan. I imagine other players do the same. I seldom find a perfect solution—I didn't find one in Hannibal—but along the way, I learn a lot about the game and I have a lot of fun. I also learn how to make a little rain fall on the poor players who try out their "perfect plans" on me.

My first "perfect plan" for Hannibal was intended to be a winner for the Romans. I moved T. Longus' army to Rome and combined it with P. Scipio's, creating a mass of legions against which I hoped Hannibal could not prevail. That left me free to use the rest of my cards as Event cards (EC) to harass Hannibal on his long trek from Spain. Longus usually picked up a pair of Allied combat units (CUs) *en route*, so that the combined army at Rome usually amounted to 18 CUs. Hannibal, negotiating the Alps, rarely got to Rome with more than eight CUs. If he rushed into battle, Rome got the maximum 20 Battle cards (BCs) and Hannibal got but 13 (eight for his CUs, four for his battle rating and one for Gallia Cisalpinia).

You would think Hannibal would always lose such a lopsided contest. Indeed, in my first playings of the game, he did lose, and it was a long, expensive retreat back to Gallia Cisalpinia, let me tell you! Even when Hannibal converted a PC marker near Rome as a safe haven, the Carthaginians were still losing the war.

I was sure I had found the perfect Roman plan! Then, a strange thing started to happen—Hannibal started to win. The secret lay in the play of the cards. I will relate what I learned about battle tactics:

CHOOSE THE ROMAN GENERAL

If P. Scipio is in command in Rome, Hannibal can demand a die roll to effect a shift in command to Scipio's junior associate. Don't forget rule 14.1.

ELEPHANTS

Hannibal has to make the decision to use them or not, before seeing his BC hand. If Hannibal has two or more elephant CUs, he should definitely use the beasts. Even if the Roman general rolls less than his battle rating (turning the elephants back), the Carthaginians will lose only a single BC. The Romans, on the other hand, lose one BC *per elephant unit* when the elephants storm through. If Hannibal possesses only one elephant CU, however, he should use the elephant only when the Roman general has a battle rating less than three.

FORMING THE BATTLE PLAN

Arrange your BCs in your hand, so that you can see clearly the quantities that you have of each tactic. Divide the numbers of each BC type in your hand by the number of cards of that type that could possibly be in the opponent's hand. Multiply by 100 to express it in percentage terms. The result is a measure of the relative numerical advantage you have for each BC type. [Memorize the distribution of cards in the deck: 12 Frontal Assaults (FA), nine Flank Rights (FR), nine Flank Lefts (FL), eight Probes (PR), six Double Envelopments (DE) and four Reserve (R) cards. It's no longer than a phone number: 129-9864.]

The usual best plan for Hannibal, or any general, is to keep playing the BC type in which he possesses the greatest numerical advantage. In a simple example, ignoring the existence of PR and R cards, let us assume Hannibal holds three DE, five FA and four FR cards. Assume the Romans also have a hand of five or more cards.
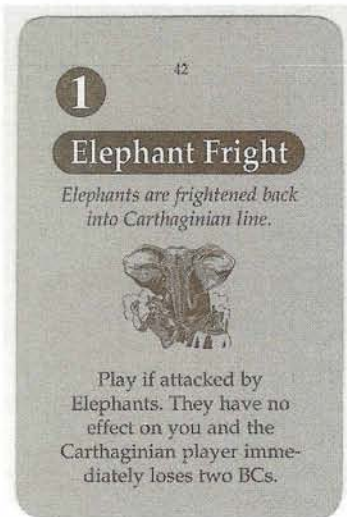
The numerical advantage in FR, for instance, is calculated as follows: four FR cards in the Punic hand, five left in the deck and possibly in the Roman hand. Therefore, the FR numerical advantage was 4/5 x 100% = 80%. The Carthaginian leader would figure his numerical advantages as DE 50%, FA 71% and FR 80%. This analysis shows that the best plan for Hannibal is to play his FR cards.

If the Romans held a smaller hand, the Carthaginian numerical advantages would be altered. For instance, if the Romans held a hand of only three cards, the numerical advantages for Hannibal's hand would be DE 100%, FA 166% and FR 133%. In this case, FA would be the favored tactic. The smaller Roman hand mandated a shift in Carthaginian tactics. Without calculating numerical advantages, few players would have spotted the correct line of attack.

As these weird percentages can exceed 100%, it is confusing to think of them as percentages. Therefore, let us redefine them as "Herman ratings," naming the concept after the creative genius, Mark Herman, who designed the *WE THE PEOPLE* battle card system on which *HRC* is based. The best battle plan is (usually) to play the BC type with the highest Herman rating each round.

Of course, other details complicate the choice. It is preferable to win battles with DE cards because the loser adds a hurtful +2 to his die roll on the Retreat Table. If the DE and FR Herman ratings are close, the attacker would prefer to play DE cards, hoping to inflict more casualties on the enemy. However, after a DE is played, the opposing general regains the initiative automatically, without a die roll. The attacker rarely gets a chance to play an unbroken string of DE cards. If the enemy general's battle rating is low, such that he can't steal the initiative often, it is better to go with FR, FL or FA cards rather than turn over the initiative with DE cards. If the enemy general's battle rating is better than that, you might as well play DE cards if you have the majority of them.

Reserve cards can be used as wild cards to substitute for any other type of card. Hence, in calculating Herman ratings, you must take into account your R cards and the R cards which your opponent might have. Now, where Hannibal has three DE and two R cards, the DE Herman rating would be 100% (three DE + two R cards = five, divided by the sum of the three DE and two R cards outstanding).

The use of Herman ratings to find the best battle plan applies to Roman and Carthaginian generals except for Hannibal. Hannibal has a unique characteristic: he treats one PR card as a FR, FL, DE or PR card (but not as a FA card). The effect of this special ability is to increase the Herman rating of his FR, FL and DE cards, but not his FA cards. Thus, in a case in which Hannibal has three DE (43%), five FA (45%) and four FR (44%)—allowing for the existence of R cards—the addition of a PR card to the hand would change the Herman ratings to DE 57%, FA 45% and FR 55%. This now makes the favored tactic a DE rather than a FA. Note that the FA Herman rating was not changed by the PR cards.

One consequence of all this is that, if Hannibal makes optimal use of his cards, he will find himself playing FR, FL and DE cards more often than the Romans. Similarly, the Roman player optimizes his tactics by using linear tactics (FA and PR) more often. It is a pleasure to see this game's rules constructed so that the best tactical choices actually induce players to fight in a manner similar to their historical counterparts.

DIVULGING DEFENSIVE SECRETS

I. If the Romans do not have a predominance of one tactic, they should play PR cards early to reduce Hannibal's flexibility. Without his PR cards, Hannibal's special ability is nullified.

II. If the defender's hand is deficient in one BC type and early defeat is looming, the defending player may come out swinging boldly with the deficient BC type, to mislead the attacker into thinking that the defender has that tactic in abundance.

III. In the opposite situation, in which the defender really does have an abundance of one tactic, he may respond to a play of the attacker's BC with a Reserve card to mislead the opponent into thinking that the defender has run out of that tactic. The attacker might then continue to play that tactic instead of switching to a more profitable line of attack.

It is an axiom of good gamesmanship to know your opponent. If your opponent is known

to be capable of such despicable, devious behavior as I have described above, you must make allowance for it. Look at his face. Is he bluffing? Call his bluff, or fold. Don't let him see your face when you are trying to pull the same tricks on him. Turn your head or pull down the visor of your helmet.

On the other hand, if you are playing against a less experienced or less sanguine player, don't miss the signal when your third play of an FR card draws an R card from him. He has probably run out of FR cards. It is a sign that he is scraping the bottom of the BC barrel. Don't back off. Close in for the kill!

FIGHT ANOTHER DAY

Don't be so focused on your own game plan that you fail to notice the enemy's! While you have been playing one FR card after another, your opponent may have been playing FA cards. How many FA cards do you have left? If you can see that you are going to run out of FA cards before your opponent runs out of FR cards, consider rolling to withdraw. Don't wait to be forced to retreat. Retreats are very expensive, militarily and politically.

STRATEGY CARDS IN BATTLE

Don't forget your orange cards. Six of these strategy cards are playable in battle. Any of them might make the critical difference in a particular battle.

Marharbal's Cavalry (Carthaginian only) may be used as a DE card that does not automatically turn over the initiative. The defender can still roll for the initiative, however, so this card is most useful against a poor general.

Elephant Fright (Roman only) converts any elephant charge into a loss of two BCs for the Carthaginians.

Ally Deserts allows you to draw one BC from your opponent's hand and add it to your own. This may be done towards the end of a battle to convert an attacker's next attack into your defense! Also, a late play of the card is more likely to give you a valuable R or DE card.

Spanish Allies Desert (only in battles in Hispania) denies your opponent any BC bonuses for his Spanish allies in combat.

Numidian Allies Desert (only in battles in Africa) denies your opponent any BC bonuses for allies from Western or Eastern Numidia. As the Roman player, if I have this card and a campaign card, I like to invade Utica and attack Carthage on the first turn, ten BCs to eight. Why fight a long game when you can win a short one?

Spy in Enemy Camp (at the start of combat) allows you to examine half of the enemy's BCs, drawn at random. You will then know much better his strengths and weaknesses. This card is not as useful as it might seem in big battles, but it is a great advantage in a small battle.

Of course, each strategy card played in battle cannot be used for operations and gives the opponent possible back-to-back plays at the end of the turn. Don't use your last strategy card in a battle if you need to attack somewhere else or place a PC marker to save a province.
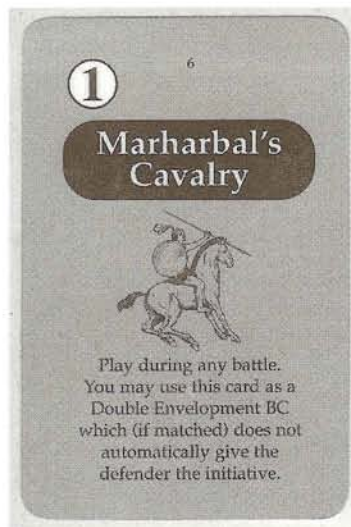
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5 When in the sequence of play does the Carthaginian player declare whom he desires to have the first move?

A. The Carthaginian player first asks the Roman player if he is using a Campaign card to move first. If not, then the Carthaginian player declares who will move first.

6.2 and 6.3 When Rome is besieged and all Roman generals are inside Rome, where do the Romans receive reinforcements?

A. No reinforcements are allowed other than those arriving with Scipio Africanus.

6.3 Can a reinforcement be placed inside a city that is not besieged but has an enemy occupying the space? If the city is filled to capacity with friendly CUs and no other eligible location exists, is the reinforcement lost?

A. Yes. Yes.

ERRATA for 7.2 Treachery in the City is a dual use card as well (may be used both to move the army and implement its event).

8.1 and 8.5 How is a subordinate commander activated to move off with part of an army that is under a superior?

A. Play an operations card with a number able to activate the moving (subordinate in this case) general. The general(s) left behind is (are) not activated.

8.5 May an activated commander yield command of an army to a subordinate who continues to move, siege or battle?

A. No, only the activated general may move the army. However, if the activated general enters a space with a friendly general who outranks him and if a battle or siege takes place, the superior commander must take command of the siege or battle.

8.6 Must the activated general remain in command if ending his move with another general? If not, when is the change accomplished?

A. No, the activated general is allowed to subordinated himself to the inactive general of equal rank after all movement, sieges and battle are finished—in effect, as the last act of the general.

ERRATA for 8.8 and Naval Combat Table Can CUs move using naval movement without a general? The "–1" modifier for naval shipment on the naval combat table implies you can "ferry" troops without a general.

A. No they may not. The mapboard was printed just before the rule and some strategy cards were changed to their official final form. The rest of the naval combat table is correct: a general may move without CUs with a "–1" drm.

ERRATA for 8.9 Alter line 3 to read: ". . . or if all friendly CUs accompanying the General are eliminated due to retreat table casualties, retreat losses, or by Storm at Sea. The losses caused by the battle casualties die roll alone do not cause displacement." Amend the second bullet to read: "If Hannibal is displaced, he is eliminated and Carthage removes five PCs in addition to any PC losses resulting from a battle that led to Hannibal's death."

ERRATA for 9 Additional Interception Restriction: You may not intercept into a space containing non-moving enemy CUs (and, for city spaces, if outside walled cities).

9 and 10 Can a general moving without CUs be intercepted? Can a general without CUs try to avoid battle?

A. Yes. No.

9 Does an interception army arrive before or after overruns?

A. Before. An intercepting army may prevent a friendly CU from being overrun.

9.3 Can an intercepted army that is crossing a mountain pass stop short instead of giving battle and thereby avoid an attrition die roll as well? What about a naval move by the Carthaginians?

A. No. An intercepted army has already arrived in a space and is choosing to retire before battle. Therefore, in the situation of crossing a pass and being intercepted, the army rolls for attrition prior to the interception roll and then again rolls for attrition as it withdraws back over the mountains instead of giving battle. Similarly, a Carthaginian naval move could return to its port of origin and would be subjected to two naval combat die rolls.

ERRATA for 10.1 (revised) When avoiding battle, you may *not* enter a space containing an enemy CU.

10.3 If an army fails a pursuit die roll and ends its move on a walled city, may it conduct a siege?

A. Yes.

11 What is the sequence of battle resolution when elephants and consular armies are involved?

A. 1. Change of Command die roll.
2. Attacker declares battle-related cards.
3. Defender declares other battle-related cards.
4. Elephant charge declaration and charge die roll, unless elephant fright immediately played before die roll.
5. Deal BCs, display cards revealed by spy and begin battle.

Some event cards are playable during the battle.

11.6 After matching a Double Envelopment, must the defender become the attacker?

A. No, the initiative change is not mandatory.

11.9 Do failed withdrawals count as a round for the purposes of battle casualties?

A. No, only the rounds of battle card play count for determining the column of the attrition table for the battle casualty die roll.

10.1, 11.11 and 16.2 Can an army that successfully avoids battle or withdraws from a battle go inside a walled city?

A. Yes.

ERRATA for 12.1 Retreats may not end in spaces with enemy CUs (with or without a general), but must continue to a friendly PC that is empty or friendly-occupied. Additionally, the original attacker's retreat path must first go to the space from which he entered the battle.

12.3 What happens if, as a result of battle, the loser is unable to remove enough PC markers to satisfy the political consequences of defeat?

A. The player must instantly sue for peace, thereby losing the game (see rule 18.2).

15.4 Does a besieged city count for preventing PC marker isolation?

A. Yes, a besieged city can still be used by its owner to trace supply to PCs to prevent isolation.

16.4 Can an army move into a walled city space, battle the enemy besieging the city, and then roll on the siege table in the same play of a strategy card?

A. No, a battle outside the walls prevents you from conducting a siege with that OC. The unstated sequence of play should be: move, siege, battle. Any force outside the walls prevents the siege attempt until the next play of an OC.

16.4 Can an army inside a besieged city sally forth and initiate battle in the space? If it can, does it receive battle card bonuses like normal?

A. Yes. Yes.

16.4, 8.6 and 8.7 If a consular army is inside a besieged city and an army commanded by a proconsul comes to its relief while the consular army sorties to join the battle, which Roman general is in command?

A. The consul. If the consul does not sortie, then the proconsul leads the battle. This logic also applies to Hannibal outranking an activated Carthaginian general coming to his relief.

ERRATA for 19. The game no longer ends as a result of Hannibal's death (see Errata for 8.9).

EVENT CARDS

Ally Deserts: Must this be played prior to any BC play or can it be played during the battle?

A. It may be played during the battle to randomly draw any unseen card from the enemy (or select a visible card previously revealed by the Spy card but still unplayed).

Allied Auxiliaries, Elephant Reinforcements, etc.: May CUs from event cards be placed inside a besieged city?

A. No.

Bad Weather: Can this be played after attrition die rolls cause by movement after the second movement point? After naval combat rolls? After interception and avoid battle rolls?

A. No, the card must be played to cancel a move prior to any die roll that would be initiated by the movement beyond the second movement point. Once the die rolls have been allowed, the card may not be played.

Q. If it cancels a naval movement during the use of a campaign card, may a different general use naval movement under the power of the same campaign card?

A. No.

Elephant Fright ERRATA: With regard to BCs lost, the wording on the card is correct, not the wording on the strategy card list on p. 15.

Epidemic and Pestilence: Which player chooses which army rolls for attrition?

A. The player playing the card.

Hannibal Charms Italy: If Hannibal overruns a CU, is the PC removed? Is the PC removed if a Roman army is in the space, but avoids battle?

A. No. No.

Q. Can the PC be removed in the space Hannibal begins his move?

A. Yes, but only by burning one of his movement points (which *does not* give the Roman an opportunity to intercept into the space Hannibal began the move).

Native Guides: Is this modifier cumulative with other modifiers for the mountains?

A. Yes, a move across a non-Alps pass would have a "-4" net modifier, for example.

Siege Train: Does the Carthaginian siege train take up space in a general's army for movement stacking purposes?

A. No, a general moving with the siege train can move an additional 10 CUs.

Storm at Sea/Adriatic Pirates ERRATA: These cards seem to imply that CUs may move without generals—they are in error. All naval movement requires the presence of a general.

Truce: If this card is played as an operations card, does the deck still get reshuffled?

A. Yes, no matter how the Truce card is played, the deck is reshuffled.

Q. During a truce, can an army intercept into an empty space?

A. No. Interceptions are not allowed during a truce.

Q. Can a siege be prosecuted during a truce as long as the PC is not converted?

A. No, siege die rolls are not permitted during a truce, but existing siege points are not lost either.

Q. Does truce prevent movement through or subjugation of a neutral (green) tribe space?

A. No.

Q. Can campaign or forced march cards break the truce?

A. No, any event which can move an army may not be used to break a truce, nor can the "counter" event cards or the traitor cards.

Q. Can a truce be broken by playing an event that does not occur (e.g. Allied Auxiliaries when there are no generals in Italy to take the CUs)?

A. No. An event card may only be played as an event if the conditions apply to bring about the event. Otherwise, such a card play is an operation.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Q. Can a subordinate's special abilities be utilized by a commander (i.e. Mago's naval ability for Hannibal's sea movement)?

A. No, a special ability is only used by that general and when commanding.

Q. May Hanno go by sea from one port in Africa to another in Africa?

A. Yes. Fabius, too, may move from port to port in Italy.

Q. If Hanno intercepts, does a PC get converted in that space?

A. No, Hanno's ability applies to his movement through activation by a strategy card.

Q. Does Hanno remove a PC before a battle? After winning? In a space in which his retreat ends?
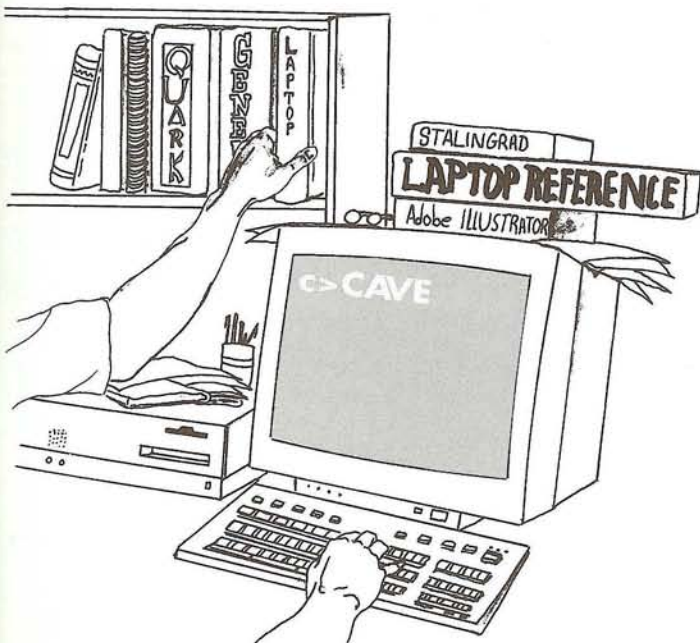
A. No, Hanno's ability to remove a PC is limited to the space in which he ends his strategic ops movement (after overruns) in which there are no enemy units (i.e. no battle).

Q. Do the special abilities of Marcellus and Scipio Africanus apply for subjugation of tribes?

A. No.

Q. Does Gaius Flaminius' special ability apply to attempts to prevent withdrawal?

A. Yes.

Tarchon Teeth
CAVEWARS Race Profile

By Ben Knight

My fondness for rats goes back a few years to a time when I lived in an earth home sunk into a Kansas hillside. A pack rat gained access to the attic from the back of the house and proceeded to chew on everything it could find while gathering many items (such as Christmas decorations) into a nest. It was amazing what one pair of incisors accomplished in such a short span of time. I wondered how it could be done. Then I found a shiny item separate from the debris—a tube of teething gel, the gel itself oozing out of holes where tiny, nervous teeth had punctured it. I caught the pack rat in a humane trap, escorted it to another hillside, and plugged the "rat" hole where the piping for the central air conditioner entered the eaves.

In the underworld of Ibido, the Tarchons are considered "filthy rats," despised by the other races who superciliously believe the Tarchons excel at nothing except breeding. Of course, there is strength in numbers, so I encourage you to play the Tarchon race in *CAVEWARS*. What follows are some pointers on how to get the most out of your multitudinous rats.

ARMIES

Let's start with the basics. To win at *CAVEWARS*, you must capture the enemy's cities with your armies. There are three types of offensive armies you can build. You should specialize in only one type.

1. Weapon-based armies. To build these armies requires weapon technology, some cave technology, perhaps some transport technology, lots of metal and toil for production and upkeep. The Gakkar and Dwarves normally follow this policy because of their keen research abilities in weapon technology and the Dwarves' three-quarters metal-cost special ability.

2. Creature-based armies. These armies require summoning magic and lots of magic supply (in place of toil) but no metal. This is an ideal strategy for the Namarie because of their "excellent" research ability in summoning magic.

3. Wizard-based armies. These armies require a high mastery level of magic (any type) and toil but no metal or magic supply.

The Tarchons should not pursue a weapons strategy because they have "poor" weapons tech research ability. They should not create creatures because they have "bad" summoning magic research ability. That leaves wizards. Fortunately, the Tarchon race is great at building armies of wizards and packs of unarmored scouts.

INITIAL BUILDS

Start the game by producing half a dozen or so rat-people armed with spears. Conserve your bronze for building engineers and a swords-rat or two to protect your capital. Send your spear-rats out singly as scouts to map the terrain and find the enemy. The Tarchon have stealth ability, which means you will probably spot the enemy before he spots you, but only if you get out there and search for him. If you locate an enemy engineer, bring a couple of your scouts together before attacking. If you find an empty enemy city, walk in and either a) raze it immediately (if you fear the enemy will take it back on his turn), b) wait a turn and ship the population out first, or c) call it home and start building another spear-rat or two there. Meanwhile, have the rest of your population work on research.

RESEARCH

You should concentrate on viewing magic at first because of your "excellent" research ability in this area. Viewing magic will increase the strengths of the wizards you build. After your population exceeds a few hundred, start researching cave technology also. Set your research levels at about two-thirds on viewing magic and one-third on cave technology. When you reach mastery four of viewing magic, then reverse the ratio to one-third on viewing and two-thirds on cave. You will need the higher mastery of cave technology to feed your masses later in the game. If you reach mastery five of both viewing magic and cave technology, stop research entirely. Produce as many wizards as possible, along with some magic supply for viewing.

MAGIC

You will only need magic supply for viewing spells, and the most effective viewing spell is Map Level, which requires mastery four and 2,500 magic points per use. The Map Level spell is the most economic because it shows you where all the enemy cities are (as well as the terrain on that level). Those cities are your primary objectives. Your scouts already should have explored the level of your capital and some caves of the adjacent levels by the time you reach mastery four. Put some of your population to work on magic supply as soon as you anticipate getting Map Level capability. You won't need to use magic supply for invisibility spells because of your special stealth ability.

STEALTH

Not only are the Tarchons fecund, they are sneaky, too! The special stealth ability applies to any Tarchon not wearing armor or riding a mount, as well as engineers and wizards (but not other special units, such as catapults, cannon, etc.). Players of other races sometimes cast Tiny Invisibility spells over their engineers and scouts to hide them from enemies, but the Tarchons already have "an excellent chance" of not being seen due to stealth. This special ability is one more reason why the Tarchons should eschew weapons-based armies in favor of wizards.

WIZARDS

Wizards with mastery zero wear a beanie cap. This cap indicates how much you should rely on them. Mastery one wizards are little better, but once you reach mastery two, wizards are able to push the enemy (and neutrals) out of cities. Build enough wizards to make a potent

force, but not so many as to cripple your early research efforts. It requires hundreds of toil points to make a wizard (the cost depends on the current magic level), but once made, a wizard automatically increases his mastery in step with your highest magic level. When you produce wizards, use the Ship Unit button to build armies of them in front-line cities. With your offensive armies comprised of wizards, there is little need for swords-rats except as scouts and sentinels stationed at cities and key roadblocks.

CITIES AND FOOD

If any race needs to watch its food supply, the procreative Tarchon race does. After you have built your initial scouts, use your starting cache of bronze to build a couple of engineers. Find a comfortable spot near some fat mushrooms and start building a new city. Look at

your food supply each turn. An alarm bell should go off in your head if you see it falling sharply. You harvest one food square for each ten rat-people in a city. Keep enough population in each city to reap a full harvest if possible. Don't raze a city simply because there are no food squares under its control. As you improve in cave technology, the city itself and the open squares under its control will add to your food supply.

You will need several engineers to keep up with city building, but fortunately you need fewer engineers in play than those races who depend upon mining metal for their armies.

MINES

You may need to mine a little bronze early in the game to produce more engineers, and per-

haps some iron later to give your swords-rats better edges. Otherwise, mines are of no use to a race dependent on wizards. Each mine requires 35 points of toil, whether an engineer or city is doing the mining. Therefore, don't mine metal. Use that toil for research or wizard production instead. Take any metal you need from the defeated enemy on the battlefield.

DEFENSE

Defense is a luxury. You can't beat the enemy down by building defensive walls, so don't bother to put any effort into defense. Think offensively. Take the war to his front door—or better yet, sneak in through his eaves.

Remember: Good breeding is everything. May your Tarchons rule the caves.

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Spelunking With the Gakkar
CAVEWARS Race Profile
By Kirk M. Carroll

*C*AVEWARS is a new Avalon Hill computer strategy game where you and up to four friends or computer players can battle each other in the world of Ibido, a subterranean labyrinth inhabited by fantastic races. It is a game of exploration, expansion, resource management, research and conflict incorporating the worlds of magic and technology. Your goal is to assemble armies of superior weapons or summoned creatures, and conquer all opposing enemy cities. No other outcome will suffice. This is no-negotiating, down-and-dirty, all-out war.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The Gakkar are the "Bad Boys" of Ibido and their appearance is literally that of the devil. Table 1 summarizes the attributes of each race. The Gakkar are proficient only in weapons research and combat. The Gakkar's "special ability" is that they slaughter a third of the population of a city upon conquest (as opposed to the normal quarter). The Gakkar must be played aggressively: research, build and attack. If the game lasts too long, the other races will catch up to you in weapon technology and from that point you will be working at a disadvantage.

GETTING STARTED

When you begin the game, you find yourself with one lone city, utterly defenseless, and with very limited resources. Fortunately, the other players are in the same boat. You may have some passive neighbors in the form of neutral cities. They pose no threat as they do not leave the safety of their cities and they do not build.

Keep in mind that you start off with only a limited amount of bronze with which to begin building your empire. The first priority is to build units for city defense and scouting. I like to begin by building five cheap, wood spear units that require no metal. Two are sent to scout the surrounding area; the rest are held in reserve in the city. Make sure no adversary is nearby and watch for the presence of holes leading to other levels from which the enemy could launch a sneak attack. If there are holes nearby, assemble a small force at the earliest opportunity to occupy the hole(s). They may lose in battle but at least they will alert you to danger. Before exploring the levels above and below, it is usually best to map out completely your starting level.

Once you have your initial spear units, build two engineers. The computer player will often build two engineers before any other units and use them in a dual scouting/building role. While this may allow a quicker start in building new cities, this is generally a bad idea. Your engineers are vulnerable and can be destroyed easily. When building engineers, adjust the production slide bar so that you can build each unit in one or two turns. Protect your engineers at all costs. This is much easier said than done, because you cannot stack any other units with engineers. If you see food squares nearby, have both

engineers build new cities. Otherwise, one engineer should be sent to build new cities and the other to unearth bronze deposits for mining.

Once your two engineers are built, begin cranking out more wood spear units until you have eight or so in the city. At that point, unless there are other players nearby, stop production. Let your city population grow (remember, each built unit drains three people from your population). Support your newly built cities. Ship them 14 population points from your capital city to spur growth (assuming seven per cent population growth per turn, this will ensure expansion of your new city's population by one person per turn in the early going). The Gakkar rate of population growth may actually be higher than average. Also, send along a couple of units to defend your new city. Do not have new cities build units until they have a population of at least 40-50, and then do so only if additional units are absolutely needed.

If you come across another player early, attack! Early in the game, the Gakkar clearly have the advantage. Continue churning out one spear per turn. A force of ten wood spear units can usually defeat anything the enemy may have

TABLE 1

	GAKKAR	NAMARIE	HUMANS	TROLLS	BERGBUI	DWARVES	TARCHON	ADVARI
Weapon Research	Incredible	Poor	Average	Average	Average	Average	Poor	Average
Transport Research	Poor	Average	Average	Poor	Average	Very Good	Poor	Bad
Cave Tech Research	Poor	Bad	Average	Poor	Average	Good	Good	Average
Earth Magic Research	Poor	Average	Average	Average	Very Good	Very Good	Average	Good
Summoning Research	Terrible	Excellent	Average	Poor	Bad	Poor	Bad	Poor
Transport Magic Research	Poor	Excellent	Average	Bad	Terrible	Bad	Bad	Very Good
Viewing Magic Research	Terrible	Excellent	Average	Bad	Average	Bad	Excellent	Good
Population Growth	Good	Average	Average	Poor	Bad	Poor	Very Good	Poor
Melee Combat	Good	Very Bad	Average	Excellent	Good	Good	Very Bad	Good
Long-Range Combat	Average	Very Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Poor	Good	Average
Strategic Movement	Poor	Good	Average	Excellent	Poor	Good	Average	Bad
Special Ability	Mass Murder	Cowardice	None	Blitzkrieg	Rock Eating	Metallurgy	Stealth	Dispersal/ Worminess
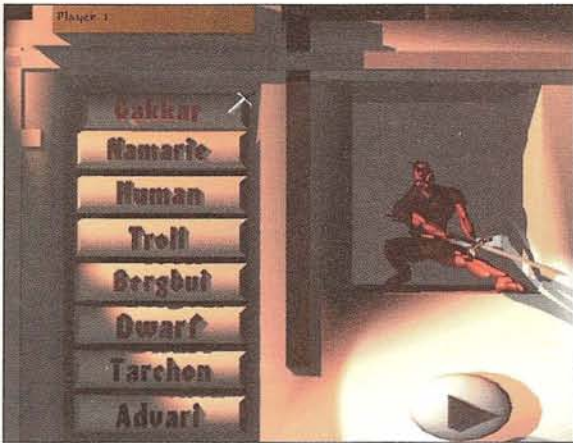
provided they are at mastery zero in weapon technology, too. If you come across enemy engineer units early in the game, eliminate them! You will need two or more wood spear units to destroy an engineer. If you kill a couple of engineers early, before they have begun to mine, that race will not be building any more and will be limited to producing wood units and wizards. Keep in mind that they can do the same to you!

It is important to expand rapidly. This can be done by building new cities or by conquering existing ones. Neutral cities usually can be conquered easily at the start. Most of the time, the neutral cities are built in less than ideal locations, such as in the middle of open spaces with no food and no metal under their control. If that happens, it is usually best to ship the population of the newly conquered city off to your other cities and then raze it. Otherwise, these cities will drain your food supply.

When building new cities, choose sites with lots of food squares around. You will see the importance of this once your population grows and begins to outpace your food production. When that happens, your excess population plus an extra 2-3 per cent will die off. It is hard to have a thriving empire when your people are starving to death.

Your core set of cities will be your research and production base. Then you need to build cities with mining and defense in mind. Remember that engineer units are not required for mining if the metal deposits are within three squares of a city. A city built next to a nest of metal deposits will be a source of easily-obtained wealth. These mining towns are not designed to be high population sites. Often, they are next to no food squares so a high population will be a drain on your empire's food supply.

Scout the area for choke points leading into the heart of your empire. Many times there will be winding passageways leading to or from open caverns where you probably have the majority of your cities. If you find suitable choke points, build cities there and reinforce heavily. Even though you will be on the offensive, you cannot ignore the question of defense all together. These choke points make excellent defense sites for your growing empire and can provide early warning to danger. Regularly patrol your empire in search of any dastardly engineers trying to dig a hole up or down into your empire. As you can do nothing to guard against teleportation, in the later stages of the game keep a capable force protecting each city.

TOIL AND TROUBLE

Each population point provides three units of toil that can be assigned to production, research, defense and/or magic. Tweak your slide bars each turn. If you have no need for new units, crank the production to zero and increase your research. Keep the magic bars to a minimum for the Gakkar. Defense should be set to ensure a steady improvement in defense rating over time. When the defense of a city reaches 100, set the slide bar to zero to avoid wasted toil. The slide bars should be weighted heavily towards research in the early going. Once you make contact with other races, you will need to boost your production of units.

Try to maximize your research and concentrate exclusively on weapons technology at the beginning. Once your population grows to two or three hundred, split your research between weapons and cave technology to avoid the "law of diminishing returns" rule regarding research. The Gakkar should research as quickly as possible to weapons technology mastery two. This will give you the flintlock rifle. Cave technology should be researched to mastery one in order to begin the mining of iron. At the same time, transport technology should be researched to mastery one so that you can purchase decent mounts for your units. After that, go back to concentrating on weapons (all the way to mastery four which will provide you with the assault rifle and sniper rifle) and on cave technology to mastery three or four. This will help ease the food shortage (which you are probably experiencing at this point in the game) and allow mining of mithril. Eventually, transport technology should be researched to mastery three or four to allow you to build artillery and assault buggies.

You may have noticed that I have ignored researching the magic. There are two reasons for this: 1) the Gakkar are either poor or terrible at researching the magic arts, and 2) as the Gakkar, you will win by crushing your opponents in battle with conventional arms, not summoned creatures. Eventually, you will be ready to research

magic (once you have attained mastery five in the other fields). Priority should be given at this time to viewing magic, earth magic and transport magic.

If the game lasts long, you will be in dire need of metal. Viewing magic will help you locate deposits. Earth and transport magic will get you to them. One of my favorite tactics is to locate a large metal deposit deep within stone, tunnel out a square adjacent to it, transport an engineer to the tunneled spot, build a city, and then dig and mine the deposits. Surrounded by stone, you are much less likely to be molested by the other races and usually do not even need to defend those sites.

If the game stretches towards the 130-150 turn mark and you are managing to hold your own, eventually you will be researching summoning magic. This can be a very useful art, especially at mastery five which will allow you to build the most awesome melee unit on the board: vampires. A group of ten vampires can hold their own against almost anything. The nicest thing about summoning magic is that you can build as many summoned creatures per turn as you wish as long as you have enough magic points and room in your cities to place them. This is especially useful if you need to augment your city's defenses in a hurry.

ATTACK

If you make contact early, press the attack with whatever forces at whatever tech level you have. You will have the advantage. An effective force early in the game consists of four or five bow units and five or six melee units (spear, sword or katana) dressed in the best armor available and on mounts. Mounts will increase your mobility and give you bonuses in combat.

You may be tempted to use an engineer to dig a hole up or down to another level. Think twice before doing this. Make sure you can protect a new entrance into your empire and make sure this is going to work to your advantage. This door swings both ways. If you happen to dig right into the heart of the enemy empire, he may be able to send wave upon wave of units through this opening into your domain.

If you make no contact early, then you may want to bide your time. Conserve your precious metals until you reach the tech level at which you decide you are ready to wage war. If you are expanding at a good rate, have a dozen or more thriving cities, and have several mines going, and if your people are not starving, then your weapons research should be far, far ahead of the others. If I feel I'm ahead in research and I'm not presented with any tangible threat from the other players, I will refrain from building any iron or mithril units until I reach weapons technology master four. At that point, I will build assault rifle and sniper rifle units with flex jackets mounted on Tortaqs, a devastating combination, particularly if the enemy is still building bow or flintlock units. A stack of five assault rifles and five sniper units can be formidable. It is at this point that I like to press home the attack, razing the cities as I go (after shipping the population off to my other cities). The Gakkar should adopt a scorched-earth policy unless a site comes along that is too good to give up. Otherwise, you risk getting bogged down protecting the city from counterattacks. Again, the longer the game lasts, the less chance the Gakkar will win. The Gakkar cannot afford a static war or a game of attrition. The other races will bury you.

If you are presented with a threat from the other players and need to build units to defend your cities, try to do so using bronze units only to save your precious iron and mithril for the higher tech level units. Of course, if the enemy shows up on your doorstep sporting iron or mithril rifles, then you'd better be matching those units to avoid utter destruction.

If you can research your weapons and your transport technologies to mastery five, then you can begin building tanks, perhaps the most devastating weapon in *CAVEWARS*. A group of ten iron tanks is very effective. A group of ten mithril tanks is awesome. It is with these units that victory should come swiftly.

A NOTE ON IBIDO

Thus far, my comments have largely pertained to playing in random worlds. You also have the option of playing on the Ibido map where the players are placed in pre-set locations, one per level. The world of Ibido is one of twisting passageways and relatively limited food and resources. This usually makes for a long game. Long games do not favor the Gakkar. Winning tactics require some adjustment. While it is usually best to scout your level completely before moving to other levels, (unless you are playing "random" Ibido, where players can be anywhere) you are assured of having no other players on your level. Therefore, when you find a hole, explore through it. Have a reserve force ready to take care of any unwanted visitors that may be appearing through these same holes. The world of Ibido presents a special problem for the Gakkar, but your aggressive play can still yield victory.

VICTORY

There is, of course, no guarantee of a victory in every game with the Gakkar, although an aggressive Gakkar will have a good chance of establishing a dynasty in Ibido. The Gakkar is not for the faint of heart. If you prefer to win by concentrating on defense, then you should choose another race. The Gakkar must gamble in order to win. If you find the enemy nearby early, attack with as many units as possible, leaving your cities temporarily undefended if necessary. Sometimes you will come up on the losing end of this gamble. An undetected force wandering behind your lines can take you out of the game early, but I find that this happens only rarely. The risk is well worth it if you succeed in eliminating an enemy in under the first 20-30 turns.

You must dictate the pace of this game. If you remember to be a band of ruthless, bloodthirsty, warmongering, marauding demons with a true love for weapons, then victory can be yours.

★

No Place Like the Advari Home
By Edward McDonnell

The best way to win *CAVEWARS* is to be the Advari. The other creatures are out of their element in your dark underground.

STRENGTHS

The Advari have many strengths, which is understandable (these worm-like creatures have always lived in the labyrinthine world of Ibido and are fighting on their home dirt).

The most obvious strength possessed by the Advari is that they are the biggest and baddest boys on the block. They have the most hit points of any race, 15 hit points per unit, compared to only six for humans and ten for the next largest race, the trolls. Thus, the Advari field great melee forces.

A second strength of the Advari is their research ability, ultimately making more efficient use of research toil. More specifically, having a good ability in earth magic research allows the Advari to build wizards cheaply in the beginning of the game and advance these wizards quickly to more powerful levels.

WEAKNESSES

The physical inappropriateness of Advari for riding mounts is not a weakness at all. Simply allocate research away from transport technology and into other essential areas. By not allocating toil to transport technology in the early stages, the Advari will give up the use of cannons and artillery which move slower than Advari units anyway. That is no big deal when you consider the other advantages you have instead.

The "bad" strategic movement of the Advari might appear as a weakness in the early stages of the game as well. However, by concentrating on long-range weapons and wizards to pick off the enemy before they can reach you, you need not worry about this disadvantage much either.

GETTING STARTED

The start of the game is the most crucial moment. Begin the game by putting all technology toil into cave technology. Build two bronze engineers, one after the other (it is best to take only three turns to build each). The rest of the city's toil should go into research with some in magic. Have the engineers look for bronze while you build some Advari units with wooden spears. Have the Advari units guard your city and scout for neutral cities. Once you get your cave technology breakthrough, put all research toil into weapons technology.

If you are unable to take over any neutral cities with a handful of wooden spear units, build bronze crossbar units when you get your weapons breakthrough. You need the population from these neutral cities. Remember to remain offensively-minded. You need not defend many of the cities you take. Your special dispersal ability will allow you to still retain some of the population if it is taken by another race.

Burrowing ability is the sign of a truly enchanted race. Become one with the earth as the Advari. Only then will you understand the nuances of this game.

★

IT'S DEBATABLE

Why So Much *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER?*

By Brian C. Blad

*W*hile I cannot accede to Brian's plea for more coverage of ASL within these pages, I think this is a useful testimonial from one part of the hobby community to another. The Series Replay in this issue represents the maximum amount of space we can devote to "The Game" and probably won't be replicated within a year or two. Although popular, ASL suffers from being quite complex, procedurally. The age of computer gaming provides some hope that the most complicated and realistic wargames can be made more accessible to a wider public. To date, however, ASL continues to defy computer programmers. Charlie Moylan, the programmer who did OVER THE REICH for us, is the latest to step forward with a hopeful proposal. Until he succeeds, we are left with the (many aspects of the) boardgame to show you.—SKT

You may have seen the tons of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* (ASL) articles and scenarios published here over the years. Many of you have wished, no doubt, for less coverage of *ASL* and more of YOUR favorite games. Others, such as myself, wish for even more coverage of *ASL* in this magazine. In this short article, I explain what *ASL* is and why as part of our devotion to "The Game" (as we refer to it) that we need/want even more *ASL* coverage.

