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★ The AVALON HILL

GENERAL

Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 80

The post ORIGINS issue is traditionally my annual political harangue about what's right and wrong with the hobby so why should this year be any different? The sixth annual ORIGINS national convention was an interesting mixture of highs and lows which will be reported on in sundry tones throughout the hobby press. As such, it appears to be fair game for this writer's slings and arrows. What follows is admittedly just one man's opinion of what transpired this year.

ORIGINS continued to grow with an estimated total attendance of between three and four thousand, attracting a record number of exhibitors (104 boothes) with reports of several dozen others being turned away at the last minute for lack of space. Among them was GHQ whose miniatures stand had been a familiar sight at the first five ORIGINS. The fault here lies both in the inadequacy of the site to accommodate the industry and the wait-to-the-last-minute attitude of the various exhibitors to commit themselves to attendance. Unfortunately, the facilities were woefully inadequate to handle even this reduced number of displays. Despite reducing the square footage of individual booth spaces, the exhibits were packed in like so many sardines which, when coupled with the failure of the promised air conditioning, left exhibitors once again fuming about the conditions under which they had to operate. Very narrow walkways between booths left the exhibition area always crowded and sweltering. All in all, the exhibition area did not lend ORIGINS much of a boost in terms of impressing the public with a professionally run show.

FORTRESS EUROPA

June 1944.

For over two years, the Allies have been gathering their forces in England, preparing the final plan and its execution. Over three million men have been assembled in England and Africa. The Allied Strategic Air Forces relentlessly strike at railroads, road networks, bridges, and industrial complexes in Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland, attempting to soften up the German defense and slow German production.

The target is Hitler's Fortress Europa.

The Germans have a million and a half men to protect the Atlantic coast of Holland, Belgium, and France, as well as the Mediterranean coast of France. Believing the war will be won on the beaches, they have fortified much of the coastline with mines, bunkers, barbed wire, flooded areas, and gun positions: The Atlantic Wall.

FORTRESS EUROPA receates the Allied campaign in Western Europe from D-Day to March 1945. The Allied player must select an invasion site and make a successful landing, break out of the beachhead, drive across France, and push deep into Germany. The German player must prevent the Allied invasion or else conduct an orderly withdrawal across France, constantly delaying the Allies, and then counterattacking in the winter. *AN EPIC STRUGGLE.*

FORTRESS EUROPA is the successor to the highly acclaimed *THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.* And while the mapboard area and the time frame are the same as those covered in *D-DAY*, *FORTRESS EUROPA* is a tremendous step up, both in complexity and historical accuracy from both *TRC* and *D-DAY*. In fact, the only remaining similarity to *TRC* in the AH version of *FORTRESS EUROPA* is the double impulse movement in the turn sequence.

The completely new air system is quite involved, though still abstract in concept. In most games, the decisions involving the assignment of available aircraft to specific air missions will be the most crucial factor in deciding the winner. Special unit characteristics cover commandoes, rangers, paratroopers, Volkssturm units, and partisans. Other rules cover restricted German movement, realistic but simple supply rules and restrictions, limited armor effectiveness in other than clear terrain, sea movement, rail movement, invasion areas, and the panzer reserve.

The basic game is thirty-seven turns long, but five scenarios are provided that cover parts of the campaign and range from seven to twenty-eight turns long. Sudden Death Victory Conditions (again, quite different from those of *TRC*) are included and will shorten most games if used, as well as increase the excitement throughout. But, no matter which game is being played, neither side has it easy and after a player has mastered the rules, he will have innumerable subtle strategies and tricky tactics to choose from.

The game includes two Allied OB Charts, two German OB Charts, an Aircraft Mission and Replacement Chart, a Time Record Chart, a 22" × 24" mapboard, 520 counters, one die, and a sixteen page rulebook. Available for $15 from the Avalon Hill Game Co., 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, Maryland 21214. Add 10% for postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

Complexity Rating—7

Playing Time—Six Hours and Up
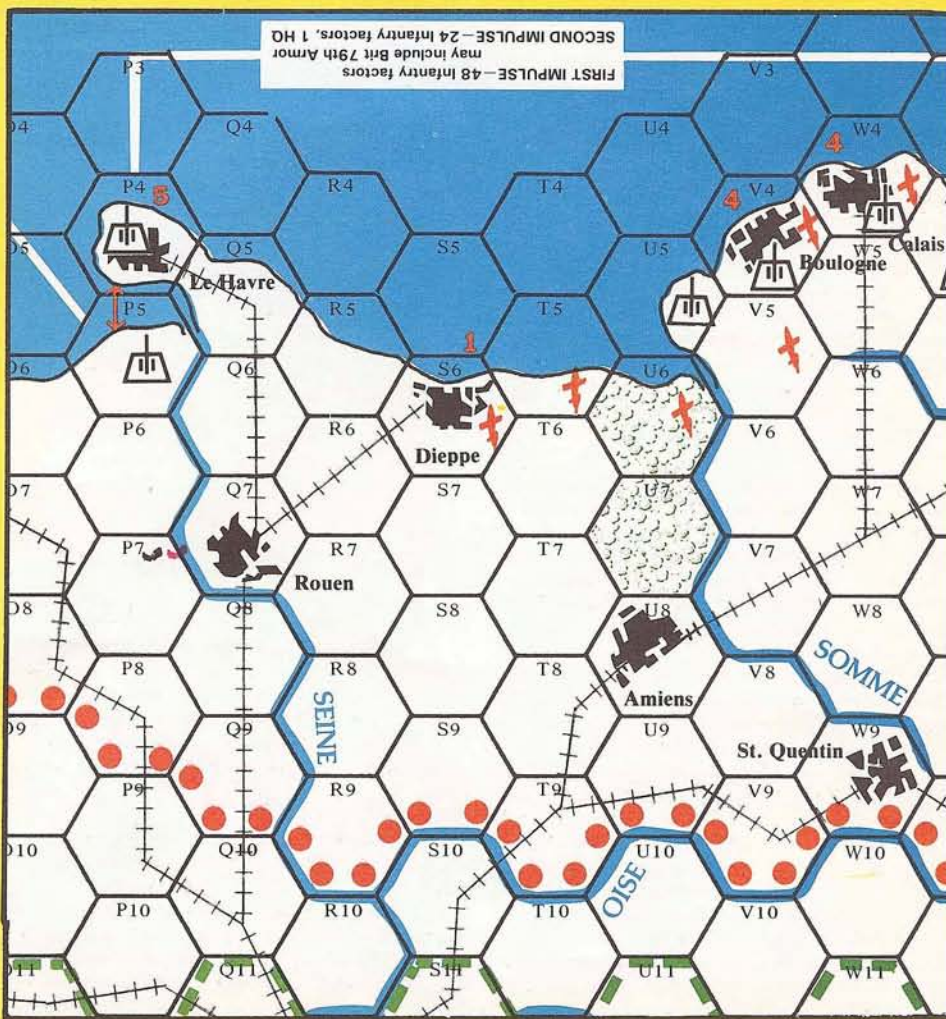
CIRCUS MAXIMUS