ASL is a squad level, tactical simulation of World War II. The *ASL* system covers every theater of operations from the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 through some of the individual battles of the Korean War's end in 1953.

"Now wait a minute! You just said World War II and yet here you are throwing in the Spanish Civil War and Korea!? Okay, what gives?" This is one of the big draws of *ASL* and the modular system it employs. *ASL* allows the recreation/simulation of almost every land action ever fought in those time periods. The mapboards are geomorphic, which means they can be put into different configurations and they'll still fit together, and many overlays have been created to allow for the simulation of literally thousands of different terrain types.

The rules allow for beach assaults, desert warfare, jungle fighting, city slugfests, caves, tunnels, fortifications, night attacks, snow, rain, mud and more. All are covered in the mechanics of the *ASL* rules, in a module by

module addition to the system. Chapters A-D of the modular rule system are all that is required to learn the main game system.

"Why modular?" Well, *ASL* is the most advanced game that I've ever seen, but modules allow me (or you) to learn the system a little at a time. It is also easier on your wallet, because you don't have to buy the entire game system all at once when learning how to play. You can get into *ASL* with the *ASL Rulebook*, *Paratrooper* and mapboards I through IV (for about $80).

"Yikes! 80 bucks! That's a lot of money to spend on a game!" Is it? Look at the expandability of the game system. New scenarios, historical modules and more are being released all the time. *ASL* is infinitely replayable. You can play the same scenario a hundred times (but you need not, given the volume of published scenarios available) and get a different outcome every time. Now that there is a solitaire play system available for *ASL*, you no longer have the excuse of not having a face-to-face opponent.

"There are amateur products being released to support ASL *and the* ASL Annual *is published every year? Why?"* Once you are hooked on *ASL* you can never get enough. The demand for *ASL* material grows every day as more and more people are introduced to *ASL* at gaming clubs, hobby stores and conventions like AvalonCon.

ASL is unique in that you can recreate all kinds of small unit actions if you wish. There is a design-your-own system where you can pick a date, a number of points and, *voilá*, with little effort, you have a purely fictional battle to play. All the major power nationalities are represented in *ASL* as are the Axis and Allied minor nations. Partisans are included, too. The best part of *ASL* is that it is not a stagnant game system. A rough estimate puts the official and unofficial published scenarios in the range of over 300. Many more scenarios and historical battles are being researched and converted to *ASL* every day. The *ASL* game system provides something for every student of WWII.

"Okay, you've sold me, so I go ahead and I buy the basics. I learn the system and I even like it. Where do I find opponents?" The obvious answer is in your hands. Read and advertise in the opponents wanted column of

The GENERAL. Usually, you can leave your name and number on a bulletin board at your local hobby or game store. If you own a computer, jump onto the internet and do a search for *ASL*. You will find all kinds of World Wide Web pages set up to sing with praise of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*. The *ASL* mailing list on the internet discusses new scenarios and products like modules and *ASL Annual* on a daily basis. Over 500 *ASL* players from around the world actively participating in the discussions. America Online and Compuserve also have significant discussion groups for the game and the Avalon Hill bulletin boards on those services can facilitate finding an opponent. Stop by a local game convention (the convention calendar in this magazine lists many of them). Wander among the convention-going boardgamers. You will soon find an *ASL* player or two. There are even tournaments held around the world dedicated solely to the play of *ASL*.

"If I don't like ASL, then what do I do?" In case you don't, the obvious course of action is placement of a game "for sale ad" in this magazine (see Opponents Wanted page). You can also get on the internet and use the same *ASL* sources to find a buyer looking to add to their sets. *ASL* players tend to wear out boards, counters and rule books after a time.

So, is *ASL* for you? Maybe, if you're looking for a flexible, expandable, challenging way to recreate small unit actions in World War II. If not, bear with us. There is no solid estimate of *ASL* players worldwide. Some have estimated 7,000-10,000 players worldwide. We do know that we are recruiting new players every day. There are players almost everywhere you may go. Still not sure if *ASL* is for you? Find a local player or hobby shop and check it out, you won't be disappointed that you did!

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Alone and Confused
Solitaire ASL and the Novice Player

By Matthew Ellison

Okay, for whatever reason, you finally decided to buy *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER (ASL)*. The only problem, if you are in the same situation as I, is that you don't have anybody to play on a regular basis. You play it by yourself, but it is difficult to pretend that you don't know there is a hidden 10-2 leader with a squad and a heavy machinegun bore-sighted on the hex you just decided to avoid. Then, along comes *SOLITAIRE ASL (SASL)*.

WHAT SASL IS NOT

It does not provide rules for playing existing scenarios in solitaire fashion. Maybe someday someone will adapt old scenarios for that purpose. Also, *SASL* is not like playing *ASL* against a real opponent. The artificial intelligence (AI) for the enemy forces (provided by a series of tables) are not the same as a live person sitting across from you, either at a table or computer monitor for play by email. A tactic that works in *SASL* will not necessarily work in a real game. A real person would not be constrained by the limits which are set upon the enemy forces in the *SASL* missions. The AI controlling the enemy units is not likely to maneuver to cut off rout paths or create kill zones. It's also more likely to send squads out into the open in range of your machineguns.

Also, *SASL* is not designed to help you learn the rules. For the easiest method to learn *ASL* rules, I recommend Jim Stahler's programmed rules article " Eight Steps to *ASL*" in volume 30, number 1 of *The GENERAL*. *SASL* adds another twenty pages of rules to read and understand. You must be at least familiar with chapters A-D of the *ASL* rulebook before you can play *SASL*. If you misread or misunderstand a rule, there will be no one to correct you.

WHAT GOOD IS THIS MODULE?

It is quite good when used for the purposes and intentions for which it was designed. You do not need a live opponent to sweat over what the Suspect counters [the *SASL* version of concealment] hide. You never know if a machinegun will open up when you run your squads out into the open. The long range activation can make it dangerous to cross open ground when the nearest Suspect counter is 16 hexes away. *SASL* takes the fog of war concept to a new level. In most regular *ASL* scenarios, you know whether your opponent has an antitank gun before you even start moving your armor. You never know what might pop up in *SASL*.

The concept of command control is also important in *SASL*. You are never quite sure until the dice are rolled, if your squads will do what you want them to do. It is quite possible to

have a large portion of your company immobilized by panic. They are not running away, but they are not moving forward or firing either. Leaders can help as long as they too don't panic. This makes even the 7-0 and 8-0 leaders important to have near the front. While losing half of your company to panic is frustrating, it does help to even the odds against the AI.

While it is easy to fall into erroneous play habits with *SASL*, you also have the opportunity to look up rules at your leisure without annoying your opponent. Thus, you don't need to have complete understanding of the rules before you play. Take sniper activation numbers (SAN) as an example. As long as you know when to check for it and what to look for, you can then look up the rules to find out more detail, such as determining the target and performing sniper checks. Also, if some section of the rules confuses you, such as off-board artillery (OBA), you can ignore events utilizing such sections, or you can use them and step your way through the particular rules section. This is the great thing about *SASL*: you can use whatever you want (within reason). If you want to try a night scenario, go for it. If you want to concentrate on infantry combat, then don't play the Tank Attack mission and re-roll any random event/activation check that calls for AFVs. In other words, you can proceed at your own pace.

Finally, the part of *SASL* that I liked best was the campaign aspect. *SASL* campaigns are not historical (in the *Historical ASL* sense), but involve the use of a given company in a series of missions. How your company does in a given mission influences what improvements it makes and replacements it gets. Therefore, it becomes important to protect your company. Making a last ditch run across open ground to reach a victory point objective (VPO) is not as attractive as it would be in a regular *ASL* scenario where you don't have to use the troops you have left at the end of one scenario for the next one. This conservation of force and the variable length of mission contribute to making *SASL* different from *ASL*. It is also what got me into a mess the first time I played an *SASL* mission.

I decided to jump straight into a campaign in Russia using a German company. I selected Bunker Busting (Mission 4) as the first mission. Not only was I having to deal with fortification rules with which I was not very familiar, but also I had to know the vehicle rules for the assault guns I received as support. Half of the way through the mission, I realized I had yet to check for sniper activation. I also forgot to check for panic more often than not. I hate to think of what other rules I was using incorrectly. I quit playing the mission in disgust with my poor grasp of the rules.

STARTER TIPS

I thoroughly enjoy *SASL* now and I would like to offer some suggestions to help make the transition easier for others who are new to *SASL*. I provide an analysis of each of the missions and the rules that some may find problematic in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 covers the missions where enemy units have a hold (defensive) attitude (missions 1-7). Table 2 covers the missions where the enemy is in an advance (offensive) attitude (8-14). If a mission has a yes in the row for partisans, then that mission may be played against a partisan enemy. The engineering row refers to missions where engineers, demolition charges and flame throwers may be used. Artillery strikes are the equivalent of OBA for the enemy side, but they are somewhat easier to use than the traditional OBA.

As can be seen from Tables 1 and 2, the missions with the least amount of rules are missions 1, 2, 5 and 8. Of these, missions 1, 2 and 5 have your company attacking, while mission 8 has your company on the defensive. I recommend starting with mission 1 or 2. These require the least amount of space, and the enemy is using a hold attitude. It is easier to play a solitaire mission against an enemy with a hold attitude because they are much more likely to fire than move which minimizes the amount of rules you have to master. Also, I suggest experimenting with design-your-own companies. Try SS, paratroopers and mixed companies to get a feel for the system before using one of the historical companies. Don't jump directly into a campaign until you are familiar with the rules.

After you become more familiar with the *SASL* rules, try Mission 8, Patrol. This is the simplest mission (in terms of rules) where the enemy is in an advance attitude. After that, you can move in whatever direction you choose. Most of the non-random event guns and vehicles show up in missions 8-14, when the enemy is in an advance attitude. Most of the extensive and/or confusing rules sections, such as OBA, are primarily used in these missions also. On the positive side, however, the units requiring those rules are often optional. The Human Wave rules are only required for Mission 14, Human Wave. They may enter due to a random event in other missions where the Russians are the enemy but they can be ignored if you do not feel comfortable with Human Waves. The rules for using Human Waves in *SASL* are even printed in a shaded box, because they are used infrequently. Don't bother reading them until you want or are required to use a Human Wave.

One of the more difficult sections to remember are the rules concerning automatic actions. It is a good idea to have that section handy when you are playing. Checking leaders and squads for command control is another aspect of *SASL* which can easily be forgotten during the course of play. This section, however, is vital to play balance. It is quite easy for your company to win if nobody panics. Therefore, if you find that you are forgetting to check for panic, I suggest you check after the rally phase of each player turn. This may affect balance somewhat, since you know ahead of time who will panic and who will not, but it is better than no check whatsoever.

Finally, there are a few tips that might make your first few missions more successful. You

will most likely get light mortars among your support weapon allotment. These weapons can be very useful. Use them against Suspect counters that are out of range of your squads, especially in woods. Mortars, as indirect fire weapons, qualify for the -1 Airburst TEM which can help determine if those pesky Suspect counters are actual units or just shadows. Remember that mortars can retain Rate of Fire (ROF) even though they are using the Area Target type. The American 60mm mortar can retain ROF firing WP when it becomes available. Try to keep your squads within two hexes and in line of sight of your leaders when possible. This should reduce the amount of panic that strikes your troops. Avoid fighting partisans in Mission 2, Pockets, since they don't surrender via the rout phase

method and they get VPs for each squad (good order or not) still left on board at the end of the game. Even though these missions have variable end turns, you have to be aggressive on offense. Don't let the Suspect counters slow you down. Deploy a few squads and run them out where they can cause activation checks. Mark some of your MGs with opportunity fire and shoot anything that pops up.

The basic point to remember in *SASL* is that you can proceed at your own pace. If you don't want to deal with a certain rules section, re-roll or ignore any random event that calls for you to use units requiring those rules. If you do happen to use a rules section with which you are not familiar or have questions, read that section

carefully when the time comes. The down side is that with no one around to challenge you, you must look up a rule if you are unsure. It would be a rude awakening to "learn" a rule incorrectly in *SASL* only to have it cost you a scenario in a face-to-face game when your error is uncovered by your opponent.

Thus, *SASL* can be an important learning tool in your *ASL* library. It also can be a lot of fun. Maybe in future pages of *The GENERAL*, you will read about the hardships and battles of a German infantry company as they march across the steppes of Russia.

★

Rules Involved	Mission 1 Cautious Advance	Mission 2 Pockets	Mission 3 Recon	Mission 4 Bunker Busting	Mission 5 Take the Highway	Mission 6 The Fortress	Mission 7 Block Party
Fortifications	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Guns[1]	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Vehicles	No	No	*	*	No	No	*
Artillery Strikes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
OBA	No	No	No	No	No	No	*
Bombardment	No	No	No	No	No	*	*
Partisans	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Engineers	No	No	No	*	No	Yes	*

TABLE 1. Missions with ENEMY Units in a Hold Attitude

[1] This does not include the 1/2" Light Mortars used as support weapons

* Units using these rules sections are either optional or possible attached units that may or may not be used.

Rules Involved	Mission 8 Patrol	Mission 9 Enemy Offensive	Mission 10 Hold the Line	Mission 11 Tank Attack!	Mission 12 Besieged	Mission 13 The Bridge	Mission 14 Human Wave
Fortifications	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guns[1]	No	*	*	*	*	No	*
Vehicles	No	*	*	Yes	*	No	*
Artillery Strikes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	*
OBA	No	No	*	No	*	No	Yes
Bombardment	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Partisans	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Engineers	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

TABLE 2. Missions with ENEMY Units in an Advance Attitude

[1] This does not include the 1/2" Light Mortars used as support weapons

* Units using these rules sections are either optional or possible attached units that may or may not be used.
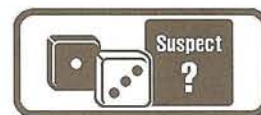
SERIES REPLAY
SOLITAIRE ASL

AMERICAN: Neil Clark

GERMAN: The Game System

NEUTRAL COMMENTATOR: Richard Eichenlaub

"Did I just hear Matthew Ellison say Bunker Busting busted up his understanding of the rules?" Well, here we get to see another player tackle Mission 4, Bunker Busting in the SOLITAIRE module of ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER. I hope that this replay serves to illustrate this unique extension to the ASL game system for ASL players and the uninitiated alike.
—*SKT*

Focusing upon the fortunes of US Army Company "Strange" from the D-Day landings through to the end of the war, this replay shows Strange Company's baptism by fire. Following the D-Day landings, "Strange" Company took part in an action to expand the beachhead into dense, fortified land to the east.

Situation: June 1944
SASL Mission 4 (Bunker Busting)
Friendly ELR = 3; Enemy ELR = 3
Friendly SAN = 2; Enemy SAN = 4
Friendly REs = 2/3; Enemy REs = 5/6
AC No; 3
Booby Trap Level = B
Board Configuration: Configuration B with board 37 on north with i.d. number to southwest and board 13 on south with i.d. number to northeast. Friendly board edge (west) abuts off-board setup area (hexrow FF of any board, ignoring non-road terrain).
Environmental Conditions: Moist (-1), Overcast, no wind, streams and connected marshes are flooded. All bridges on board 13 are intact.
SSR Reinforcements: 2 x M4(105)MTs (no armor leader). This gives three victory points (VPs) at start to the enemy.
Suspect & Sniper Placement and Company Setup. As shown in setup figure.

NEUTRAL COMMENT ON SETUP

Only upon reading Neil's final notes on the Rest and Refit after this mission did I realize the error, but Neil is starting this mission with too many squads. An American company consists of *nine* squads and the other listed personnel, not twelve. This company commander should feel fortunate to enter this mission with a "reinforced" company.

PRE-GAME COMMENTS

This is not an easy start to the campaign. The Bunker Busting mission is a tough one, with plenty of fortified positions to be revealed. Although the SSRs have given me two superb AFVs to support the attack, there will probably be a lot of guns out there capable of stopping them. I must activate a lot of the suspects (S?) to stand a chance of winning. The VP schedule gives 1/2 VP to the enemy for each S? still on the board at the end of the game. As so many of them are in closed terrain, activating them will have to be done up close which means casualties and more forfeited VPs.

The forest on board 37 will probably be very well defended—no less than 38 S?s are in those trees. On board 13, most of the S?s are in buildings, which are very likely to be fortified building locations.

The random event numbers (RE#s) dictate that the enemy is very sensitive in this area and will very likely generate reinforcements, while I am largely on my own. The density of S?s, coupled with the reasonably high AC#, means that once S?s generate fortifications, the neighboring S?s will only fail to activate on a 6 because fortified positions are victory point objectives (VPOs) in this scenario.

The sniper activation numbers (SANs) are reasonably low. Sniper fire shouldn't be too dangerous. Booby traps have never caused me much trouble in the past.

That flooded stream effectively cuts board 13 in half and all the adjoining marshes are impassable too. I had best concentrate my efforts to the north of the stream. The elevated road hexes should help conceal my moves from some of those S?s as the game advances.

Because the bulk of the S?s are in the woods, I shall attack on board 37, screening my advance from board 13 with the numerous line-of-sight (LOS) hindrances and obstacles. I don't have to stay out of sight, but I must keep the final Infantry Fire Table dice roll modifiers low so that the board 13 S?s don't activate. Because the terrain is much more open on board 13, an attack on any location there is sure to draw fire from S?s on both boards. If time permits, I'll take out some of them later.

The plan is to advance onto board 37 and overwhelm the less densely situated S?s near the friendly board edge (on west). Then, before moving on the woods, I'll use the mortars to activate S?s from long range. Whatever is activated will be concealed again due to favorable terrain effects but at least I'll know what I'm up against. All that concealment terrain will also help to protect my force as it advances. The American squads are notoriously brittle under fire.

Strange Company

Jackson	Surman	Rigney	x 12 A thru L
x 2	BB, CC	x 1	AA
x 3	c1, c2, c3	x 3	c4, c5, c6

As always, it's a good tactic to limit the number of S?s activated at any one time, but it's especially true in this mission, as every activated fortification which is not captured at the end of the game will yield VPs to the enemy.

I use the usual tactic of deploying and sending the half squads forward to provoke activation. The tanks will come on the board only after I know that there are no guns waiting to take them out. The first time I played this scenario as the Germans, I brought a StuG IIIB aboard early and finished it's move. A squad moving later in the same MPh activated an S? six hexes from the StuG which revealed an AT gun in a pillbox. The StuG was blown away in the first enemy Prep Fire without firing a shot. The armor is just too important to be lost like that.

The M4(105)s are pretty impressive in this mission, although I could have used a couple of engineer squads with a FT and a couple of DCs to help with that forest. The M4s can generate lots of smoke and white phosphorus, and pack formidable firepower in their 105mm gun, coaxial MG and bow MG. The anti-air MG won't get used much, as they'll enter buttoned up and probably stay that way throughout. One excellent thing about the *SASL* system is that you can get to see some pretty sexy hardware in action.

In the *SASL* system, a lot of dice rolls are used to determine what exactly gets activated, and what actions those units perform, especially when the enemy is on the offensive. The enemy units will be revealed and move/fire as dictated by the Activity tables. You really have no idea what you are up against when you start. The high dice roll modifier (DRM) to activation table A1 means that probably there will be many guns out, but few AFVs, but the REs could bring anything onto the board.

The *SASL* system provides rules about command control which add uncertainty to the effectiveness of your side. I find that they add a new dimension to *ASL*, which makes vitally important your leaders and the quality of their leadership. Failure to be in command means that the unit is temporarily immobilized. Both sides are subject to panic, but it hurts the friendly side the most.

At start, all American squads are 6-6-6s, and are listed by squad identity letter (A, B, etc.). Half squads are termed HsAA, etc. while crews are c5, etc. As units battle harden or ELR, they will be replaced with the appropriate unit with the same identity letter.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Neil has diced himself into an extremely tough first engagement for his untried company. He is well aware how difficult Bunker Busting missions are. In my experience, these can be
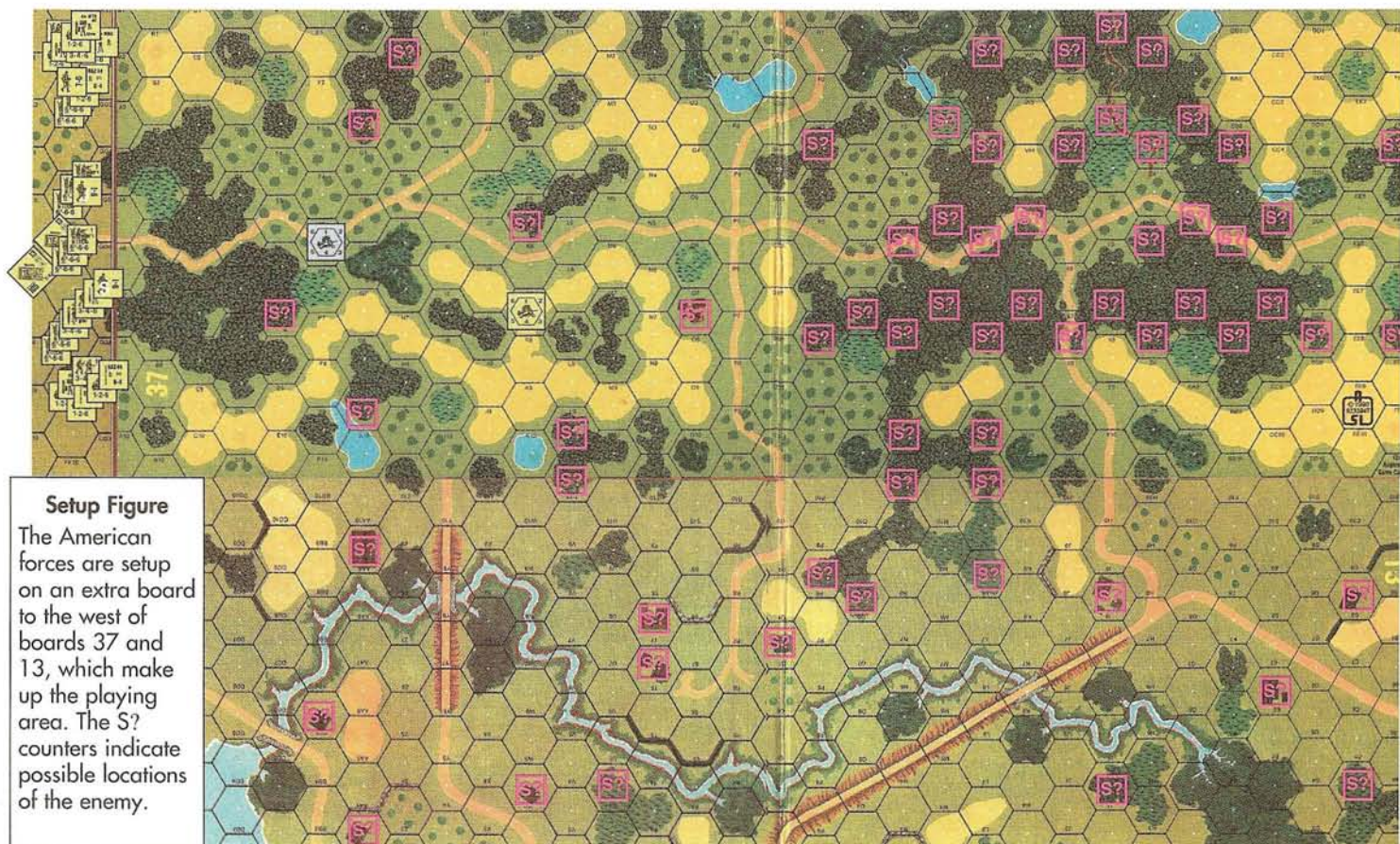
Setup Figure

The American forces are setup on an extra board to the west of boards 37 and 13, which make up the playing area. The S? counters indicate possible locations of the enemy.

very hard to win when the terrain is dense and have a nasty tendency to ruin a good company. However, if handled delicately, a couple big VPOs can offset the free VPs awarded to the enemy for leftover suspect counters.

In a complicated twist, Neil has provided the enemy with a nearly secure flank. The flooded stream, as he notes, cuts board 13 in half. He has to be very careful not to allow those S? on the far side of the stream to activate. They could be VPOs which would be deadly if he tries to capture them. Neil is being very optimistic to even consider having enough time to tackle the far side during this scenario. Once he gets sucked into that woods, he'll be lucky to disengage, much less refocus his attack elsewhere.

His plan to tackle board 37 is, I think, his only viable approach. He's absolutely correct that he needs to manage how many S? activations he allows. One secret to this mission is to bypass non-VPO activations. Once an S? activates and does not create a fortification of some sort, it is worth nothing to the enemy. When the other side is defending, there is only a one-in-six chance it will move. Of course, the risk is that the unit will successfully dig foxholes, thereby creating another VPO. However, on the whole, foxholes are not worth much and I feel it is better not to tangle with the enemy except for some substantial potential gain.

Experienced *ASL* players will recognize the tactic of using 1-2-6 crew counters as support weapons teams (for the bazookas and mortars). This is a nice tweak of the system, because these units can self-rally. They also tend to be replaced relatively easily between missions.

A key concept, and one that makes *SASL* campaign games so interesting, is knowing when to call it quits. It takes experience with the system to know that losing this mission is better than winning it with your company in such bad shape that the next three missions are almost certain losers. This is the toughest of all decisions in *SASL*.

AMERICAN TURN 1

System-driven actions are shown in italics below.

Setup
Squad H deploys into half squads HsKK and HsQQ.

Movement Phase
Jackson in command, puts Rigney in command
Jackson & A move A5 B5 C5 D4
B moves A5 B5 C5 D5
C moves (CX) A5 B5 C6 D5 E5...
   G3 fails activation check (AC)
... C moves F4
   K5 fails AC
Surman in command
HsKK moves (CX) A8 B8 C9...
   G9 fails AC
... HsKK moves D9
   13AA9 fails AC
c6 moves (CX) A8 B8 C8 D7
   E7 fails AC
c3 moves (CX) A8 B8 C8bp D8bp E9
HsQQ moves (CX) A1 B1 C1 D1
   H1 activates 4-4-7 and 2-4-7 squads. H1 fires at D1: (cowers)
   1RFP placed in D1. HsQQ ELR failure DM becomes 2-3-6 HsQQ
Rigney, c4, G & I move A2 B1 C2 D1
   Attacked by 1 RFP: no effect (NE)
J move (CX) A1 B1 C2 D2
c1, c2, HsBB move A1 B1 C2
Surman, L & K move (CX) A8 B8 C8bp D8 E8bp F8
HsAA & HsCC move (CX) A8 B8 C8bp D8
c5 moves (CX) A8 B8 C9 D9
E & F move (CX) A6 B5 C6 D5 E5 F5 G5
D moves (CX) A6 B5 C6 D5 E5 F5 G5
M4(105) A in command, moves start A6 B5 C6 D5 E5 F5 G5 H4 I4 J3
   stop
M4(105) B in command, moves start FF5 A6 B5 C6 D5 E5 F5 G4 H4
   stop

Advancing Fire Phase
Rigney directs D1 fire at H1: NE

Rout Phase
Rigney routs with HsQQ C2 C3

Advance Phase
c4 to E2
c1 & c2 to D1
J to E3
HsBB to D2
D, E & F to H4
C to G5
Jackson & A to E5
B to E5
Surman, K & L to G9
c3 to F9
c6 to E8
HsAA & HsCC to E8
HsKK & c5 to E9
Concealment on E2 E3 D2 E8

TURN 1 COMMENTS

Well, that went more smoothly than I would have expected. Five of the six suspect activation checks failed to activate anything, allowing me to force-march my troops into forward positions. Although the wheatfields around 13CC6 do not conceal my movement, they do prevent an AC because of the LOS DRMs.

I didn't have to move the M4s buttoned up, because there was no threat to them, but they got to where I wanted them anyway. They are in position to area fire at R3 and O7 in the upcoming defensive fire phase (DFPh).

Surman and his boys will have a 6FP (firepower of six) shot on V10 at +2 which has less than a 50% chance of revealing something. Team c3 in E9 can assemble the mortar and fire, rate of fire permitting, in the next prep phase until it gets a result on L9.

On the left wing, I'll paste H1 with defensive fire (12FP at +2). If that fails to do the trick, I'll assemble the mortars to hit it in the next Prep Phase. Those units will have to go down before I can move safely past the J hex row on the left.

GERMAN TURN 1

Rally Phase
Rigney fails to rally HsQQ, desperation morale (DM).

Prep Fire Phase
H1 fires at D1: NE

Defensive Fire Phase
Rigney in command
G & I fire at H1: NE
c1 assemble MTR A
c2 assemble MTR B
M4(105) A Panics
M4(105) B in command, area fires at O7: miss -1 TA. Fires
  BMG/CMG at O7: NE
Surman in command, directs K & L fire at 13V10: NE
c3 assembles MTR C

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Indeed, things went better than expected. With an activation check of 3, half the potential activations would be successful. Neil is bucking the odds up to this point. This is beneficial, because he needs to press the attack and there is nothing worse than getting stuck right out of the blocks.

I think he is dangerously close to activating 13BB5. He has a 50% chance of creating something, then a slightly better than even chance of it being a fortified building. That would grant the enemy nine victory points which would be difficult to take away.

On the opposite side, he is going to clear the squad and a half in 37H1. I think these guys are only a minor threat, because they are on the back side of a woods. As Neil has decided to make his main line of advance the northern board edge, I understand why this enemy is bothering him.

I was a little surprised he didn't bring his forces onto the board concealed. Fire against concealed units is less effective, as Neil knows well, having placed concealment counters on three of his stacks at the conclusion of his turn. Even though suspects will strip his concealment, opportunities still exist to maintain concealment and use it to advantage.

AMERICAN TURN 2

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

This turn, I plan to blow away those units in H1 and move to the other side of that tree line. The M4(105) A can area fire at R3 while I use armored assault to advance the units in H4 along the road towards O7. I must activate those units in L9 & V10 this turn so that I can advance up the road although that will be easier done by advancing a unit rather than prep firing. Until something is activated, the bazooka team in E8 will have to advance boldly to draw some fire. If nothing comes up, they can continue towards O7. If anyone does show their face, then I might have some use for Opportunity Fire after all.

Rally Phase
Surman fails to deploy squad L
Rigney rallies HsQQ

Prep Fire Phase
Rigney in command

Suspect counter which failed its activation check and is removed.

American Turn 1: The company sweeps through the "shadows"—suspect counters—finding minor resistance in H1, where a firefight ensues.

c1 fire MTR at H1: K/1 (2-4-7), 4-4-7 breaks DM
c2 dismantles MTR
M4(105) A in command, area fires at R3: miss -1 TA
M4(105) B fires WP at O7: miss, -2 TA
Surman in command
c3 designated as opportunity firer, remove CX (-CX)

Movement Phase
c4 moves CX F2 G3
J moves F3 G4 H3 (-?) I3 -CX
HsBB moves CX E3bp F3 (?-) G4 H3 I3 J2
G & I move CX E2 F1 G2
Rigney & HsQQ move D3 E4 F3 G4 H3 I3
c6 moves F7 G8bp (-?) H7 -CX
HsAA & HsCC move F7 G8 -CX
L moves H9 ...
  L9 fails AC
... L moves I9
  13V10 fails AC
...L -CX
Surman and K move H8bp I8 J7bp K8 -CX
HsKK & c5 move F8 G8bp H7 -CX
D in command, moves I5 J5 K6...
  O7 activates 2-4-7, 37L AT gun (CA N6/N7) and 2-2-8 crew in
  Fortified building location. 2-4-7 fires at D: NE. 37L fires at D:
  miss, -1 TA
... D moves L5 M5 -1TA left in L5 -CX
E Panics -CX
F in command, moves I5 J5 K6 L5 M5 -CX
Jackson in command
C moves H4 I5 J5 K6 L5 -CX
Jackson, A & B move F5 G5 H4 I5 J5 K6 L5

Advancing Fire Phase
G, I, c4, HsQQ & A fire at H1: 4-4-7 (broken) passes 2MC
A, B, C, D & F fire at O7: (cower) NE

Rout Phase
H1 to H0

Advance Phase
c2 to E2
G & I to H1
c4 to I2
HsBB to K3
D & F to M4
Jackson, A, B & C to L4 -1 TA left in L5
M4(105) A & B both CE
L to J8
Surman to J8
K to L7
HsKK, c5 & c6 to I7
HsAA & HsCC to H7

Concealment on D1 E2 H1 I2 I3 L7

TURN 2 COMMENTS

I decided to expose the crews of the two AFVs, because I don't want to take the -1 BU penalty to my shots, especially when that AT gun has activated in O7. The 37L is not a danger to me at this range, it would need a 2 to hit, but if I close the range, it's special HEAT ammo becomes more dangerous.

The decision to pull Surman back to L7 in the Advance Phase looks odd at first, but it enables him to perform the command control dice roll for all the units in his command range. Otherwise, they would have to perform those actions themselves. Also, sniper fire makes it not a good idea to leave a leader alone in a hex.

Unfortunately, my mortar teams are lagging behind the advance. I must bring them up as soon as possible, even though they are all out of the command range of any leader. I'll try to use the Defensive Fire Phase to get the assembled mortars dismantled. Next turn, I want to place white phosphorus in O7 and blitz it in close combat. The fortified wooden building is worth nine VPs and the AT gun two VPs.

Thus far, I've been lucky with the activation checks, so I've made good progress, but O7 is the start of a new phase.

GERMAN TURN 2

Rally Phase
4-4-7 fails self rally, retains DM

Prep Fire Phase
37L fires AP at M4(105) B: hull hit, -1 TA, TK: NE. 37L fires AP at
  M4(105)B: miss, -2 TA.
2-4-7 fires at L4: NE

Defensive Fire Phase
Jackson in command
A, B, C, D & F fire at O7: 2-4-7 1MC: hero creation, 2-2-8 breaks
  DM, TA lost
M4(105) A in command, area fires HE at R3: miss, -2 TA
M4(105) B in command, area fires at O7: hits, hero elim. 2-4-7 passes
  NMC. 2-2-8 (broken) NMC elim
Rigney in command
HsBB assembles MMG
c3 in command, dismantles MTR
c1 in command, dismantles MTR

Rout Phase
H0 surrenders to G

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Neil finally hits paydirt with the 37O7 activation of an AT gun and a half squad. As he notes, this is worth 11 VPs and is a relatively easy target. He can press home the attack quickly, but that risks activating the S? behind it. This prize might be worth capturing slowly.

Although he hasn't been terribly plagued by panic yet, it is obviously a concern for him. One squad froze this turn. It's not a key unit, but it causes a tilt for the player. Generally, every unit has a planned action and when a squad doesn't fulfill its obligation, things can get really messed up. Neil is cognizant of this and is doing a decent job keeping his forces organized and his leaders well-positioned.
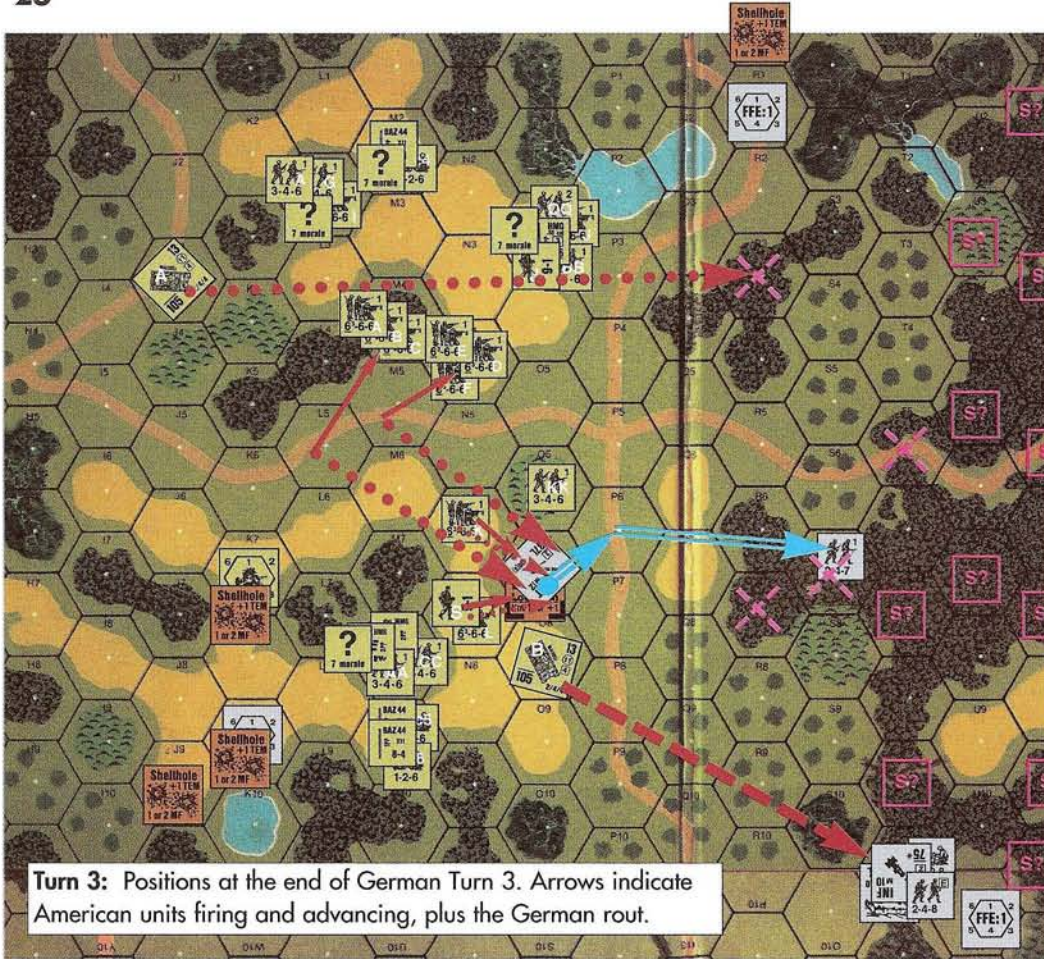
The American company captures its first German prisoners. This happens pretty often in *SASL* and is an excellent way to rack up VPs, because captured units count double. The drawback, of course, is that Neil has to allocate some of his precious forces to guard duty.

Turn 3: Positions at the end of German Turn 3. Arrows indicate American units firing and advancing, plus the German rout.

In typical *ASL* fashion, the half squad in the building generates a hero which is immediately wounded and dies. The crew of the AT gun is wiped out. Looks like 11 easy points for Neil.

AMERICAN TURN 3

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

I am supposed to play the enemy side to its best advantage. Firing the 37L with AP ammo to get a -2 target acquisition counter seemed like a good idea. Unfortunately, it lost ROF before it could get off a HEAT round, although it would still only have hit on a 4. Had it hit, that would have been it for the M4.

The Hero in O7 didn't last long and, at last, one of my AFVs got a result. I shouldn't have too much trouble this turn storming O7. I expect that will draw some fire from the units in the woods. I hope to activate enough S?s with VPs along the tree line to win the game without having to activate too many interior woods hexes at point blank range.

On the left flank, I will push the MMG half squad to N1 where he can fire on R3 without a lot of LOS hindrance DRMs. The prisoners are a bit of a nuisance, and I don't get any VPs for them. Yet, even though it's a game, I don't like the idea of not accepting surrender.

The overall objective this turn is to get as many units up front as possible. I haven't yet managed to get the support weapons to keep up with the advance and I want those mortars and machineguns to do some work.

Rally Phase
Squad G deploys into Hs's G & A. A takes prisoners

Prep Fire Phase
Jackson in command
A, B, C, D & F fire at O7: (cowers) 2-4-7 NMC Breaks DM
M4(105) A in command, area fires at R3: Hits, 4MC
  R3 fails AC

Movement Phase
HsBB moves L2bp M2 N2 -CX
Surman in command
HsKK moves CX J6 K6 L5 M5 N5
  R7 fails AC
  T5 fails AC
K moves M7 N6 (-?)
c3 Panics
HsAA & HsCC CX to I7bp J7b K8 (-?) L8
Surman & L move K8 L7bp M7bp N6
c5 & c6 move J7bp K8 L8
Rigney in command
E moves I5 J5 K6 L5 M5
c4 moves J2 K3bp L2 -CX
I & HsG move I2bp J2 K3 -CX
Jackson moves L3 M3 N2
c1 in command, moves E2 E3bp F3
c2 Panics
J & HsQQ move CX J2 K3bp L2bp M2 N2
M4(105) B in command, moves start I5 J5 K6 L5 (CA M6/L6) M6
  M7bp N7 O8 stop
Rigney moves H3 G3bp F3 E3bp E2
HsA moves I1 J1 K2

Advancing Fire Phase
Surman directs K & L fire at O7: 2-4-7 (6) passes 3MC

Rout Phase
2-4-7 low crawls to P6

Advance Phase
Jackson, HsBB, HsQQ (?) & J (?) to O3
  S7 fail AC
c4 to M2
I & HsG to L2
c1 to G3
HsA to L2
D & F to N4
E to N4
HsKK to O6
A, B & C to M4
Surman, K & L to O7
HsAA & HsCC to M8
c5 & c6 to M9
Concealment on M8

TURN 3 COMMENTS

Where is everybody? It can be a bit frustrating moving painstakingly forward, only to find that there's nobody there. Still, I shouldn't complain about clearing the first half of board 37 and capturing one VP location and a gun. The second half won't be so easy.

The M4(105) in O8 is there to cover the advance on the right wing next turn, in case T9 and T10 open up with something nasty. You just never know what the random event numbers might turn up.