Join us for a glimpse of the savage splendor and pageantry that was Rome as ordinary living rooms are vicariously transformed into one of the majestic arenas of the ancient world. Hark! Even now the blare of trumpets brings down a grudging calm upon the throng that fills the galleries thirsting for the thrills of the day's competition. This is the *CIRCUS MAXIMUS* and assembled here from Spain, Thrace, Judea and the far corners of the Mediterranean are the champions of the ancient world to pay homage to the Emperor and vie for his gold. From your vantage point behind the matched grays of the House of Gaiius you watch as the sultry image is broken by the clatter of late-arriving chariots approaching the starting line. To the extreme right is the veteran Phoenician who won his freedom last month in Athens but, like a moth to flame, is drawn back to the Circus in search of fame and fortune or a grisly end beneath the hooves of a following team. Next to the line are the chestnut brown Arabians of the Egyptian and the sturdy whites of the Greek from Corinth. But of more immediate concern are the jet black beasts of Messala, the defending champion, but an arm's length away. Renowned for both his prowess as a driver and his murderous attacks on those who dare contest a corner with him, Messala is both the favorite of the crowd and feared by all who drive in the Circus. And today the hubs of the wheels on his chariot glisten in the midday sun. The Roman is using razor sharp scythe blades—a cruel threat to any wheel or horseflesh which ventures too near. You are all that stands between him and the favorable inside position at the far corner. The blare of the trumpets once again stills the crowd and signals that all is ready. The days of bravado, valor, and raw courage live again. *CIRCUS MAXIMUS* is about to begin.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS is a multi-player game of racing skill divided into three levels of play for players aged 12 and up. The Basic Game can be played with a minimum investment of learning time as one player can quickly explain the game to inexperienced participants. Yet, *CIRCUS MAXIMUS* is more than just a racing game. The drivers must choose whether to slow their teams in order to attack their opponents with whip and/or ram attacks, how to best defend against and evade such attacks by others, when to whip their own team into the stretch, or save their limited endurance to coax them through the all important corners. In the Advanced Game additional complexity is added in the form of wrecks, dragged drivers, and critical wounds. The Campaign Game version allows participants to build an entire stable of chariot teams and drivers for use in a racing season of ten different starts. Wounds and experience gained in one race will affect the outcomes of future events. You can amass large fortunes with astute wagers, or be sold into slavery for going into debt. Bribes, drugs, and other forms of skullduggery can ruin even the best plans of those who have not countered with adequate security forces.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS is best played with eight participants but can be played by any number from one to ten or more. Like most multi-player games it is extremely well balanced and easy to learn, yet challenging and exciting to play. The average playing time of two hours enables several plays in the course of an afternoon. In each game you get a mounted 16″ × 33″ mapboard, *COI*-style gamette box, 16 page rulebook, and 96 die-cut counters representing the drivers, teams, and chariots which do the racing and the Sesterces which are bet on them.
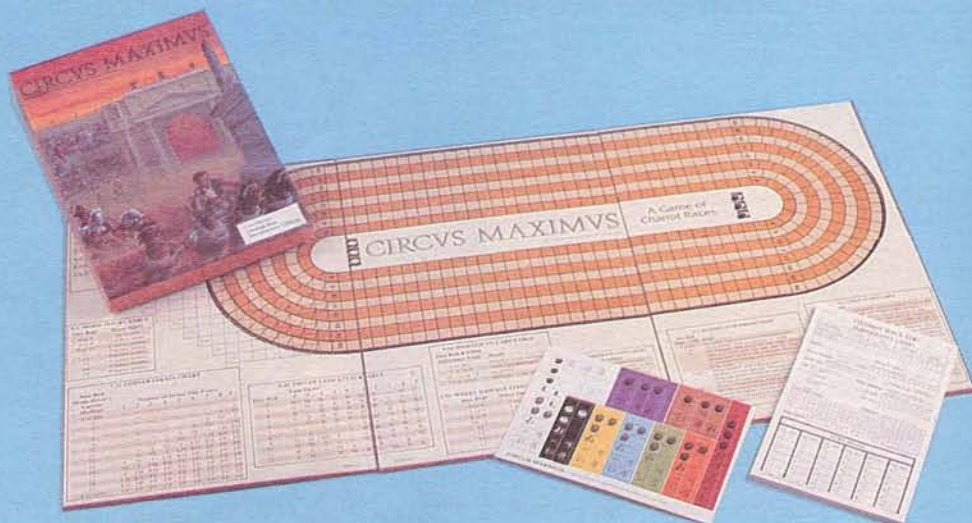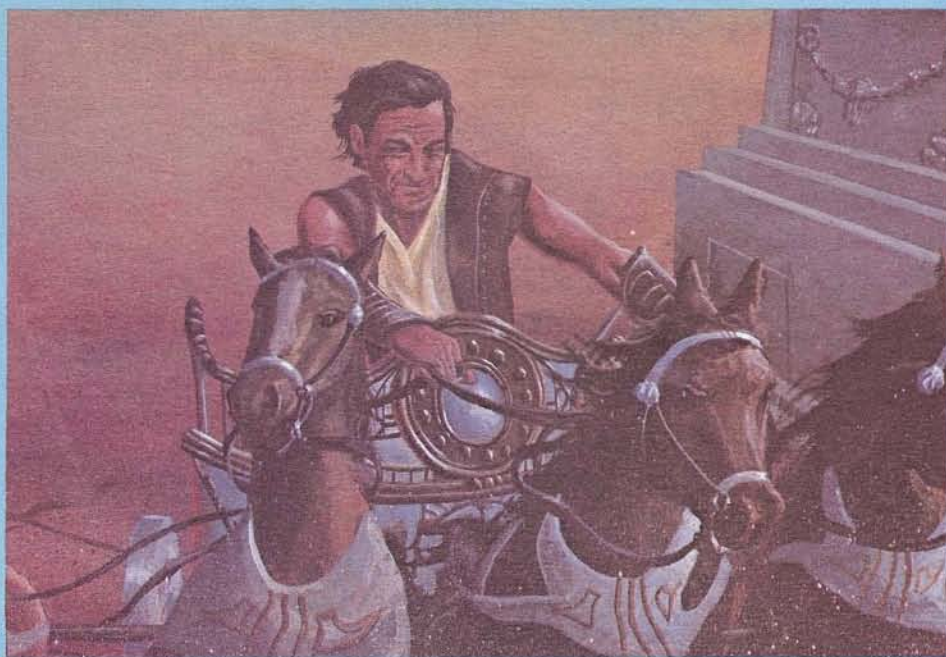
CIRCUS MAXIMUS is one of those games that comes along from time to time which is just plain fun to play. We know we have a winner on our hands when designers volunteer to stay late to playtest somebody else's game. Such was the case with *CIRCUS MAXIMUS*. Like *WS&IM, KINGMAKER,* and *RAIL BARON* before it, there was no shortage of volunteers to playtest *CIRCUS MAXIMUS*. In fact, AH developer Don Greenwood hated to finish it because it meant the end to his enjoyable Saturday afternoon playtests.

Described elsewhere as *SPEED CIRCUIT* with dirty tricks, *CIRCUS MAXIMUS* indeed owes a great debt to the former as well as *WIN, PLACE & SHOW* in regards to its smooth playing and exciting mechanics. The combination of the former with the unique combat techniques of designer Michael Matheny has resulted in a game far more exciting than its predecessor's in the AH "racing" stable, despite the blandness of the track itself.

Rated '2' on the Avalon Hill Complexity Scale of 1 [Easy] to 10 [Hard], *CIRCUS MAXIMUS* is available directly from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 for $8 plus 10% postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

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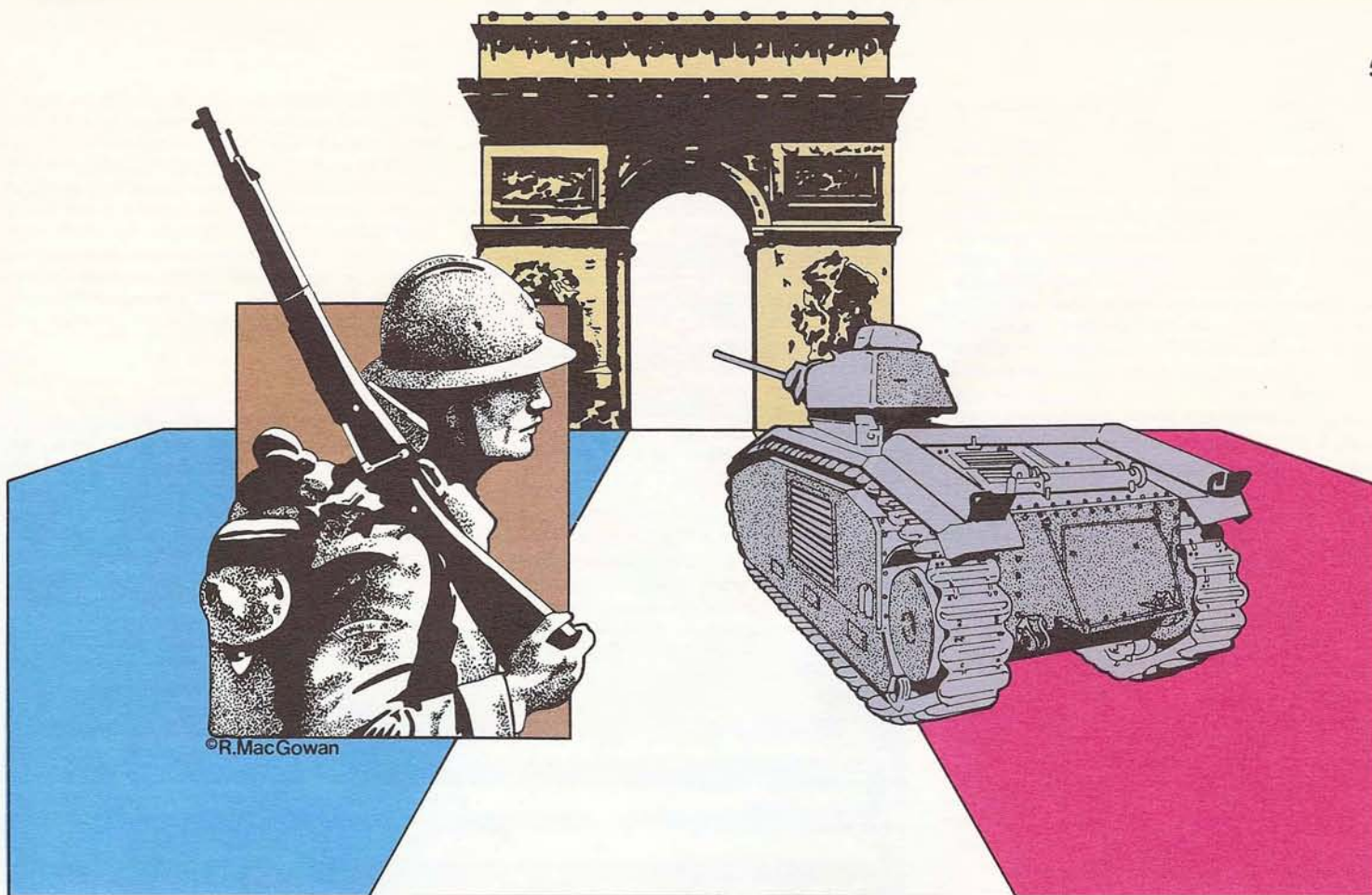
FIRST IMPRESSIONS

An Introduction to Squad Leader Plus TWO By Bob Medrow

SQUAD LEADER enthusiasts need no introduction to Bob Medrow, but for those who do, the story goes further than that green 8-1 leader counter with the same name. Bob was instrumental in elimination of more problems than I care to remember in the initial SQUAD LEADER game for which he won the Royal Order of the MVP, my undying gratitude, and half a game store. Since then he's been more than just a little active in the gamette playtests and has battled relative newcomers like McNamara and Mishcon to the wire for later MVP honors. Having lost that title with the last two gamettes he's made up for it by winning the Annual Editor's Choice Awards for his first two "First Impressions" articles. By the looks of this fine piece of analytical writing he is sure to be among the nominees for a third.