I've sent Rigney back to pick up those straggling mortar teams. Admittedly, his chances of gaining command are only slightly better than the crew's, but at least they'll get two attempts. I'll have to let F9 make it on their own. I've clustered everyone else, except L2, into the command range of the two 9-1s. Barring an unlucky command dice roll (DR), they all should be moving into the woods on turn 4.

GERMAN TURN 3

Rally Phase
Random event. 2 x Artillery Strikes. FFE1 A on O7 (150mm) scatters to K9. FFE1 B on O3: (150mm) scatters to R1
2-4-7 (6) fails self rally

Prep Fire Phase
Although the off-board artillery (OBA) blast areas are free of units, a DR is made for each hex for shellholes and burnable terrain for possible flame creation.

Defensive Fire Phase
M4(105) B in command, area fires at T10: Miss, -1TA placed.
  Fires CMG/BMG at T10: NMC
  T10 Activates 2-4-8, 75 INF gun (CA S10/T9) and 2-2-8 crew in Trench. NMC nullified by TEM*
Surman panics
K in command
L panics
HsKK in command
K & HsKK fire PBF at P6: (cowers) NE

Rout Phase
2-4-7 (6) routs Q6 R6 S7

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Neil's advance continues with ease. His command problems are causing his support to straggle a bit. He should not be frustrated, but rather thankful, that he's had such good fortune. He has to remember that it's a long war and his company has many battles to fight, some tougher than others. He shouldn't wish for a fight. His war god might grant it and give him more than he can handle.

One minor error was that the 37O7 half squad should have surrendered to the squads pounding on the door from 37N6. Since it had no recourse but to low crawl or be interdicted and was next to known enemy units, it should surrender.

A quick accounting shows Neil with 9 VPs for the fortified building and 4 VPs for the captured squad. If he grabs the gun captures the half squad, he'll be at a grand total of 19 VPs. I count 53 S? remaining, which gives the enemy 26.5 VPs plus the 3 VPs Neil coughed up for tank support. If he's conservative, Neil might be able to steal the eleven or so points he needs and settle down and wait for the mission to end.

Will the enemy let him do that?

A random event is triggered. Neil is lucky the artillery missed because it rolled well (four kills). The trench/infantry gun combination is the winning ticket. He's right that nearby activations could start a snowball of enemy VPOs that could throw quick victory out the window.

AMERICAN TURN 4

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

Random event-driven artillery strikes don't kill much in my experience, because they scatter all over the place and are not continued. As it stands, there is only a very small chance that they will find a target in the Defensive Fire Phase this turn. If they do, I'm in very serious trouble, because they'll probably be continued and two modules of 150mm OBA is potentially lethal to my concentrated troops.
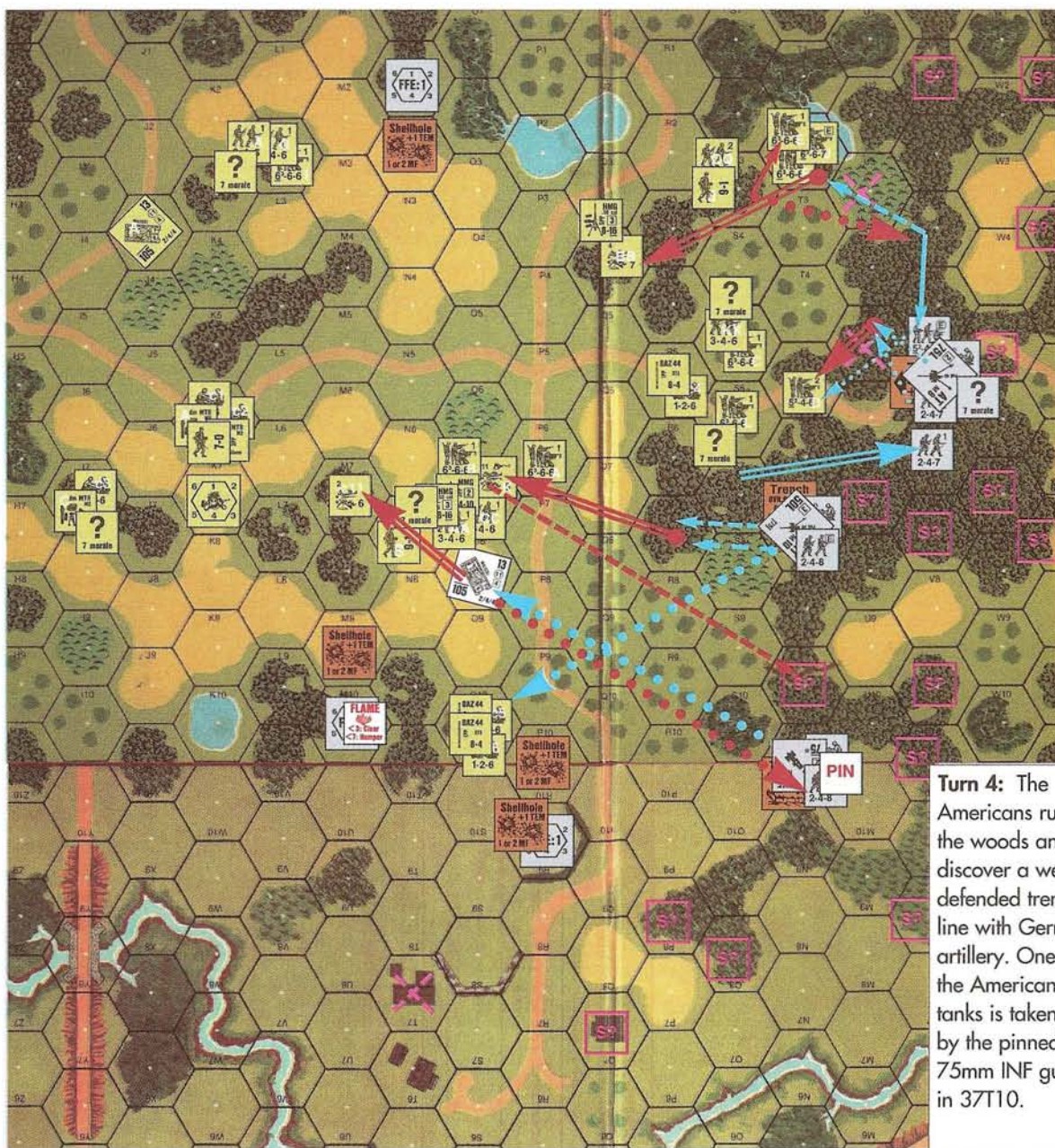
In my movement phase, I'll have to disperse them just in case the FFE2 ends up among my troops. The tanks are going to button up this turn to protect them from OBA and that infantry gun in T10. Hex T10 is now worth six VPs for the trench for both sides and the infantry gun is two VPs to me. Unfortunately, to assault it, I will have to risk activating board 13 S?s and that could get tricky.

This phase, I plan to get into the woods in R3/R4 and get the HMG/MMG set up in O7 to fire on that T10 position. Infantry fire might be more reliable than the M4s MA.

Rally Phase
2-4-7 (6) remove DM
L recovers 37L gun

Prep Fire Phase
M4(105) B in command, fires CMG/BMG at T10: NE. Fires MA at T10: Hits, -2TA, 2-4-8 pinned, 2-2-8 takes PTC (gunshield)

Movement Phase
Surman in command
HsKK moves P5 Q5...
   U5 fails AC
...R4 -CX
Jackson in command
HsQQ moves P3 (-?) Q4bp R3
   U3 fails AC
Rigney in command
Rigney & c2 move E3bp F3 G4 H4 I5 J5
c1 moves G4 H4 I5 J5
c3 in command, moves F8 G8bp H7
K moves CX P6 Q7 R7
   2-4-7 (6) place DM, T7 activates 2-4-8, 50L AT gun (CA S7/S8) and 2-2-8 crew in Trench. 50L AT gun fires at R7: Hits, K NMC breaks DM. Fires at R7: Hits, Hits, -2 TA, K (DM) takes 1MC, NE.
Jackson, J & HsBB move P3 (-?) Q3 R3bp S3bp T2
   V3 activates 5-4-8. 5-4-8 fires at T2: 1RF placed, Jackson passes 1MC, J passes 1MC, battle hardens 6-6-7, HsBB Breaks DM. 5-4-8 SFF at T2: Jackson passes NMC, J passes NMC, HsBB passes NMC
E & F CX move O5 P4 Q4bp R3bp S3
D moves CX O5 P4 Q5 R5 S5 T4
c4 moves CX N2 O3 P3 (-?)
   P4 Q5
A & B move M5 N5 O6
C moves CX N4 O5 P5 Q6 R5
I panics

HsAA AM to N7-CX
HsCC AM to N7-CX
L abandons 37L, moves P6 Q6 R5
c5 in command, AM to N9
c6 in command, AM to N9
M4(105) A panics

Defensive Fire Phase
R1 FFE scatters off of board (N2)
K9 FFE scatters to 13R9, no flames
50L gun fires at R7: hit, K passes NMC
2-4-8 fires at R7: NE
T10 panics

Advancing Fire Phase
Jackson directs J fire at V3: NE
E & F fire at V3: NE

Rout Phase
HsBB routs to S3 R3 Q4
K routs Q7 P6 O7
2-4-7 routs T7 U7 V6

Advance Phase
Rigney, c1 & c2 to K6
c3 to I7
Jackson to S3
E & F to T2
HsQQ to S3
L to S6
C to S5

HsKK to S5
D to U5
V5 activates Hs gun F, 1-3-5 pillbox with 2-4-7 (CA U5/U6), 75L AT gun (CA U5/U6) with 2-2-8 crew
c4 to R5
A to P6
B to O7
HsAA & HsCC to O7
c5 & c6 to O9
   13T7 fails AC
Concealment on S5, S6, I7, L2

TURN 4 COMMENTS

I made a serious mistake not firing white phosphorus at T10 during prep fire, because the 75* INF gun possibly has HEAT ammo which could hit the M4s. Fortunately, the crew panicked and no shots were fired, but I'll have to endure his prep fire before I get another chance. It was also a mistake to advance those bazooka teams into O9, but fortunately T7 failed to activate. That could have been very unpleasant. A fortified building in open terrain would tie down a lot of my force and would activate many other such locations when I attacked it.

Turn 4: The Americans rush the woods and discover a well-defended trench line with German artillery. One of the American tanks is taken out by the pinned 75mm INF gun in 37T10.

I'm not sure that building a fire base in O7 is going to be of much use, because of the high hindrance DRMs and TEMs, but I'll chip away from the fortified building while I try to outflank the position through the woods.

As expected, the OBA modules couldn't find any targets and will probably fail to be continued in his Prep Fire Phase. Had they found two or three units, they would have pounded away mercilessly until the end of the game or, given the high caliber, until the units were eliminated.

The Advance Phase is a good time to activate suspects because they can't fire back, although the V5 units will get point-blank fire versus squad D. At least I know what's ahead now. The interior woods hexes were always going to be tough, but I'm grateful that its not a couple of squads and a leader. Of course, that AT gun is lethal. In closed terrain, pillboxes are easily overwhelmed from the flanks, but moving to V4 and V6 might activate fire.

GERMAN TURN 4

Rally Phase
2-4-7 fails self rally, remove DM
Surman rallies K
Remove DM from HsBB

Prep Fire Phase
13R9 FFE: C: 37M10, no flame
Off-board FFE: C: no flame
2-4-7 fires PBF at U5: (cowers) NE
75L gun fires HE at U5: hits, D ELR failure, breaks to 5-4-6, DM
50L fires at O9: miss, -1TA
75 INF fires HEAT at M4: turret hit, -1TA, HEAT TK: M4(105) B eliminated, crew survival: c11 1-2-8 placed on O8. 75* fires HE at O8: hits, -2TA, c11 2MC breaks, DM*

Movement Phase
5-4-8 moves V4 V5

Defensive Fire Phase
Surman in command
HsAA & HsCC assemble MGs
Surman directs B & K fire at T9: NE

Advancing Fire Phase
5-4-8 fires at D: NE

Rout Phase
D routs to T5
c11 routs to N7, M7
Concealment on V5

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Call it gamesmanship, but I think Neil has made this mission extremely tough for himself by charging ahead along the north and middle of board 37. Once he activated the two mid-board trenches, I would have redirected my attack at those two key points. The more S?s that he activates, the more likely additional VPOs are going to appear for the enemy. Then, all activations adjacent to them are modified by -1, making them even more likely to activate. This can be the beginning of a chain reaction of activations that quickly puts the mission out of reach.

At this point, he has more than enough to manage. Three guns face him, two from trenches (worth six points apiece plus the guns) and one from a seven-point pillbox. I'd consider this, plus the additional activations nearby that are going to take place, as the mission's only focus. Neil should concentrate on systematically reducing these positions. Then he should hunker down on his hard-won battlefield. Let another company move through his and continue the fight while Strange eats dinner. He is likely to generate more

problems for himself by executing a fighting recon deeper into the woods on the north.

The enemy in 37V5 does a fire action automatically. A friendly unit *adjacent* to the enemy as well as the enemy in an improved position with a target both require a fire action (overriding any other action determination).

The tide is beginning to swing against the American forces. He *was* about even in the fight, but now fate has conspired against him and mission victory is becoming more difficult. The loss of the tank is a tough blow.

AMERICAN TURN 5

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

This was *not* a good turn at all: one M4(105) destroyed and both the OBAs returned to the board with another chance to find targets in the upcoming DFPh. The frustrating thing is that the To Hit DR of the M4s fire of HE last turn would have resulted in the successful placement of white phosphorus on T10 without loss of that ammo and an automatic NMC for the crew. Mistakes are severely punished in war.

Squad D was hammered last turn to a 5-4-6, but the route into the woods interior has been freed by the 5-4-8's move to defend V5. Although now it might be more sensible to concentrate on capturing what's already on the board rather than attempting to activate more S?s. The 5-4-8 can defend the NCA of the pillbox, reducing it's vulnerability to close combat.

Hex T6 is the angle of attack on T7, because the AT gun will have to pay a severe CA change penalty and a one-shot ROF reduction to fire on me. However, U7 could activate and slow that attack down. I'll have to try that first before I try a frontal assault with smoke. The fire group in O7 can only really fire on T9 as the LOS hindrance and TEMs on T10 are prohibitive (+6).

After some thought, I've decided to continue moving east through the woods with a small force while the remainder turns south to take out the guns. At the moment, I've captured 13 VPs, but there are still 46 unactivated S?s on the board. Locations in enemy hands are worth another 17 (26 if the guns are captured). My casualty VP loss is 7 VPs. I gave away 3 VPs in the setup. I'm way behind, but if I can take everything on the board at the moment without suffering heavy casualties, then I will win.

Rally Phase
D fails self rally, remove DM
c11 fails self rally, remove DM

Prep Fire Phase
Surman in command
HsAA & HsCC declared opportunity firers, -?

Movement Phase
L in command, AM to T6:
T7 panics, 2-4-8 FPF's at L: (cower) no attack, 2-4-8 breaks DM.
50L FPF's at L: miss, gun breakdown, 2-2-8 breaks DM. U7 activates 5-4-8, 2-3-7, fire at L: (cower) NE, 2RF placed
A moves Q7 R7
Jackson in command
HsQQ moves CX to T3 U3 V3
W5 activates 8-0, 5-4-8 with LMG. W5 fires at HsQQ: 4RF placed, HsQQ 2MCELR failure, becomes 2-2-6, DM
HsKK moves S4 T3 U3
J moves T3 U4
Jackson moves S4 T4 T5
C moves T5, smoke placed in U6
c4 in command, moves S6 T5 U6
V5 doesn't panic, 2-4-7 (6) in V6 DM, 5-4-8 & 2-4-7 fire at c4: NE. 75L fires at c4: Hit, c4 fails 2MC, DM
E moves T3 T4 fails smoke placement in U5 -CX

I panics
F moves T3 U4 -CX
c6 moves P8
2-4-8 fires at c6: NE
75 fires at c6: Hits, -1 TA, 6RF placed, c6 2MC breaks DM*
c5 moves O8 P7 Q8
T9 activates 4-6-7 in trench. 4-6-7 fires at Q8: c5 passes PTC
Rigney in command
Rigney, c1 & c2 move L5 M5 (-?) N5 O5 P5 Q5 R5
c3 moves J6 K6 (-?) L5
M4(105) in command, moves start K3bp L3 M3 N3 O4 (VCA P4/O5) P4 P5 P6 P7 P8 (TCA Q8/Q9) stop
CE attacked by 6RFP's in P8:
M4(105) attempts to fire sM at T10: NE
HsG panics
Surman & K move CX P6 Q6 S7 T6
Attacked by 2RF: NE. 2-3-7 FPF: Surman NMC Breaks DM, K passes NMC, K passes LLTC, 2-3-7 Breaks
B moves CX P6 Q6 R6bp S7

Defensive Fire Phase
M10 FFE:2: c3 elim, MTR destroyed
N1 FFE:2: HsBB elim, MMG destroyed

Advancing Fire Phase
K & L fire at U7: 5-4-8 passes 1MC, 2-3-7 (6) pases 1MC
B fires at T7: NE
A fires at T7: NE
HsAA & HsCC fire HMG/MMG at T9: NE
M4(105) fires MA at T10: miss, -1 TA

Rout Phase
HsQQ routs U4 T4 T5
c4 routs T5
c6 routs O8 N7 M7
Surman routs S6 R6
U7 2-3-7 routs V6 W6 W5. 2-4-7 routs W6 W5. 2-4-8 routs U8 V7 W8.
2-2-8 routs U8 V7 W8

Advance Phase
HsKK to V2
V1 activates 4-3-6
X3 activates 2-4-8, 81mm MTR (CA W3/W4) with 2-2-8 crew in trench*
C to U5
E to T5
K & L to U7
V7 activates 4-6-7, 4-4-7 with 8-0 in 2S Foxhole
B to T7 (enters trench)
A to S7
c5 to R7
Rigney, c1 & c2 to R6

Close Combat Phase
K & L are ambushed, 5-4-8 vs. both 6-6-6s: NE
K & L attack 5-4-8: elim
Concealment on J & F, E, B, Rigney, c1 & C2

TURN 5 COMMENTS

I've captured another 8 VPs, but activated another 16 VPs for the enemy side (T9, V7 and X3). Now, it seems that S?s can't fail activation. Both OBAs found targets and wiped out two stragglers for 2 casualty VPs, and, if continued, can find good targets next turn. 150mm OBA is lethal, especially if it finds targets in open ground or woods where it gets a -1 DRM. Hopefully, neither will be continued in the next Prep Fire Phase.

I may have won the close combat in U7, but now I'm adjacent to two squads and a leader. Barring panic, I'll have to face a 16FP (+1) prep fire. I wanted to advance a squad to V3 but that 81mm mortar would hammer them.

I've learned a lot about concealment in this game. I used to think it was lost the moment you used non-assault movement or moved adjacent to an enemy unit, but that's not so. Instead, I can gain concealment, assault move adjacent to a position, take the defensive fire as area fire and advance into close combat with a better chance of ambushing. Those crews are very useful scouts, because they are not subject to disruption or ELR failure and they can self-rally!

The flanking move through the woods to T6 panicked the units in T7 and the position

fell without a struggle. I hope to repeat this tactic on V5 next turn.

Moving the remaining M4(105) to P8 to assist the attack on T10 is risky. I had hoped to stick a smoke counter on T10, but that attempt failed. I've got a -1 target acquired counter on T10 for the upcoming defensive fire, if I survive the prep fire. There's already a -1 target acquired marker in P8 so it's a very risky move. By my reckoning, I was unlucky to lose the other M4, because there is only a small chance of a kill. I must capture a lot of VP locations to win now. The way through the woods looks very tricky, justifying the risk to the tank.

GERMAN TURN 5

Rally Phase
W8 2-4-8 fails self rally, remove DM; 2-2-8 rallies
W5 8-0 rallies 2-4-7, 8-0 fails rally of 2-3-7, remove DM
Surman self rallies
Jackson rallies D
Jackson fails to rally c6, remove DM
Jackson fails to rally HsQQ, remove DM
c11 fails self rally
c6 fails self rally, remove DM

Prep Fire Phase
M5 FFE:1 scatters to I3, flame placed in H2
R3 FFE:1 scatters to N5
T9 4-6-7 fires at M4(105): NE
T10 75* INF gun fires HEAT: Hull Hit, -2 TA, HEAT TK, crew passes shock TC, CE HEAT coltrl attack: NE
2-4-8 fires at R7: NE
VI 4-3-6 fires at V2: NE
V5 5-4-8 & 2-4-7 fire at U5: ? lost, C 1MC casualty ELR failure, becomes HsC 2-3-6, DM
75L AT gun fires at U5: hits, -1TA, NE
V7 8-0 directs 4-6-7 & 4-4-7 fire at U7: L 2MC Breaks, DM, K 2MC ELR failure, becomes 5-4-6, DM
W5 5-4-8 entrench, place 1S foxhole, TI
2-4-7 entrench, fails, TI, -1 labor
W8 2-2-8 entrench, fails, TI, -1 labor
X3 2-4-8 fires at V2: NE
81mm MTR fires at V2: miss, -1TA

Defensive Fire Phase
M4(105) in command, fires MA at T10: miss, -2TA, fires CMG/BMG at T10: NE
HsAA panics
HsCC panics

Advancing Fire Phase
M10 no blaze

Rout Phase
HsC routs U4
K routs T6 S7 R6
L routs T6 S7 R6

Advance Phase
V7 8-0 to W8
Place concealment on V5, V7, W5, W8

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

I see a couple problems in the play as noted. First, if the broken 5-4-6 in 37T5 indeed rolled a 3 for rally, I would consider that successful. The squad has a 7 morale when broken, desperate adds 4 to the dice roll, self-rallying adds another one, but the woods are rally bonus terrain, bringing the modified roll back down to a seven. Also, my take on panic is that the half squad must use final protective fire, which caused it to break. But the gun is simply marked as fired and does nothing more (it is neither Infantry nor an armed vehicular unit). Therefore, I would say the AT gun and crew are both okay, although unable to fire for the remainder of Neil's turn (making them pretty much sitting ducks for close combat).

The worm begins to turn for Neil. All those early missed enemy activations are being balanced now by activations of real, shooting Germans. I think this is a key turn for Neil. Enemy

VPs are beginning to mount and he is taking casualties. He has Germans in front and artillery pounding his rear areas.

As I mentioned before, the *SASL* campaign game forces the player to make the tough decision to cut losses and get out with something left to fight another day (or another month, as it goes in *SASL*). Neil needs to seriously consider his situation. Perhaps it is time to get his forces back in good order and retire. It is not an easy decision. Neil really shouldn't go back after his first mission with so many losses as to be eligible for rest and refit.

After the German player turn, Neil's forces are, essentially, disengaged from the enemy. Now is a perfect opportunity to fall back on his left and focus on clearing the two positions in the center. If he uses his tank's smoke to shield his troops from the potential enemy on board 13, he might be able to sweep down the woods line and take these positions. Then, given that he's going for the win, he can either try to take what he has exposed or hope he can reveal a real treasure in the 37V/13L hexrow just behind the trenches.

AMERICAN TURN 6
PRE-TURN COMMENTS

I don't believe those OBA modules both rolled to continue with no targets. Fortunately, they didn't scatter anywhere unpleasant, but they can roll again in the Defensive Fire Phase.

That was a close thing with the HEAT round last turn if it had been a turret hit, the M4 would

have been gone. As we now both have -2TA on each other, I must make it count this turn.

With just over half the game gone, I feel I'm struggling a bit. I've now captured 19 VPs and lost 10 casualty VPs (CVPs), and there are 29 VPs in enemy hands. Finally, the 40 unactivated S?s on the board are another 20 VPs. I still need to capture VP locations.

This turn I will attack hexrow T by firing white phosphorus on T10 and by assault moving the concealed squad in T7 to T8 to attack T9. This will activate V9, but I can't attack frontally until fire is drawn from T9 and T10. At some point in this turn, I'll probably activate 13P8. If it opens up with an AT gun, the M4 is looking very exposed. Although a hull hit will be a frontal hit, a turret hit will use the reduced side armor factor. Things are getting sticky.

Fortunately, Surman rallied himself last turn. He can help rally two of my broken squads and direct their fire this turn. The fire base in O7 is proving to be useless. With no leader to exert command, it's likely that they'll panic as they did in the last DFPh.

Finally, on the left, I'll assault move HsKK to V3 to lose the -1TA and stop those boys in W5 from completing their entrenchments, although he'll probably get clobbered by their defensive fire. Then, I'll push a couple of concealed squads towards V5 and see what happens. It would be nice to use smoke but that means whoever attempts to place it will lose concealment.
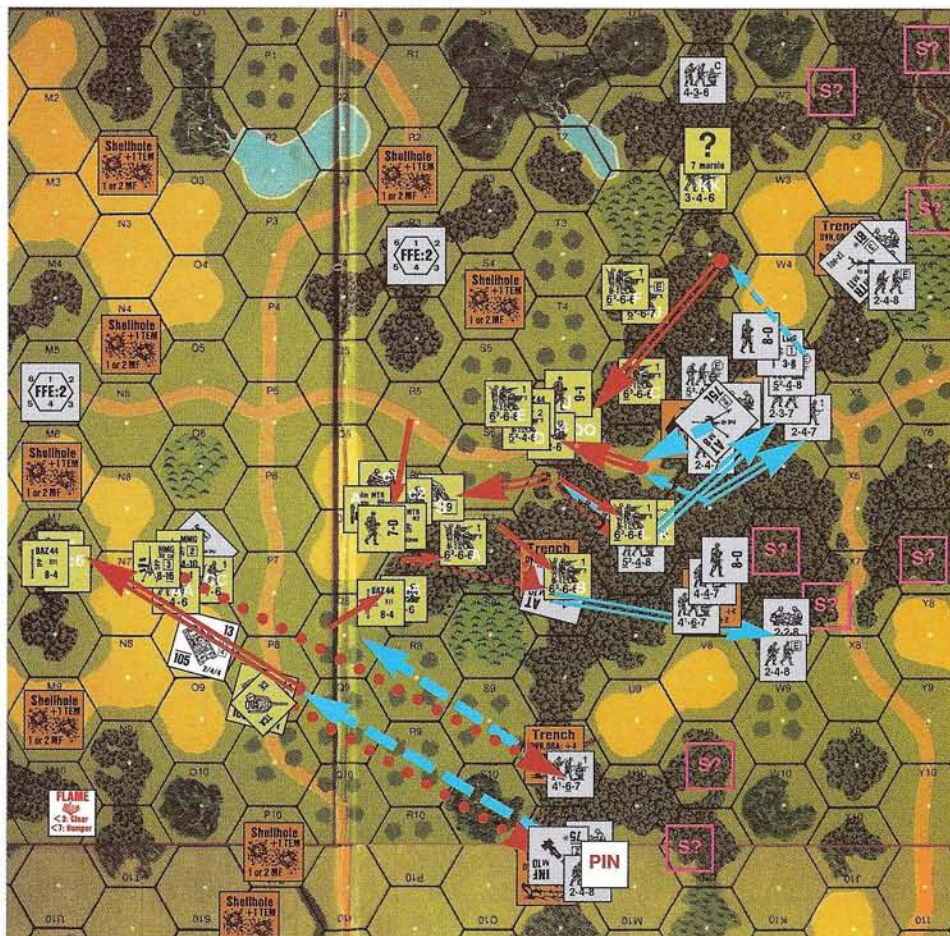
Turn 5: The Americans hit the German trench line—positions at the start of the American Close Combat Phase, in which squads K and L eliminate the 5-4-8 in U7.

Rally Phase
HsC fails self rally, remove DM
Jackson rallies HsQQ
Jackson fails to rally c4
Surman fails to rally L, remove DM
Surman fails to rally K, remove DM
c6 fails self rally
c11 fails self rally
W5 8-0 rallies 2-3-7
W8 8-0 rallies 2-4-8

Prep Fire Phase
M4(105) in command, fires WP at T10: hit, full-strength WP placed in
   T10, 2-4-8 NMC Breaks, DM. 2-2-8 passes NMC. M4(105)
   fires CMG/BMG at T9: 4-6-7 passes PTC
HsAA in command
HsCC in command
HsAA & HsCC fire HMG/MMG at T9: NE

Movement Phase
Surman in command
c5 AM to S8
   T9 panic check, 4-6-7 fires at c5: 1RF placed, c5 passes PTC
B in command -CX, AM to T8
   T9, 4-6-7 SFF at B: 1RF placed, V9 activates 4-6-7
V9 4-6-7 fires at B: NE
4-6-7 SFF at B: NE
A moves T7 T8
   Attacked by 1RF: NE
c1 moves S7 T7
c2 moves S7 T7
Surman moves S7 T7 T8
   Attacked by 1RF: Surman passes PTC
HsKK in command, AM to V3
   W5 panics, 8-0 directs 2-3-7, 2-4-7, 5-4-8/LMG at HsKK: ? lost,
   6RF placed, HsKK 1MC Breaks, DM
Jackson in command
F places smoke in U5, moves U5 (-?)
   T5 panics, 5-4-8 & 2-4-7 PBF at F: 6RF placed, F 3MC Breaks,
   DM
J AM to U5
   Attacked by RF NE. 75L fires at J: miss, -1TA.
E AM to U5
   Attacked by RF: ? lost, E 1MC Breaks, DM
Jackson & D AM to U6
   5-4-8 FPFs at U6: NE, 2RF Placed. 5-4-8 FPFs at U6: 5-4-8
   Breaks, DM. 75L Intensive Fires at U7: miss, -1TA
HsQQ AM to U6
   Attacked by RF: NE. 2-4-7 FPFs at HsQQ: HsQQ passes NMC
I in command, moves CX M3 N3 O4 P4
HsG panics

Defensive Fire Phase
N5 FFE:2 scatters to I3
I3 FFE:2 scatters to I1
T10 75*INF gun fires HEAT at M4: turret hit, HEAT TK NE. HEAT vs.
   CE: NE. 75*INF gun fires HEAT at M4: turret hit, HEAT TK:
   NE. HEAT vs. CE: NE. 75*INF gun fires HEAT at M4: hull
   hit, HEAT TK: NE. HEAT vs. CE: crew (M7) passes 1MC
X3 2-4-8 fires at HsKK: NE. 81mm MTR fires at HsKK: hit, -1TA,
   HsKK 1MC NE. 81mm MTR fires at HsKK: hit, -2TA, HsK elim

Advancing Fire Phase
Surman directs A & B at T9: 4-6-7 2MC pins
Jackson directs D & HsQQ at V5: 5-4-8 (8) passes 1MC. Pillbox, 2-4-7
   passes PTC
J fires at V5: 5-4-8 NMC casualty breaks to 2-3-8.

Rout Phase
E routs to T5
F routs to T5
V5 2-3-8 (7) routs to W5
T10 2-3-7 (7) routs to 13N9

Advance Phase
J to V5
Jackson, D & HsQQ to V5
Surman, A & B to T9 enter trench
c1 to T8
c2 to T8
c5 to T7 enters trench
I to Q5

Close Combat Phase
T9 German ambushed: Surman, A & B vs. pinned 4-6-7: elim 4-6-7

V5 German ambushed: Jackson, HsQQ, D & J vs 2-4-7 & 2-2-8: elim
   2-4-7 & 2-2-8

TURN 6 COMMENTS

At last, it's turning my way. One VP location was captured (T9). Another was neutralized (V5). The down side is that the units in both of these locations are adjacent to enemy positions and will get clobbered in the next prep fire phase, this being especially true in V5 (where a 24FP attack at +1 is something to worry about). American squads don't hold up under fire (eas-

ily failing morale checks) and when there are numbers before them, they ELR fail as well. At least they will only get hit once (apart from the LMG). If he doesn't roll low, there shouldn't be any casualty breaks.

Three consecutive hits with HEAT on the M4, two of them turret hits, was a bit too close for comfort. I was lucky not to lose the M4 this turn. The INF gun still has HEAT and is still standing. The crew took the hits without blinking, too. They deserve a medal.

The advance on V5 was a little out of sync. I should have advanced the concealed units before advancing a known unit. Instead, the concealed units had to face a 6RF attack before the defensive fire began. Luckily, it all worked out well in the end. There was a lot of fire this turn. I like the *SASL* rules. In some ways, they are very elegant in spite of the OBA rules. I hope those OBA modules won't be continued this turn, but my advance has moved past their reach at this point.

GERMAN TURN 6

Rally Phase
Random event: enemy convoy enters 13A5 to exit 37 11 in order:
   PSW234/2 w 9-1 AL, PSW222(L), PSW233, 4xSdKfz 7s each
   with one S? Passenger.
13N9 2-4-8 fails self rally, remove DM
37W5 8-0 fails to rally 2-3-8, DM retained
Rigney fails to rally K
Rigney rallies L
c4 fails self rally
Remove DM from E & F
c6 self rallies
c11 self rallies

Prep Fire Phase
I1 FFE:C cancelled
I3 RRE:C
FFE:C scatters to K4, no flames
T10 75* INF gun fires at T9: miss, -1 TA. 75* INF gun fires at T9:
   critical hit, -2 TA, [SAN Target F5, Enemy Sniper, Enemy SAN
   now 3], 1KIA, Squad A elim, Surman & B break, DM. 75* INF gun
   fires HEAT at M4: miss, HEAT ammo lost, hull Hit with HE, -1
   TA, HE TK: NE. HE vs CE: NE.
V1 4-3-6 Entrench, fails, TI, -1 Labour
V7 4-4-7 & 4-6-7 fire at T9: NE
V9 4-6-7 fires at T8: (cowers), NE
W5 panic

Movement Phase
W8 8-0, 2-4-8 move V8 U9
   c1 panics, c2 panics, c1 & c2 FPF at U9: 1RF, [SAN F8, near-
   est target is F5 sniper, American sniper removed], 8-0 and 2-4-8
   both elim
2-2-8 moves V8 U9
   Attacked by 1RF : NE. c1 & c2 FPF at 2-2-8: c1 & c2 pinned
Convoy enters 13A5 in order stated above, VCAs B4/B5 move B5 C6
   D6 E7 F7 G8 H7 remains in motion.

Defensive Fire Phase
Jackson panics
J panics
D in command
HsQQ in command
D & HsQQ fire PBF at W5:
   Entrenched 8-0 3MC Breaks, DM. 2-3-8 (7) 3MC Breaks and
   elim. 2-3-7 3MC pinned. 2-4-7 3MC Breaks and elim. 5-4-8
   2MC pinned
M4(105) in command, fires MA at T10: miss

Advancing Fire Phase
U9 2-2-8 fires at T8: (cowers), NE
M10 no blaze
I2 no blaze

Rout Phase
W5 8-0 routs X4 X3 into trench
T9 Surman & B rout S9 S8 R7

Advance Phase
U9 2-2-8 to T8

Close Combat Phase
T9 Americans ambushed: 2-2-8 attacks both c1 & c2: c1 elim
Ambush & Panic
   c2 attacks 2-2-8: both in melee

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Neil has managed to get things back in order and capture two VPOs. He is bold, attempting to

take the pillbox directly in front of German forces, but boldness wins missions.

His observations about the *SASL* system are absolutely correct. Players will need to accept the total randomness of the system (every unit in the German order of battle is represented aside from the SS and engineers). In my experience, however, the various events come together to make for a tough opponent, even if a bit robotic. *SASL* carries forward that tradition that one can never assume anything in *ASL*. Neil never counted on the German artillery to keep roaming about his rear areas, but it has. I doubt Neil would have expected his left flank to be crushed as it has been. All of this has taken place through a series of dice rolls and friendly activity. The system may seem haphazard, but when you sit back and examine events in a big picture context, it has amazing flow and continuity.

The dice continue to create interesting events for Neil. He managed to survive in front of the pillbox because the enemy panicked, which is a much less frequent occurrence for the enemy than the friendly side. At the same time, a convoy of reinforcements has arrived and is destined to cruise in and blunt the American point of attack. This situation could play to Neil's benefit, because he may be able to set up a little ambush and snatch some easy VPs.

AMERICAN TURN 7

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

Well, I got knocked back from one VP location, but it wasn't V5 as I expected but instead T9. What a disaster that was. I forgot about the point blank fire modifier and I hoped that the white phosphorus hindrance modifier would effectively render the INF gun useless. Instead, it retained ROF and got a critical hit. I was actually lucky not to lose the whole team in T9. A small local counterattack means that I have been pushed back again, and one mortar team is killed, the other locked in melee. I won't be able to use their mortars in the upcoming turn.

I was audibly relieved when W5 panicked, allowing me to get my fire in first. Unfortunately, Jackson and one squad also panicked, making the fire less powerful than it should have been. Otherwise, it would have been all over for those boys. I should finish them off this turn and advance into the pillbox in the advance phase (APh).

I'm in bad shape for pressing on against new objectives this turn with four and a half squads and one 9-1 leader already broken. I expect some of them to rally. They will get thrown into melee at T8.

I've never lost a sniper before. While it's loss may not seem so great, it is good to know that, if he rolls double ones, I have a 1-in-3 chance of inflicting some harm on the enemy side.

The convoy won't get far this turn. I might not have to worry about it breaking up. However, fortune has dictated that its path runs right through my position. This is a good example of how wild an *SASL* game can be;

AVALONCON 1997 ☆ HUNT VALLEY, MD

JULY 30th   AUGUST 3rd

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1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

Game to be played by this team member:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION: Registrants may participate in any number of events, but can only play in one at a time. Most events will not be "sold out", but to *guarantee an opportunity to play you must bring a copy of the game* (to ensure sufficient copies on hand) and be present at the announced starting time. Those registering after June 1st will not receive a free $10 credit towards purchases. There are no one-day admissions, but at-the-door registrations are discounted $5 per day based on the number of days remaining. This year, Open Gaming and events begin 10 AM Wednesday.

LOST ITEMS: Bring your program. There will be a $2 charge to replace programs. Wear your badge at all times. You may not enter an event without a badge. Replacement badges will **not** be usable for the $10 purchase credit.

EVENT DESCRIPTIONS: Events are listed in chronological order in the box to the left, and in alphabetical order hereafter using the following format:

Name, Class, Format, Style, Duration, GM, Starting Time [Pre-Registration Limits].

Name: Lists abbreviated name for the event used on the Chronological Listing and badges.

Class: *A*: Rules will not be explained; for experienced players only. *B*: Beginners welcome. Rules will be briefly explained. **If you need instruction, be present one hour before the scheduled playing time. The GM is not required to teach the game once the event begins.**

Format: *Swiss-Elim:* Entrants play a number of preliminary rounds to determine finalists who will then play in Single Elimination format. *Swiss:* All entrants play same number of rounds, being paired against opponents with similar records. *SE:* Single Elimination; entrants play until they lose a game. *DE:* Double Elimination; entrants play until they lose two games. *DEMO*: No prizes. ■: Restricted Prize Schedule (Junior and Out-of-print Events have one tier fewer prizes). *OTHER:* System to be explained.

Style: *CONTINUOUS:* Play continues round after round until completed with only one-hour breaks. Rounds will not start after midnight and will resume at 9 AM. *The GM may require that rounds begun by midnight be finished that night.* Players must adhere to the schedule or forfeit. *SCHEDULED:* Play has designated, timed rounds with predetermined breaks of three hours or more. *SPLIT:* Multiple qualifying rounds at different times, players may participate in *only one* qualifying round. *HEAT:* Multiple qualifying rounds at different times, players *may participate in multiple Heats. Continuous Heats:* Games continue to start whenever sufficient players are on hand. Any winner of a game qualifies for SE, second-round play. *Mulligan Round:* A one-round preliminary Heat in SE events which doesn't count as an initial loss, and allows winners to skip first round in next Heat.

Duration: The *expected* number of rounds and length of each. *Some formats will require more or fewer rounds than planned due to an unexpected number of entrants. Players should schedule their time accordingly and refrain from entering these events their time constraints will not allow them to finish should they advance. Final rounds may be rescheduled to accommodate finalists at the discretion of the GM. In all formats, the GM and two assistant GMs may agree to adjudicate games which do not adhere to schedule. Their decisions are final.*

GM: The Game Master in charge. If an address is printed, additional advance information is available by sending the GM a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Times: Starting times of the initial round are abbreviated as follows: *We:* Wednesday, *Th:* Thursday, *Fr:* Friday, *Sa:* Saturday, *Su:* Sunday. Hours are given in military time (12 = noon, 13 = 1 PM). The *expected* duration *of preliminary rounds only* for all events is shown on the Chronological listing. We suggest copying this page before registering.

[Pre-Registration Limits:] AVALONCON has been divided into 13 time blocks as follows: W1 = We 10-14, W2 = We 15-19, W3 = We 20-24, T1 = Th 9-14, T2 = Th 15-19, T3 = Th 20-24, F1 = Fr 9-14, F2 = Fr 15-19, F3 = Fr 20-24, S1 = Sa 9-14, S2 = Sa 14-20, S3 = Sa 20-24, Su = Su 8-14. Each event's most *likely* duration for the *majority of its entrants* is summarized by these time blocks. However, those advancing beyond the second round or in larger-than-expected events may experience overlapping schedule conflicts. The final rounds of long elimination events are not included in the estimated duration. Durations listed with an "S" have a scheduled final round on Sunday morning. You may Pre-Register for any events that do not

have overlapping time blocks. Pre-registrants receive preferential treatment for byes and last remaining slots.

Prizes: All winners will receive a championship plaque. The winner and other finalists will receive credits good for the purchase of our merchandise and plaques according to a standard schedule based on the number of entrants. For example, there are 32 prize-winners in a 128-player event. Juniors and Restricted events receive half as many prizes and this status is shown by a "■" symbol.