This is my third article to be concerned with *SQUAD LEADER* and/or the gamettes which have followed upon its heels. The first of these appeared in Volume 14, No. 5 of *The General* and dealt with certain basic aspects of the *SL* system, with the emphasis placed upon the infantry. There was also a discussion of the first three scenarios. Volume 15, No. 6 contained an extensive discussion of the armor game as modified by the publication of *CROSS OF IRON*. In addition, each of the eight *COI* scenarios received some attention. As did the first two, this article rests upon a foundation composed of playtest experience, the writings of others, and discussions with other gamers.

This article covers three major topics: the most significant ways in which *COD* modifies or extends the *SL-COI* system; an in-depth look at certain aspects of both the old and the new artillery systems; and a look at five of *COD's* twelve scenarios.

Much of what you'll find here should be intelligible to anyone familiar with *SL*, and those of you into *COI* should have little trouble in following what *COD* has to offer, even if you've never seen the second gamette.
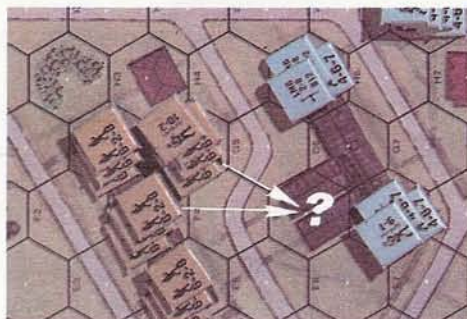
Figure 1: One of the basic dilemmas of *SQUAD LEADER:* is one big attack better than two small ones? Had the German started a squad in F5 he would doubtless have found out.

The treatment of the first two topics is generally a hard one, meaning that you will find lots of numbers. The genesis for this type of treatment goes back to the problems I first encountered during the playtesting of *SL*. By the very natures of the combat systems, many of the truths of how they can really be expected to perform are not at all clear. Oh, the mechanics are clear enough. However, particularly when two dice are being rolled, that doesn't mean that the outcomes are obvious enough to make a choice of tactics a simple thing. The very first *SL* scenario, The Guards Counterattack, contains a situation that illustrates this quite nicely (See figure 1). If the German player sets up with a unit in F5, the Russian player could use his six squads in F3

and G4 as a fire group and attack once on the 36 firepower column. Or, he might consider having each stack attack separately, thereby giving him two, weaker attacks, one of which he might not have to use if the first succeeded in breaking the German squad. If one selects the second approach there's then the question of whether or not Col. Berki should be placed where he can lend his –2 dice roll modifier (hereafter DRM) to one of the attacks.

Now, it takes little thought to reach the conclusion that once one starts looking at things like the relative probabilities of success of the options described above, enormous piles of numbers can be generated. The real problem is then to determine which of these numbers will be of benefit to the serious, but not fanatical, player. My personal objective in undertaking the types of calculations you'll see here has been to establish reasonable doctrines for my cardboard commands. Pouring over a three-ring binder full of charts and tables during the course of a game is not my idea of fun, but I do prefer to play intelligently. Thus, as you'll see in the last section of the article, I'm perfectly willing in order to arrive at an initial setup, to consider the statistical nature of the effectiveness of a 37L AT Gun against a PzKwIB with its –3 armor and its size modifiers. Without that type of knowledge it's awfully hard to decide where to position that AT Gun. Now, enough game experience can, if you remember it all, accomplish the same end. But, for many of us, both the remembering and the finding of enough playing time are beyond us. Hopefully, if you're interested in playing well, the kinds of information in these articles will help you handle the decision making required.

And, make no mistake about it, *COD* does add to the range of decision making required. It's probably fortunate for all of us that the step from *COI* to *COD* is a smaller one than was the one from *SL* to *COI*. First, and probably most important, there is very little to unlearn. By my reckoning, less than 5% of the rules in *COD* alter previous rules. Of these, the only significant changes are in connection with the offboard artillery mechanics. Secondly, only some 45% of the rules involve universal additions. By this I mean additions that are, if you decide to use them likely to find application in most scenarios. The majority of what's here will be used only occasionally. For the most part, this is because these rules consider specialized equipment or situations.

If *COD* does add to our burdens, it should also add to our awareness of two significant aspects of WWII. The educational aspects of this hobby we share have always meant more to some than to others. However, the contrast between the types and amounts of equipment and vehicles used in the *COD* scenarios and what we saw in *COI* is immediately obvious. This contrast, in a very effective way, demonstrates the escalation in both military technology and the dollars-and-cents cost of fielding an army in just a few short years. If one fails to maintain a clear vision of that aspect of war, one cannot comprehend either the larger picture of WWII or the world in which we now live.

As to the other aspect, I'm sure that we're all aware of various differences among the major combatants of WWII, but a study of the Allied vehicle lists is most enlightening. With all that's been written about the topic it's hardly a secret that France and England entered the war with Germany with a numerical superiority in AFVs and the rules pertaining to their use helps us to see some differences in philosophy between the opposing sides. As you look down the British list at what appeared as the war progressed, you will see that these differences continue. Note, if you will, the general lack of self-propelled artillery. Turreted vehicles are there instead. The British preference for tank heavy armor organizations can be seen in the absence of halftracks. For those of you with the patience for it, a study of the entry dates of British, German and Russian AFVs provides some rewarding insights into the ability of each power to adapt to a changing battlefield. Yes, whether or not it pleases you to see wargames as history-in-a-box, it's in there in this series of games.

Before looking at specifics, it is necessary to consider some basic aspects of probability. An exhaustive knowledge is not necessary, but some facts are likely to prove useful, here and elsewhere. Most of the rolls made in the *SL* system are made with two dice. Because the numbers used in the system are the sums of the spots, the probabilities of the different outcomes are sometimes hard to visualize. The chance of rolling a '2' is one in 36, the change of rolling a '3' is two in 36, and so on up to six chances in 36 to roll a '7.' After that the chances start falling: the chance of an '8' is five in 36, that of a '9' is four in 36, and so on, with a '12' once again having just one chance in 36. Before going on, it's essential to stress that this does not say that the roll of a pair of honest dice will yield '2' just once, '3' twice, etc., in 36 casts. Remember, dice have no memory.

The probability of something is equal to the ratio of the number of chances this something has of coming up to the total number of possible outcomes. With two dice the total number of outcomes is 36. Since the dice combinations (1,5), (2,4), (3,3), (4,2) and (5,1) all total six, there are five chances, out of 36, of rolling a six. Thus, the probability of such a roll is 0.13889, to five decimal places, or 13.889%. In all of the tables in this article, probabilities are expressed as percentages.

In most cases we're interested in the probability of rolling at or below a particular number. While the probability of rolling a six is 0.13889, the probability of rolling six *or less* is the sum of the probabilities of rolling two, three, four, five or six. That will happen, on the average, 15 times out of 36 for a probability of 0.41667.

Many of the game's mechanics require more than one dice roll. For example, there are the separate TO HIT and TO KILL rolls involved when onboard ordnance fires at a vehicle. Suppose that a particular case requires a TO HIT roll of six or less and a TO KILL roll of eight or less. The probability that two dice will yield eight or less is 0.72222. Since both rolls must be made in order to have a successful shot, the probability of making such a shot is equal to the product of both probabilities, 0.30093.

THE INFANTRY GAME

In *COI*, the new armor rules seem to dominate most players' perception of what's in that gamette and the vehicle counters are among the most striking components of both *COI* and *COD*. As fascinating as I find the range of iron monsters spawned by WWII to be, however, the human side of that terrifying conflict is, for me, brought to life by the infantry. My opinions about *SL* and its children are hardly objective, but I feel quite strongly that the ways in which human frailties and strengths are demonstrated by the system is one of its strongest points.

The Expanded Cast of Characters

The conflicts surrounding the start of WWII involved quite a variety of troop types. To reflect this, infantry comes in at least three flavors for the French, the British, the Finns and the Allied "Neutrals" (Poland, Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands and Norway). Of these, the troops of England (except for the Home Guard) and Finland escape the penalty of a broken side morale value a point or two below their unbroken values. Reflecting their justly-famed stoutness under fire, Finnish squads possess the unique (for squads) ability to self rally and are not subject to a Desperation Morale penalty. Since the troops of the other Allied nations were not the same as the hastily trained soldiers both the Soviets and the Germans sometimes sent into battle, they do not suffer the added Inexperienced Infantry penalties of section 94.

A totally new type of soldier, the scout, makes his debut in *COD*. Various parts of other rules also making their appearance here have the net effect of increasing the number of concealed and hidden units in play. As one would imagine, the function of a scout is to go looking for trouble. The mechanics of creating them are such that it is not possible to create a horde of skirmishes. While their introduction does add to the decisions a player must make, it also adds a useful flexibility at little cost. The prohibition against their production by Russian, French and non-Finnish minor country forces is but another way in which the system reflects the characteristics of the forces involved.

Leaders have received little attention in the rules since their introduction in *SL*. The two sections in *COD* concerned with leaders do not alter their activities or abilities, but, do, effectively, increase their number slightly. The first of these rules allows for the possible creation of a leader when a squad is in a stressful situation: either broken and adjacent to an unbroken enemy unit during a Rally Phase, or during Close Combat. The frequencies with which leaders can appear under these circumstances (one in 12 times and one in 36 times, respectively) are low enough so that the inclusion of this rule will have little impact on play. Its appeal will be to those who delight in the sudden appearance of the unexpected.