THE EVENTS: Events designated "☛ jr" are only for children under the age of 14. Parents are urged to supervise and should attempt to teach the game beforehand, *but should refrain from playing the game for their children.*

Acquire (ACQ), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, two preliminary 1-hr rds. 16 advance to SE. M. Anchors. Sa 15. [S2]

Across Five Aprils (A5A), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, 6-hr preliminary rd of round robin Bull Run, Pea Ridge, & Bentonville. Top four players from each side advance to Bentonville; then two advance to Pea Ridge, and finalists play Pea Ridge. Play same side throughout event. A. Lewis, 16 Gosling Dr., Lewes, DE 19958. Th 9. [T1]

■ **Adel Verflichtet (ADV)**, B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, 4 preliminary 1-hr rds, 10 advance to SE Semi, 5 to Final. R. Pfeifer. Sa 19. [S2-3]

☛ **Adel Verflichtet Jr (ADJ)**, B, SE, Continuous, three 1-hr rds. S. Davis. Sa 13. [S1]

Advanced Civilization (ACV), A, SE, Scheduled, 10-hr preliminary. Top eight advance to Sa 19 Final. Western Map Extension allows 8-player game. C. Hickok, 250 Hidden Valley Ln, Harrisburg, PA 17112. Fr 9, S [F1-2]

Advanced Squad Leader (ASL), A, Swiss, Continuous, seven 7-hr rounds; six scenario choices/round. Pegusus Bridge sub-tourney starts Fr 17 for losers and late arrivals. R. Gifford, 320 East 27th, South Sioux City, NE 68776. Th 10, S. [T1-S3]

Advanced Third Reich (A3R), A, Other, non-elimination, two-round format with players expected to play through Sa12 campaign game. Round 2 is '41 scenario. J. Moore, 180 Prospect Park West, #10, Brooklyn, NY 11215. Th 15. [T2-S1]

Afrika Korps (AFK), B, SE, Continuous, four 4-hr rds. T. Graf. We 11. [W1-2]

Age of Renaissance (AOR), Swiss-Elim, A/B, Scheduled, three 5-hr Heats for Th16 Semi-Final. We Heats for beginners only (1 game or less experience). Th Heat for experienced players. J. Scarborough. We 11 [W1-2], We 18 [W3], Th 9 [T1]. S

Air Baron (ABN), A, Swiss-Elim, four 3-hr qualifying Heats for Su 9 SE round. B. Knight. We 19 [W2-3], Fr 12 [F1], Sa 9 [S1], Sa 14 [S1-2]. S.

Air Force/Dauntless (AFD), B, SE, Continuous, 1-hr rounds. D. Angus. Sa 10 [S1].

Anzio (ANZ), A, SE, Scheduled, four 5-hr. rds of the 15-turn Basic Game in either of two Split Rounds. Mandatory Sa 9 Round 3. P. Fletcher. We 12 [W1-2], Th 9 [T1].

Assassin (ASN), B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr. rds. Everyone starts with a city adjacent to Vienna. K. Gutermuth. Th 14. [T1-2]

Atlantic Storm (ACS), B, Swiss-Elim, four 2-hr qualifying Heats for Su 9 Final. If game not published yet, event will be Demo instead. B. Knight. We 11 [W1], Th 9 [T1], Fr 9 [F1], Sa 10 [S1]. S

■ **Attack Sub (ATS)**, A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, three preliminary rds to determine seeding for SE semis. Scenarios A, B, C, D, E or H. K. Hunsinger, 2038 Royal Oak Ave, Defiance, OH 43512. Su 9. [Su]

Auction aka The Collector (AUC), B, SE, Continuous, three 1-hr rds. J. O'Donnell. Sa 15. [S1-2]

B-17 (B17), A, Other, Continuous, three 3-hr 1943 raids. Players fly all three raids. D. Terry, 7501 Norris Ave, Sykesville, MD 21784. Th 9. [T1-2]

Baseball Strategy (BBS), B, SE, Continuous, four 2-hr rounds of best 2-out-of-3 series in two league Heats. Team draft. J. Bell, 7 Casey Court, Baltimore, MD 21228. We 13 AL [W1-2]. Sa 13 NL [S1-2]. S

■ **Battle of Bulge '81 (B81)**, A, SE, Continuous, four 4-hr rds using Race to Bastogne 8-turn scenario. R. Heller, 4733 Bartram St, Rockville, MD 20853. Fr 15. [F2-3]

Battle of Bulge '91 (B91), B, SE, Continuous, three 3-hr rds. Scenario #1 with all Basic Game and most Optional rules with modified VC. K. McCarthy, 3866 Wallingford, S. Euclid, OH 44121. Th 9. [T1]

Blackbeard (BKB), B, SE, Continuous, three 2-hr rds. J. Vroom. Sa 9. [S1]

Breakout: Normandy (BKN), A, Swiss, Continuous, six 5-hr rds. Bid for sides, drop in/out at any time. Mulligan round winners excused until Fr 15. R. Fedin, 112 Glengarry Dr, Moon Township, PA 15108. We 18 [W3], Fr 9 [F1-2]

Britannia (BRI), A, Swiss-Elim, four 5-hr qualifying Heats. Must play in at least two Heats to qualify. 16 advance to SE 2nd Rd Fr 19. S. Pfeiffer, 417 Fairdale Dr, Simpsonville, SC 29681. We 11 [W1-2], We 19 [W2-3], Th 19 [T2-3], Fr 9 [F1]. S

Candidate (CDT), B, SE, Continuous, two 3-hr rds. All states unresolved after two hrs will be Undecided entering the convention. K. Gutermuth. Th 9 [T1]

Circus Maximus (CMS), A, Swiss-Elim, four prelim 3-hr Heats. Variant armament rules. Winners advance to Su 11 final. B. Sinigaglio, P. O. Box 437, Delta Junction, AK 99737. We 15 [W2], Th 20 [T3], Fr 21 [F3], Sa 11 [S1]. S

☛**Circus Maximus Jr (CMJ)**, B, SE, Continuous, 3-lap race. 8 advance to final race. T. Hitchings. We 14 [W1-2]

Civil War (CVW), A, SE, Continuous, four 4-hr rds of short scenarios with VP bids for sides. G. Seary, 2307 Tracy St., Endwell, NY 13760. Fr 9 [F1-2]

Colonial Diplomacy (CDP), A, Scheduled, 8-hr rd with seven Best Country performances advancing to Fr 9 Final. J. Yerkey. Th 9 [T1-2]

Cross of Iron (COI), A, Swiss, Continuous, five 4-hr rds with half bid scenario. B. Thomson, P.O. Box 3756, Boynton Beach, FL 33424-3756 or bthomson@zim.com. Th 9 [T1-F1]. Multi-player Demo We 17.

D-Day '91 (D91), B, SE, Continuous, four 4-hr rds. S. Finnerty, 4664 Tangle Ridge Trail, Burlington, NC 27217. Sa 9 [S1-2]

Decathlon (DEC), B, Meet, one 2-hr track meet with handicaps. J. Coussis, 1978 G Kenilworth Circle, Hoffman Estates, IL 60195. Fr 23. [F3]

☛**Dinosaurs of Lost World JR (DLJ)**, B, SE, Continuous, three 2-hr rounds. R. Stakenas. Sa 10 [S1]

Dinosaurs of Lost World (DLW), A, SE, Continuous, two-hr rds. A chance for the adults to test their mettle against the Junior Tournament graduates. W. DeMarco. Su 9 [Su]

Diplomacy (DIP), A, Swiss, three 7-hr Heats. Best two rounds score. Traditional prizes augment merchandise credit. J. Yerkey. Fr 18 [F2-3], Sa 9 [S1], Su 8 [Su].

■ **Dune (DUN)**, A, SE, Continuous, two 4-hr rds. J. O'Donnell. Th 9 [T1]

1830 (830), A, SE, Scheduled two 6-hr Split rds to advance to Sa 18 Semi-Final. D. Hecht. Th 18 [T2-3], Fr 18 [F2-3] S

Enemy In Sight (EIS), B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr rds by designer Neal Schlaffer. Sa 12 [S1]

Facts In Five (FI5), B, SE, Continuous, two 1-hr rds. C. Foster. Sa 21. [S3]

Fifth Fleet (5FT), B, Swiss-Elim, Scheduled, three 3-hr Heats to qualify for Fr 9 SE Finals. Scenarios from different Fleet games in each heat, but 5th Fleet rules apply throughout. J. Fleckenstein, 120 Lakeland Dr., Sterling, VA 20164. We 18 (5th) [W2-3], Th 9 (7th) [T1], Th 16 (3rd) [T2]

Football Strategy (FBS), B, SE, Continuous, five 2-hr rds. with SPLIT 1st rd. M. Stanley, 2439 Dover Rd., Columbus, OH 43209. We 18 [W2-3], Th 18 [T2-3]

■ **Fortress Europa (FSE)**, A, SE, Continuous, four 4-hr rds of the 7-turn Invasion scenario. P. Koenig, 310 Cabrillo St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627. Sa 10 [S1-2].

Gangsters (GSR), B, SE, Scheduled 2-hr rds in four qualifying Heats for Fr 22 Semi-Final. Prize for best novice. J. Pack, 1216 East Tamara St., Sandy, UT 84094. We 16 [W2], Th 23 [T3], Fr 9 [F1], Fr 19 [F2-3]. S

☛**Gangsters Jr (GSJ)**, B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. Bring your loaded squirt guns. J. Pack. Fr 18 [F2-3]

☛**Gettysburg '88 (GBG)**, B, SE, Continuous, five 4-hr rds of Scenario 5 (6F). Mulligan round winners are excused until Fr 14. D. Zimmerman, 4 S. Railroad St, Myerstown, PA 17067. Mulligan Round We 11 [W1], Fr 9 [F1-2]

Global War (GBL), A, Other, Continuous three-day linked play of A3R and ERS in teams. B. Harper, 3641 W. 48th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6N 3R2. We 10 [W1-F3]

Great Campaigns of the ACW (GCA) B, Swiss, Continuous, fifteen 3-hr rds divided between the five titles of this series with points awarded in each event used for promotions. Each title will also be a separate event with its own prize list. Detailed event info will be mailed to all pre-

registrants and is available at GCACW web site at www.smart.net/~waveland/gcacw.htm. K. Lee, 99 West St, Tunkhannock, PA 18657. **Here Come the Rebels (HCR)** P. Duffy. Fr 13 [F1-S2]. **Roads to Gettysburg (RTG)**, S. Katz. We 11 [W1-T2]. **Stonewall In the Valley (SIV)**, T. Bender. Sa 9 [S1-Su]. **Stonewall Jackson's Way [SJW]**, F. Speck. Th 18 [T2-F3]. **Stonewall's Last Battle [SLB]**, E. Beach. Th 9 [T1-F1].

Greed (GR$), B, Continuous one hour dice-fest to rack up the highest score. B. Reiff. Su 9 [Su]

Guerilla (GUE), A, SE, Continuous two 3-hr rds. Viva La Revolution! with designer N. Schlaffer. Su 9. [Su]

Gunboat Diplomacy (GBD), A, DEMO, one 5-hr rd "Blind" Diplomacy without negotiations. Secret country assignments. GM reads moves and written press to preserve secrecy. J. Yerkey. Sa 19. [S3]

Hannibal; Rome vs Carthage (HRC), A, SE, Continuous, six 3-hr rds. Four-hr opening rd, three hrs thereafter. G. Seary, 2307 Tracy St., Endwell, NY 13760. Th 10 [T1-2]

History of the World (HWD), A, SE, Scheduled three 6-hr rds. 36 advance to 2nd rd Sa 18. A. Maly. Fr 18. [F2-3] S

History of the World with Bidding (HWB), A, Swiss-Elim, Scheduled, two 5-hr Heats of GENERAL 29#1 variant for Fr 15 Final. J. Pei, 6406 Avery Island, Austin, TX 78727. We 12 [W1-2], Th 19 [T2-3]

☛ **History of the World Jr (HWJ)**, B, SE, Continuous, two 3-hr rds of six or fewer epochs. R. Beyma. Th 10. [T1]

House on the Hill (HOH), B, DEMO. A two-hr haunting preview of an Avalon Hill '98 release with designer Bruce Glassco. Th17 [T2], Fr 21 [F3], Sa 10 [S1], Su 10 [Su]

■ **Jutland (JUT)**, A, Continuous 2-hr rounds using 1:1200 scale ships refight a multi-player BC action. P. Risner, 7630 Weeping Willow Ct., Sarasota, FL 34241. Sa 9 [S1]

Kingmaker (KGM), A, SE, Continuous, two 5-hr qualifying Heats to advance to Fr 9 Final. Variant cards and optional Parliament rules will be used; Advanced Combat won't. H. Thoen, 6220 Sherbrooke St. W, #510, Montreal, QUE H4B 1M3 Canada. We 10 [W1], Th 9 [T1].

Korean War (KRW), A, SE, DEMO, three Continuous 10-hr rds. P. Fecurka. Th 12 [T1-3]

Kremlin (KRM), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous Heats. Any winner advances to Th 18 Semi-Final. P. Stein, 562 New Highway, Apt 2C, Hauppauge, NY 11788. We 18+

☛ **Legends of Robin Hood Jr (LRH)**, B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, two 1-hr preliminary rds plus Final. E. Kirchner. Su 9 [Su]

London's Burning (LBG), B, Swiss, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. Alternate playing British and Germans in short scenario. J. Coussis, 1978G Kenilworth Circle, Hoffman Estates, IL 60195. We 12 [W1-2]

Machiavelli (MAC), A, SE, Scheduled, two 8-hr rds. Top scorers advance to Sa 17 Final. S. Koehler, 2906 Saintfield Pl, Charlotte, NC 28270. Th 17 [T2-3]

Maharaja (MAH), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, two 4-hr preliminary Heats. Best score for each faction advances to Th 19 Final. S. Cousins. Th 9 [T1], Th 14 [T2]

■ **March Madness (MMS)**, B, Swiss-Elim, four 4-hr Advanced Game Prelim Heats of 16-team Regionals which each advance one team to Final Four on Su 9. Players draft up to two teams/Region which play till they lose. Players participating in more than one Region draft last. J. Ellmann. We 10 [W1], Fr 9 [F1], Fr 15 [F2], Sa 9 [S1]. S

MBT (MBT), B, Swiss-Elim, DEMO, Continuous, three 2-hr rds. R. Schoenen. Fr 18 [F2-3]

Merchant of Venus (MOV), B, Swiss-Elim, Scheduled, three 2-hr Heats to $2000. 25 advance to SE 2nd rd Sa 9. Five finalists will play Final to $3000. G. Mayer, 736 Charleston Oaks Dr., Ballwin, MO 63021. We 18 [W2], Th 9 [T1], Fr 16 [Fr 2]

☛ **Merchant of Venus JR (MVJ)**, B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, two 2-hr preliminary rds to $1200. Top scorers advance to Final. Special prizes in surprise categories. E. Kirchner. Th 13 [T1-2]

Mustangs (MUS), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, three 1-hr prelim rds with top two pilots of each side advancing to SE Semi-Finals. Options 13a, 13b, 15a, & 16. C. Hansen, 4611 Truman Ln, Virginia Beach, Va 23455. We 18 [W2-3]

Mustang Furball (MFB), B, SE, one 2-hr aerial free-for-all. C. Hansen (see above); Chansen@ezdial.com. We 22 [W3]
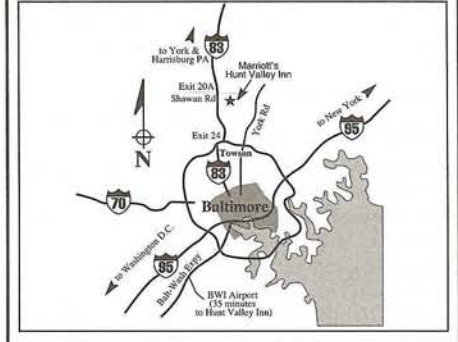
Naval War (NVW), B, SE, Continuous 2-hr rds of 5-player games to 75 pts. J. Sharp. Th 13 [T1-2]

■ **Origins of WWII** (OWW), A, SE, Continuous two 2-hr rds of 4-player variant in GENERAL 31#4. G. Sauer, 407 S. Court St, Circleville, OH 43113. Fr 16 [F2]

Pacific War (PCW), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, five 2-hr rds with Battle scenarios: Coral Sea, Relief of Wake Island and Battle of Eastern Solomons. G. Gonzalez, 190 W. Merrick Rd, Apt 4R, Freeport, NY 11520. Th 10 [T1-2]

Panzerblitz (PZB), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous 4-hr Heats. Top eight advance to SE Semi-Finals Sa 9. Counters provided for 26#2 and 28#3 GENERAL scenarios. D. Giordano, 4 Wade Ave, Carney's Point, NJ 08069. We 12+

Panzer Leader (PZL), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous 4-hr Heats will run We through Sa. Top eight advance to SE Semi-Finals Fr 21. B. Scott, 2317 Barracks Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22901. We 10+

Pax Britannica (PXB), B, Other, one 7-hr rd. Duplicate Tournament: all random events prerolled. Uses improved '93 rules which will be provided. A Demonstration game for beginners precedes this event at Fr 9. R. Sacks, 4861 Broadway 5V, NY, NY 10034-3139. Fr 12. [F1-2]

■ **Paydirt** (PDT), A, Swiss-Elim, two 5-hr Heats to determine Conference champs to meet in Super Bowl Su 9. Pick or bring team of choice. Advanced Rule 11 used for balance; must cover the spread to win. Best two teams after three games meet in conference finals. D. Baumgardner, 2121 24th St W, Billings, MT 59102. AFC: Th 17 [T2-3], NFC: Sa 12 [S1-2] S

Peloponnesian War (PPW), B, SE, Continuous, four 3-hr rds, using the full Peloponnesian War scenario. F. Hamrick. We 10 [W1-2]

☞ **Princess Ryan's Star Marines** (PRJ), B, Swiss, three 2-hr rds with designer M. McLaughlin. Fr 14 [F1-2]

Princess Ryan's Star Marines (PR*), B, Swiss, three 2-hr rds with designer M. McLaughlin. Sa 10 [S1-2]

■ **Pro Golf** (PGF), B, Other, Continuous, two 1-hr rds. K. Good. Th 23 [T3]

Rail Baron (RBN), B, Swiss-Elim, Scheduled, three 4-hr preliminary Heats. 25 advance to 2nd SE Semi-Final rd, Fr 14. Demo game We 22. C. Foster, 6164 Waco Way, Fort Worth, TX 76133. We 10 [W1], Th 14 [T1-2], Fr 9 [F1] S

Republic of Rome (ROR), A, two 6-hr Heats of the Middle Republic. Winners advance to Fr 10 Late Republic Final. W. Wible, 740 Abbey Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23455 or sandyw@decipher.com. We 9 [W3], Th 18 [T2-3]

Roadkill (RKL), B, SE, Continuous, three 4-hr Heats. Winners advance to Sa 14 Final. P. Weintraub. We 14 [1-2], Th 19 [T2-3], Fr 14 [F1-2].

Runequest: Lost Eagle (RNQ), B, SE, Scheduled, three 4-hr Split Rds with top players advancing to Su 9 Final. Set in Roman Britain of 198 AD. You'll command a squad of 11 characters from the 9th Legion attempting to return safely with the Legion's Eagle after the fall of the Antonine Wall. J. Boyle. Fr 18 [F2-3], Sa 13 [S1-2], Sa 19 [S2-3] S

Russian Front (RFT), A, SE, DEMO, one 6-hr rd of 4-turn Barbarossa scenario. Bid Objectives for sides. J. Pei. Th 9 [T1]

■ **1776** (776), A, SE, Continuous, three 4-hr rds of Saratoga. Two finalists play first year of Campaign game. S. Packwood, 2170 James St, Eagan, MN 55122. Fr 9 [F1-2]

■ **Slapshot** (SLS), B, SE, Continuous, two 1-hr rds using all optional rules. B. Reiff, 2207 Smokey View Blvd, Powell, OH 43065. Sa 23 [S3]

■ **Speed Circuit** (SCT), B, Swiss-Elim, four 4-hr prelim Heats. Best two results determine finalists for Sa 9 Final. K. Whitesell, 107 Nursery Rd, N. Linthicum, MD 21090. We 14 [W1-2]. Th14 [T1-2], Fr 10 [F1], Fr 15 [F2]

Squad Leader (SQL), A, Swiss, Continuous, four timed 3-hr rds. B. Thomson, P.O. Box 3756, Boynton Beach, FL 33424-3756. Sa 9 [S1-3]

Statis Pro Basketball (SPK), B, SE, Continuous, four 3-hr rds. Draft one of 29 NBA championship teams for a "Dream" SE tournament. B. Grabow. Sa 10 [S1-2]

Stock Market Guru (SMG), B, Swiss, Continuous two 2-hr rds. Remake of Stocks & Bonds. C. Lewis. Th 18 [T2-3]

Storm Over Arnhem (SOA), B, Swiss-Elim, three 3-hr qualifying Heats. Win in any Heat to advance to SE Th 13. Uses Hidden AT Guns. S. Koleszar. We 14 [W1-2], We 20 [W3], Th 10 [T1]

■ **Submarine** (SUB), A, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. Play once as sub and once as escort in ten-player game using 1:2400 scale models. K. Hunsinger, 2038 Royal Oak Ave, Defiance, OH 43512. We 18 [W2-3]

Superstar Baseball (SSB), A, DE, Continuous, eight 1-hr rds using teams of past superstars. Team rosters supplied but limited to first 16 pre-registrants. H. Flawd, 2826 Blacksmith Way, Lancaster, PA 17601. Th 9 [T1]

The Russian Campaign (TRC), A, SE, Scheduled, four 4-hr rds in two Split Rounds with winners advancing to Rd 3 Fr 14. '41-'42 scenario with changes. R. Beyma, 109 Brentwood Circle, Pocomoke, MD 21851. We 19 [W2-3], Th 12 [T1-2]

Titan (TTN), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous 5-hr, 4-player qualifying Heats will run We-Fr with top 16 advancing to Sa 9 Semi-Final. B. Wolff III. See web page for more info: URL = http://www.uwm.pdu/~bruno/titan/avaloncon.html We 10+.

Titan Arena (TTA), B, Swiss-Elim, Scheduled four 1-hr qualifying Heats in five-player games of our newest multiplayer card game. Winners advance to Su 10 SE Final rds. If game unavailable, will be run as Demo instead. M. Hall. We 17 [W2]. Th 21 [T3], Fr 14 [F1], Sa 19 [S2] S

Titan 2 (TT2), A, SE, Continuous, five 3-hr rds of two-player Titan. C. Ackman, 4151-C King George Dr, Harrisburg, PA 17109. Th 10. [T1-2]

Title Bout (TBT), B, SE, Continuous, four 1-hr, 8-rd heavyweight fights leading to a 15-rd finale. L. Pratt, 5249 Westbreeze Court, Hilliard, OH 43026. Fr 20. [F3]

Turning Point: Stalingrad (TPS), A, SE, Continuous, four 6-hr rds. One week games with tie-breakers. Bid VPs for sides. 3rd edition rules. Highest rated players paired against one another in opening rounds. H. Jones, 117 Loch Shin Dr., Moon Twp, PA 15108. Th 10. [T1-3]

TV Wars (TVW), B, SE, Continuous, three 2-hr rds. R. Stakenas II. Sa 19 [S2-3]

☞ **TV Wars** (TVJ), B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. S. Vessey. We 11 [W1]

Tyranno Ex (TYX), B, Swiss-Elim, three 3-hr qualifying Heats. Latecomers allowed in groups of four. All winners advance to Fr 15 Semi Final. T. DeMarco. We 10 [W1], Th 9 [T1], Th 20 [T3]

Up Front (UPF), A, Triple Elim, Continuous, ten 1-hr. rds. J. Matt. Th 9. [T1]

Victory In the Pacific (VIP), A, Swiss, Continuous, seven 5-hr rds. No optional rules. May drop in and out at any time, but doing so reduces chances of winning event. G. Petroski, 6829 23rd Ave, Kenosha, WI 53143-1233. Fr 9. [F1]

War & Peace (W&P), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous three 3-hr rds of 1805, 1807, 1809 scenarios with top four advancing to SE rds of 1812 & 1813. B. Jackson, 190 W. Merrick Rd., Apt 1N, Freeport, NY 11520. Fr 10 [F1-2]

War At Sea (WAS), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, five seeded 2-hr prelim rds, four finalists advance to SE. Special prize for best newcomer. Must win by ≥ 2 POC for full win. Bid for sides. B. Monnin, 177 S. Lincoln St., Minster, OH 45865. Th 9 [T1-3]

■ **Waterloo** (WAT), A, SE, Continuous, four 4-hr rounds. A 7 PM turn will be added to first four days for a total of 28 turns. Mulligan round We 10. Players have two days to play 1st rd - contact GM for preference. Winners advance to Round 2 Fr 20. L. Lingle, 4307 N. Carolina Ct., Harrisburg, PA 17112 or Larrylingle@Juno.com. Th 9+

We The People (WTP), A, DE, Continuous, seven 3-hr rds. Bid PCs for sides. Single CU Winter Attrition rule in effect (50% chance). No other options. J. Falling Sa 9. [S1]

Win, Place & Show (WPS), B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. J. Burnett. Sa 18. [S2]

☞ **Wizard's Quest Jr** (WQJ), B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. K. Stroh. Fr 9 [F1]

Wizard's Quest (WZQ), B, SE, Continuous, two 2-hr rds. Hey, 40-somethings - Challenge the Junior Tournament graduates if you dare. K. Hitchings. We 15 [W2]

Wooden Ships & Iron Men (WSM), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, six 2-hr rds. W. Rohrbeck Fr 9. [F1]

World at War (WAW), B, SE, Continuous, five 4-hr rds using two OPERATION CRUSADER, two STALINGRAD, and one AMERICA INVADES scenarios. E. Sposito. Th 10. [T1-2]

Wrasslin' (WRS), A, SE, Continuous. Elimination bout. Manage a stable of three wrestlers. P. Weintraub. Fr 9. [F1]

Wrasslin' Battle Royal (WBR), A, SE, Continuous. Two 1-hr rds. GM selects wrestlers. P. Weintraub. Su 12. [Su]

☞ **Wrasslin' Jr** (WRJ), B, SE, four 1-hr rds. P. Weintraub. We 19 [W2]

SERIES REPLAY...
(Continued from pg. 30)

you can face an enemy which vastly outclasses you, or one that is so feeble that it's hardly worth the bother. It's the not knowing that really draws you in.

The INF gun has used all its HEAT ammo. The M4 is safe for the time being, until that PSW234/2 with 9-1 armor leader gets into LOS. The 50L needs a lot of luck to kill the Sherman from the front, but it may have APDS ammo. The bazooka teams should help keep the armored cars away from the M4. If I'm crafty, I can ambush the lead elements so that they never trouble me. That might be difficult while the T7/T10 line is so contested.

Rally Phase
E fails self rally
c4 self rallies
Rigney rallies K
Surman fails self rally, remove DM from Surman and B
X3 8-0 fails self rally, remove DM

Prep Fire Phase
Flip WP counter to dispersed WP
Jackson in command, directs D, J and HsQQ's PBF vs. W5: 2-3-7 passes 1MC.
  Entrenched 5-4-8 passes NMC.

Movement Phase
M4(105) in command, moves start, VCA Q8/Q9, TCA Q8/Q9, Q9, R9
  T10 panics, 75*INF gun fires HE at M4: turret hit, -2 TA, HE TK: NE. HE vs. CE: Crew 1MC breaks, stunned, M4(105) stops. 75*INF gun fires HE at M4: hull hit, HE TK: NE
Rigney panics
K panics
L in command, moves R7 S8
I in command, moves R5 S6 T6 -CX
HsCC panics
HsAA panics
c6 in command, moves N6 O6
c11 in command, moves N6 O7
HsG panics
c4 in command, moves T6 T7

Defensive Fire Phase
FFE:2 scatters to I5 no flames
W5 panics, 5-4-8/LMG and 2-3-7 fire at V5: Jackson 2MC breaks, DM. HsQQ 2MC breaks, disrupted. D 2MC ELR failure, becomes 5-3-6, DM. J 2MC break, DM

Advancing Fire Phase
M10 no blaze
I2 Blaze

Rout Phase
HsQQ surrenders to W5 2-3-7
Jackson & J rout U5 T5
D routs U6 T6 S7

Advance Phase
I to T7 not in trench
L to T8
c4 to T8
c6 to P5

Close Combat Phase
T8: L, C4 & c2 vs. 2-2-8: 2-2-8 elim
Concealment on T7

TURN 7 COMMENTS
What on earth was I doing advancing the CEM4 towards the INF gun? I guess I got what I deserved. I should have buttoned up in the MPh and gone CE in the APh, but I was overconfident and didn't want a "–1" penalty to my AFPh. Now I have a permanent –1 DRM.

My prep fire in V5 was a disaster which allowed the units in W5 to rip me apart. One half squad has surrendered, which doubles the CVPs he gives to the enemy side. I failed to capture the pillbox. Control of a pillbox is defined as the last player to

occupy the pillbox Location and I never made it inside. Things are going badly.

I hope the FFE:C will fail to be continued this turn. At least, there are plenty of shellholes to cover my retreat, if my position fails. With a minimum of three game turns left, I still have plenty of time.

GERMAN TURN 7

Rally Phase
c11 recovers 37L
13N9 2-4-8 fails self rally
X3 8-0 fails self rally
Surman fails self rally
Jackson fails self rally
Remove all DM counters

Prep Fire Phase
I5 FFE:2 scatters to J5, no flames
T10 75*INF gun fires HE at M4: turret hit, HE TK: NE. 75*INF gun fires HE at M4: hull hit, HE TK: NE
V1 4-3-6 fails entrench attempt, TI, -2 labor
V9 4-6-7 fires at T8: c4 NMC breaks, DM. c2 NMC creates Hero (Matherne), Fanatic. L NMC ELR Failure, becomes 5-4-6 DM

Movement Phase
W5 2-3-7 with prisoners moves X5 Y5 Z4 AA5 BB5
W5 5-4-7/LMG moves V5, enters pillbox
X3 2-4-8 moves CX W4 V4 U5 HsC DM, T5 DM
Convoy moves to Y9, PSW 234/2 LOS to T8 releases convoy, VCA X8/X9 BU, X8 W9 V8 stop
PSW 222(L) moves to Y9 stop
PSW 233 moves Y10 Y9 X8 X7 X6 X5, VCA W5/W6, W5 V5 U6 stops
All SdKfz's stop
Defensive Fire Phase

c2 panics
Matherne fires at V9: NE
c11 in command
c11 changes 37L CA P6/P7

Advancing Fire Phase
U5 2-4-8 PBF at T5: NE
PSW233 fires MA at T5: miss, -1 TA
PSW234/2 fires MA at T8: miss, -1 TA
PSW234/2 fires CMG at T8: Matherne passes NMC. c2 NMC breaks, DM. c4 passes NMC. L passes NMC

Rout Phase
T5 Jackson, E, F & J rout S5 R4 Q3
U4 HsC routs T3 S3 R3
T8 c4, c2 & L rout S8 R7

Advance Phase
U5 to T5
BB5 to CC6
Remove TI marker, flip stun marker to +1
Concealment on CC6, V1, V7

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY
Neil is showing typical American optimism. *[I'm glad to see that the British Mr. Clark has thrown himself into his role.—SKT]* His last remaining tank is rendered impotent for this turn, his left flank continues to disappear and he's losing VPOs faster than he's gaining them. He's hit a concrete wall and bounced off. In another two turns, the German convoy will pile
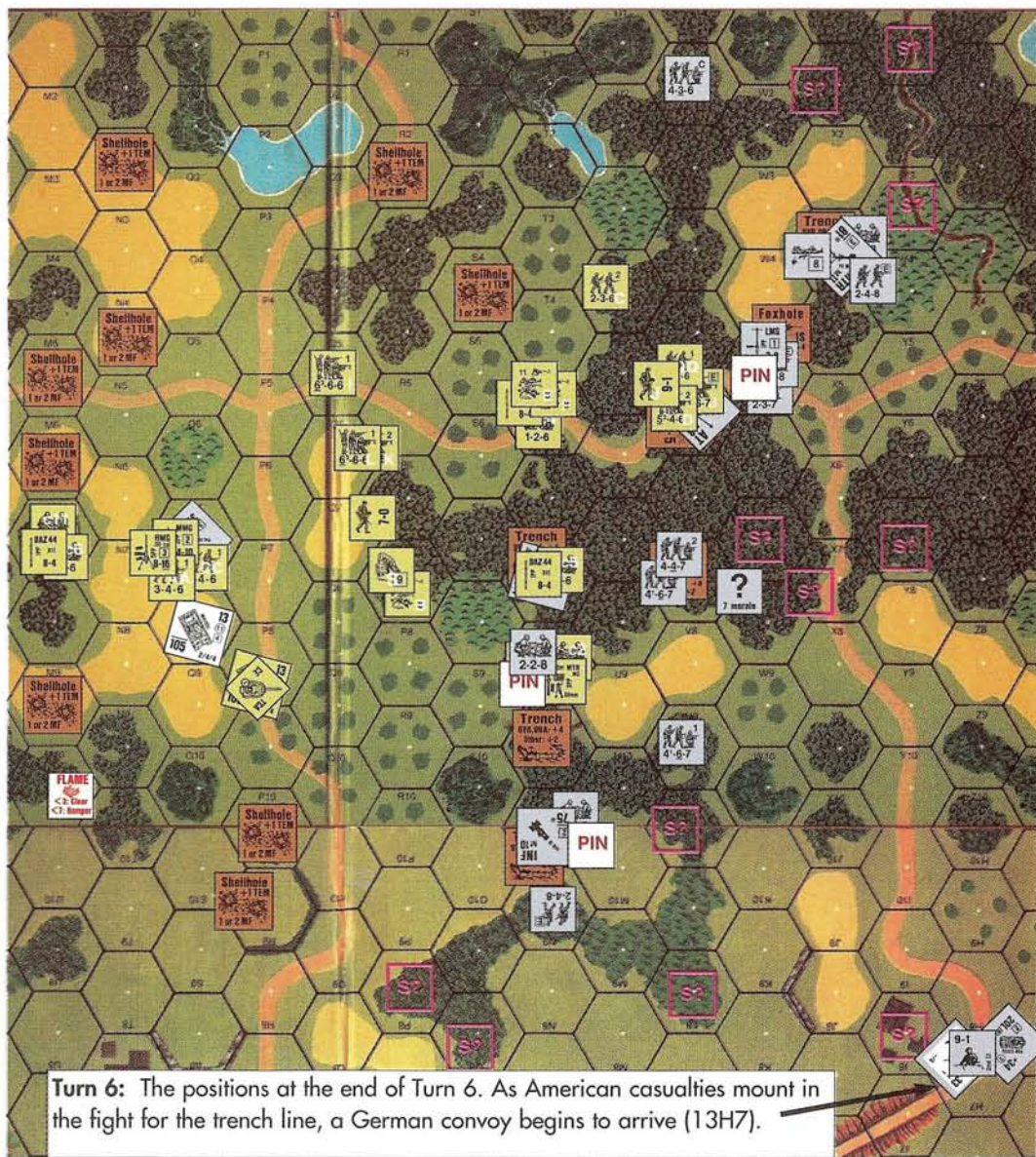
Turn 6: The positions at the end of Turn 6. As American casualties mount in the fight for the trench line, a German convoy begins to arrive (13H7).

into the action putting him at even more of a disadvantage. Despite all of this, he's hoping for an extended mission length!

A couple of minor goofs. First, the support weapon teams (1-2-6 counters) are considered crews, and are immune to heat of battle. Second, if my understanding of Neil's notations is correct, the enemy units in 37X3 and 37W5 rolled 8 and 9, respectively. For enemy units in hold attitude, as dictated by the mission parameters, this would normally be a fire action. However, the subscript notes that an infantry unit will entrench if not already entrenched, otherwise it does nothing. In both cases, the units are already entrenched, so should not have moved. Normally, in *SASL* missions where the enemy is in hold, movement of enemy units is rare.

Were I under Neil's command, I would be begging him to get us out of here. Company Strange has lost all but two of the VPOs previously gained. Their furthest line of advance is nearly recaptured by the enemy and losses are beginning to mount. Getting all forces pulled back in good order is going to require good luck. Even then, I suspect Neil is destined to lose a few more guys in the rearguard action.

TURN 8

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

My God, if I haven't lost it already, I'm in a lot of trouble. I diverged from the normal movement commands for the enemy side last turn when I advanced the 2-4-8 to U5, but I am supposed to play the enemy side to its best advantage. Putting flight to three and a half squads and a 9-1 leader was too sensible a move to overlook.

Barring an incredible Rally Phase, I have only four squad equivalents and one leader (a 7-0) unbroken on the board, plus my AFV is operating with a +1 handicap. I feel I can still do some damage. I have two bazooka teams in good order—one in T7 and concealed, which means they can either advance adjacent to U7 or to T8 for a shot at an armored car.

At this stage, I take stock of my situation. I have captured 19 VPs and I have lost 15 CVPs. The enemy has 43 unactivated S?s for 22 VPs and holds 29 VPs of fortifications, so the tally is: US 19 VPs, German 68 VPs. Not good! I have to capture 25 VPs with no more losses to win. Those armored cars are worth 3VPs each, 5 VPs if the Crews die too. The T8/T10 line is worth another 14 VPs. I shall concentrate my efforts there and try to hold the left against a counterattack. I have to minimize the number of hold attitude S?s activated now in case they generate more fortifications. The advance attitude S?s brought in by the convoy can't generate fortifications and should activate when they advance next turn.

The German right flank is too strong for me to attack. That 81mm mortar in the trench in X3 with 3ROF makes any flanking move through the woods too dangerous. That pillbox in V5 is well defended again.

TURN 8 COMMENTS

I got a break and destroyed the PSW234/2 and killed its armor leader for 5 VPs. I'm poised once again to assault the T8/T10 line. Instead of advancing everyone into T9 and taking the -1TA with me, I'm going to try to blow away the defenders on the V7/V9 line, while the M4 uses it's smoke mortar to place smoke in T10.

I had some bad rolls with the M4 and not only lost the white phosphorus ammo, but malfunctioned the gun. The MGs and the smoke mortar are all it has left to contribute to the last few turns, barring a lucky repair roll.

I think I've learned by now that it's not a good idea to advance adjacent to a gun/AFV within it's covered arc. The -2 point blank modifier makes that a lethal move. I've been lucky that so few of these shots have been critical hits. Instead, my squads have ELR failed.

There is an element of desperation creeping into my play now. This turn was filled with piecemeal moves (and most of them were blown away). I don't have the troops to make a big effort anywhere. Maybe the next Rally Phase will change that so that I can make some proper moves in the last two or more turns.

I am tempted to withdraw to the O line and wait for the game end, resigning myself to a defeat. Yet, the game could possibly last another four or five turns and a lot can happen, even in one turn. Besides, I want the CVPs to try to improve my company. Without a win, I'll be in bad shape for the next game. With a win, I may be able to bring all those second-line squads back up to strength as well as get a leader promotion. It's a pity that the hero perished as they help with battle hardening between games.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Despite Neil's terrible luck with morale checks, he hasn't had any additional losses. Breaking the tank's main gun is a typical, couldn't-happen-at-a-worse-time *ASL* event. Possibly, though, Neil will get lucky and repair it immediately.

The *SASL* system will be what helps Neil avoid total destruction. The original units will not pursue him and the convoy is pretty well funneled right now. But, Neil's situation is serious with so many units broken and his position badly bunched up in the middle. A concerted push by the enemy on his flanks risks complete envelopment. If that were to happen, leader promotions and between-mission battle hardening will seem a distant dream.

As I feared, German forces are slipping around Neil's flanks. He runs a very real risk of getting trapped in the 37R6-T8 woods area where his forces are concentrated. He really needs to kill the armored car in 37T5 to clog up the woods-road and slow any other vehicles from exiting the forest. It is clear that Neil's confidence is beginning to show strain. He has stopped talking about capturing additional enemy positions and is considering protection of his company.

TURN 9

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

It's strange how this game plays. The 4-6-7 in 37V9 has made some incredible DRs to get effective results from a low FP attack with positive DRMs. Last turn, once again it broke my units in T8, including the bazooka team, which makes any attack on T10 very difficult this turn. There is only a small chance that the M4 will be able to get its main armament up and gunning before the end of the game.

T10 will be reinforced this turn when the advance attitude S? moves there and will very likely activate something. Advance attitude S?s can activate very effectively. A leader and two squads with support weapons are not unlikely, for instance.

That half squad crosses the orchard from T5 to R4, surviving the defensive fire of my squads, to effectively neutralize the last bazooka team and place my broken leader and squads under desperation morale in the rally phase. I hope the captured AT gun in O7 will hold off the armor and maybe even kill another AFV before it breaks down. I was lucky to get three shots out of it last turn without a breakdown. Now, in my turn, barring panic, I will have a +2 shot at that PSW because the -2TA counter neutralizes the LOS hindrance DRMs.

Unless I get a favorable random event in this turn, or a wonderful Rally Phase, I'm pulling back. Otherwise, I can't see how I can hope to win this one. I will establish a defensive line along the O hexrow. As the enemy is in hold attitude, he'll more than likely leave me alone, provided that I can take care of the armor.

TURN 9 COMMENTS

To top it all off, it's raining! At least it will add to his To Hit DRs when I'm seven or more hexes from him. It also means that SMOKE is now useless, though. That INF gun has been lethal in this game. I suppose they always are, but I've never been shown how bad they were.

I had hoped to get a result from firing the MMG at V9, after having gone to all the bother of carrying it there, but nothing came of it. The 37L AT gun immobilized the PSW233 and forced the crew to abandon it, but died in the process. With the close combat in R4 resolved without loss to me, I hope that I can conduct an orderly and uneventful withdrawal and that the game end dr is merciful.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

I can imagine the colorful language emanating from the US positions now that, on top of everything else, it started raining.

Neil has kept things together. He was able to rout a large portion of his force out of harm's way, squashed the threat on his left by killing the half squad that jumped his support weapon team and effectively knocked out the armored car.

The Germans continue to pressure the US forces. A Panther and a Tiger both arrive and an assault gun activates (admittedly, from a S? that was previously a passenger in a halftrack. Hmmm, that must have been some halftrack.) The American tank was very nearly shocked by the turret hit. Such a result is lethal a little less than 50% of the time, assuming there isn't an enemy in position to finish it off. Neil knew from the start that the enemy side would get more random events, but I admit that he has suffered at the hands of fate.

Turn 9: The positions at the end of Turn 9. As the Americans fall back, more German tanks arrive to pressure the right. [Rotated squads are broken.]

TURN 11 COMMENTS

I voluntarily broke Surman and squad B because I don't want them sitting in the open where they can be overrun. Surman is my best leader. I may not pull much out of this game, but I want to keep the 9-1 leader.

The increased LOS hindrance from the heavy rain means that all my forces are out of sight of the bogged StuH and that cursed 75*INF gun. I hope neither will bother me again. The Panther wasn't able to see anyone either. Unfortunately, the Tiger can, but I'm hoping that my last bazooka team can nail it, if it moves closer. That 81mm mortar will start shooting in the next prep fire phase.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

In *SASL*, support weapons (SW) are sort of automatic troops, because any unmanned SW team-run weapon has a two-thirds chance of regenerating a crew between missions. If the weapon is lost, there is a two-thirds chance it will be replaced with a new crew (assuming one isn't available already). These guys can become the kamikazes of the *SASL* world. Yet, one quickly finds important infantry support dwindling away, if these chances are taken too often.

Neil is beginning to feel the effects of having only one active leader on the field as his units panic. His command control was good on the advance, but broke down during the retreat after Jackson disappeared and Surman got trapped in the open (having panicked). It is atypical in *ASL* to have to conduct a wholesale retrograde movement in the face of an active enemy. In *SASL*, it can happen frequently. It becomes a unique skill to keep the company in good fighting order with proper combat deployment, while directing an orderly retreat.

TURN 10

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

Let the game end dr be merciful. I'm in full flight. I am lucky to still have the M4(105). I'll have to reverse him back as far as possible before the Panther gets a shot at him. I could play hero and advance the bazooka team at T7 to T6 or U7 for a shot at the Tiger, but I just want to save as much of my company as I can.

The random events have been kind to the German player and I've received nothing. If the weather wasn't so bad, I could hope for an airstrike to kill off the enemy armor. *[I sense a bit of battle fatigue and bitterness here.—SKT]*

TURN 10 COMMENTS

I lose Jackson to a casualty rally DR, just after I thought that I'd really hit the bottom. The M4(105) is a goner, no doubt about it. I just hope somebody survives this fiasco!

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

At this point, Neil is not as bad off as he seems to think. He's already paid VPs for the attached tanks; their loss doesn't affect his company. He needs to focus on getting his men out. The loss of Jackson was a big blow. Although there are still German guns bearing on his forces, he may be able to avoid further damage to his company if he gets behind some cover.

TURN 11

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

What is there to say? Rigney rallies three squads and the M4 blows up with the loss of all hands, I really should have abandoned the vehicle after it was immobilized. Squad D soldiers are sitting on their butts and will probably surrender. Squad K ELR breaks down to a green squad. I can only hope the game ends this turn.

TURN 12

PRE-TURN COMMENTS

I think I'm going to be all right, as long as I offer targets with high DRMs to hold attitude enemies, because they are only interested in keeping me away from their positions. I'm going to let all those units fire at O7 where they will have high DRMs.

TURN 12 COMMENTS

The demise of the Tiger should ensure my survival, even though I still have the Panther to handle.

I can't help notice that the German left is in tatters and it's tempting to rush the position to try to pick up VPs.

Even if I kill both the PSWs, capture V1, V5, W5 and X2 without activating another fortified position or taking a single casualty *and* hold T7, I'll have only 60 VPs to the enemy's 70. It's not worth the risk. Besides, there is a 50% chance the game will end this turn.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

So, the gamble eventually paid off. Neil was able to kill the Tiger, giving his company a morale boost and a little better survival probability.

Neil still considers reversing direction and attacking again! I have to hand it to him: He's got moxie. If it were me, I'd be pulling all units back even further than he has. I'd leave a SW team in the 37O7 building as bait to keep German attention, while the remainder of the company would settle in on the back side of the 37K and 37L wood lines.

In a final portent of what could have been, more enemy units arrive on Neil's immediate left to apply pressure on his already-compacted company. In my many missions of *SASL*, the arrival of enemy forces from all directions can be the most terrifying of situations. They may be a bit robotic in motion, but they just keep coming and coming.

VICTORY POINT DETERMINATION

The final VP tally yields a German victory.

	Enemy:	Friendly:
At start VPs	3	0
CVPs	15 (Inf)	4 (Guns)
CVPs (AFVs)	17	13
VPOs	33	15
Unactivated S?s	19	0
Total VPs	**87**	**32**

FINAL COMMENTARY

So where did I go wrong? Would I have been better to attack on board 13 to start with? The closed terrain seemed more favorable to the attacking American squads who crack easily under fire. I'd hoped that the copious LOS hindrance DRMs would help protect my fragile force. My own feeling is that, once again, I failed to use my support weapons effectively. My mortars and that magnificent .50cal heavy machinegun hardly saw any action. I was advancing quickly. These units would have been better left dismantled until serious opposition was encountered.

As it was, I assembled mortars to assault the tree line at H1 early in the game, while the main force ran on towards O7. To be fair, though, when the SWs were in action they didn't get good rate-of-fire and were also hampered by the high LOS hindrance DRMs. I should have taken more time to prepare my assaults.

I wasted the M4(105)s. I was too cautious with them at the start, keeping them BU. Later, attacking an enemy position while CE was just plain stupid. I have lost AFVs to snipers early in a game. The last time I played Bunker Busting, one of my supporting StuG IIIBs ended up sitting five hexes away from a Russian 45L in a pillbox at the end of my first turn. It was promptly blown away in the first enemy prep fire without doing anything! At least both M4s saw some action. However, I am never going to advance an AFV at an enemy position CE again.

Another "never again" is assaulting an emplaced high-caliber gun through its CA. The

DRMs for point blank fire make Critical Hits much more likely. The INF Gun was superbly placed in T10 to cover board 37. The swamp in S10 protected it from a frontal assault. It held its own brilliantly with some superb covering fire from the 4-6-7 in V9. I don't complain about DRs in a game, unless it's really bad, because they have a tendency to break even. As in life, a perfectly executed "perfect plan" can fail just because some brave souls won't break, but instead lays down murderous defensive fire against impossible odds. Some utterly stupid tactics can still win with luck. It's all fair in war.

I wish I had received one random event with some support for me, but with the RE#s being what they were, that was not to be expected. As I'd remarked earlier, the booby traps killed nobody and the snipers did nothing except shoot at each other.

Finally, because this is a campaign game, my company is going to be handicapped during the rebuild/refit stage because of the loss. There are no promotions for Surman or Rigney, although Rigney deserves a medal. I get Jackson and the two half squads reformed into squad C, but all the rest are lost.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

Neil had three strikes against him going into this mission with his new company. First, he got a Bunker Busting mission. This is undoubtedly one of the toughest to win in *SASL* and requires very careful manipulation of the system to activate S? slowly and carefully select the VPOs to capture.

Second, Neil ended up with a dense terrain board. S? activations can snowball as VPOs are revealed and nearby activations become easier. The board configuration left Neil with little choice on his approach. With the flooded stream he ran a very real risk of activating deadly firing positions in valuable fortified locations which would have required an assault across bridges. He was much better off probing the woods and picking the fruits gingerly.

Third, he faced numerous enemy random events. One has to assume that any random event is going to cause an adjustment of plans. Even off-board artillery forces a player to spread out or risk a lucky hit killing off a large portion of the company. In Neil's case, most of his troubles arrived from off the board. Although this offers some VP opportunities, advancing enemy forces usually cause headaches and make it difficult to manage the flow of the battle.

As I've mentioned, where Neil went wrong is not recognizing the *SASL* system and what it can do to a player. In *ASL*, you usually know what the objectives of the scenario are and set about maneuvering to meet those objectives. The enemy force make up, both on the board and reinforcing, is known as well. The whole approach to the game changes in *SASL*, especially in a Bunker Busting mission.

The basic victory goal is known: get rid of S? and take fortified positions. However, the number and location of fortified positions is not predictable. The player has to carefully utilize the concepts of probe and support. Establish good fire bases. Probe the next set of S? counters to find the good stuff. Unless there is a need to

move through a non-fortified position, it's best to bypass it and look for gold elsewhere. As long as this process is managed carefully, time is usually the player's friend. However, if dozens of VPOs are generated, there suddenly isn't enough time to capture them all.

Once a few VPOs are located, the player needs to assess the opportunity and deal with them in detail. All the time, the player must exercise care not to activate S? that aren't near the action.

Neil rushed forward and cleared S? like a scythe. Flush with success and frustrated by a lack of enemy, his company became dispersed and outran its support. When he finally hit some serious resistance, he forged ahead in other sectors of his front and suddenly found himself outclassed. The *SASL* system really kicked in and started pouring more enemy forces onto the board. Since Neil was just trying to take and hold the main enemy line of resistance, he was ill-prepared to deal with this sudden influx of aggressive infantry and vehicles. Although he managed to handle the various threats, his momentum was gone and his company was in bad shape. It took two turns just to get all his squads back in good order, facing the right direction.

In certain respects, the *SASL* system can be the most difficult opponent to play. It is unpredictable and somewhat relentless. The system can be a real puzzle to solve, with each mission having unique characteristics and unexpected events. On top of it all, the player has the job of shepherding his company through these missions in an effort to not only survive, but to improve the company. The player has two objectives in a *SASL* campaign game. Winning a mission is tough enough, but the real trick is having a viable company survive afterward.

REST & REFIT POSTSCRIPT

All double-break units were retained. Squads C and I were made back up to full strength and Jackson returned. Abandoned support weapons were lost. Because the mission was lost, no leaders were promoted. Prior to replacements, Strange Company stood like this:

9-1 Lt. Surman
9-1 Lt. Jackson
7-0 Cpl. Rigney
1 x 6-6-7 (Squad J)
5 x 6-6-6 (B, C, E, F, H)
2 x 5-4-6 (I, L)
2 x 5-3-6 (D, K)
1 x Hs w/ MMG (CC)
1 x 1-2-6 Mortar Team (c1)
3 x 1-2-6 Bazooka Teams (c4, c5, c6)

The company gains no battle hardening and receives the following replacements:

1 x 6-6-6 (A)
1 x 5-4-6 (G)
2 x Hs (AA, BB)
1 x .50cal HMG
1 x 1-2-6 Mortar Team (c2)

Thus, the company enters the next action almost at full strength (missing only a MMG and a mortar team).

MEDIEVAL MACHIAVELLI

New Scenarios from Italy's Middle Ages

By Charles Bahl

There can be no doubt that *MACHIAVELLI* is a direct descendent of *DIPLOMACY,* yet the game is more than just a clone of its illustrious forebear. It is not, for instance, simply *DIPLOMACY* played on a map of Renaissance Italy. The addition of garrisons, unit conversions and sieges makes *MACHIAVELLI* a very different gaming experience. When you go beyond the basic game and include such features as finances (particularly bribes), rebellions, assassinations and a smattering of optional rules like famine, plague and excommunication, you are talking about a game that not only captures some of the color and intrigue of the period it depicts, but also provides even the most experienced and hardened *DIPLOMACY* players with a whole new world of challenge and strategy.

In addition, *MACHIAVELLI* lends itself well to the use of multiple scenarios. Unlike *DIPLOMACY,* which always begins with the same starting positions, *MACHIAVELLI's* home control markers allow an unlimited variety of setups. The game comes with four such scenarios covering most of the Renaissance period. However, the game system need not be restricted to that particular historical epoch. After all, double-dealing and back-stabbing were not invented in the fifteenth century. They have, rather, a long and distinguished career that stretches as far back as the historical record allows us to look. Indeed, one of the most interesting, treacherous, and cruel periods in Italy's history begins with the barbarian invasions and the subsequent collapse of the Western Roman Empire, and seems admirably suited for inclusion within *MACHIAVELLI's* canon of scenarios. With this in mind, here are four new scenarios, covering some of the most salient moments from Italy's Middle Ages.

SCENARIOS

The setup for each scenario lists the provinces controlled by each of the powers (home countries) at the start of the game. If a military unit starts in a particular province, this is indicated by an A (army), F (fleet) or G (garrison). The starting treasury of each power is also listed (ignore if playing with basic game rules). The variants for each scenario explain how to align the powers to allow for different numbers of players. When a player starts with more than one power, all the units used by that player are treated as one power.

Neutral Provinces: If a country (or series of provinces) is defined as neutral in a scenario, treat the provinces of that power as if they were not on the mapboard—these areas are out of play. Units may neither advance nor retreat into neutral provinces. Neutrals are different than uncontrolled or autonomous provinces (rule 7.7).

Inactive Units: If a country is defined as inactive in a scenario, treat the units of that power as if they were in civil disorder (rule 7.8).

Counter Shortages: If a particular country does not have enough home control markers to record all of its home provinces, use regular control markers for this purpose. In addition, the counter mix is not a limit to the number of military units a particular power can possess. If a power should run out of a particular kind of military unit, it can use those of any other power not currently in play or not being used by another player.

Victory Conditions: The victory conditions for some of the scenarios may differ from those given in the rules of play. If no victory conditions are listed for a particular scenario, then they are the same as those given in rule 3.2 (how to win).

Special Rules: Some scenarios list special rules. These are considered to take precedence over any relevant rules given in the rules of play.

Variable City Income: Unless the scenario indicates otherwise, players *do not collect* the variable city Income for control of Florence, Genoa, Milan, Naples or Venice.

SCENARIO V
THE FALL OF THE LOMBARDS: 725-800

Although the Byzantine Empire under the generalship of Narses expelled the last of the Ostrogoth invaders from Italy by 554, external pressures on the Roman world—both from the east and from the west—proved too much for the Empire to maintain its traditional borders. With the death of Narses, new Germanic tribesmen, the Lombards, pushed through the Alps onto the northern Italian plains. By 600, the Lombards controlled most of Italy, including the Po River Valley, Tuscany and a large area south of Rome. The Byzantines kept only toeholds in Sicily, around their capital in Ravenna and in southern Italy. The Papal See, however, retained considerable military power at Rome and its precincts.

The Popes viewed the Lombards as both potential allies and future enemies. At first, the Papacy courted the Lombards' military strength in the hope of gaining control of Byzantium's holdings in central Italy. In collusion with Papal authorities, the Lombards at first successfully challenged the Empire. In 751, they succeeded in capturing Ravenna and in driving the Byzantines permanently from the area. Fearing now that they had created in the Lombards an enemy more dangerous than the Byzantines, the Papacy turned to France to thwart their power. Under Pepin in the 750's and then under Charlemagne in the 770's, the Frankish Empire, at the urging of the Papacy, invaded Italy, destroyed the Lombard hegemony in northern Italy, and turned over the former Byzantine area in central Italy to Rome. After their defeat, the Lombards held tenuously only to a group of declining possessions in southern Italy.

START DATE: Spring 725
SETUP
FRANCE: Avignon (A), Marseille (F), Swiss (A), Savoy (F), Saluzzo (A) and Provence. Treasury: two ducats.

LOMBARDS (use Austrian units): Turin (A), Pavia (A), Modena (A), Mantua (A), Cremona (A), Naples (A), Bari (A) and Aquila. Treasury: six ducats.

BYZANTINES (use Venetian units): Palermo, Messina (A), Otranto, Durazzo (F), Albania (F), Ragusa (F), Dalmatia (F), Friuli (A), Treviso (A), Padua (A) and Ferrara (A). Treasury: four ducats.

PAPACY: Rome (A), Patrimony, Ancona (F), Perugia (A), Arezzo (A) and Urbino. Treasury: six ducats.

AUTONOMOUS GARRISONS: One each in Tunis, Siena, Piombino, Pisa, Florence, Bologna, Lucca, Genoa, Montferrat, Milan and Venice.

NEUTRAL PROVINCES: Tyrol, Austria and Hungary.

VARIABLE INCOME (Advanced)
A. The Papacy and France receive variable income as indicated on the chart.

B. The Lombard player receives the variable income indicated for Venice on the chart, but DOES NOT need to control Venice to receive this income. No other power may receive the variable income for Venice.

C. The Byzantine player receives the variable income indicated for the Turks.

Letters

New Directions

I just got Volume 31, Number 2 in yesterday's mail. As usual, it was a momentary thrill, followed by disappointment. . . The GENERAL all too often publishes articles on new games which may turn out to be a flash in the pan, and it devotes too little space to time-honored, phenomenal wargames. . . My main beef with *Computer Gaming World* is that they honor games with their "Hall of Fame," but then they give no further coverage to those supposedly great games.

Anonymous disappointed subscriber, cyberspace

Coverage of excellent computer strategy/wargames by other companies is the sort of thing we will be doing with our expansion of subject matter. You are right that there aren't any magazines doing strategy tips for the really good computer games that keep drawing back the player from time to time (last Friday, I enjoyed playing the original Master of Orion—the longest-standing computer game still on my hard disk). We are stepping in to play that role. We do this in the hope of generating new interest in subscription by gamers who predominantly do not play boardgames. Through their subscriptions we hope to broaden their interests, generate more support for boardgames as well and put this niche of our hobby back on its feet.—SKT

All right! Doing articles on other company's computer games! Good job!

Rob Winslow, cyberspace

Prison Reform

I am an inmate. Sometimes the mail gets lost, delayed or confiscated. . . I am sorry that I am not permitted to order any of your games, but this institution has ruled that your games are not on the authorized property list and are not to be permitted in this institution. This seems rather arbitrary to me, because chess, checkers, poker and pinochle cards, *Uno* and backgammon are all permitted and sold at the inmate center, and *Risk* can be checked out from the recreation center. I am aware of the educational value of your games, but I have been unable to convince the staff here to acknowledge this.

David W. Townsend, Missouri

As this letter struck a particularly strong chord with me, I encourage subscribers to flood the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center, 18701 Old Hwy 66, Pacific, MO 63069-9799 with your town letters.

Dear Mr. Townsend,

I was somewhat appalled to hear that Avalon Hill games are not approved for use in your facility while Risk is. A great number of our games teach principles of cooperation, advanced planning and history, while Risk is purely a leisure game that rewards aggression against one's neighbors. Admittedly, some of our historical simulations deal with military topics which may have little appeal to a correctional facility. However, games such as CIVILIZATION, which joins Risk in Games magazine's hall of fame, would be very appropriate. I am enclosing a photocopy of an article on the use of this game in a

classroom which may help you to change a few minds on this topic.

—SKT

Snow Days

Just wanted you to know that I'm doing my part in recruiting the next generation of gamers. We had a school snow day last week. I invited several of my son's friends (ages 13-15) for a game of *CIVILIZATION*. . . One kid was so hooked that he ran out and bought it and *ADVANCED CIVILIZATION* the very next day. Now they play it every spare minute. They've got a six-player, all-kid game going right now.

Eric Kirchner, cyberspace

Issue Comments

I wanted to write about Volume 31, Number 2, which was especially well done and certainly had broad appeal. I was quite glad to see a couple of grognards duking it out in the *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE* replay. I can't begin to imagine the extra toil taken to make the graphics match the player decisions (the summaries next to the maps were excellent). From reading the replay, I found two obvious rules errors that I had been making in my own games. . . On the varied articles about *LONDON'S BURNING*, I can say that the writers' insights are worthy of a go in the skies over Britain.

Mike Welker, Steubenville, OH

I have been a loyal but time-challenged Avalon Hill game player and on-and-off subscriber to *The GENERAL* for over 20 years, more or less. I have noticed in the last couple of years that the physical quality and informational content have both increased to a significant degree. . . I just got the last issue and was disappointed to not find any details on AvalonCon'97, including making hotel reservations. After three years of making daily commutes of two hours each way I'd like to reserve a room this year.

Hank Richardson, cyberspace

With a GM event form deadline of February 28th, the earliest moment possible for supplying you with the pre-registration form is now (see the insert for this issue). Call the Hunt Valley Marriott at (410) 785-7000 and ask for the AvalonCon convention rate for July 30-August 3, 1997 —SKT.

I understand that all of the articles will not interest me, and I do not expect it. The real joy that I get from the magazine is strategy articles. The issue on *EMPIRE OF THE RISING SUN* strategy was great. Even if I do not have the game, a good strategy article is a great read and will get me interested in the game. . . I like coverage of computer games, but I get several other magazines that cover this.

Ken, cyberspace

I am ecstatic over your reintroduction of the variant counter sheet. What a great way to close out every publication year of *The GENERAL*. Keep up the good work.

Ron Wuerth, cyberspace

Gaming Interests

Keep making those multi-player games, like *MAHARAJA*, *BRITANNIA* and *HISTORY OF*

THE WORLD. They are much better than recycled two-player operational level games of specific battles that we used to play but now find less fun and more of a headache.

L. Robusto, Staten Island, NY

I just recently received the entire *Great Campaigns of the American Civil War* collection for my birthday. The game system really captures the feel of the American Civil War campaigns. I'm an avid computer gamer, but these games bring me back into the majesty of boardgaming. . . I think TAHGC's advanced planning to get involved in the computer game market will save the old Avalon Hill.

Steve Kershaw, Somers Point, NJ

The Developer Responds

A rather long-winded and somewhat poorly-argued letter came in the other day with complaints about the rule book for AGE OF RENAISSANCE. Don Greenwood's rather thorough response directly references the issues raised in the letter, so to save space I'll publish only the response below.

The use of standard AH play money was simply an attempt to save real consumer money on what is an admittedly expensive game. Because there was no one historical currency in use in all of the lands depicted, AH dollars seemed as good a term for "financial units" as any.

As for the spelling of areas used in a game covering over 1000 years of history, I can show you three or four different accepted spellings for almost any place on the map. Any one of them would be viewed incorrect when judged from the perspective of a single time and geographic location.

Many have commented adversely on the readability of icons in the rules presentation—this complaint certainly has some justification. However, if you follow their defined meaning closely, you will find that the icons provide a great deal more clarity than the words they replace. Not only do ❑ and ■ graphically and instantly reveal more information than the "unit, white-side face-up" and "unit, colored-side face-up," but they save an enormous amount of verbiage which otherwise would have been added to the cards—detracting from their appearance, not to mention their completeness. Saying that ❑ can be replaced by the word "unit" simply ignores the vast difference in meaning between expansion and controlled units, which plays an enormous role in the proper play of the game.

As for the use of mathematical symbols "$\geq$" and "$\leq$," I'd have thought that anyone capable of playing such a game would have learned these basic math terms in this day and age. Their use is needed to save verbiage on the cards. Artists constantly decry the use of text on their cards, due to the detraction from the graphic images. Without the use of such convenient abbreviations, those beautiful cards would either be ambiguous or overrun by text.

All of this is not to say that I necessarily made the right choices, but having considered the options, I would not change my approach were I to do it again.

Don Greenwood

Opponents Wanted

Avalon Hill does not vouch for the character or business practices of any advertisers.

CA: ASL Challenge! Start anytime. Stop anytime. Win three of five scenarios and take home $150 cash prize! $50 entry fee. Earl J. Ryan, ASL Military Tactics Instructor, PO Box 0398, Corona, CA 91718, (909) 736-RYAN.

CA: Experienced player seeks others at any/all levels of ability for FTF ASL. Your choice DYO or published scenarios. Earl J. Ryan, ASL Military Tactics Instructor, PO Box 0398, Corona, CA 91718, (909) 736-RYAN.

CA: 100 miles from nowhere! Wargamer at the NTC seeks FTF gamers. Willing to drive! Anyone in Victorville or Santa Barbara? Steven Duke, 4034 Alvord, Fort Irwin, CA 92310, (619) 386-1117.

CA: WANT TO BUY VITP. John Kennison, 5142 Stratford Ave., Westminster, CA 92683, (714) 892-9705.

CO: Experienced gamer seeks opponents for face-to-face play in the Denver area. I play almost anything. David Newport, 9821 W. Vassar Way, Lakewood, CO 80227, (303) 987-0738.

CT: Seek gamers in NW CT, SW MA or Duchess County, NY. Play HWD, ACV, DIP or anything else except ASL. Mark McLaughlin, 280 N. Elm St., Canaan, CT 06018, (860) 824-4774.

GA: PBM ALEX, WAS, SOA, DEV, and Anzio. Rated or not, experience preferred but not mandatory. Leroy Gatch, Box 55376, Atlanta, GA 30308.

IL: Save me! Addicted 3R4 player seeks FTF opponents in Chicago suburban area. Also play AFK, B'81, BRI D'77, HWR, LBG, PZB, PZL, TPS and others. Jason Fulton, 760 Bluff St., Apt. 104, Carol Stream, IL 60188, (630) 588-1237.

IL: PBM sought for WAT, DD77, GE88, and BB65. Michael Ellsworth, 1117 Kiersted St., Morris, IL 60450, (815) 942-2548.

IL: PBM AOR. Four week turns; approx. 8–10 months. No fee. AREA rated. For rules write Jared Scarborough #1, Scarborough Rd., Payson, IL 62360-9743.

MA: The 'Bunker' needs ASL reinforcements now! Veterans and Novices alike wanted for both AREA rated competition and various playtesting. We play most Saturdays, Call/Write: Vic Provost, 1454 Northampton St., Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 536-9661.

MD: Adult FTF opponents wanted in the Eastern Shore area of MD and VA. I like to play A3R, TRC, BKN, W&P, 1776, VITP and HWD. Rob Beyma, 109 Brentwood Cir., Pocomoke, MD 21851, (410) 957-3541.

ME: Desperately need Paydirt team charts from '73, '74 and '75; then called Sports Illustrated Pro Football. Will pay generously. Peter Vorias, 48 E. Grand Ave., O.O.B., ME 04064, (207) 934-2286.

MI: Looking for up to four players for PBM FTP. GM'd scenario. Please request side preferred if any. Also want FTF A3R, GDC, ERS. Kurt Romig, 4168 Watson, Holt, MI 48842, (517) 699-8148.

NE: Looking for a mature FTF player to play campaign and scenarios for ASL 3R, AFD, TRI and WSIM. Carl Nardin, 5203 N. 85th St., Omaha, NE 68134, (402) 571-6838.

NJ: Adult gamer seeks FTF GOA or TRC. Also wanted: games or parts for GOA. Jim Chambers, 87 Candace La., Chatham, NJ 07928, (201) 635-2096.

NY: PBM/FTF FRED/STC. GMaster seeking players for PBM 1980/1996 Machiavelli 8/9-player variants. Subscribe to AHIK's Premiere PBM multiplayer magazine. BlutUndEisen. FTF 1776, MA. Stuart Schoenberger, P.O. Box 510, Jamaica, NY 11435-0510, (718) 262-3402.

NY: TP:S opponent wanted by 28 y.o. for FTF play. Anthony Burnet, PO Box 1472, Massapequa, NY 11758, (516) 731-4354.

NY: WWII Hobbyist seeks opponents for most WWII simulations. Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse area. Ray J. Rairie, 30 Gemini Cir., Rochester, NY 14606, (716) 247-6943.

PA: Adult gamers living in the S.W. PA area wanted for FTF gaming. Play most board games and NPB. Tom Semian, 316 S. Home Ave., Avalon, PA 15202, (412) 761-8794.

PA: Wanted, adult opponents for ASL on weekends. Dave Shrader, 405 Old Airport Rd., Blairsville, PA 15717.

TX: Interested in amateur multi-player play-by-mail gaming? Send a SASE for a sample of Pontevedria; the list of North American 'zines and GMs. W. Andrew York, POB 2307, Universal City, TX 78143.

UT: Will buy: Bulge '81, G-Burg '77, Bull Run, Panzer Armee Afrika, Chancellorsville, Fortress Europa, Fury in the West. Kevin Thomason, 261 E. 300 South, Suite 325, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.

UT: AvalonCon team members and roommates wanted–call (801) 523-0571 or email jpack@sisna.com. John Pack, 1216 E. Tamara St., Sandy, UT 84094.

VA: Opponents wanted for FTF CASS, TPS, SOJ, VG Fleet Series, others. PBM Pax Brit, GOA, EIA, VG, Civil War. Alex Sanders, PO Box 791, Fairfax, VA 22030, (703) 591-0962.

VA: ASL gamers of Northern Virginia can playtest new scenarios, play old scenarios, new players are welcome to learn ASL. Jim Stahler, 7777 Willow Point Dr., Falls Church, VA 22042, (703) 698-7142.

VA: Looking for FTF ASL in No. VA. 30 yr. getting back into the game. Also FTP and TLD. Mike Panchvshyn, 714 Palmer Dr., Herndon, VA 20170, (703) 742-0791.

VA: Experienced gamer wants FTF opponents in Fredericksburg, Orange, Charlottesville, Culpepper area. Most AH/VG games. Prefer AREA. Write first, please! Rod Coffey, 16201 Monrovia Rd., Orange, VA 22960.

WA: Wanted: C&O/B&O, AH Train Game from early 70's. Tim Thorp, 3332 Hoyt Ave., Everett, WA 98201, (206) 388-0267.

CLUBS

CO: Volunteers needed to join the glorious ranks of the Colorado COMMISSARY, the area's most fun-loving game club. Contact Scott Johnson, 2039 Shiloh Dr., Castle Rock, CO 80104, (303) 660-2029.

FL: Join our growing gaming group in Sarasota, FL. For more info call Mike Bakken at (941) 355-3429, e-mail: M.BAKKEN@GENIE.GEIS.COM. 5016 Medalist Rd., Sarasota, FL 34243.

IL: Windy city wargamers meet 4 times a month. We play it all; ASL, A3R, VIP, DIP, monthly newsletter with ASL, VIP and DIP games. Louie Tokarz, 5724 W. 106 St., Chicago Ridge, IL 60415, (708) 857-7060.

JAPAN: AHIKS Asia-Australasia PBM Games: DIP, CDP, BRI, REN, CIV, EIA, GER, MAH, ROR, COLD. Kevin Burns, 2659-4 Tsukahara, Minami Ashigara Shi, Kanagawa 250-01 Japan.

MA: Vanguard Hobby Club meets first Saturday of each month. Over 50 members. Historical board games, miniatures, role-playing and cards. Michael Powell, Easton, MA. Call (508) 324-9815 after 7.

MD: Local players needed to maintain 25 year tradition of 30-member AH Football Strategy League. 16-game season plus playoffs begin in September. Don Greenwood, 1541 Redfield Rd., Bel Air, MD 21015, (410) 893-0380.

NC: PAW, The Piedmont Area Wargamers is recruiting ASL players in the NC Triad area. All levels of play welcome. Call for more information. Contact Doug Maston, 4 Three Meadows Ct., Greensboro, NC 27455, (910) 282-0552.

NH: Nashua, LeMarshalate, a 20-year-old wargaming club looking for new members. Meetings in Nashua on the 3rd Sat. of month. Call (603) 428-7037 or write to PO Box 221, Henniker, NH 03242.

NJ: Jersey Association of Wargamers. Meets twice monthly, one Saturday, one Sunday, in Park Ridge, NJ 1:00 pm–12:00 am. Historical Miniatures and Boardgames. Call (201) 427-8340 for dates and events, or contact Dan Foley at (914) 638-1136 or Bob Dwyer @73642.3620@compuserve.com. JAG, PO Box 167, Waldwick, NJ 07463-0167.

NY: Metropolitan Wargamers Club Brooklyn boasts its own 2000 square foot loft for boardgames and miniatures. Safe location near subway, ample parking, open every weekend. Joe Brophy, 16 Beachfront La., New Rochelle, NY 10805, (914) 636-6317 (eve.)

NY: Mid-Hudson Area Wargaming Society (MAWS). We meet monthly in the Poughkeepsie, NY area and play many different wargames (no RPG's). Beginners are welcome. Contact Barry Smith at (914) 778-5440. 104676.1161@compuserve.com, or 9E Squire Vlg. Walden, NY 12586.

PA: Central PA Strategists Club. Meetings are held 9:30 to5 on the 2nd and 4th Sat. of every month at the East Shore (Colonial Park) branch of the Dauphin County Library just outside Harrisburg. Call Charles Hickok at (717) 599-5603.

SC: Chas. Lowcountry Wargamers, 113 Wisteria Rd., Goose Creek, SC 29445, 553-0987.

VA: Sunday Board Games at Fantastix on Broad Street, 12-5 pm. Acquire, ABN, 1830, MOV, RBN. Brought to you by Rage–Richmond area gaming enthusiasts. Jack Jaeger, 9518 Drayton Cir., Glen Allen, VA 23060.

FOREIGN

Canada: Winnipeg ASL Club, Winnipeg, MB Canada, Contact: Jim McLeod, Tel: (204) 783-3649, E-Mail: j.mcleod15@genie.com, any and all ASL players welcome.

Japan: Japans international gamers guild PBM games: CDP, CWR, DIP, Junta, Samurai, 1812, 1759, GER Kevin Burns, 2659-4 Tsukahara, Minami, Ashigara Shi, Kanagawa, 250-01 Japan.

Japan: Opponents wanted: PBM Col. Dip., Quebec Libre, Canadian Civil War, Indianomacy Dip Variant, United Nations and others: Kevin Burns, 2659-4 Tsukahara, Minami Ashigara, Kanagawa, 250-01 Japan.

The Netherlands: Gaming organization "Het Duivelsei". Srecko Suznjevic. My Email is ssuznjev@wi.leidenuniv.nl. Our Homepage is at: http://www.wi.leidenuniv.nl/~ssuznjev/DuivelsEI.html

FOR SALE

CA: GENERALS for sale / trade. Vol.15, Nos. 2&3, and others. Send SASE for prices or call during reasonable Pacific Coast times. Anyone have Alesia? Matthew Shirley, 2137 Cherrywood Ct., Hamford, CA 93230, (209) 584-4574.

FL: BL, SUB, FL, PAA. All games in excellent to good condition. $15.00 per game will cover all cost. Ron D'Oria, 140 NE 58th St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33334, (954) 772-9897.

ID: Relative left me several boxes of wargames: PZB, PZL & Variant, G88, Bulge 2nd Ed., TPS, FPR and others. Warren R. Hallum, PO Box 51965, Idaho Falls, ID 83405-1965.

IL: AH games, other games and books. Reasonable prices. For listing send SASE to Earl Ferguson, 2217 W. Mackinac Ct. Peoria, IL 61614, (309) 692-0458.

NV: Many discontinued AH games for sale. You name it, I probably have it. Please send SASE for complete list to: Bruce Nelson, 1309 Rainbow Meadows, Las Vegas, NV 89128.

PA: Many wargames, magazines and books for sale at reasonable prices. Send SASE for list. Tom Semian, 316 S. Home Ave. Avalon, PA 15202, (412) 761-8794.

PA: New listing send a SASE to Walter H. Dippel, 4033 Valley Vue Dr., Gibsonia, PA 15044-9502.

TX: For Trade or Sale. Send SASE for list of out of print AH games (inc. sports games). Also out of print issues of The General, Forrest Worthen, Rt. 2 Box 473, Big Sandy, TX 75755.

SPECIAL RULE

The Lombards may never build fleets or convert military units into fleets. Their army units, however, may be convoyed by other powers per the normal convoy rules.

PLAYER VARIANTS

Two Players: One player takes France and the Papacy, the other player takes the Byzantines. All Lombard units are considered to be inactive.

Three Players: One player takes France and the Papacy, one player takes the Lombards, and the third player takes the Byzantines.

Four Players: Each player takes one of the powers.

SCENARIO VI
EMPIRE AND INVADERS: 1051-1100

By the beginning of the new millennium, the Holy Roman Empire under Otto I had succeeded both in invading northern Italy and in establishing control of the area. In return for Otto's promise to recognize Papal power over central Italy, the Pope agreed to crown him Emperor. Otto, however, counterclaimed the right to confirm Papal elections. Thus were sown the seeds of conflict between Empire and Papacy concerning the exercise of competing spiritual and temporal powers. The conflict was to last for centuries. Under Imperial rule, northern Italy divided into two rival camps: the Guelphs (pro-Papal) and the Ghibellines (pro-Empire). All during this period, however, despite theoretical allegiance to the Emperor, northern Italian cities (especially Pisa and Venice) developed autonomously as small, but powerful, city states.

In the south, the Duchy of Benevento (a remnant of the original Lombard Kingdom) conducted a desultory war with Byzantium. The conflict succeeded only in weakening both sides. Thus, when the Normans under Robert Guiscard invaded the area in the second half of the eleventh century, they met little organized resistance. By 1071, both Lombard and Byzantine power had been effectively wiped out. The Normans were pro-Papal, and their military might and able administration greatly increased the prestige of the Papal See to the detriment of the Empire. Toward the end of the century, Robert's brother Roger extended Norman control in the Mediterranean with a successful invasion of Sicily, seizing it from the Muslims, who had themselves taken the island from the Eastern Roman Empire in 865.

START DATE: Spring 1051
SETUP

NORMANS (use Neapolitan units): Tyrrhenian Sea (F), Gulf of Naples (F) and Naples (A). Treasury: four ducats. Only Naples is considered a home province of the Normans.

BYZANTINES (use Milanese units): Salerno (A), Otranto (A), Ragusa (F), Albania and Durazzo. Treasury: six ducats.

PAPACY: Rome (A), Patrimony, Perugia (A) and Arezzo (A). Treasury: three ducats.

VENICE: Venice (F), Padua (A) and Treviso (A). Treasury: six ducats.

MUSLIMS (use Turkish units): Tunis, Central Mediterranean (F), Palermo (A) and Messina (A). Treasury: six ducats.

PISA: (use Florentine units): Pisa (F), Lucca (A) and Piombino (A). Treasury: 4 ducats.

HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE (use Austrian units): Milan (A), Pavia (A) and Cremona (A). Treasury: five ducats.

LOMBARDS (use French units): Ancona (A) and Bari (A).

AUTONOMOUS GARRISONS: One each in Turin, Montferrat, Genoa, Trent, Mantua, Modena, Ferrara, Bologna, Florence and Siena.

NEUTRAL PROVINCES: Avignon, Marseille, Provence, Savoy, Saluzzo, Swiss, Tyrol, Austria, Hungary and Slavonia.

VARIABLE INCOME (Advanced)

A. The Papacy and Venice receive variable income as indicated on the chart.

B. The Holy Roman Empire receives the variable income indicated for Austria on the chart.

C. The Byzantine player receives the variable income indicated for Milan, but DOES NOT need to control Milan to receive this income. No other power may receive the variable income for Milan.

D. The Muslims receive the variable income indicated for the Turks.

E. The Pisan player receives the variable income indicated for Florence, but DOES NOT need to control Florence to receive this income. No other power may receive the variable income for Florence.

F. The Normans receive the variable income indicated for France.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Games with Five or More Players: The winner is the first player to control at least 12 cities (fortified or unfortified) at the start of a spring turn.

Games with Four or Fewer Players: The winner is the first player to control at least 15 cities (fortified or unfortified) at the start of a spring turn.

SPECIAL RULES

1. The Holy Roman Empire may never build fleets or convert military units to fleets. Their army units, however, may be convoyed by other powers per the normal convoy rules.

2. The Normans are slated to receive more military units at the beginning of the game than they have cities to support them. If they do not control sufficient cities to support the number of units they possess by the military unit adjustment phase of the next spring turn (1052), they must eliminate the extra units per the normal rule for unit removal (4.1). The Normans possess only one home province/city (Naples). However, as an exception to the normal rule for placing new units (4.2), the Norman player can place new units in Naples and/or in any other Norman-controlled provinces/cities subject to the other restrictions of rule 4.2.

3. The two Lombard army units are considered to be inactive.

PLAYER VARIANTS

Two Players: The Muslims, Pisa and the Holy Roman Empire are considered inactive. One player takes the Papacy and Venice, the other player takes the Byzantines and the Normans.

Three Players: The Muslims are considered inactive. One player takes the Normans and the Byzantines, one player takes Rome and Pisa, the third player takes the Holy Roman Empire and Venice.

Four Players: The Muslims, Pisa and the Holy Roman Empire are considered inactive. Each player takes any one of the remaining powers.

Five Players: The Muslims and Pisa are considered inactive. Each player takes any one of the remaining powers.

Six Players: The Muslims are considered inactive. Each player takes any one of the remaining powers.

Seven Players: Each player takes one of the powers.

SCENARIO VII
PAPAL ASCENDANCY AND MONGOL THREAT: 1177-1250

In 1176, the Holy Roman Empire's control of northern Italy was dealt a severe blow when the "Lombard League," under the leadership of Milan, defeated an Imperial army at the battle of Legnano. Then, when dynastic struggles erupted in Germany, the Papacy was able to strengthen its hold over the Papal States under the able leadership of Pope Innocent III. In the south, however, the Empire fared better. The marriage of Emperor Henry VI to Norman princess Constance of Sicily helped ensure the spread of Imperial influence to Naples and Palermo. In fact, their son, Frederick II, was to rule the Empire largely from Sicily.

During this time, while the fortunes of Byzantium declined, those of smaller kingdoms within its borders rose. This was especially true of Hungary and Serbia, which developed into small but powerful principalities. Venice, too, basking in its wealth as one of the dominant commercial powers of the Mediterranean, made good use of the increased trading opportunities engendered by the collapse of Byzantium and the rise of the Crusader States. However, the ever-present threat of Mongol invasion loomed over all of Europe. During this period, the Mongols swept through Asia, the Middle East, Russia and Central Europe, and seemed to be on the brink of crushing Vienna and Venice. It was only the fortuitous death of Ogodai Khan which caused Mongol armies to retire to Asia, never again to threaten Europe.