Much the same thing can be said for the second rule. This one allows for the wounding of a leader under certain circumstances which, previously, would have involved his outright elimination. The impact of this rule on a given scenario is limited to the possibility that an eligible leader will then pass a normal Desperation Morale MC (i.e., roll at or below four less than his normal morale) and, thereby, have the option to remain on the board as a lightly wounded leader. This rule is probably more significant for those involved in campaign games.

New Dangers

As if there were not already dangers enough on the paper battlefield, we encounter some new hazards here. One rule introduces HE critical hits versus infantry. These are possible only when the defender is in normally favorable terrain (e.g., inside a building). The frequency of such hits is, for practical purposes, the same as that for critical hits versus AFVs. The effect is to reverse the normally favorable dice roll modifier (DRM). Units in woods who are spared a critical hit of this sort are subject to a –1 DRM on all indirect HE fire and all direct mortar fire. The idea behind this rule is that at least some of the high angle incoming fire will be detonated by the trees, thereby producing more fragmentation damage than would be done by shells detonating upon contact with the ground. This same air burst effect could be produced, late in the war, over any terrain by proximity fused shells. I imagine that *GI ANVIL OF VICTORY* will provide us with a rule for that.

A section entitled "Men Under Fire" introduces the hazards of grounding, pinning, and cowering. In effect, these rules introduce an Infantry Fire Table (IFT) result other than no effect, the breaking of a unit, or its elimination. The first of these, grounding, occurs whenever troops moving on land and on foot are hit by defensive fire resulting in a morale check (MC) which they pass by rolling the highest possible number that leaves them unbroken. This "near miss" results in the unit ending its movement then and there. The effect is temporary and ends with the end of the current Movement Phase. Prep fire survived by an infantry unit by the same type of a dice roll causes the unit's inherent firepower factor to be halved during the immediately following Defensive Fire Phase, and the unit is said to be pinned.

My first concern about a rule like this is over the frequency with which it will have an effect. Because it forms the basis for much of what follows, the first Table to be presented shows the probability that a unit having the morale levels indicated will survive, alive and unbroken, the attacks indicated. The range of DRMs is dictated by this article's emphasis on artillery fire. The column headings under "Attack" are the same as those on the IFT.

A somewhat less extensive Table was discussed back in the first of these articles, so I'll be brief here. Most basically, a study of this Table is the starting point for gaining some systematic insight into what you can expect from attacks resolved on the IFT. Both offensively and defensively, this is the logical starting point for the development of tactics.

The immediate concern, however, is the extent to which these survival percentages are reduced by these two new rules. A rather simple qualitative answer can be found by examining the values in Table 2. As you can see, the DRMs for which this effect is greatest go from negative to positive as the FPF increases. Thus, if we look at a single negative DRM we see that the incidence of grounding or pinning generally decreases for increasing FPF, while, for a positive DRM, they increase. Such behavior

is quite plausible given the corresponding values in Table 1. For negative DRMs an increase in the FPF leads to a much greater reduction in survival than that seen for positive DRMs.

The use of these rules is, of course, up to you, but, if one is used, so should the other. Together they are rather evenhanded, causing trouble for both attacker and defender. Overall, they should produce a noticeable, but slight, reduction in the tempo of events.

This same section provides for something called cowering. Its mechanics are quite simple. Whenever any IFT or Close Combat attack makes use of the inherent firepower of a squad or crew, rolling doubles causes the attack to be shifted one column to the left unless there is some kind of a leader involved in the attack. Table 3 shows how frequently such a shift will reduce the severity of a successful attack, where a successful attack is defined as one which causes at least a normal morale check (MC). This, then has nothing to do with whether or not the attacked unit passes its morale check. From the structure of the IFT a one

column shift doesn't necessarily cause a reduction in the IFT result. For example, rolling a pair of '4's in a 24 FPF attack with a zero DRM still causes the attacked unit to take a level 2 MC.

	Fire Attack Strength			
DRM	4	8	16	24
−4	3	3	3	3
−3	7	6	8	8
−2	4	3	6	3
−1	10	7	9	11
0	7	4	6	6
+1	20	10	10	11
+2	17	7	8	6
+3	33	20	14	13

Table 3. The percentage of successful attacks that are reduced in severity due to Cowering.

According to the numbers in Table 3, cowering will become a more frequent result when the target has better protection. From what I've read concerning the time when soldiers did or did not fire this is historically correct.