START DATE: Spring 1177
SETUP

HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE (use Neapolitan units): Messina (F), Palermo (A), Naples (F) and Bari (A). Treasury: two ducats.

PAPACY: Rome (A), Patrimony, Perugia (A), Arezzo (A), Florence (A) and Pisa (F). Treasury: four ducats.

VENICE: Venice (F), Dalmatia (F), Padua (A), Treviso (A) and Ferrara (A). Treasury: six ducats.

MILAN: Milan (A), Trent (A), Cremona (A), Mantua (A) and Modena (A). Treasury: six ducats.

MONGOLS (Use Austrian units.): Austria (A), Tyrol (A), Hungary (A), Carniola (A) and Croatia (A). Treasury: five ducats.

AUTONOMOUS GARRISONS: One each in Turin, Montferrat, Genoa, Pavia, Lucca, Bologna, Siena, Piombino, Ancona, Tunis, Ragusa and Durazzo.

NEUTRAL PROVINCES: Avignon, Marseille, Provence, Savoy, Saluzzo and Swiss.

VARIABLE INCOME (Advanced)

A. The Papacy, Venice and Milan receive variable income as indicated on the chart.

B. The Holy Roman Empire player receives the variable income indicated for Naples, but DOES NOT need to control Naples to receive this income. No other power may receive the variable income for Naples.

C. The Mongols receive the variable income indicated for Austria.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Games with Five or More Players: The winner is the first player to control at least 13 cities (fortified or unfortified) at the start of a spring turn.

Games with Four or Three Players: The winner is the first player to control at least 15 cities (fortified or unfortified) at the start of a spring turn.

Games with Two Players: The winner is the first player to control at least 18 cities (fortified or unfortified) at the start of a spring turn.

SPECIAL RULES

Mongol units are placed on the board only in a five-player game. In games with fewer than five players, all the beginning home provinces of the Mongol player (Tyrol, Austria, Hungary, Carniola and Croatia) are considered to be neutral provinces.

PLAYER VARIANTS

Two Players: One player takes the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire, while the other player takes Milan and Venice.

Three Players: The Holy Roman Empire units are not placed on board; their home provinces are considered neutral. Each player takes any one of the remaining powers.

Four Players: Each player takes any one power other than the Mongols.

Five Players: Each player takes one of the powers.

SCENARIO VIII
TO THE RENAISSANCE: 1250-1300

As a result of both continual opposition by the Papacy and the rising influence of the Italian city states, the Holy Roman Empire's hold on northern Italy was virtually at an end. In the south too, the descendants of Frederick II found their power stripped from them by the active cooperation between Pope Urban IV and his French favorite, Charles of Anjou. Charles brought an army to southern Italy, defeated Frederick's son Manfred in battle, and seized what was left of Imperial power there, calling himself King of Naples. Deeply resenting French influence in their affairs, the Sicilians called upon Pedro III of Aragon (who was related to Frederick by marriage) for military assistance. Pedro defeated Charles and became King of Sicily. In the ensuing years Pedro's descendants extended the power of Aragon to include both Corsica and Sardinia. Thus, by the end of the century, southern Italy was divided between the French and the Spanish. The Holy Roman Empire had been effectively excluded from the Italian peninsula.

In the north, the trade rivalries between Venice and Genoa had led to open warfare.

Genoa, in this period, gained the upper hand and reached the peak of its power and prestige. (It was at this time that Marco Polo, who had since returned from China, was captured by the Genoese and imprisoned.) Milan also grew in importance as the leading manufacturing center on the Lombard plain, while Florence on the other side of the Apennines began to acquire neighboring lands and to increase its military muscle. In a short period of time, Florence became the cultural capital of Europe and the birthplace of the Renaissance.

START DATE: Spring 1253
SETUP

PAPACY: Rome (A), Patrimony, Perugia (A) and Ancona (F). Treasury: four ducats.

VENICE: Venice (F), Padua (A) and Ferrara (A). Treasury: six ducats.

MILAN: Milan (A), Pavia (A) and Cremona (A). Treasury: six ducats.

GENOA (use Austrian units.): Genoa (F), Savoy (F) and Modena (A). Treasury: six ducats.

FLORENCE: Florence (A), Pisa (A) and Piombino (A). Treasury: four ducats.

ARAGON (use Turkish units.): Palermo (A), Messina (F) and Sardinia (F). Treasury: six ducats.

AVIGNON (use French units.): Avignon (A), Marseille (F), Naples (A) and Bari (F). Treasury: eight ducats.

AUTONOMOUS GARRISONS: One each in Turin, Montferrat, Saluzzo, Trent, Lucca, Bologna, Siena, Arezzo, Treviso, Ragusa and Durazzo.

NEUTRAL PROVINCES: Austria and Hungary.

VARIABLE INCOME (Advanced)

A. The Papacy, Venice, Florence and Milan receive normal variable income as indicated on the chart.

B. Genoa receives the variable income indicated for Genoa, but DOES NOT need to control Genoa to receive this income. No other power may receive the variable income for Genoa. The three ducats for the city of Genoa are collected by any power controlling the city as in the normal rules.

C. Aragon receives the variable income indicated for Austria.

D. Avignon receives the variable income indicated for Naples, but DOES NOT need to control Naples to receive this income. No other power may receive the variable income for Naples.

PLAYER VARIANTS

Two Players: Treat Avignon as inactive. One player takes Venice, Milan and Genoa, while the second player takes the remaining three powers.

Three Players: Treat Avignon as inactive. One player takes the Papacy and Florence, one takes Venice and Milan, and the third player takes Aragon and Genoa.

Four Players: Treat Avignon as inactive. One player takes the Papacy and Florence, one takes Genoa and Milan, one takes Aragon, and the fourth player takes Venice.

Five Players: Treat Avignon and Aragon as inactive. Each player takes any one of the remaining powers.

Six Players: Treat Avignon as inactive. Each player takes any one of the remaining powers.

Seven Players: Each player takes one of the powers.

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SERIES REPLAY...
(Continued from pg. 39)

easy Bunker Busting win in August before going down dramatically (all but wiped out) in September during Mission 8, Patrol).

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

After Neil collects his company together, he sees he has three leaders, ten and a half squads, a MMG, a mortar team and three bazooka teams. None are fanatic and there are no heroes, so the company gets no modifications to the improvement process.

The first check is for leader promotion. That can't happen because Neil lost the mission, but nobody gets demoted either, because he stayed on the field.

Next, he rolls to see if any squads are improved, but none are hardened.

Then, he should not have rolled on the replacement table and should have considered himself lucky that he had a reinforced company when he took on this first mission. Upper command has realized their error and Neil's company will *not* be receiving any more guys this month (he's overstrength by a squad and a half now, so they should be taking away men).

Since he thought he was understrength and deserved more men, Neil must have rolled well. The only modifier is the number of squad equivalents over one that the company is short. It is extremely tough to be successful on this roll unless the company is really shot up.

He lost some equipment, but gets an automatic crew to man the mortar he retained. The HMG can be doled out within the company as he sees fit.

It is interesting, but not surprising, that Neil's company lasted only four months. Perhaps I am more conservative, but I found it possible to take German and Russian companies from the start of hostilities to nearly the end of the war. In each case, I had positive net campaign game points at the time I stopped. However, I was much more willing to bug out and choose my winnable missions than Neil has been here. I tried to ensure the safety of the company and to minimize losses. This is a much different game than standard *ASL* in that respect. Except for a few scenarios, the regular game does not force a player to protect his units from destruction (*Historical ASL* campaign games being a major exception and even these guarantee replacements to cover most losses).

SASL campaigns can be agonizing to play, but also very rewarding. I became very proud when my Russian company attained Guard status. I also felt despair when my German unit was pulled out of the line for two months to rest and refit until it could be brought up to minimum strength.

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TECH TIPS

Common Problems and Solutions for Avalon Hill Computer Games
By J.C. Connors

WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN

A new Wooden Ships & Iron Men Scenario Pack is now available! Avalon Hill has just released the *Wooden Ships & Iron Men* scenario pack, which is available for free on our website (http://www.avalonhill.com). The first scenario pack includes eight new scenarios from back issues of *The GENERAL*, including:

Pirate Scenarios (Vol. 17, No. 6):
• Captain Kidd vs. *Adventure*
• Blackbeard vs. *Ranger* and *Ocracole*
• Bartholomew Roberts vs. *Great Ranger* and *Swallow*
• Henry Every vs. *Gang-i-Sawai*
• Battle of Mutara (fictional)

War of 1812 (Vol. 13, No. 2):
• Last Voyage of the *President*
• Cape St. Vincent
• Lake Champlain

We plan to upload a new scenario pack every month for the next several months. Be sure to check our web site periodically.

Problem: When I try to start the game, it flashes momentarily on the screen, then goes back to the DOS prompt.
Solution: Try using the command "wsim /v" to run the game. Be sure to include the space between wsim and the /v! If this does not help, check the version of mouse driver you are using for DOS. Many older mouse drivers that are not 100% compatible will cause the same problem. Make sure you are using a Microsoft mouse driver, version 8.30 or higher.

Problem: I downloaded the Scenario Pack, but it won't appear in the game.
Solution: Copy the new scenarios into your WSIM\SCENARIO directory. They'll run fine once you do that.

Problem: The scenario editor keeps crashing on me.
Solution: If you only have 8 mb ram, you'll need the 1.02 patch.

CAVEWARS

Problem: The game can't find the correct video mode when it loads.
Solution: Your video card needs to be VESA 1.2 compliant. Be sure you have the latest DOS and Windows drivers for your video card (contact your card's manufacturer for details). Also, try running the freeware program UNIVBE.EXE before you try running the game.

Problem: I have a Sierra Screamin' 3D video card and the game won't run.
Solution: Right now, the game is incompatible with Sierra's 3D card. We're working with Sierra right now to fix this problem.

Problem: I want to adjust the number of cavern levels in the game.
Solution: This is a new feature made available in version 1.11. Download the update for the game.

OVER THE REICH (WINDOWS 95)
Problem: When I try to run the game, I get the error "Cannot find dsound.dll."
Solution: You need to install the 16-bit version of the game. Copy OTR31.EXE (from the \OTR directory on your CD-ROM) into your c:\OVRREICH directory. Now run this program from your Windows Explorer. If this doesn't work, try reinstalling Quicktime (from the \INSTALL\FILES directory on the CD-ROM). You can modify your shortcut for *OVER THE REICH* to run the OTR31.EXE file; check your Windows 95 documentation for instructions on how to do this.

THIRD REICH PC
Problem: I've played the game and saved a turn, but when I try to reload it, I get only "previous choices" and "done" as options. Choosing "previous choices" crashes the game.
Solution: The problem is caused by having only one saved game. Save two games under different names and you can load either. The latest update to the game fixes this problem.

Problem: I am trying to do exploitation combat, it is only allowing me to exploit two hexes, and I cannot create a chain.
Solution: Read carefully section 5.46J of the Operations Manual. You first move the first exploiting armor its two hexes. Select the second exploiting armor, then click on the hex currently occupied by the previously-moved unit (in this case, the first exploiting armor). The second armor unit will "jump" there, and you can then move it two hexes past that.

Problem: The game keeps freezing when doing the computer's SR phase.
Solution: The latest update corrects that problem, which occurs under Win95.

Problem: France won't fall!
Solution: This was an odd bug that popped up in version 1.36. Download the newer version (1.37).

Current Versions of Avalon Hill Games

OVER THE REICH—IBM PC & Mac
CD-ROM
Original Version 1.00
Current Version 1.01
Available Upgrade v1.00 to v1.01
Note: Separate patches cover Windows 95, Windows 3.1 and Macintosh versions.

CAVEWARS—IBM PC
CD-ROM
Original Version 1.00
Current Version 1.11
Available Upgrade v1.00 to v1.11

Wooden Ships & Iron Men—IBM PC
CD-ROM
Original Version 1.00
Current Version 1.02
Available Upgrade v1.00 to v1.02

THIRD REICH—IBM PC
CD-ROM only
Original Version 1.1
Current Version 1.37
Available Upgrade v1.1 to 1.37

ADVANCED CIVILIZATION—IBM PC
CD-ROM only
Original v1.0
Current v1.01
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.01

D-DAY AMERICA INVADES—IBM PC & Mac
CD-ROM only
Original v1.0
Current v1.0
Available upgrade (1) IBM PC only

1830 RAILROADS & ROBBER BARONS—IBM PC
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v1.2
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.2

STALINGRAD—IBM PC & Mac
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v2.0 for PC; v1.9 for Mac
Available upgrades v1.85 to v2.0 or v1.9

FLIGHT COMMANDER 2—IBM PC & Mac
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v1.04
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.04

5TH FLEET—IBM PC
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v1.2
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.2

OPERATION CRUSADER—IBM PC & Mac
Original Version 3.5" Disk
Current Version CD-ROM
Original v1.0 Mac 3.5" Disk
    v1.1 PC 3.5" Disk
Current v2.35 (Mac and PC CDROM)
Available upgrade v1.x to v2.35

KINGMAKER—IBM PC
3.5" Disk
Original Version 1.50
Current Version 1.52
Available upgrade v1.50 to v1.52

Check us out Online!
You can obtain demos, updates, screen shots, and online technical assistance through e-mail by accessing our areas on Compuserve, America Online, and our website, http://www.avalonhill.com. Use "GO" keyword "Avalon Hill" on either Compuserve or AOL. You can e-mail us directly at AHGAMES@AOL.COM, or 72662,1207 on Compuserve with your comments and questions.

Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition
Deploying into Line with *Age of Rifles*
By Mark G. McLaughlin

In an effort to appeal to a broader audience, The GENERAL is now accepting strategy tips articles on our competitor's computer games. Although I ask authors to also rate the game, understand that I want articles from authors who have played the game thoroughly, because they enjoyed it. The emphasis of the articles will be on ways to improve play of a game the reader probably already owns.

—SKT

Confederate General James Longstreet is alive and living in California. I have proof of this: I meet him every time I play against the computer in SSI's *Age of Rifles*.

Age of Rifles is the premier thinking-man's tactical wargame for the 19th Century. Units are regiments, batteries and squadrons, all depicted as if they were beautifully painted miniatures deployed on a table whose terrain would be the envy of any railroad model hobbyist. The units look and, more importantly, act like soldiers of the period. The artificial intelligence is brilliant at the highest levels. The computer does not cheat (or if it does so, it disguises its cheating very cleverly) or gain any undue numerical advantage. With few exceptions, the computer fights "by the book," and it appears as if that book was written by Longstreet.

Age of Rifles can be played against an AI of varying difficulty levels or against another person. It has an email interface and an excellent design-it-yourself system. Its designer, Norm Kroger, Jr. is famous for that style of game. He designed SSI's two previous wargame construction kits, along with a number of other top historical wargames, and the game editor function is his trademark. Of course, so many scenarios are already included with the game that I have not seen the need to design my own game yet.

Age of Rifles' 64 scenarios include almost all major (and many minor) engagements of the period between 1840 and 1905. Each can be fought on its own or as part of collection of battles that recreate the timelines of the American Civil War or of the Franco-Prussian, Mexican-American, Austro-Prussian or Russo-Japanese Wars. Nine battles of Queen Victoria's army are represented. These allow players to re-fight battles against Sikhs, Mahdists, Boxers and Zulus, or to indulge themselves in the romance of the Charge of the Light Brigade. Two battles not listed on the box are short, fast and worth the fight. One is the storming of the forts at Arica in the Chilean-Peruvian War and the other is the landing of the US Marines against the Kangwa Forts in Korea in the 1870s. This latter battle adds a whole flotilla of gunboats and warships of the American Pacific Squadron.

While the more obscure battles are the most unusual and most colorful, the treatment of the battles of the American Civil War are the heart and soul of this game. No other computer game on the market recreates the feel and flavor of the battles of 1861-1865. Nearly half of the scenarios are battles of the American Civil War and the AI is a better computer opponent than you'll find in any other Civil War game.

LIKE FACING LONGSTREET ON DISK

Age of Rifles lets you set the difficulty level at a very easy learning level if you want, which all but guarantees you a victory (your opponent will either just sit still or will hurl himself forward in uncoordinated, rash assaults).

At the top difficulty levels, you fight the reincarnation of James Longstreet. Like the famous Confederate general, the computer makes a plan,

Scenario Editor

Age of Rifles has an elegant, detailed, yet simple-to-use scenario design system. It is something that should be viewed, even if you do not plan to design a game or scenario. In the editor, you can see the full range of uniforms, flags, types of weapons and units available. It has a good terrain editor. SSI has a contest going for best scenarios, apparently with an eye to publishing the best of them as an add-on disk.

sets things up and proceeds forward only when it is ready. The computer uses terrain and overlapping fields of fire extremely well. It rarely pushes its troops to the exhaustion point. It does not take unwarranted risks. Though cautious, it is not timid. When this computer is ready to hit you, it hits hard and does not let up.

You can actually learn much from this computer.

SETTING UP THE BATTLES

Age of Rifles gives you a wide range of choices. You can decide to either build a game (using the editor) or play an existing one. If you choose to play a campaign, you will fight the battles of, say, the Mexican-American War in the order in which they occurred. There are eight campaigns that group the 64 battle scenarios together by conflict. The campaign feature links the battles together in the proper sequence and provides a bit of history to show each battle's relationship to the previous scenario. This is especially useful in campaigns whose objectives and history may be less well known by a gamer. It sets the stage for the fight and puts the battle in perspective. However, your victory or loss in one battle has no effect on the course of the war.

Once you choose the battle/campaign to fight, the computer offers you a list of rule toggles. The more rules you use, the better the game, except that I suggest toggling off automatic formations and automatic vitality recovery. With automatic formations, the computer officers choose their own formations, which speeds up play of the game a little. As formations effect everything from firepower to melee to movement, a player who plays with automatic formations is akin to a football coach telling his players "oh, just get on the field and play ball."

In this game, units can get tired if you push them too far or too fast. With automatic vitality recovery, they just bounce back like robots to full effectiveness every turn. My feeling is that you should have to watch how hard you push your troops. You will need to weigh the need for speed versus the risk of fighting a battle with exhausted, weakened units. Such units drop stragglers behind them as they push forward, lose morale, and become less effective. Balancing these contending concerns is the historical key to fighting battles of the period.

The rest of the "toggles" allow fog of war, weather, stragglers and reaction fire by units. Frantic fire lets units (at their own discretion, mind you) pop off as much ammunition as they can load

Rating	Category
🧠🧠🧠🧠	Mental Challenge
🖥️🖥️🖥️🖥️	AI Ability
H H H H H	Realism
♥♥♥◗	Excitement
👁️👁️👁️👁️	Artistic Appeal
CCCCC	Replayability
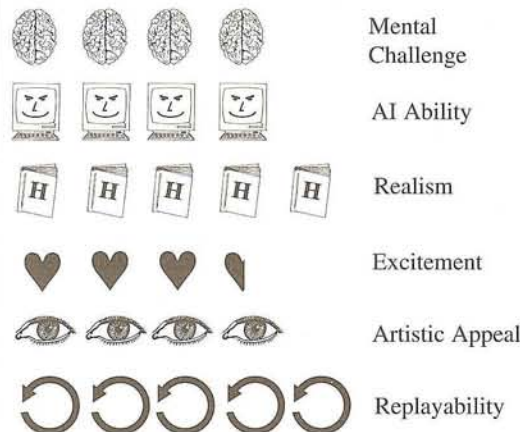
Rating icons range from one (wretched or ten years behind the state of the industry) to five (top 10% of industry). Four is good, three is passable (middle of the road for the industry) and two is not great (bottom third).

Create units with the scenario editor

and fire when mortally threatened. This adds to the unpredictability of the battle, as units may walk into storms of fire or be caught with their ammunition pouch empty. The "full undo" switch allows you to take back keyboard mistakes (but only the very last action you made). This saves on frustration. The variable turn initiative gets you away from a pure I-move, He moves game, making it possible for one side (or both) to get back-to-back moves.

THE FEEL OF BATTLE

Age of Rifles gives players a tremendous "you are there" feeling. The units look, move, fight, and act like soldiers of the period. They are not automatons. They get exhausted, run out of ammo, fall out of ranks and fail morale. Leaders who lead from the front frequently die out there. Leaders who sit safely in the rear tend to keep their troops moving but are sorely missed when it comes time to steady the line or push the men into that desperate bayonet charge.

The sound effects are nice. Bands play period music. You hear the tramp of marching feet, as infantry walk forward. You hear the horses gallop or the artillery caissons roll. The sound of a 12-pound Napoleon howitzer is loud and deep when it fires. A French gatling gun (*mitrailleuse*) rat-a-tat-tats in your ear and chews up the ground with a spattering of bullets on the screen. Flashes of explosions, clouds of smoke, shouts and screams of men and horses occur. You can even hear the rattling of canteens as panicked men throw away their gear (I kid you not).

As units take losses you get continual lists of dead, wounded, captured and missing. You learn of leader's rallying a wavering unit or of famous generals dying or being carried from the field. When people die, their corpses and shattered weapons litter the field. You can chart an attack by the trail of blood-stained bodies and broken cannons.

This game is as much a visual and aural delight as it is a brain-teaser.

YOUR FIRST ORDERS

At least half of the time the computer moves first and catches you napping. When you get your turn, the VERY FIRST THING you should do is click on any unit and hit the "Info" bar at the very top left of the screen. This will show you how many brigades/divisions are in your army, and the formation to which the unit belongs. It will show you if some of the higher formations are active or

not. Some formations are kept in reserve until a particular turn or enemy action frees them up—sort of a "McClellan at Antietam" factor. It will also let you know if you will be getting reinforcements, along with their composition and point of entry.

Click on the higher formation (brigade/ division) of the unit to get a breakdown of the individual units in that formation (showing names, manpower, weapons and status. The most important information is the "reaction status" of the formation. The computer almost always hands you an army whose reaction status is "wait," meaning that your units just stand there and take it. Change this immediately, and change it for EVERYBODY in your army BEFORE you move ANYBODY. It only takes one click per higher command. Thus, you need only click on one unit in each brigade to pull up the Info menu.

Which reaction you choose is a function of your plan and the scale of the game. At the largest scale battle (one hex is 400 yards), the variations between the choices are minor. At the smaller scale battles (one hex is 100 or 200 yards), the range at which you tell units to react is critical. In the battles of the end of the

Action in the Russo-Japanese War

century, units become equipped with long-range weapons that can fire half the distance across the screen. You can decide to either let your men hold their fire until they can see the "whites of their eyes" or you can pop off at anything that comes into range or you may choose either of two gradations that form the middle ground.

Units that have stood still during their own move have more movement points and vitality than units that moved a lot. A unit with more movement points/vitality has a better chance of shooting more than once during the other side's turn. You can use this reaction program to set up varying levels of fire in a zone. For example, you might want units you expect to get hit to hold their fire until the last while giving orders to fire at anything in range to supporting units on their flanks or on high ground behind.

The same options exist for cavalry, which can be ordered to charge at anything it sees or held in check with what amounts to a "charge if charged" order. Letting cavalry charge whatever it sees whenever it wants is ONLY a good idea if you put a unit out on an open, unknown flank.

Five Forks action in the Civil War

It will charge the head of column as it comes into view. That will force the enemy to stop, deploy and deal with your rash horsemen. They will kill all of your cavalry, but the charge will buy you some time. In all other circumstances, hold back your cavalry, usually out of the firing line. A "Near" reaction command will allow it to charge if any enemy comes immediately next to it (so they will not be caught flat-footed or shot to pieces), but will prevent them from doing a death or glory charge.

COMMANDERS

Command and control is important in *Age of Rifles*. Units stay within the radius of their leaders, move at full speed, receive replacements and ammunition, and recover morale. Units without leaders tend not to move, or move only one hex. If you plan to make a flank march or spread units out to cover a long line, watch where you place the leaders.

ARMY TYPES

How you fight a battle in *Age of Rifles* depends on the type of army which you command. The armies come in three basic types: those with little/limited firepower, those with considerable firepower and those with tremendous firepower.

Bayonets to the Front

The first type is the army with little firepower (Zulus, Mahdists, Boxers) or the army with limited firepower (both sides in the Mexican-American War, the 1840s/1850s British Empire battles or the "native" side in the later battles against Queen Victoria's Army). In these armies, you need to close and win the battle hand-to-hand. That means moving in march column, deploying into attack column, and going in with the bayonet. Musket units that try a shootout in line will usually crumble under massed attacks.

Except when facing a clear shot from enemy artillery, a player can maneuver his units by stacks (two units in a stack) and should always attack by stack. This maximizes their shock value. However, do not do this under artillery fire, because when a stack is hit by cannons both units will take casualties as a massed target.

If such firepower is a concern, move the units one at a time and then combine them in a stack adjacent to the target to be charged.

The player can then switch to the "stack" mode to give commands and send in the units together.

The game provides a higher level command that allows a player to move all units of a division/brigade at once (they move towards a particular point on the map at their own best pace). This can be useful if two or more stacks of units from the SAME higher formation (same division or brigade) are all adjacent to the same hex to be attacked. They will all charge together if you select the higher formation movement command (sort of a Pickett's Charge that works routine).

The battles fought with armies of little/limited firepower are essentially Napoleonic in concept. Hits on the flank or rear matter, but the big battalions usually win. Cavalry can ride supreme in these armies. The Sikh horsemen in the British Empire battles and, especially, the Mexican Lancers in the Mexican-American War should be feared. They can win a battle almost on their own, especially if they can hit an enemy on the flank or one whose vitality and morale have been sapped by overmarching. A unit that has taken a few casualties or is shaken by fire is especially vulnerable to a cavalry charge. Such charges often carry through to a second or third unit.

In this kind of battle, the key to victory is a mobile reserve ready to counterattack with saber or bayonet. Such a formation can stabilize a line or take advantage of an enemy who has broken your first line, only to stop before you exhausted and vulnerable.

Shoot Twice and Then Fix Bayonets

The second type of army is that which has considerable firepower. Most armies in most of the scenarios are of this type. Both sides in each of the American Civil, Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian Wars have long-range rifles and even longer-ranged artillery. These weapons enable armies on the defense to set up killing zones that will weaken any attack. They will not, however, stop all or even most attacks.

A canny player (or the computer) will move up some units to draw fire or shoot it out at long range. A second wave leap-frogs through this line, shakes out into line and opens fire at medium range. A third line then plunges in march column up through this medium line, forms up into columns and smashes into the weakened, already-fired defenders.

This kind of attack often takes two or three turns to set up, and works best when an enemy can be outflanked or at least extended. It is best to move units one at a time (instead of by stack or whole division) until right before the bayonet charge. One unit moves adjacent to the enemy. A second is then brought into the same hex and the two friendly units plunge into the adjacent enemy. This kind of timing is crucial, because if you do it wrong your attack will be shattered and your units will halt in front of the enemy.

In this type of matchup, defense is better than offense, but the offense still wins. An army nailed to a position or which depends only on standing and shooting will eventually be outmaneuvered, ground down and defeated. Battles are still very mobile affairs. The front lines should always be in line, or double line at worst, with skirmishers. A second line should be kept in more mobile attack formations. They can counterattack, take advantage of an enemy weakened by fire, or shake out into a firing line if necessary. Firepower will prepare ground, but only the bayonet will take it.

In these scenarios, artillery is the queen of the battle. Well-laid guns can break up an enemy line. Advancing with artillery is very difficult, however. It only works when you move up the guns AFTER you have moved infantry forward. The guns should NOT be moved past the infantry line, but mixed in with it. Unlimber the artillery on the front line, with infantry, thus giving your guns a chance to use reaction fire in the enemy turn. On your own turn, your guns can start the ball.

Cavalry in these battles is rare and relatively useless. It can scout, screen a flank or ride down already-broken units. It can grab a victory hex late in the game, if the enemy has left it ungarrisoned. Most cavalry in this type of battle gets to do one thing and then dies. If you use it, you lose it, so use it wisely (and keep it safe until then).

Pass the Ammunition

Some of the armies in some of the battles have TREMENDOUS firepower. The Russo-Japanese War scenarios are particularly brutal firefights. Fire and maneuver (and a good deep trench) win these battles. There is little place for the bayonet except for the occasional charge to either take a key position or run down a routed foe. In either case, the target must be thoroughly softened up by firepower.

BAD MATCHUPS

A few battles mix armies from different periods. The army with more firepower usually wins. Omdurrman (1898 in the Sudan) is one where armies from the far ends of the spectrum face each other. It plays much like the old arcade hit, *Space Invaders*. The Mahdists come at you in waves and die in waves. This is not much fun for either side. For the British it is mostly a fire and forget game; for the Mahdists it is an exercise in frustration. Either side can win, but put your money on the British. If you want any kind of a chance as the Mahdists, play against a stupid level for the AI.

This does not mean that firepower armies always beat those that do not have firepower. Islandhlwana is a good case of a battle in which spears beat rifles. The idea is to put so many people in such a small space that the boys with the rifles cannot kill them fast enough. The computer knows how to do this very well. As a Zulu, it simply overwhelms one part of the British line at a time. Its casualties are horrendous, but after each part of the British line crumbles, the next part is more easily overcome.

If you play Zulus, Boxers or Mahdists, remember this tactic. Run away on part of the field, concentrate your forces and hit with wave upon wave, all in the same turn, until you finally flow over part of their long and deadly lines. This means moving unit by unit and making sure that you do not choke up lines of advance with stacks (no unit can pass through a stack of two friendly units, ever).

Some of these mixed matchups are more obvious than others. Some sneak up on you, like the charge at Battery Wagner, which allows only one side to take advantage of its firepower. Solving puzzles like this makes you want to play this game over and over again.

★

More Shooting and Scooting
A Variant for *ASSASSIN*

By Bruce Reiff

*A*SSASSIN is a fun little beer and pretzels card game done before the onslaught of *collectible* card games. It is a fun way to whittle away an hour or so. However, it does have some drawbacks. How many times have you played and watched some poor sap sit in Vienna for at least half the game or more without moving? This happened in the 1996 AvalonCon *ASSASSIN* tournament finals. While a source of great amusement for the other players, this doesn't make for a very good game or for much fun for the afflicted player. There are 56 destination cards and only 30 of those connect to Vienna. Without one of those key 30 cards (out of a total of 251), you sit and watch everyone else go about their business. This kills the enthusiasm to replay a beer and pretzels game.

The other drawback to the game is the assassin card. If you have the assassin, you are never going to pass it until that third gun comes up. Why not? There's absolutely no incentive for you to do so. Why should you give other players the opportunity to score points? It doesn't cost you anything to hold the assassin in your hand. If you pass it, the only thing that can happen is that your opponents will score points. So, the lesson you learn quickly is to never pass it! Inevitably, the person who is dealt the assassin just sits on it until the third gun card comes out. He's the only one who can score points and he just sits there and smiles—hardly what the game should entail.

The following changes are designed to improve the game by making hits more likely and making it easier for players to make their way around the board. Bud's Basement Gamers, a division of the Columbus Area Boardgamers Society (CABS) has extensively playtested these rules and found them to be a better way to play than the original design. While not completely solving the above drawbacks every time, they certainly make for a better game.

The original rules apply except where noted. Do not use any of the options listed in the rules booklet (although #1 can be intriguing). Also, do not use any variants or optional rules from previous articles in *The GENERAL*.

TWO DRAW PILES

This variant uses two separate draw piles, one for destinations and one for all other cards. I will refer to them as the "destination" deck and the "other" deck. Remove the four guns and the assassin card. Then, separate the 56 destinations from the remaining cards.

Destination Deck. Shuffle the 56 destination cards and deal one to each player. Then, take ONE of the gun cards and shuffle it into the remaining destinations. Set these cards aside. They now form one of the two draw piles in the game.

Other Deck. Shuffle the other deck and count out six cards per player. Then add the assassin to these cards and shuffle thoroughly. Determine who goes first and start dealing these cards, beginning with that player so that each person has seven cards except the person going first, who has eight. Take the remaining THREE gun cards and shuffle them into the rest of the other deck and set them aside to form the second draw pile.

STARTING LOCATIONS

After each player reviews his hand, he secretly writes down the city in which he would like to begin. All players simultaneously reveal their chosen location and place the pawns on the map. A starting location does not have to be accessible to the destination card they were dealt (but it's a wise thing to do). You then begin play normally.

DRAWING CARDS

In the original game you normally are allowed on your turn to take the top discard or two cards from the draw pile. Since this version has two draw piles, new drawing rules are needed. On your turn, you must choose ONE of the following combinations: a) draw two cards from the other deck; b) draw one card from the other deck and one card from the destination deck; c) take the top card from the discard pile and one from the other deck; or d) take the top card from the discard pile and one from the destination deck. You may NEVER take two cards from the destination deck or from the discard pile. This keeps the destination deck from being depleted too quickly. If one pile becomes depleted before the other, then you just can no longer draw from that pile. We found in our tests that the destination pile always is depleted first, but not by much.

ASSASSINATIONS (OR "HITS")

Assassinations may begin immediately and are not subject to any rules about starting in the same locale. If you were unfortunate enough to start in the same city as the assassin, well then, that is just your tough luck.

A player may be hit in the same city twice by the same player as long as one of the players has completed a destination since the last hit. For example, Green hits Blue in London. Green then successfully goes to Paris and returns to London. Blue hasn't moved. Green may hit Blue again. The same would apply if Blue went to Paris and back to London. Green would still be able to hit Blue since one of the players has completed a destination since the last hit in that city. This is a change from the current rules which say both players must leave and return.

In the case of more than two players in a city, the assassin may hit them both on the same turn. Each player is treated independently of the other players. For example, Green hits Blue and Yellow in London. Yellow goes to Paris then back to London. Green can hit Yellow again. If Green goes to Paris and back he could hit both again. Also if Green hits Blue and Yellow in London and passes the assassin to Blue, then Blue can hit Green and Yellow! Conceivably, Blue could pass the assassin to Yellow and then Yellow could hit Green and Blue. These examples are just to point out that assassinations are now easier to do and how they work. This should encourage more movement in the game.

SCORING

Another change is the player making the hit does not score 100 points, but rather the player being hit loses 100 points. This should encourage the players to be a little more free about passing the assassin card around the table. After all, if player A hits B who hits C, and you're player D, they lose points and you don't. If you are nowhere near anyone, you can now benefit by passing the assassin. The ten legitimate target cards subtract an additional 50 points from the score of the player who is hit. The response play of an *Interpol Officer* or Innocent Bystander adds points back to the score of the player who has been hit. For example, Green hits Blue. Blue plays an Interpol Officer in response to the hit. Blue loses 100 points and then gains 100 points for a net loss of zero. If Green had played a *Legitimate Target* card as well, Blue would have lost 150 points and gained 100 for a net loss of 50 points.

The *I'm Not Here, I'm In Vienna* card nullifies the hit (no point loss) and moves the player being hit to Vienna as per the rules. You can play the *I'm Not Here* card while you are in Vienna. You are considered to be hiding deep in the city. You still lose all of your played destination, vehicle and mileage cards, but do get to count the *I'm Not Here* card as another destination and add it to your stack.

You still score the usual points for distance from the assassin and *Legitimate Targets* held in your hand when the game ends. NOTE: it is possible for you to score negative points in this version of *ASSASSIN*.

OTHER RULES

1. When a player draws a gun card, he need not specify the deck from which it came. He can say whatever he likes about it, but does not have to tell the truth. He cannot tell some players without telling the others. Whatever he says, if anything, about the deck from which the card came must be public. This gives the player with the misfortune of drawing a gun card some benefit from it.

2. Wild Card (this is an optional rule, but we love it). Remember when you opened up your new game and separated the cards and had that one extra card that was totally black? You wondered why they didn't make another destination or something? Well, here's your chance to use it as a wild card! You can use it as ANY card in the game. Shuffle it in with the 'other' deck and play it just as you normally would as the card it represents. You can hold it in your hand as long as you'd like. Once it is used, it is placed out of play so it can only be used once (or if you use it as a destination, place it aside to score the points). If you choose to use the wild card as the assassin, you can only do so once and it counts as one of your two cards played (as opposed to the regular card which doesn't). Deduct the points from the person hit and set the wild card aside. You can use the wild card as a gun as well. The most obvious use is to play it as the fourth gun card and end the game when you think the assassin is far away from you. This also means you could play one card (to complete a destination for example) and then play the wild card as a gun for your second play of the turn (a very nasty trick). This is the only time the wild card stays in play. You can also hold it in your hand until the game ends and use it as a *Legitimate Target* to score the 20 points. This card has plenty of good uses, now.

I hope that these suggestions will liven up your game of *ASSASSIN*. It's already a nice little game, but these additions should make it so all players are part of the movement and flow of the game.

★

Sports Special

By James C. Gordon

COACH THE GAME
STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL Variants

Anybody who knows me well understands that I have a deep passion for basketball (and I carry this to the extreme of officiating youth games—the most insane act of masochism I can imagine). The game of basketball is won by a combination of athletic prowess, disciplined play and smart thinking. My opinion of STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL *is that it involves too little of the latter. It is with great pleasure that I publish this variant, which gives the coach more options to ponder. Each has both benefits and liabilities, so think about them carefully and get into the game!—SKT*

These variant plays are for use with the current edition (1993) of *STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL*. The offensive plays enable a coach to direct the action to a specific player or type of play. The defensive plays enable a coach to call for more aggressive or more conservative play by his team. A coach may employ any play at any time except when restrictions are noted within the rules below.

OFFENSIVE PLAYS

1. INBOUNDS PLAY

The offensive coach may announce an inbounds pass to a specific player. On the inbounding FAC draw, consult the applicable line as usual, but a successful pass goes to Choice. The player receiving the inbounds pass has his assist rating increased by **one** point for the ensuing ADVANCE. During the last two minutes of the half or game, the player receiving the inbounds pass may attempt a forced shot immediately.

Limits: This option must be announced before use and is available only on inbounds plays at the start of a quarter or after: a successful field goal or free throw by the opposition, a play out of bounds to the defense, a non-shooting foul or a timeout.

Liabilities: The player receiving the ball must pass it, except during the last two minutes of the half or game. Against a press defense, the primary defender automatically succeeds with any possible steal resulting from the inbounds pass play, regardless of the steal rating of the defender and S# on the card.

2. SET SCREEN

After one ADVANCE, the offensive coach may announce the player he intends to be the screen setter. A pass directed to the player with the ball, including as a pass to choice, is resolved as an **open** shot. Any resulting defensive foul must be assessed against the primary

defender of either the player with the ball or the screen setter (defensive coach chooses which). If the play does not go to the player passing the ball or the screen setter, play is resolved normally.

Limits: This play may not be used with a fast break.

Liabilities: A pass directed to the player designated as the screen setter is a turnover to the defense out of bounds. Any resulting offensive foul is automatically called against the screen setter.

3. CRASH THE BOARDS

Before a shot from the floor is resolved, the offensive coach can designate any two of his players to crash the boards. Those two players make an extra effort to get inside position to rebound a missed shot. The rebound ratings for the two designated players are raised by **five** points each during the shot resolution. Any rebound result of High at the position of either designated rebounder goes to that player. A rebound result of High in Game goes to either player (determined by the offensive coach).

Limits: This option may not be used on consecutive possessions, except during the last two minutes of the half or game. This play may not be used by a team conducting a fast break nor by a team playing fast break defense.

Liabilities: The rebound rating for all other offensive players is reduced by **five** points each during the shot resolution. A shot number of 1-5 is offensive goaltending. A shot number of 96-100 is an offensive foul on one rebounder crashing the boards (chosen by the offensive coach). The opposing team receives a one-letter improvement in its final fast break column if it recovers the rebound and receives a fast break. A team already using the A column for fast breaks may choose (on non-fast break rebounds) to receive an automatic fast break with a pass to choice followed by a shot resolved normally.

4. SETUP PASS

After one ADVANCE, the offensive coach can declare a setup pass by announcing the player intended to be the shooter. If the pass goes to the intended shooter, add **three** points to his shot rating and resolve an open shot attempt. If the pass goes to the intended shooter due to being a pass to choice, add only **one** point to his shot rating and resolve an open shot attempt.

Limits: This option may not be used on consecutive possessions by the same team or with any fast break.

Liabilities: Ignore any assist results on the pass. The passer is ineligible to recover any rebound on the play—the primary defender recovers instead.

If the pass goes to the passer, the result is a 24-second violation. If the pass goes to another player, he must attempt a forced shot.

5. LOB PASS

Like with the setup pass, after one ADVANCE, the offensive coach can declare a lob pass by announcing the player intended to be the dunk shooter. If the pass goes to the designated dunker, the shot range of the dunk shooter is increased by adding his rebound rating. The defensive rating of the primary defender is ignored.

Limits: The lob pass may not be attempted on consecutive possessions by the same team. The lob pass may not be attempted against the sagging defense (see below).

Liabilities: A shot number of 1-5 is offensive goaltending. Any resulting offensive foul is against the dunk shooter. The passer and the dunker may not recover the rebound (such rebounds are recovered by the primary defender). Any pass result to the passer (other than pass to choice) is a turnover (out of bounds to the defense). Any pass to another player is resolved normally.

DEFENSIVE PLAYS

It is possible to call all of these five defensive strategies simultaneously.

6. AGGRESSIVE BLOCK ATTEMPT

Before a field goal attempt is resolved, the defensive coach may announce that the primary defender or the defensive player in the game with the highest block rating will attempt an aggressive block. A player's aggressive block rating is equal to double his standard block rating plus four points. A shot number which is lower than the defender's aggressive block rating is a blocked shot. A shot number of 50-59 is a blocked shot with the ball out of bounds to the offense.

Limits: Each player is limited to a number of aggressive block attempts during each game which is equal to his standard block rating. This may not be attempted during fast breaks or against shots by the intended shooter in a setup pass or lob pass play.

Liabilities: A shot number of 60-69 is a foul on the aggressive blocker. A shot number of 95-100 is defensive goaltending. A subsequent rebound directed to the aggressive blocker is recovered instead by the offensive player with the highest rebound rating.

7. AGGRESSIVE STEAL ATTEMPT

Before any ADVANCE, the defensive coach many announce that the primary defender or the defensive player with the highest steal rating will attempt an aggressive steal. A player's aggressive steal rating is equal to double his standard steal rating plus four points. If the shot number on the FAC drawn for the ADVANCE is lower than the defender's aggressive steal rating, then the result is a stolen pass. A shot number of 50-59 is a ball out of bounds to the defense.

Limits: Each player is limited to a number of aggressive steal attempts each game which is equal to his standard steal rating.

Liabilities: A shot number of 60-69 is a foul on the aggressive stealer. A shot number of 95-100 is a ball out of bounds to the offense. After a failed aggressive steal attempt, the offensive player may attempt an open shot immediately or pass the ball as an assisted pass.

8. LOOSE DEFENSE

After a timeout or foul, or prior to any ACTION pass resolution, either coach may announce that one or more of his players are playing loose defense, in order to reduce defensive fouls. Defensive fouls off ACTION or ADVANCE pass results are ignored when they are against a player playing loose defense (and not attempting an aggressive steal).

Limits: None—the conditions remain until the coach announces a reversal of this strategy.

Liabilities: Regular steal and block actions are ignored by players playing loose defense. The assist rating of an opposing player guarded by a player playing loose defense is increased by **two** points. Both shot ranges (field goal and 3-pt.) for each opposing player guarded by a player playing loose defense are increased by **three** points. The press defense may not be used by a team which has a player playing loose defense.

9. SAG DEFENSE

After a timeout or foul, or prior to any ACTION pass resolution, either coach may announce that his team is playing a sagging defense, in order to improve defensive rebounding and prevent inside shooting. The rebound ratings of all players on the team using the sag defense are increased by **five** points when that team is playing defense. The lob pass (see above) may not be attempted against a team using the sag defense.

Limits: None—the conditions remain in force until the coach announces a reversal of the strategy.

Liabilities: The shot rating for each opposing player is increased by **three** points. The three-point attempts ratings for each opposing player is doubled. The three-point shot rating for each opposing player is increased by two. Neither the press defense nor the three-point defense may be used while a team is using the sag defense strategy.

10. FAST BREAK DEFENSE

The fast break defense may be announced at any time by the team with possession of the ball. This strategy causes all fast breaks by the opposition to be resolved with column D. The opposing team also may not make a shot attempt after an ACTION pass.

Limits: None—the conditions remain in force until the coach announces a reversal of the strategy.

Liabilities: The rebound ratings for all players on the team using the fast break defense are decreased by **two** points when that team is on offense. Any rebounds directed to High at a position or High in Game cannot be recovered by a team using the fast break defense when that team is on offense. That rebound automatically goes to the corresponding defensive player instead. The press defense may not be used while a team is using the fast break defense strategy.

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AT THE KIOSK

By Glenn E. L. Petroski

Single Elimination

This is the first part of a series of columns by Glenn on tournament event formats. I asked him to write these to provide potential tournament game masters with ideas on ways to improve their events.

—SKT

In planning a tournament, one of the first considerations must be tournament event format. There are about a dozen basic format choices. However, the variations on these run well into the hundreds. As I discuss these thoughts on tournament formats, do not consider these as hard and fast rules. Many solutions to tournament problems must be game-specific, GM-specific or tournament-specific.

The most obvious place to begin is with single elimination (SE). It is simple and straightforward. Everyone understands the principles involved and how the system works, at least at the most basic level. SE dominates most thinking when it comes to any type of competition. Preconceived notions based on SE formats can get game masters (GMs) opting for other tournament formats into difficult positions.

In most discussions between GMs and their constituents, the examples of operation are based on 16, 32 or 64 players. These are all ideal numbers for SE events on two-player games. I have yet to have a tournament field any of these numbers exactly. Nor have all of the players remained to finish each round for which they were eligible. SE events among unseeded contestants are a problem when 41 players show up for a round.

The mentality of many GMs at AvalonCon is pro-SE. The prize structure, eight-player tournament qualifier, recommended procedure for awarding byes and most of the GM guidelines provided by the convention organizers are clearly based on a SE view of the world. This is in spite of the fact that Avalon Hill encourages GMs to use almost any other format.

SE is a system of tournament play in which any player, team or contestant, which loses a game drops out of the competition. In short, a single loss eliminates the competitor from the tournament (and at AvalonCon he mosies over to the next tournament and tries his hand at a different game). The SE format is the easiest to administer, and usually creates the fewest headaches. Once the initial brackets are established, pairing players against each other, all involved know what they have to do to win the tournament. If you lose once, that's it: you are out of the event. The winner of a game plays in the next round against another undefeated opponent. The winner of the event will finish the tournament undefeated. Second place goes to the last opponent defeated by the champion.

Unfortunately this is where SE runs out of steam. Assuming that there are four or more players involved, considerable argument can be made for who earns third place, etc. In fact, it is quite possible for the second best player to be eliminated in the very first round by the best player (yet, there is no clear gauge of that loser's ability). Strict SE events will not generate a truly valid placing beyond the champion.

If there is a prize or award structure for anything other than first or second place, the GM has a difficult task in differentiating among the players. Some sort of criteria, scoring system or series of tie-breakers should be established and given to players in advance of the start of the tournament. Clarity is essential, because at the time that the last match is finishing, the GM is under great pressure to finish the scoring, hand out prizes and awards, and to do so quickly!

The most common, but least ticklish, problem that occurs with SE is handling an odd number of players. What happens when 41 players show up for a two-player game? Or 37 for a Dip Tourney? Or any number that does not evenly divide into a perfect field? You should plan ahead for this contingency.

Each adjudication becomes a major decision. Should time constraints, or other circumstances, make adjudication necessary, the GM will carry a heavy load. Any player who is on the losing end of an adjudication is being eliminated and won't stand for unclear standards. The GM is deciding who will not have any further chance at the championship. Such decisions will not be popular. Unfortunately, due to time constraints and differing play styles, often a GM must adjudicate in order to get the next round started on time.

Strict SE has no provision for ties. Yet, some games provide for victory conditions in which the game ends in a tie. In *VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC*, the average is one tie per tournament. The GM must decide ahead of time if ties are mutual losses, mutual wins, half losses, etc. If both remain in the tournament, could they face each other in a rematch? A GM planning a tournament using SE needs a plan of action that answers these questions before they arise. The easiest solution is to say that both players involved in a tie are eliminated (thus discouraging mercy for their opponent). Another approach is to call it a half loss and advance the players until they lose or half-lose again (but this requires fluid brackets and match pairings on the fly). If there is time before the next round, the players could switch sides and play the game again with each other (this time only a winner can advance).

Two other objections to SE cannot be over-looked. First, player interest is squelched. To attend any tournament or convention, players commit some amount of time and expense. Using SE in a two-player game means that half of them are going to be real unhappy when told that they can go home after playing only one game. If it is a Diplomacy tournament, the unhappy percentage rises to 86%! Other multi-player games will face similar grim statistics. Do not expect attendance to increase for future events that so disappoint players who love the game. SE is therefore best suited to a large con-vention setting in which the first-round losers can easily enter another event of interest. Small conventions or single-game tournaments die early deaths when using SE formats.

Second, the luck factor weighs too heavily in the results. Every game we play involves some sort of luck factor, to a greater or lesser degree. In Diplomacy, luck is negligible. In *WAR AT SEA* the luck is often extreme. How many games have you played, of any title, that were actually decided by one last-ditch die roll? Basically, we are talking about games of skill. For the unknown, there is a luck factor involved. Really good players minimize that factor, but it never entirely goes away. SE has the very real potential of awarding the championship to a mediocre player who simply gets lucky once when it counts.

SE will eliminate superior players prema-turely, since any one unlucky loss will leave them out of the running. There is no come-back possibility—no room for error, no redemption. This allows the legitimacy of championships to be questioned.

SE is left with marks against it. Do not write it off entirely, but think hard before you choose it for your own event. Take a good look at the alternatives. If you choose the basic premise of SE, examine some modifications and variations.

As with any event, plan ahead.

In coming columns, I shall discuss a number of other formats. If you have a favorite, or varia-tion, I would like to hear about it. There are a number about which I know little or nothing.

Please take note! I have a new address and phone number, but remain eager to hear from you!

At your service,
Glen E.L. Petroski
6829 29th Avenue
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53143-1233
414-654-5044

LADDERS REPORTING IN:
WAR AND PEACE: Roger Cox is willing to GM a PBM competition. Who might be inter-ested? Contact Roger at 57 Coastline Drive, Inman, South Carolina 29349-9655.

PANZER BLITZ: Round one went quick! The slugfest continues! Contact Paul Martin, 1914-1971 Saint Laurent Blvd, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3P8.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE 1981: Second round comes to a finish! 12 players still in search of more victims! Contact Mark Poulson, 204 E Cannon, Lafayette, Colorado 86026.

AFRIKA KORPS CORRECTION: Joe Beard is on the top of his own ladder. However, there are 27 players, not 12 as previously reported. This is still not too many for Joe to handle. Contact Joe at 3822 E Sahuaro Dr, Phoenix, Arizona, 95028-3442.

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TOP A.R.E.A. RATINGS
Date of Standings: January 27, 1997

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC
Players on List: 187 Active Players: 113

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Alan Applebaum	2013	IKAF6
2	Michael S. Crowe	1950	CDI-5
3	Ray Freeman	1947	FHBD6
4	Timothy Proksch	1929	EH-D6
5	David Targonski	1922	IK-E5
6	Steven Packwood	1835	GJ-E6
7	Daniel R. Henry	1811	JLDF7
8	Michael A. Kaye	1800	CD-B6
9	Thomas Gregorio	1796	FICE5
10	Tom D. Johnston	1791	EG-E6
11	Edward O'Connor	1780	DD-B6
12	Neil Moran	1775	BB-A5
13	Bruce Kernan	1704	CB-B6
14	Glenn E.L. Petroski	1703	NMEG7
15	Kevin Kinsel	1699	BCD-6
16	Gregory J. Hanson	1694	IK-E5
17	Michael Knautz	1692	GI-E6
18	Michael A. Ussery	1684	HJBF6
19	Bill Thomson	1669	BDDA5
20	Robert Kondracki	1636	DE-C6

WAR AT SEA
Players on List: 157 Active Players: 63

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Steven Packwood	1819	DG-D6
2	Bruce A. Monnin	1803	GJHE6
3	Phillip Rennert	1800	DH-C6
4	Ray Freeman	1766	DHAC6
5	Timothy Hitchings	1717	DH-C6
6	Thomas Y. Scarborough	1707	CEBB5
7	Glenn E.L. Petroski	1686	BC--6
8	Bruce Reiff	1679	BC-A6
9	Vince Meconi	1650	DG-C6
10	Robert Mull	1647	BD-A6

DIPLOMACY
Players on List: 100 Active Players: 91

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Thomas Kobrin	1536	AH-A5
2	Sylvain Larose	1536	AH-A5
3	Buzz Eddy	1535	ADA-6
4	Steve Elliott	1535	ADA-6
5	Louie Tokarz	1528	AFB-6
6	Daniel Mathias	1527	AH-A5
7	Steve Nicewarmer	1527	AH-A5
8	Sean Smallman	1527	AH-A5
9	Greg S. Geyer	1524	AH-A5
10	Joseph Abrams	1524	AF-A5

Great Campaigns of the American Civil War
Players on List: 79 Active Players: 67

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Joseph Bellas	1917	EG-B6
2	Forrest Speck	1768	DG-B6
3	Paul Tisevich	1754	CE-A6
4	Edward Beach	1645	BD-B6
5	Trevor Bender	1643	DE-A6
6	Raymond Rooks	1640	CE-B6
7	Kenneth Lee	1640	AC-A5
8	Ed Connery	1587	AB-A6
9	Patrick Duffy	1586	AC-A6
10	Scott Smith	1573	AB--6

Qualifiers refer to quantities of Games played, Opponents played, PBM games, Tournament participation, and Year of last activity with later letters indicating greater quantitites and the number being the last digit of a year. For more information on the A.R.E.A. rating system, contact: Glenn Petroski, 6829 29th Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53143-1233, 414-654-5044

AvalonCon Highlights Continued
Part Two of Convention Coverage
By Stuart K. Tucker

Volume 31, Number 2 contained the first part of this two-part article which summarizes the competition at AvalonCon '96. The largest events were mentioned in the previous part. This part resumes coverage of the rest of the tournaments, grouped by categories not previously covered.

COMPUTER GAMES

FLIGHT COMMANDER 2   19 entrants

The preliminary round pitted *FC2* players against the computer, with the top 16 scores advancing to the four-round single elimination human opponent stage. Round 1 sent the players back to Korea in a classic Mig versus F-86 furball. The second round presented a scenario of total equality with F16Cs facing F16Cs. In round 3, players bid for sides in a large US vs. Russia air engagement. The final round was a custom scenario with hand-picked planes using 600 points. Stan Buck beat out Andrew Maly to take home the plaque.

WORLD AT WAR   16

Six PCs were hooked back-to-back for opponents to plot their moves simultaneously within a 15-minute time limit. Each single-elimination round lasted an average of three and a half hours but each match was scheduled at the convenience of the opponents to allow easier scheduling around participation in boardgame events. As terminals became available late in the convention, pickup games were held. Scenarios were assigned randomly (eligible scenarios were Hellfire Pass and To the Rescue from *OPERATION CRUSADER*, Manstein's Solution and Quiet Flows the Don from *STALINGRAD*, and Bradley's Nightmare from *D-DAY: AMERICA INVADES*) with fixed variants for balance. Opponents bid victory points for sides. The Soviets had trouble winning at Manstein, even with all variants in their favor, warranting a significant victory point bid for the Axis.

Last year's runner up, Eric Sposito, fell in the first round to his nemesis, Vince Alonso, in a hard fought battle of the Don scenario when his Soviets simply ran out of turns to capture their distant objectives against Alonso's "speed bump" defense. In one of the most exciting wins of the event, Eric Marr's unfavored Soviets managed to squeak by Steve Smith in a Don match that was agonizing to the end when a last-day blitz into a couple of unoccupied objectives achieved victory.

In the semifinals, Robert Jamelli's Soviets finally met their match against Mike McMain's spirited Axis defense in Don, when he encountered thin line after thin line of Axis defenders. In defending champion Alonso's semifinal match (in Bradley's Nightmare against first-timer Joe Sposito), Alonso ran into an Axis Nightmare, as far in the Axis rear area, a single surrounded and isolated US infantry battalion survived a massive

attack and retreated even deeper into the Axis rear. After depleting his best units retaking his rear objective, Sposito was able to snatch a slender victory by exploiting an unscreened northern mapedge approach to US-held objectives.

The final match against Mike McMain was almost anti-climactic. Manstein's Solution saw the Axis under Alonso for a second year in a row (with a 510 point bid) win over McMain. The Soviets valiantly tried the Kalach gambit, which brought their forces to the gates of the city. The Soviet situation became hopeless when McMain had not isolated the city by the time the massive German reinforcements arrived.

BUSINESS/FAMILY GAMES

1830   45

Using a single-elimination format, the first and second place finishers in each of nine five-player games advanced to the semi-finals, along with a few third-placers to fill out the field. In the five-player final, Christian Goetze took top honors, followed by Barry Gorski, Jeff Bakalchuck, Jim Stanard and Dave Platnick.

ACQUIRE   32

The *ACQ* event featured qualifying rounds in which the four highest scoring players advanced to the final game. Gary Moss entered the finals with nothing but wins, but faltered to finish third. Al Bingaman controlled the serpentine giant Imperial in the center of the board. His $700 margin of victory over David Plotnick depended on merging Worldwide into Imperial before Worldwide became immune to merger. Steve Packwood, who earned the most money in a qualifying round game ($60,500), came in fourth.

STOCKS & BONDS   26

To win this tournament you must accumulate the best combined money score in two playings of the game. Ken Gutermuth used the margin well and bailed out of Stryker one turn before everyone else to take a commanding lead after the first game. Those who didn't bail out went bankrupt (including the eventual winner and third-place players). Stryker was strong all game long in the second playing. Those who bailed out this time gave up on a winner. Andy Lewis rode the margin on Stryker most of the way (starting on turn 2) to pass Ken and capture the title. Gary Moss was third, having ridden Stryker on margin the entire way in the second game. The play of two games allows any opponent to make up for failure to surpass the leader during the first game.

Whereas the highly speculative stock Stryker Drilling makes for an exciting tournament, it is hardly an endorsement for the educational value of the game that our champion went broke once in the course of play. Recognizing the game's shortcomings, Avalon Hill is issuing a revised version of the game this year under the title STOCK MARKET GURU *which introduces a few more realistic elements to the game. Although the gaming goal of being best will still drive "high rollers" into speculative stocks, there'll be other effective ways to make money wisely that better mirror educated stock investing rather than casino gambling. Furthermore, more realistic risks of business failure will make Stryker Drilling a much less palatable gamble. See this issue's Coming Attractions column for more on this new release.—SKT*

OTHER DIPLOMATIC GAMES

REPUBLIC OF ROME   41

This event was held in two heats of the Middle Republic Scenario, with twelve players from the preliminary nine games advancing to a final round pair of games. Player success was judged based upon outright wins and total faction influence as a percentage of influence at the whole table.

In the heats, three victories came through Consul for Life votes, three came via most faction influence at the end, and two went to rebellious players. Tom Phillips led a Rebel army in victory over a Senatorial army led by no less than the Consul for Life (a title acquired soon after the assassination of Rome's leading senator)—all the while another player sat and watched his faction influence of 80 points fail to yield victory. At another table, Tony DeFeo timed his rebellion correctly as Rome fell before six simultaneous wars). Notably, each of the successful Consuls for Life snatched victory from players with more influence, showing that money talks in politics. In addition to the nine winners, three players with 28 per cent or more of their table's influence advanced.

In one final game, a Michael Corner-led Senate fell to foreign wars while Richard Launius was in rebellion. In the other game, the Senate survived to the end, allowing Michael Ehlers to eke out a victory (and tournament plaque) with just four influence more than Tom Phillips and only 22 per cent of the table's total.

ADVANCED CIVILIZATION   28

The 1996 *ACV* tournament was made more enjoyable by the full day break between rounds, which lowered the dropout rate compared to pre-

vious conventions. Joe Gunderson rode in from Indiana and decisively won first as Crete and then as Iberia in the final. In the final, he did it all and had the first score to break 5000 points in tournament history. Charlie Hickok finished second as Thrace. Doug Galullo played great in the final with Crete but slipped at the very end. Fourth place went to last year's champion, Mike Neal as Babylon. He suffered from everyone's determination that he not win it again (and he insisted on getting out in front). Mark Neale as Africa was 5th and Laura Ehlers as Assyria was 6th. Russell Mueller, hindered by calamities, as Illyria was 7th. Eric Gunderson (the champ's brother) was crushed by calamities, playing Egypt. As usual, wild trading, finger pointing, position bad mouthing, mental tension and subtle calculation all made this a great championship game of *ACV*.

EMPIRES IN ARMS 27

Four simultaneous marathon games of the 1805 Campaign took place. Players bid victory points for their countries with final standing in the overall tournament determined by percentage of required victory points adjusted for the number of turns played. This allowed for evaluation of end of weekend positions for those games that could not complete the 132 turns.

Each game quickly took on its own character, within the general theme of ganging up on France. Hwan Rhee ('95 co-winner) played France again, facing the wrath of Europe valiantly. At one point his Napoleon was faced by an allied army of more than 600 factors, including a preposterous cavalry force of 130 factors. Hwan prudently chose to withdraw, needing anything but a die roll of 6 to succeed. One of the convention's loudest roars erupted when he failed (*bringing to a halt the Roman senatorial debate in this editor's game of REPUBLIC OF ROME*).

Jim Chatham took home the honors of first place, followed by Mike Corner, John Clopton and Chris Frey.

PAX BRITANNICA 22

This tournament is run in a "duplicate" format. Each board faces the same pre-rolled events and other die roll resolutions, allowing for easy comparison of diplomatic skills in taking advantage of what fate deals the players.

At one board, Chris Carey (best Germany and second overall), Earl Anderson (best Russia and third), Richard Curtin (best France and fourth), Andrew Lewis and Albert White clearly demonstrated cooperative play. They fought two wars with the Ottoman Empire and three with the Chinese. Their Congress divided up Spain and Italy: Berbera and Morocco to France, Somalia and Philippines to Germany, Porto Rico and Cuba to the United States.

Another board witnessed three boxer rebellions. In a classic accident, Egypt was lost to an unattended unrest in 1904, and was then stolen by an Italian minor power. Marty Ward claimed best Japan and fifth overall.

At another table, Britain and Germany on the first turn ruthlessly looted the French Colonial Empire, Britain taking Egypt and Senagambin, Germany a condominium in Algiers. Three turns later, in Congress, the Italian and Spanish empires were peacefully served up: Morocco to France and Germany, Rio do Oro to Germany, Berbera and Somalia to France, Porto Rico and Cuba to the United States and Philippines to Britain. In the only Boxer Rebellion, the Chinese took Korea, but Britain took Central China. Steve Cuccaro claimed best United States and sixth place in the tournament. Eric Olin emerged as the tournament's best Britain and overall champion.

DUNE 22

This was a single elimination tournament with winners from each of the five boards advancing to the final round. The winners advancing to the finals were Joe Abrams (Guild), Andrew Kutzy (Atreides), Bruce Bernard (Emperor), and Steve Koehler (Fremen). Jeff Slater (Bene Gesserit) won his board; however, he was unable to continue into the finals so Marc Houde (Atreides), second on the board, advanced. In the finals, Koehler (Harkonnen), Bernard (Fremen), Kutzy (Atreides), Abrams (Emperor) and Houlde (Guild) started slowly for the first round. The middle game got wild and woolly—the tanks were filled to the brim. Bernard's Fremen tried to take four strongholds in a turn for the win, with less than eight tokens. He was crushed. The Emperor, Abrams, having the most tokens and money made several attempts toward the end. At the end game, Koehler's Harkonnen made a desperate attempt and lost. After the dust settled, players had wiped themselves out of the strongholds, leaving Bruce Bernard's Fremen with a residual victory.

KREMLIN 20

The *KREMLIN* tournament changed to a single elimination format and attendance suffered from competition with other popular events at the same time. Sean Cousins won the championship despite playing at the toughest board in the opening round. The early going was dominated by 2nd place finisher Kevin Lerow, but when his politicians died off, Sean swept into power. On the last turn, Sean performed his famous purge die roll sweep and sent eight players into Siberia, giving him the game. Cathy Kratz and Mark Neal put up a spirited fight in the final.

SPORTS GAMES

MARCH MADNESS 41

This four-heat event allows participants to pick several teams and advance them through two complete 64-team basketball tournaments using the advanced rules for the game. Participants of a previous heat get last choice when picking teams in a given heat. The Kentucky teams from the '50s fared well again this year, although editor Stuart Tucker's run came to an abrupt halt when his C-rated frontline scored a total of 3 points in the second half of his fourth round game. Joe Diminnie, Keith Hunsinger, Steve Munchak and Bruce Reiff made it to the hallowed final four, where Joe Diminnie survived with the only undefeated team of the tournament.

DECATHLON 39

The Olympic Spirit—which may have robbed the convention of some of its usual crowd—was still alive and well inside the Con late Friday night as contestants came to try and earn the title of "World's Greatest Athlete." In the end, John Weber took home the Gold Medal by leading Bill Toomey to a score of 8395 points. The Silver went to Ed Snarski who coached Bob Mathias, and the Bronze to Lana Hunter coaching Rafer Johnson.

FOOTBALL STRATEGY 30

Many of Avalon Hill's Baltimore *FOOTBALL STRATEGY* League found themselves knocking each other off in the second heat of this two-heat tournament. In the end, none made it to the finals. In order to advance to the finals, Bruce Reiff defeated Debbie Bell, while Mike Holland defeated defending champ David Terry (both losers being members of the Baltimore League). Reiff then defeated Holland for the championship. [*The editor's record is 1-10 in this game, but at least he can say that he held Reiff to a close game for three quarters, despite Bruce's annoying tendency to denote a flair pass with the sounds of fireworks. I'd give real money to see Bruce lose a game to a flair.*]

PAYDIRT 19

The *PDT* Super Bowl turned out to be an exciting matchup. Led by Steve Young & Co., William Place's '91 49ers built a 3-0 record with a 19-13 win over Chicago, 21-18 over New Orleans, and 20-18 over Minnesota. They ran into Harry Flawd's Houston Oiler team which had dismantled Kansas City (20-3), Buffalo (40-24) and Denver (31-0), and won the AFC championship game 23-10 against Sue Ellsworth's Seattle Seahawks.

In the Super Bowl, it was all defense. San Francisco had the ball three times inside the Houston 20-yard line, but could only come away with two field goals in the first half (having failed on 4th and goal from the 2 on the third chance). The second half was more of the same, and with Houston holding a 10-9 lead with 5:30 left in the game. The first turnover of the game was a fumble recovered by the 49ers at their own 44. They drove down to the Houston 24 where Paul Cofer lined up for what appeared to be the winning field goal with only 30 seconds left. Once again the Oiler defense came up with the big play as its kickrush pressure forced the kick wide.

SUPERSTAR BASEBALL 11

You couldn't have asked for a more exiting finish. Jon Diminnie's Cardinals trailed Mike Ellsworth's undefeated Senators 5-0 in the bottom of the 8th. The double-elimination format required two wins by Joe or one by Mike for the plaque. The 'ol gashouse gang sprang to life, rallying for five runs in the bottom of the 8th, aided by Lou Brock's two-run triple. Lee Smith pitched out of a bases-loaded, two-out jam in the top of the 9th, and in the bottom of the 9th, Frankie Frisch connected with a two-out home run for the Cardinal win to force a final game.

Unmoved by their loss in game one, the Senators put up three first inning runs in game two. However, the gashouse gang pecked away until they tied it 3-3 after six innings. They then put up two runs in the bottom of the 7th, with RBIs by Frisch and Hornsby. The Senators closed the

AH PHILOSOPHY...(*Continued from pg.3*)

Toggle [to Henchman]: Commander, you may buy the Origins contract, whenever you're ready. *KABLOOM*

Hexi Gon: I just felt a tremor in The Strategic Thought. Like a million counters being flushed into Lake Geneva.

Ram: I'm telling you, it's not there, kid.

Newb: No auction could dispose of so many good games.

Hexi Gon: Turn the program design around, Ram. That's no game auction.

Ram: I can't. We're caught in some kind of infinite loop. I won't give up without a fight.

Hexi Gon: There are alternatives to disk-wiping.

[Scene aboard the Mallstar]

Newb: It's lucky you have these outside design submissions.

Ram: Yeah, but I never thought I'd be converting them myself.

Darsc Vaporware: I sense a presence here I haven't felt since . . . Commander, virus-scan this compiler.

[Act III. Scene at the gaming convention]

Hexi Gon: Your destiny lies on a different path than mine, Newb. The Strategic Thought will be with you, always. [Stage Left]

Ram: Where did you dig up that old bookcase box?

Newb: Board Gaming is a great concept.

D6-CRT: Bleedeep-bip.

E-DTO: He says she's here—the Princess.

Ram: What Princess?

Newb: She's what we're all fighting for. She's priceless.

Ram: I can think of quite a lot of prices. Besides, marching into a Live-Action Role Play is not what I had in mind.

E-DTO [As Ram and Newb head after the Princess]: What shall I do if I run out of back issues?

Ram: Lock the warehouse and hope they don't have telephones.

[Scene at a playtest session]

Byte Actor [with distaste]: Where are you taking this . . this Dee-zine? I wasn't notified. [Ram erases him.]

Ram: Which game-turn is the Leisure in? Go get her, while I try to rewrite this rule manual.

Newb [to Princess Leisure]: I'm Newb Gamebuyer. I'm here to game with you. I have your D6. I'm here with Board Gaming.

Princess [excited]: Board Gaming? Where is he? [Computer crashes on Newb while Ram topples the counter tray.]

Princess Leisure: Between your e-mailing and his howling, it's a miracle that the whole network doesn't know we're here. It's a wonder he doesn't get us all curfewed. Don't just stand there, outflank them with something. I don't know who you are, Cyberjunk-Brain, or where you come from, but, from now on, do as I say.

Ram: Listen, I take orders from one person—me. No royalties are worth this.

Princess [pointing to the Hiller Compiler]: You compile with that thing? You're braver than I thought.

Ram [Sarcastically]: Nice.

[Hexi Gon and Vapor enter the room.]

Vapor: And now the circle is complete, Hexi Gon. Once you were the master and I was but the pupil. Now, I am the master.

Hexi Gon: Only a master of vapid musings, Vapor. If you strike me down, I'll return my disks over and over again—more than you can imagine.

Ram: Didn't we just play this design? What kept you?

Princess: We ran into some old design concepts.

[Vapor buys up Hexi Gon and moves to the Pacific Northwest.]

Newb: NOOOOO! I can't believe he's gone.

Princess: There wasn't anything you could have done.

Ram: Come on, buddy. We're not out of this playtest, yet. Stay sharp.

Newb: These real-time games are coming in too fast.

Ram: Ah-ha.

Newb: Got him.

Ram: Great, kid. Don't get cocky.

Princess: That's it. We did it. We did it.

Governor Toggle: You're sure the virus is secure on their hard disk?

Vapor: I placed it there myself.

Ram: Not a bad bit of rescuing. Sometimes I amaze even myself.

Princess: That doesn't sound too hard. . . . They let us hang up. I just hope this D6-CRT will reveal the game's weakness. It's not over yet.

Ram: It is for me, sister. I ain't in this for no Perfect Design and I'm not in it for you, Princess. I expect to be well paid.

Princess [to Newb]: Your friend's quite a VR tripper. I wonder if he thinks about anything at all.

Newb: I . . . I think.

[Scene at attack on the Mallstar]

GAMA President: The distributors don't think small boardgames to be a threat. But the approach will not be easy. Only a precise success will start the profit reaction. Man your sales booths; may the Strategic Thought be with you.

Vapor: This will be a day long remembered. It has seen the end of Board Gaming. It will soon see the end of the Perfect Design.

Newb [to Ram]: So you get your money and you are leaving? They could use a good programmer and you are turning your back on them.

Ram: What good is a preorder if the company is not around to fill it?

[remorseful pause] Hey, Newb. May the Strategic Thought be with you.

Princess: He's got to follow his own joystick.

Red 5: Here comes the game fair.

Newb: I'm going in, cover me.

Red 5: Watch out for the tower.

Gold Leader: All assembly lines, accelerate to release date. Customer sales will be in firing range in seven minutes.

Darsc Vaporware [to minions]: Several companies have set up around-the-clock demos, come with me. Stay in viral formation.

Perfect Design Base Control Officer: Watch out. There's a new group of sales booths. Enemy card games at 12 O' Clock.

Gold Leader: Switch all power to Option Features Screens. Stabilize rear deflectors.

Vapor: I'll take this one myself.

Newb: D6, that die roll modifier has broken loose again. See if you can pin it down. D6, try to increase the spin.

Vapor: I'm on the leader...the Strategic Thought is strong in this one.

Newb: I've lost D6 under the bookcase.

[Newb hears **Hexi Gon's** voice]: Use the Strategic Thought, Newb. Let go. Newb, trust me.

Base Officer: His computer's off. What is wrong, Newb? You switched off your targeting computer.

Newb: Nothing's wrong.

Vapor: I have you now/Whaaaat?

KERPLOW

Ram: Yeeeehooo. You're all clear, kid. Let's blow this thing and go home.

[Cash Register sound] *KA-CHING*

Hexi Gon: Remember, Newb. The Strategic Thought will always be with you.

[Scene at Annual Stockholders Meeting]

Newb: Ha, ha. I knew you couldn't go.

Ram: Hey, hey. I couldn't let you spend all your credit limit.

Princess: I knew we meant more to you than money.

[A tattered D6-CRT is pulled out of the box.]

Newb: Ohhh, nooo.

E-DTO: D6? Can you hear me? You must repair him. Sir, if any of my circuits or pages can help out, I'll gladly donate them.

[Epilogue]

E-DTO: . . . and thus it happens that Ram Solo and a Hexigon Freelance Designer save Princess Leisure, redeem Darsc Vaporware, capture Imperative Profit, give hope to the Perfect Design warriors, defeat the dark side, enliven the galaxy with the Strategic Thought.

Princess: Shut up.

E-DTO: Shutting up.

(Watch for the next *GENERAL* blockbuster hit in a mailbox near you for only $18 per six-issue year.)

* * * * *

On a more serious note . . . more than being a tribute to that great Lucas film re-released this season, this marks another evolution for *The GENERAL*. This droid can't simply trundle along as usual. Although my editorship still stresses continuity (The Strategic Thought flows through everything), this magazine must evolve. The marriage between computers and boardgames will not dissolve. *The GENERAL* is now accepting outside advertisements and strategy articles on other companies' computer games. To some, these changes may seem revolutionary. To others, we simply hope to catch their eye for perhaps the first time. Just as Avalon Hill publishes on a broad range of topics and in a variety of media, so must the magazine cover the hobby. We are now being carried in a number of computer game stores, and necessarily must seek to interest their clientele. It is all part of expanding the hobby . . . and carrying the message of thinking person's games. I expect Hexi Gon's friends will still find much of interest to them in these pages, though. And so, another adventure. . .

—SKT

★

AVALONCON...(Continued from pg. 55)

score to 5-4 in the top of the ninth, but with the tying run on first and two outs, Mort Cooper retired Mickey Vernon, giving the St. Louis Cardinals the victory and a dramatic come-from-behind title.

NAVAL GAMES

ATTACK SUB   40

As the Sunday morning final hurrah game for many players awaiting late airplanes or traveling partners playing in championship games elsewhere, *ATS* generally draws a large, eclectic audience.

Second-time tournament participant Jim Matt beat former champs Jack Reid and Bruce Young to advance into the finals against veteran naval gamer John Emery.

Matt selected the scenario "Rebel Without a Cause" and Emery elected to play the Typhoon-class *Oppokov*. Jim's surface force was no match this day for Emery's sub, as *Revnostny* fell victim to a torpedo before *Udalay* could deploy. As the second deck began, John turned the launch key and the missile carried Emery his first Avaloncon plaque.

ENEMY IN SIGHT   36

This year 36 Admirals played for top honors playing in two rounds of six-player games. The final round required four decks in a closely fought game to determine the winner. First deck action saw Fred Gosnell and Phillip Thomas jump to an early lead, but Gordon Rodgers soon overtook them, while David Brooks, Rob Williamson and Matt Evinger brought up the rear. Concerted ganging up on the leaders allowed the first-to-last scores to be very close by the end of the third deck. The fourth deck opened with Fred scoring three prizes almost immediately, only to have his line broken and lose two of them to Matt. Fred retaliated by sinking two ships before the game came to an end with two weather gauges and claimed victory with 141 points over Phillip's 113 and Matt's 108.

NAVAL WAR   24

This single-elimination tournament featured tables of six for the first round of competition and drew seniors, youngsters, men, women, veterans and rookies.

Facing off in the Computer Room of AvalonCon '96.

The final usually has six players, with winners from each table and the next two highest point totals advancing. This year, a point-total tie made for a final with seven: Stephen Scott, Mike Hart, Jeff Boerger, Jim Fleckenstein, Beth Bernard, Lana Hunter and Paul Richardson. It took four hands to settle the championship. There were three first-hand scoreless players, but the first-hand leaders were quickly stomped. After three complete hands, the highest and lowest scores were separated by only 27 points, making victory within reach of any of the players in the fourth hand. In the end, quiet Mike Hart topped the field and scored just enough to edge out the other six, scoring a total of 66 points.

FIFTH FLEET   10

The *5FT* tournament featured defending champion Andrew Maly facing a field that included a former champ and two previous runners up.

Round 3 saw Maly lose for the first time in seven consecutive *5FT* tournament games, to James Eliason. In the semifinals, Eliason eliminated Jimmy Fleckenstein, while J.R. Fleckenstein finally broke the Maly jinx, eliminating him. In the final, James Eliason's strategy and diligent solitaire practice earned him the National Championship (which had narrowly eluded him in 1991) when Fleckenstein resigned after turn 4 (of six).

Most popular scenario was Battle of the Flattops, played six times, while Indian Ocean Wolfpacks was played four times. The Soviets won seven times, dominating The Nicobar War (2-0) and Invasion of Baluchistan (3-0); the Allies eight, ruling Battle of the Flattops (5-1) and Indian Ocean Wolfpacks (3-1).

Because of expressions of interest in other *Fleet* games, a "series" tournament is under consideration, offering short scenarios from *SEVENTH, FIFTH* and *THIRD FLEET*. GM J.R. Fleckenstein welcomes suggestions: write him at 120 Lakeland Drive, Sterling, VA 20164; e-mail: navymeml@navy-memorial.org Attn: Jim F. James.

US CIVIL WAR GAMES

ACROSS FIVE APRILS   40

The 1996 *A5A* tournament saw the largest turnout of its four-year history with 40 players including its first female player. This tournament format is unusual. Everyone was guaranteed three games in which one played the same side, competing to do better than other players playing that side in other games. The initial round was used only as a tie-breaker round for advancing to the fourth round—an approach which works well to shake out the cobwebs about the system. Only in the final did a player compete directly with the player playing the same game.

The Union side won the Bull Run scenario 14 to 6 making the four-year totals Union 51 wins, Confederate 23 wins and one draw. In the Bentonville scenario, the Confederate players got revenge, winning 10, losing five and drawing five (four-year totals: U22, C36, D25). In the Pea Ridge scenario, the Confederates again won 11-7 (four-year totals: U32, C45).

The quarterfinals began the single elimination portion although players were still competing against players of their side in other games. The Union won one, drew one and lost two in Bentonville. A draw by a Union player in this round was good enough to advance. In the semifinals, each side won one in Pea Ridge. This set up a final between David Metzger's Confederates and Mark Giddings' Union in which David won a decisive victory at Pea Ridge for the national championship.

GETTYSBURG ('88)   16

In the first two of four single-elimination rounds of this potentially three-day battle game, the Confederacy logged four first-day victories and six second-day victories, while the Union won one second-day capitulation and one third-day victory. Robert Mull became a champion killer with victories over defending champ Vince Mecorni and prior champ Kevin McCarthy in the early rounds. Confederate domination continued in the semifinals with Mull and yet another former champ, Allen Kaplan, advancing to the finals. Robert failed to get the hat trick, though, when Allen led the South to a crushing first-day victory, giving him his second such plaque—his earlier one accomplished at the helm of the Union.

CIVIL WAR   8

In his first round, Trevor Bender beat defending champ George Seary by taking Washington, Philadelphia and Delaware. Trevor went on to beat former champion Dennis Culhane in the final. An unusually long 3-turn game resulted from the use of nine CP table rolls. Trevor's Union took West Virginia and Kentucky on turn 3 even though Washington was isolated and Baltimore had fallen. Both players danced around the VP cities in Kentucky trying to keep the state from converting. The game ended with the state in union control, giving Trevor the championship.

SMITHSONIAN GAMES

MUSTANGS   22

The tournament used a modified Swiss format with each player chosing to be one side (Axis or Allied) for three rounds. Then, two Axis players with the best records advanced to the single elimination rounds; similarly, the two best Allied players advanced.

In the first round, each Axis pilot took to the sky in two FW-190D-9 Doras, challenging an Allied player flying two P-51D Mustangs (allies won 7-4). The second round gave the Axis pilots a chance for revenge, pitting two N1K1 Georges against two Allied F4U-1A Corsairs (Axis won 5-3-3). Two Axis FW-190A-8 dueled with two Allied P-47Ds in the most even round of the tournament—each side won five rounds.

The two best Allied pilots proved to be Steve Chilcote ('95 runner-up) and Ed Musselman. Dave Chilcote and Cliff Hansen topped the list of Axis players. Players chose their own aircraft for

the single elimination semifinal and final rounds. Dave Chilcote flew one F4U-1C Corsair and one N1K1 George to victory against Ed Musselman's two P-47Ds in the first quarterfinal round.

Cliff Hansen's two P-47Ds bested Steve Chilcote's two F4U-1C Corsairs. Dave's combination again proved superior to the P-47Ds in the championship.

MUSTANGS FURBALL   9

This first annual running of a demolition derby in the air used rules shamelessly pirated from AH's *CIRCUS MAXIMUS*. Each player chose any single aircraft and entered a free-for-all, which featured several P-51Ds, P-47Ds, one Me109 G-6/U-4, a Spitfire LXIII, and two heavy-hitting Me262s. Chris Sasso, mounted on a Me262, proved the top gladiator, with 49 points. Don Foster's P-47D was second with 47 points.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE ('91)   9

The automatic victory condition for the German capture of Liege was eliminated. German capture of Liege was part of the normal victory conditions. The Germans must make great strides on the opening moves if they hope to attain victory. *B91* is an interesting mixture of non-locking ZOCs, weather, and air power variables. Neither side can be totally secure from devastating isolation moves. The first round saw the only German victories in the tournament. This year's tournament American victories predominate 3-1.

The field contained three returning champions with four plaques among them. The final was between Jack Morrell (reigning champion) as the Americans and Kevin McCarthy as the Germans. A good German opening was stymied when the skies cleared and eight American air appeared on turn 2. Jack's skillful placement and delaying tactics slowed the Germans on turn 3. On December 19th, the Germans managed to isolate the southern portion of the American line. Then, on the 20th, the skies cleared for the remainder of the game. Air Drops and sound American strategy sealed the fate of the Germans during the last two turns. With this victory, Jack became the first back-to-back champion in *B91*.

OTHER GAMES

ADVANCED THIRD REICH   31

Players formed two-man teams, played two games with points scored for their success. Ties were broken by comparing the ratings of the teams (maintained by the 'zine *ULTRA*) and how many points had been scored by the teams they beat, with the GM's discretion entering into the equation if necessary.

Despite 17 stalwarts playing in the related Global War event, *A3R* attendance was down only slightly. The team of Roger Hoffman and Michael Mitchell, both new to the tournament but seasoned players of the predecessor *THIRD REICH* game, won the plaque with two 10-point decisive Allied victories over tough competition. The runner-up was a team of European all-stars, Keith Walton of Liverpool and Herbert Graz of Vienna, who also won two 10-pointers, but against slightly weaker competitors. Thus, the plaque remained in the United States after the second strong challenge in two years from across the Atlantic.

PANZERBLITZ   14

Drawing players from around the world, this tournament grew in size this year. Situations 7 (with altered victory conditions), 14 and 13 (newly developed for this tournament) were used in a double-elimination tournament. Eduardo Jarce de Nucca went home to Argentina with the championship plaque. Chuck Leonard, Dave Giordano ('95 champ) and Johnny Hasay ('92 and '94 champ) made it to the semifinals, but fell short. Steve Andriakos deserves special mention for going 4-0 before having to depart to catch a plane.

PANZER LEADER   20

Participants engaged in many hard-fought games over the course of several days, competing for the best win-loss record to enter the later single-elimination rounds. Six of the eight finalists, including the eventual winner and the runner-up, began the tournament by losing their first game in the qualifying rounds. Three specially-designed scenarios (as used last year) were used in the single-elimination rounds of play.

In the championship game, Jay Zollitsch bid ten to take command of the Allies, while Rob Beyma bid eleven for the Germans in the "Hit and Run" scenario (S2) on board C. Jay pushed hard along the center road through Wiln and the woods beyond while at the same time he made distracting attacks on the right and left. Rob responded by massing most of his infantry and his lone AFV, a Hetzer, against the Allied center. The German roadblock held firm and the Allied chances looked grim until Allied combined arms attacks on the right swept the Germans off the ridge line. The Allied units rushed through the gap at N2/O2. The only hope for the German defense was that the Hetzer could reach the woods/road hex at S3 and survive a 4-1 Allied direct fire attack (it did). A submachinegun platoon slipped into support the gallant Hetzer and a timely Nebelwerfer volley ensured the German win and Beyma's championship.

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN   20

The ten turn 1941-1942 scenario was used again this year, with players bidding for sides. Once again the scenario showed good balance as the Germans won ten times and the Russians eight. The bidding for the Germans averaged 2.2 with a high of 5 and a low of –2. Most of the veteran favorites advanced in round 1, as the Russians took seven of the ten games played. Rounds 2 and 3 saw the Germans extend their winning streak to six games in a row.

The Russians came back in round 4 as successful newcomer Jerry Cecchin stopped Martin Musella's Germans, setting up the championship match with veteran Tom Gregorio (winner over Tom Schwarwank). Gregorio once again commanded the Germans and despite LT MUD and SNOW rolls in 1941 got off to a good start. The Russians fought valiantly during the winter but a CLEAR weather roll in Mar/Apr 1942 allowed the German juggernaut to start rolling early. By mid-summer, the Russian army was in shambles and Tom Gregorio had won his first—and well deserved—AvalonCon plaque for The Russian Campaign.

An optional 1942-1943 scenario may be introduced at AvalonCon '97.

1776   9

The *1776* tournament had a quality field, including past *1776* champions Steve Packwood and Mark Miklos and frequent Avaloncon champions Phil Rennert and Mike Sincavage.

In the first three rounds of the Saratoga scenario, the British only won twice, but those were by the two finalists, in their last game qualifying them for the final. Rod Coffey made it into the final by beating past champion Mark Miklos. Rod then proceeded to beat defending champion Steve Packwood in the final.

The final was limited to the first year of the campaign game, with each player bidding to be the British (the bid being the number of strategic towns the British must control at the end of the year to win). Rod played the British with a bid of 12 and ended up with 13 strategic towns after surviving several attacks on the last turn.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE ('81)   10

Tom Scharwark played Bruno Sinigaglio, the game's designer, in the semi-final. Tom was able to eliminate only two American units on the opening turn. Tom called it a day when his possible blitzkrieg breakthroughs were foiled by two unlucky "6" die rolls. Randy Heller, last year's champion, barely survived his game with John Koontz, when Heller's Germans were able to eliminate only one American unit on the opening turn. The fortunes of war changed on the third turn when exchanges in the center of the map threw John's defense off balance. The Americans were forced to give up a large amount of territory in order to avoid a German breakthrough. Heller and Sinigaglio met in the championship, where Randy had to test fate with the Yanks. Fate proved to be very unkind. In an unprecedented opening move, Bruno eliminated eight American units and engaged two. Randy was barely able to create a defensive line. Throughout this short game, American artillery had to be used up front. Randy hung on until the end of the 18AM turn and then turned over the crown to Bruno.

GUERILLA   30

The six first-round games each had five players, allowing them to include one mercenary player and two factions for each of the government and guerillas. This year showed the government factions knew what they were doing, as they won five of the six games by significant margins.

Steve Huskey, Caleb Cousins, James Jordan, John Poniske, John Sonderman and Don Greenwood battled it out in the final round. It soon became apparent that the guerillas held the upper hand and, by the end of the first deck, held all installations but the Bridge and the Policia. However, by the end of the game, all installations were government controlled, giving Caleb Cousins the game and championship with John Poniske, Don Greenwood and James Jordan taking second, third and fourth.

PELOPONNESIAN WAR   9

Evan Davis, designer of *AIR BARON*, proved to be a fast learner. Entering *PPW* as a beginner, he soundly defeated his early opponents to advance to the final match against an accomplished player, Roger Taylor (who rose by beat-

ing two-time champion Frank Hamrick). The final game saw Davis use the Athenians effectively to harass the Spartans all over the countryside after the Spartan gods forbade Sparta from continuing aggression. Thus, Davis came from behind to win a close match.

RUNEQUEST 10

The setting for this game, "In Ptolemy's Shadow," was suggested by the books of Talbot Mundy. The contestants played the roles of crewmen of a ship to whom had fallen the task of saving (by any means possible) their friends and crewmates from slavery or death in Alexandria, Egypt (ca. 53 BC). Penniless, they would have to rely upon their wits and whatever friends they could find in the back alleys and shadowed colonnades of Alexandria.

The contestants displayed a surprising amount of common sense and successfully followed the trail of clues to the two best chances of success: the Jews of Alexandria (who provided capital and a chariot) and Cleopatra's faction (who would free the players' shipmates provided they helped ensure that Cleopatra's team won the great chariot race). The players agreed and embarked on a nasty campaign of dirty tricks to increase their chances of winning the climactic chariot race using *CIRCUS MAXIMUS* rules. The players did manage to guarantee that Cleopatra's charioteer Apollodorus won the race, and so freed their crewmates. First place went to Dwayne Pribik of Virginia, who devised the dirty tricks that helped fix the race and gave his character's life implementing them.

THE RUSSIAN FRONT 4

The four-turn tournament scenario used bids for sides. This game requires excellent play on both sides to avoid supply problems which will turn a victory into a disaster in one turn. James Pei, last year's champion, met Martin Roecker in the final game, and again triumphed, taking his second Russian Front plaque.

TITAN 2 17

This tournament features one-on-one play of the game. By luck of the bracket draw, the four top-rated players ended up on the same end of the bracket, mowing down other opponents like chaff in the wind in the first round. Brian Sutton applied his sickle to the competition to enter the finals against the winner from the other side of the bracket, Clifford Smith. Brian once again proved that he is on top of this game and won the championship.

WATERLOO 10

Bruno Sinigaglio slipped by Howard Newby in the first round, surviving by virtue of having but one imperial guard unit left. In the semifinals, Chuck Stapp couldn't hold off John Ellsworth's French. Marty Mussela failed to break Bruno's stone wall. In the final, John Ellsworth tried flanking Bruno's line, only to see his attacks foiled by the counterattacks of many a retreated defender. The French needed all the help they could get, but came up short, as a last minute attempt by the GM to disqualify Bruno for not having a badge was thwarted by his pulling it out of his pocket.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thus ends our summary of another thrill-filled tournament competition at AvalonCon. Throughout the publishing year, *The GENERAL* will continue to provide readers with convention-related stories—perspectives of typical competitors, interviews of plaque-winners and tips from the best players of our games. The countdown to AvalonCon '97 has begun and game masters are busily constructing another exciting four-and-a-half day gaming extravaganza.

Be there and be fair.

★

CONVENTION CALENDAR

MONTREAL ASL FESTIVAL
May 3-4, 1997, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Held at the Downtown Days Inn, this Swiss-elimination style tournament will go 4-5 rounds with a choice of 3 scenarios in each round. Prizes for top 3 players. Registration is Cdn$20. Write Michael Rodgers, 5187 Beamish Drive, Pierrefonds, Quebec, Canada H8Z 3G4, call 514-620-5757 or email 104774.3113@compuserve.com.

HEXACON XI • May 8-11, 1997
Braunfels, Germany
Sponsored by the German society for historical simulations, this eleventh annual meeting features a medieval/early modern village with castle and local brewery, tournaments, open gaming and auction. Write Rolf-Udo Bliersbach, Rathenauplatz 23, D-50674 Koeln, Germany.

GAMESCAUCUS II • May 23-26, 1997
Oakland, CA
Held at the Oakland Airport Hilton, this convention features Avalon Hill events and tournaments. Write Mike Wilson, Trigaming Associates, P.O. Box 27634, Concord, California 94527-0634, call 510-686-9319 or email trigaming@aol.com.

THREE RIVERS GAME FEST 4
May 23-26, 1997, Pittsburgh, PA
Sponsored by Andon and held at the Green Tree Marriott, this convention features all types of gaming, including card game tournaments, plus special guests and exhibit hall. Registration is $24.95 by May 9th. Write Andon Unlimited, P.O. Box 1740, Renton, WA 98057-1740, call 206-204-5815 or email andon@aol.com.

ASL SOUTHERN CROSS
May 23-25, 1997, Knoxville, TN
This convention features a five-round main event and a three-round Saturday only event. Write John Skillman, PO Box 277, Greeneville, TN 37744 or call (423) 638-4256.

BORDEN ASL TOURNAMENT
May 23-25, 1997, Borden, Ontario, Canada
Held at Canadian Forces Base Borden (north of Toronto) is a first annual tournament with five rounds of ASL action. Registration is Cdn$20. On-site accomodation is available. Contact Base Borden Wargamers Club, 207 Saskatchewan Blvd., Borden, Ontario, Canada, L0M 1C0 or acooke@interhop.net or Blair Bellamy at (705) 737-0783.

GAMEX 12 • May 23-26, 1997
Los Angeles, CA
Held at the LA Airport Wyndham Hotel, this features all types of family, strategy, adventure, card, role-playing, miniature and computer gaming, plus flea markets, auction, exhibit hall, seminars, demonstrations and special guests. Write Strategicon, 333 N. San Fernando Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502 or call (818) 848-1748.

DRAGON*CON '97 • June 26-29, 1997
Atlanta, GA
Held at the Inforum Convention Center and running after the sci-fi book retailers symposium (STARS '97), this convention features board-gaming, miniatures, card games, RPG, computers, LARP, auction, concerts, dealer's room and many sci-fi guests. Registration is $50 by May 15th; $60 at the door. Write Dragon*Con '97, P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696, call 770-925-0115 or email dragoncon@dragoncon.org.

ORIGINS '97 • July 17-20, 1997
Columbus, OH
Sponsored by Andon, this flagship convention of the gaming industry will be held at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and features all types of gaming, exhibit hall, auction, computer gaming area and special guests. Registration is $34.95 by June 21st; $40 at door. Write Andon Unlimited, P.O. Box 1740, Renton, WA 98057, call 206-204-5815 or email andon@aol.com.

AVALONCON '97 • July 30-August 3, 1997
Baltimore, MD
Sponsored by Avalon Hill and held at the Hunt Valley Marriott in the suburbs of Baltimore, this convention features the National Boardgaming Championships for Avalon Hill's games. By popular demand, the convention has been extended into the morning hours of Wednesday. Contact Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214, call 410-254-9200 or email ahgames@aol.com.

GEN CON GAMES FAIR • August 7-10, 1997, Milwaukee, WI
This very large multi-media game convention will be held at the MECCA in downtown Milwaukee and features all types of gaming, including tournaments for ASL, ADVANCED CIVILIZATION, DIPLOMACY, AIR BARON, UP FRONT and much more. For information on convention and housing write TSR, Inc., 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147 or email www.TSRinc.com.

Volume 31, number 1 started the publication year with a bang by garnering a 3.2 overall rating (besting the best-rated issue of volume 30). The lead article by *ERS* expert Dave Casper gained a strong consensus of opinion as the best article, but many commented that it was such a good issue that it was hard to choose among the rest for second and third. "The articles are all so well-written that, even though I don't have the games, I get a good understanding of the games and wish I had them." The *THIRD REICH*-derived feature subject may have pleased those of you desiring a focus on older classic games, even if the game itself isn't. Most liked the mix of articles. Others noted the stunning *ERS* game board.

The biggest disappointment was with the short expiration date on the Electronics Boutique coupon for computer *THIRD REICH*. For this I apologize profusely, I should have noticed the possible problem and altered the ad. I hope that the store was appropriately lenient for those who tried to use the coupon. I detect an interest in expansion of hobby news, letters and commentary—I hope the Whispers and Firefight columns help. Next issue's focus on the Civil War should please those of you clamoring for such, but I'd certainly welcome more article submissions on the Great Campaign series games.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MICHAEL McMAIN

The Avalon Hill/Big Time Software *FLIGHT COMMANDER 2* campaign design contest is over and we have our $1000 winner. Michael McMain (shown in photo on this page) used the *FC2* mission builder to create the winning entry: an original campaign scenario called "CV Lincoln." Michael's creation is available on the Big Time Software website: www.bigtimesoftware.com as a

The Infiltrator's Report

free download. The scenario features a fictional conflict set in the near future in the Indian Ocean between NATO and Russia and her allies; it showcases many of the features of *FC2* in a fast-paced game.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Delays with card art have slowed production of *PRINCESS RYAN'S STAR MARINES*, but we expect to have it out in May. Shortly thereafter, the card game, *TITAN ARENA*, should be available. Two excellent projects, now in playtesting, are expected to come to fruition in the late summer/early fall: a multi-player, WWII naval card game on the theme of the protecting/sinking the Atlantic convoys and a multi-player boardgame, *ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE*, about the struggle for legitimacy among Alexander's generals at the moment of his death. The latter uses a system similar to *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE*. Mark Herman's *WE THE PEOPLE*-like civil war game is also nearing submission and reportedly getting raves at preliminary playtest sessions.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The following games are now out-of-stock: *VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC, ATTACK SUB, LEE VS. GRANT, KOREAN WAR, GULF STRIKE, AMBUSH, BATTLE HYMN, SIXTH FLEET* and *IMAGE*. In addition, *UP FRONT* is temporarily out of stock, but will be reprinted. I noticed a few other games are no longer listed on our February 1997 Games & Parts List, though still in stock (and a few on the list are in-stock but discontinued—not being printed again). These may be gone soon, so don't let an opportunity to buy a great game slip past you.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Regarding the printed solution to the rather popular "The Return to Paris" contest (in vol. 31, no. 1), British 8th Corps stands ready to join the effort to recapture Paris, although this may increase the potential losses incurred by the Royal Navy. The chance of overall success will be increased. What can I say? I made two erroneous assumptions and only caught one before printing the solution in vol. 31, no. 2—resulting in the failure to include 8th Corps in the plan. Of course, I was not alone. The many intriguing entries usually included at

least one erroneous rule interpretation. The common oversights by contestants were: 9-factor fleets cannot be voluntarily broken up (this is not *A3R*), the British armor in St. Nazaire needs to receive sea supply, sea transport fleets need not rebase to the port of embarkation and such missions may visit multiple embarkation ports, invasion forces must start in the port of embarkation, all naval missions are announced before any are resolved, sea transport and sea invasion are two separate missions allowing the missions to be intercepted separately, combats involving sea invasion combined with land-side attackers face a tripled defender.

The corrected solution involves essentially the same plan, but adds allocation of one fleet to sea invasion of Caen by the 8th Corps, which joins one armor unit from Cherbourg and two air factors for a 9-9 attack. The best German choice is interception of the two fleets during the sea transport of the two armor. If interception happens (2/3 chance), the Germans need either to defeat the British navy or inflict a three-factor loss (13/36 chance) to completely foil the plan. If the British get by the German navy (75.9%), their Caen attack wins with a surviving ground unit 50% of the time. This is followed by the previously printed 10-6 attack on Paris (83.3% success), resulting in a total chance of success of 31.6% (in the 31 to less than 38% range). Our congratulations and $10 certificates go out to winners Charles Duke (Miami, FL), John Pack (Sandy, UT), Steve Packwood (Eagan, MN) and James Silsby, Jr. (Ellsworth, ME).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Contest #179 (Merger Menagerie) in volume 31, number 2 challenged contestants to discern which merger would put the player in the best position to earn money and control the surviving hotel chains. Given that all players are short of cash for stock purchases, you must give high priority to making a merger that will give you a bigger cash bonus than the competition. In this manner, you can make a series of advantageous mergers to boost your cash position and run away with the game by controlling hotels others cannot afford to buy. You are the majority shareholder of Continental, Imperial and Luxor and are in a four-way tie in Worldwide. You are behind the others in Tower (they have four shares to your three). Your tiles allow you to merge any of the smallest hotels. You have a vital interest in preventing Tower from merging into Luxor (as you'd get no cash from it and the competition would use their money to surpass you in the other chains). Therefore, you play 8C and merge Luxor into Tower, leaving Tower as successor. This pays you the $2000 first bonus for Luxor's buyout, while the other players each get $350 (splitting the second). In the next few moves, you expect to merge first Imperial and then Continental into Tower, making Tower the most likely hotel to grow large and survive to the end of the game. Thus, you trade two Luxor shares for one Tower share and keep the third share, in case Luxor is reborn elsewhere. With your position in Continental relatively safe (due to cost/share and low cash balances for other players), you expand your control over Imperial (one share) and Worldwide (two shares), spending $1300. This secures Imperial and allows you time to get control of Worldwide (which should not be merging soon unless you wish it, because you have two of its key merger tiles). By becoming majority bonus-taker repeatedly in the middle-game you should accumulate more wealth than those who put their only cash into Tower for its end-game bonus.

Firefight

Use only short, controlled bursts. Hit the weak spots and move out.

I wish to inaugurate a new column dedicated to voicing gamer concerns about how the computer game genre can improve. It seems to me that many a computer game these days suffers from not implementing lessons that were learned by board wargame designers more than a decade ago. Let's get into gear folks! I wish to generate short, constructive criticism from this magazine's readers intended to help advance the computer game design process. Computer games utilize some of the most advanced technologies available. It is time for them to use effective wargame design constructs as well.

Readers, mail me your comments (better yet, email them to AHGeneral@aol.com). In the interests of illustrating what I mean, I'll start the firefight:

WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN doesn't seem to give the captain of the ship enough control at the exact moment of firing or grappling—two pivotal points in a naval battle when a ship's captain probably gives the most verbal commands.—SKT

I found *Panzer General* used a long-defunct combat system of having each unit attack the enemy in sequence. An attacker could not hit a position with a fully coordinated attack from various angles and no "combined arms" benefits helped each individual attack.—SKT

As an economic exercise, *Sid Meier's Civilization* set the industry standard which has been mimicked ever since, but this game's all-or-nothing combat system reminds me more of flipping a coin than war. We've had partial units or step reductions in boardgaming for nearly three decades.—SKT

A note to those subjected to fire: take solace that you hold ground worthy of a fight.

WHISPERS . . .

The French-language magazine *Vae Victis* will be publishing a series of games timed with the 200th anniversary of Napoleonic battles, utilizing a Richard Berg game system. . . Clash of Arms released in March a miniatures rules set for the American Revolution and the Seven Years' War, which has a morale-driven system. . . With the growing popularity of the TV show "Babylon5" and the upcoming release of the movie "Starship Troopers," we can expect a spate of science fiction toys and games to hit the market this year. . . Westwood is promising to make downloadable maps available for their popular computer game *Command and Conquer: Red Alert*. . . Those of you interested in Avalon Hill's Great Campaigns of the American Civil War series may want to check out www.smart.net/~waveland/gcacw.htm. . . The latest boardgame company to bite the dust is Mayfair. Stock up quickly on those fine releases you saw at Origins'96 before they disappear from stores (although the company states online that they have been bought out and the product line will continue). This comes just as Mayfair had just reprinted and released the popular *Settlers of Catan*. . . The SPI reunion, er, Connections convention was held at Maxwell Air Force Base in February. The greybeards of commercial wargaming gathered to lend their ideas to the military, which complains vociferously of the lack of (affordable) talent for their work on wargame design. As some speakers noted, the military design audience seems to have forgotten just how chaotic the battlefield can be. Perhaps, military designers focus too much upon firepower ratios and not enough on command and control issues. . . Speaking of revivals, or is that throwbacks, an online magazine about old SPI games is now seeking contributors. Given that the featured game for the premiere issue (*PANZERGRUPPE GUDERIAN*, which was republished by Avalon Hill and is now out of print) scarcely rustles up eight players a year at AvalonCon, it will be seeking readers, too. . . The Gamers continue to churn out detail-oriented war simulations. This summer they expect to release another Operational Combat Series game on the desert war during WWII. . . This seems to be a *hot* topic, as the latest Europa series game, also on the war in the desert, was released in February. . . The gaming industry's latest self-abuse involves law suit and threatened counter-suit in a conflict between manufacturer Clash of Arms and outlet Boulder Games. With any luck, they'll patch up the differences before sending too many game-buyer dollars to the men in suits. . . Australian Design Group has released their *World in Flames* game in yet another guise—this time as a deluxe combo pack with all the expansion modules. . .

COMING ATTRACTIONS

TITAN ARENA

This game is not the long awaited *TITAN* expansion boardgame that *TITAN* fans have been requesting for years. But it is a clever, quick-playing, multi-player card game that just may entertain many more people than the *TITAN* boardgame ever did since it is far simpler and faster. *TITAN ARENA* is more of a betting game than a struggle between warring fantasy armies.

It came to us originally from noted European boardgame designer Reiner Knizia who first used the game system for his *Grand National* horse racing game. Although we were taken with the design, we were not enamored with the horse racing theme and have converted the setting for the wagers to the bloody halls of the Titan Arena.

Three to five players wager on the outcome of five rounds of gladiatorial combats in a fantasy bloodlust battle between eight of the classic creatures of *TITAN*. The players are dealt hands which give them the opportunity to influence the outcome of the upcoming games. The creatures each have a unique power—further affecting the wagering. Each player secretly records his largest bet on one creature.

The combats then begin with players alternating turns at making additional public wagers and deflecting or dealing potential death blows to a creature. Wagers during each successive round of combat are less valuable, making the earlier bets more important, but with the danger of attracting a mortal blow to your favored creature. Due to a limit of one bet per creature per round, he who hesitates with his bets will find only the underdog to back later in the combat round. Only the principal backer of each creature can wield its unique ability in the unfolding struggle, giving players an inducement to commit their bets quickly. For example, the opportunity to seize control of the Cyclops' ability (to make an opponent lose his turn), may tempt the less stout-hearted to reveal their secret bet to claim power over the beast (and thereby make a target of their betting position). The death of a creature signals the end of each round (and the loss of bets on the fallen), leaving one less creature for the next round of combat. Only wagers on the three survivors at the end of the five-round slugfest score points.

TITAN ARENA plays quickly—each "hand" of five combat rounds taking no more than 45 minutes. Perhaps the simplest game Avalon Hill has ever produced, it nonetheless presents challenging and frolicking fun for the whole family. It should be available this spring.

Don Greenwood

STOCK MARKET GURU

When I arrived to edit the magazine, I was asked (due to my economics training) to spend some time looking for a way to revamp and consolidate our two games about the stock market. The resulting game is mostly a major revision of *STOCKS & BONDS*, but attempts to convey some aspects of what can be learned from *STOCK MARKET* as well. *STOCK MARKET GURU* is essentially an advanced version of *STOCKS & BONDS* that isn't any more difficult to learn. I have re-designed the classic game *STOCKS & BONDS* to retain most of its simplicity and fun, while instilling more realism into the decisions players must make.

By changing three of the game procedures and embellishing a few other details, I have made the game a better model of the situation faced by long-term stock investors. Key rule changes introduce business cycles, interest rate and bond price movements; stock news information; and risk of business failure. Consequently, the bull and bear markets are no longer random. Players have a reason to buy bonds during recessions. The more volatile stocks are more of a gamble, due to a higher chance of business failure. Advance "inside" information can be utilized. Gauging the market sentiment becomes a strategy. In addition, broker commissions and tax-free accounts give players a benefit for long-term investment. Short selling is an optional feature that can be put to use, as can borrowing on margin. For those who wish to rub elbows with the real gurus (in jail), an inside trading rule adds to the excitement level. As a result, now players may choose divergent strategies with a reasonable chance to win the game.

Recognizing that one of the appeals of *STOCK MARKET* is its historical lessons, I have added three historical scenarios involving special rules that convey the feel of the investment climate during the roaring '20s and Great Depression, the inflationary oil crisis years of the '70s and the uncertain boom years of the late '80s. Also, the Re-Designer's Notes provide basic investment principles to help you understand both winning the game and investing in the real stock market.

All in all, this new package is a great improvement over the older titles from the viewpoint of education as well as gaming fun. It should be available in April and will be an event at Avalon-Con '97.

Stuart K. Tucker

THE GREAT WAR AT SEA
VOLUME I: THE MEDITERRANEAN

2 Piece 22 x 38 Strategic Map

One 17 x 22 Tactical Map

SPEED   GUNNERY

BB08   1   8·3·1

Szent Istvan

NAME
TORPEDOES

DESIGNER
MICHAEL BENNIGHOF

DEVELOPER
BRIAN L. KNIPPLE

COUNTERS, BOX, & MAP
BRIEN J. MILLER

Avalanche Press LTD.

P. O. Box 4775
Virginia Beach, VA
23454

APL004

Play Description

Players plot the movement of their fleets on the strategic map in advance. When opposing fleets meet, play moves to the battle map, where ships maneuver and fire on one another with guns and torpedoes. More than 50 scenarios allow players to recreate naval actions on the Mediterranean and Black Seas from 1911 to 1918 from small battle actions to a massive Campaign Game covering the entire scope of the First World War.

Complexity Low

Solitaire Medium

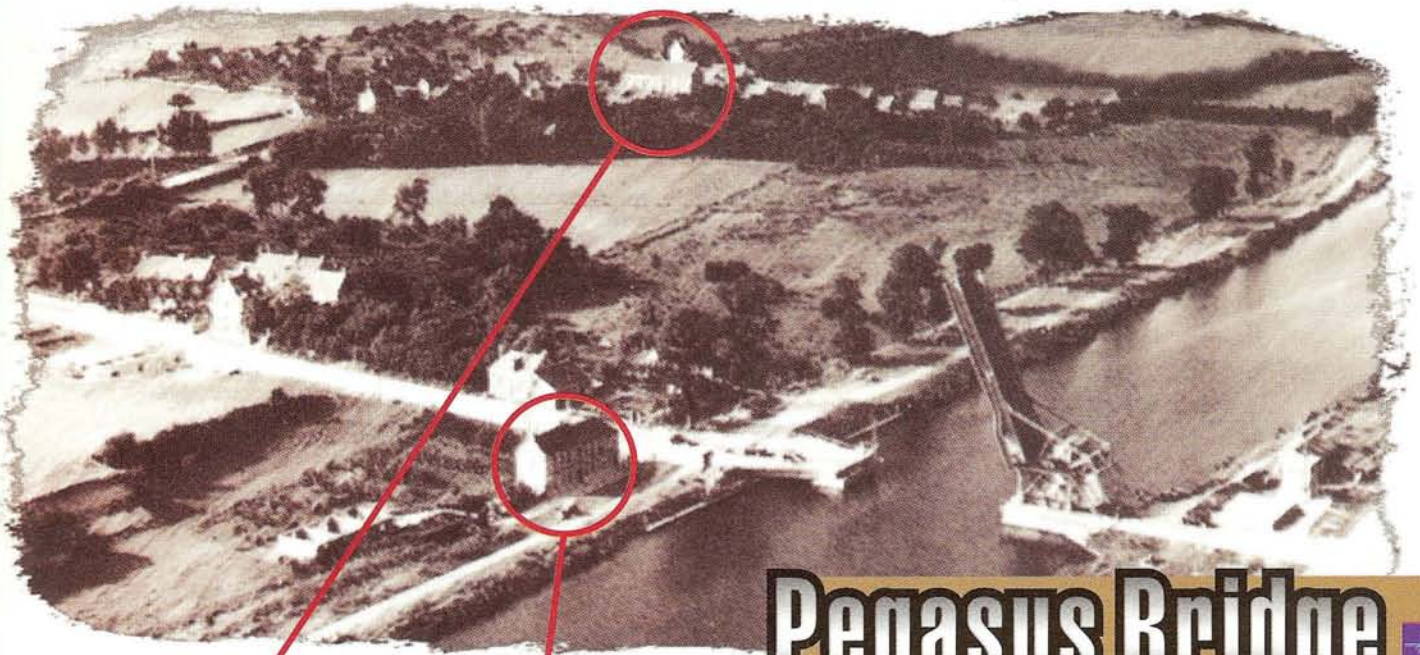|	Time	30 Minutes to many hours
	Scale	30.8 Naut Miles/Sea Zone
	Map	22 x 38 Strategic 17 x 22 Tactical
	Counters	280 1/2 inch 180 1 inch
	Rules	8 Page Rules 24 Page Scenarios

Three British gliders silently breach the German defenses on their way to . . .

Pegasus Bridge

The Bénouville Church gave a commanding view of the area which made this an important objective.

Cafe Gondrée occupied a strategic location. It was the home of the first family liberated by Operation Overlord.

D-Day: a few minutes past midnight, June 6th, 1944, glider-borne British troops of D Company, 2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, glide into the heart of the German defenses in order to capture a key bridge over the Caen Canal in Normandy. Holding this bridge is essential in preventing the isolation and elimination of the entire British 6th Airborne Division.

This ASL Historical Module includes:

- Two campaign games. The first creates the battle in its entirety; the second is a shortened campaign game which starts after the British units, known as the Ox and Bucks, have captured **Pegasus Bridge**.

- Full-color 22" x 32" historically accurate map of the Bridge and the surrounding towns of *Bénouville* and *Le Port*.

- Chapter "Q" of the **ASL** rule book (which introduces new terrain types and contains the rules for **Pegasus Bridge** Campaign Games).

- Six scenarios recreating key portions of the battle.

- 160 $1/2$" and 64 $5/8$" counters.

- **Day 7** of the Chapter "K," **Squad Leader Training Manual** and Chapter "H" notes for all the new vehicles which are introduced.

#8240 Pegasus Bridge is not a complete game. Ownership of **ASL, Beyond Valor, Yanks** and **West of Alamein** is required.

CONTEST #180—SIDESHOW

It is the start of the first Russian impulse of a clear weather November/December 1941 turn in a game of *THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.* Your comrades to the south are heavily engaged against the Axis advance on Moscow. They can spare only the 1st Cavalry Corps as a replacement for your use this turn, but promise much more help in January 1942. Your job is to arrange your limited forces in the best manner possible within the sector of the map shown to blunt all visible Axis threats in January/February. You need worry only about the Axis forces shown and the Stukas. All basic rules apply. You may use as much normal rail shipment as necessary. The railroads exiting the diagram at G1 through G9 are connected to each other and the east edge of the mapboard. Also, note the odds of the best possible Axis January 1942 attack on Leningrad against your defense.

Best Axis attack vs. Leningrad
_____ Axis vs. _____ Russian
(modified factors)

1st Cav _____

9th Armor _____

50th Army _____

Name _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Across Five Aprils—A5A, Advanced Squad Leader—ASL/SL, Afrika Korps—AFK, Age of Renaissance—REN, Air Baron—ABN, Air Force/Dauntless—AFD, Assassin—ASN, Battle of the Bulge—B(yr.), Blackbeard—BKB, Blitzkrieg—BZK, Breakout Normandy—BKG, Britannia—BRI, Circus Maximus—CMS, (Advanced) Civilization—ACV/CIV, Colonial Diplomacy—CDP, D-Day—D(yr.), Diplomacy—DIP, DUNE, 1830, Empires in Arms—EIA, Empire of the Rising Sun—ERS, Enemy in Sight—EIS, Firepower—FPR, Flat Top—FTP, Fleet Series—#FT, Flight Leader—FL, Gangsters—GSR, Geronimo—GER, Gettysburg—GBG, Gladiator—GLD, Guadalcanal—GDC, Guerilla—GUE, Hannibal: Rome vs. Carthage—HRC, Here Come the Rebels—HCR, History of the World—HWD, Hitler's War—HWR, Kremlin—KRM, Kingmaker—KGM, Knights of the Air—KTA, London's Burning—LBG, Luftwaffe—LFW, Machiavelli—MAC, Maharaja—MAH, Magic Realm—MRM, MBT, Merchant of Venus—MOV, Midway—M(yr.), Napoleon's Battles—NPB, PanzerBlitz—PZB, Panzergruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzer Leader—PZL, Rail Baron—RBN, Republic of Rome—ROR, Richthofen's War—RFN, Roadkill—RKL, Roads to Gettysburg—RTG, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Russian Front—RFT, 1776, Siege of Jerusalem—SOJ, Starship Troopers—SST, Stellar Conquest—STC, Stonewall's Last Battle—SLB, Stonewall in the Valley—SIV, Stonewall Jackson's Way—SJW, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Tac Air—TCA, Advanced Third Reich—A3R, Thunder At Cassino—TAC, Titan—TTN, Trireme—TRI, Turning Point: Stalingrad—TPS, Tyranno Ex—TYX, Up Front—UPF, Victory In The Pacific—VIP, War and Peace—W&P, We The People—WTP, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM, Wrasslin'—WRS.

_____ _____ _____ _____

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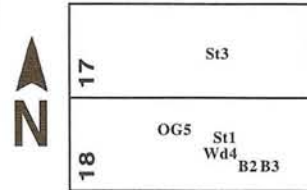
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FORTH BRIDGE

ASL SCENARIO G37
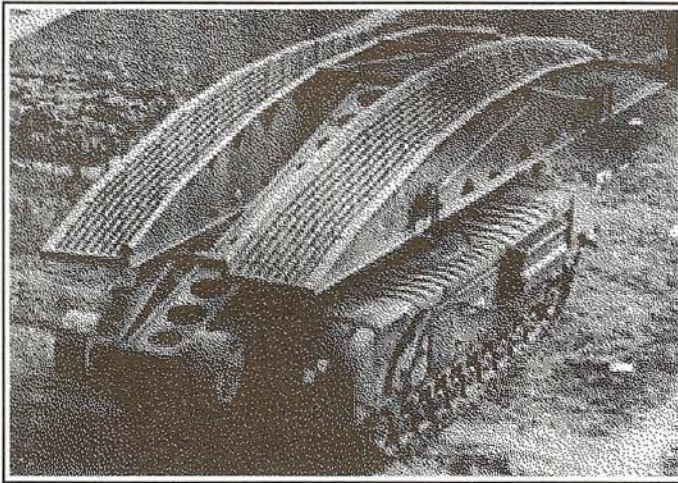
Near FUHRBERG, GERMANY, 11 April 1945: After three days of rest and refit, the Churchills of the Scots Guards arrived from Münster and linked up with the troops of the 227th Infantry Brigade's Gordon Highlanders, with orders to advance on Celle. The Germans had taken advantage of the pause to organize their resistance and to blow all of the bridges in the area. By 1300 hours, the column had negotiated one demolished bridge which had not been actively defended. Three and a half miles beyond Fuhrberg they were again held up by a blown bridge—but this time they ran into trouble.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The British win at game end, if they have ≥ 30 VP (calculated as Exit VP, but excluding prisoners and captured items) east of the stream *and* have reduced the number of Good Order German squad equivalents ≤ 4 hexes from any stream hex(es) to ≤ the turn number of entry for the British reinforcements (see SSR 4). A Good Order crew/HS manning a functioning Gun counts as a full squad.

BALANCE:

✠ In the German OB, replace three 4-4-7s with three 5-4-8s.

◉ In the Victory Conditions, change "≥ 30 VP" to "≥ 24 VP."

TURN RECORD CHART

✠ GERMAN Sets Up First [136] ◉ BRITISH Moves First [144]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	END

Elements of Fallschirmjäger Division 7 [ELR: 2] set up on/east of Hex Grain 17M1-18M10: {SAN: 4}

Elements of the 2nd Gordon Highlanders and "Left Flank" Squadron, 3rd Scots Guards Battalion [ELR: 3] enter on Turn 1 along the west edge of board(s) 17/18: {SAN: 2}

Reinforcing troop, with bridgelayer from Battalion HQ enter along the west edge of board(s) 17/18 as per SSR 4:

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start. No Level 2 hill hexes exist; they are Level 1 hill hexes instead. The 18X7-Y7 Cliff does not exist.

2. Place overlays as follows: **OG5** on 18P5-P4, **Wd4** on 18R6-S7, **B3** on 18W8-X8, **B2** on 18U8-V8, **St3** on 17R5-S5 and **St1** on 18S6-S5. Hexside 17oS9-oS10 is a stream hexside [EXC: for LOS/LOF purposes, this hexside is considered a stream hexside for LOS/LOF between 17oS9 and 17oS10 only].

3. The Germans may use HIP for ≤ one squad-equivalent (and any SMC/SW stacked with it).

4. The British reinforcements may enter on or after the player turn in which they make a mandatory RPh Reinforcement dr < the current turn number. They must all enter on the same turn and must enter prior to Turn 8.

5. Due to unstable banks, any vehicle exiting a stream hex across a non-stream hexside must add an additional +3 DRM to its Bog Check DR.

AFTERMATH: The crossing was opposed by enemy infantry which quickly knocked out a Churchill, commanded by Lieutenant Fearfield, with a *panzerschreck*. Meanwhile, the Gordons began to suffer considerable casualties as they deployed to handle the ambush. The Germans then started shelling the crossroads just short of the stream with an antitank gun, wounding Sergeant Jackson, commander of the bridgelayer nicknamed "Forth Bridge," and knocking out a second Churchill. A troop of Churchills eventually made their way to the stream to provide fire support for the infantry as it established a small bridgehead on the far bank. Through the nuisance of sniper fire, Forth Bridge was laid and the remainder of "Left Flank" Squadron crossed. Later, Forth Bridge was recovered and the Scots and Gordons continued to the next crossing while engineers assembled a Bailey bridge in its place.
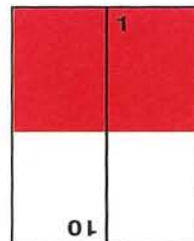
AULD LANG SYNE

ASL SCENARIO V

GERIMONT, FRANCE, 1 JANUARY 1945: In the Ardennes sector, the U.S. 87th Division was given the assignment of taking Gerimont during the VIII Corps advance to the east. The opening of the assault went well when the lead companies drove the Germans from the outskirts of the town. While pausing to regroup, the Americans were hit by a strong local counterattack. The Germans hoped to disorganize the GIs in order to give the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division time for an orderly retreat.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The Germans win at game end, if they Control ≥ 4 of the 7 multi-hex buildings on board 10 (see SSR 3).

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexrows R-GG on board 10, and A-P on board 1 are playable)

BALANCE:

☆ Decrease the game length to 5 turns.

✚ Delete one MMG from the American OB, and decrease the American ELR to "3."

TURN RECORD CHART

	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
☆ AMERICAN Sets Up First [121]							
✚ GERMAN Moves First [130]							

Elements of the 345th Infantry Regiment, 87th Division [ELR: 4] set up on board 10: {SAN: 5}
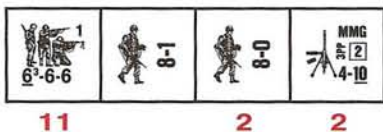
Elements of Panzer Grenadier Division 15 [ELR: 2] set up on board 1, on/north-of hexrow N, in stone building Locations: {SAN: 3}
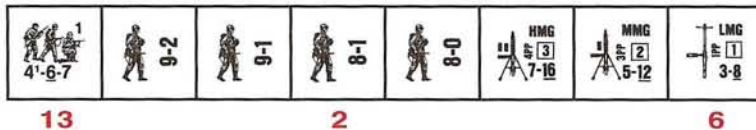
SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet, with no wind at start.

2. After setup, each hex containing ≥ one American unit undergoes a pregame 100+mm OBA Harassing Fire attack.

3. Connected Rowhouses are considered one building for victory purposes, but otherwise are treated as Rowhouses.

AFTERMATH: A hastily laid German artillery barrage was only marginally effective. The GIs, although taken unaware, initially were able to stand their ground. Despite heavy casualties, the Americans fell back slowly, moving in and out of buildings, generally tying up the point of the panzer grenadiers' attack. With the impetus of the German effort broken, the surviving panzer grenadiers beat a hasty retreat eastward. On the following day, the Allied advance ground forward into Gerimont.