In Close Combat this rule is definitely prejudiced in favor of the player with the higher odds ratio attack. This situation is quite independent of whatever DRMs may be involved. As an example, for a zero Close Combat modifier, if you are attacking at 9 + -1, the only roll that would hurt you would be boxcars. At the other extreme, an attack at 1-6 can no longer be successful.

Overall, this rule favors the defender (in a tactical sense) over the attacker. It also works against the Russians and any other troops having a small number of leaders. The effect, however, is small.

"Chrome" is the word commonly used by many game reviewers to describe elements of a game which add to its sense of realism (or the amount of busy work) without, in most cases, having a great impact on how the game really works. On that basis, I think you'd have to call these rules chrome. Use them if they appeal to you. "Cowering" is my favorite of the group.

Ever since Scenario 9, minefields have posed a hazard to both men and vehicles. While COD does introduce anti-tank mines as a separate type of mine, the more extensive, and interesting, part of the new rules in this area deals with booby traps. Booby traps in particular, and minefields in general, help, I think, to interject a desirable amount of uncertainty into the proceedings. The lament over the amount of information a tactical game player has compared with what his real life counterpart had, has always been heard from those who seek after realism. These hidden menaces help redress this problem without any significant amount of mechanics induced pain.

Normal minefields attack both when you enter and when you leave, and they continue to do so as long as troops enter their hex. Booby traps, specifically, doorway and stairway mines, will go off just once, unless they're successfully disarmed. If, however, one does go off, the normal terrain modifier for the structure is reversed. When an enemy infantry unit enters such a hex, or attempts to use a booby trapped stairway, the existence of the trap is announced. Disarming such a device is possible only if the movement in question takes place during the Advance Phase, or more than two MFs are utilized to enter the hex by the first unit to so move during the Movement Phase, or a leader with a negative leadership modifier is present in the hex when the attempt is made.

Most commonly, there will be no effort at disarming possible or there will be a one-third chance of success for such an operation. The probability of surviving in the first case can be read from the −2 and −3 rows in Table 1. Table 4 lists the probabilities of surviving in the second case.

Firepower Factors											
DRM	1/20	2/30	4/40 (70,80)	6/50 (100)	8/60 (120, 150)	12/70 (200+)	16/85	20/100	24/120	30/150	36+/200+
−3	56	42	32	22	16	11	7	4	2	1	0
−2	70	56	44	32	24	17	11	7	4	2	1
−1	81	70	57	44	34	25	17	11	7	4	2
0	89	81	70	57	45	35	25	17	11	7	4
+1	95	89	81	70	58	46	35	25	17	11	7
+2	98	95	89	81	71	58	46	35	25	17	11
+3	100	98	95	89	81	71	58	46	35	25	17
+4	100	100	98	95	89	81	71	58	46	35	25
+5	100	100	100	98	95	89	81	71	58	46	35
(a) Morale level of six											
−3	62	49	40	28	23	17	11	8	5	2	1
−2	75	62	52	40	32	25	17	13	8	5	2
−1	84	75	64	52	43	34	25	18	13	8	5
0	92	84	76	64	54	44	34	26	18	13	8
+1	96	92	85	76	66	55	44	35	26	18	13
+2	99	96	92	85	77	66	55	45	35	26	18
+3	100	99	96	92	85	77	66	55	45	35	26
+4	100	100	99	96	92	85	77	66	55	45	35
+5	100	100	100	99	96	92	85	77	66	55	45
(b) Morale level of seven											
−3	68	56	48	36	31	25	17	13	8	4	2
−2	80	68	60	48	42	35	25	20	13	8	4
−1	88	80	72	60	53	45	35	28	20	13	8
0	94	88	82	72	64	55	45	37	28	20	13
+1	97	94	90	82	74	65	55	46	37	28	20
+2	99	97	94	90	83	75	65	56	46	37	28
+3	100	99	97	94	90	83	75	66	56	46	37
+4	100	100	99	97	94	90	83	75	66	56	46
+5	100	100	100	99	97	94	90	83	75	66	56
(c) Morale level of eight											

Table 1. The probability that units having the morale levels indicated will survive, alive and unbroken, the IFT attacks indicated.

Attack	1 (−2)	1 (−3)	2 (−2)	2 (−3)	4 (−2)	4 (−3)
Infantry 6	80	70	70	61	61	55
Morale 7	83	75	75	66	68	60
8	86	79	79	70	74	66

Table 4. The probability that a unit will survive, alive and unbroken, the booby trap attacks indicated.

When I first read this rule, one of my first thoughts was for the economics of these devices. A booby trap factor costs two normal minefield factors. The DRMs are nice, but you aren't even guaranteed an attack even if a unit stumbles across such a trap. In order to pursue the matter I calculated the information in Table 5. To make a "bang per buck" comparison, compare the one factor attacks on Tables 1 and 4 with a two factor attack on Table 5. The survival possibilities are about the same for a booby trap in a wooden building if no disarming attempt is possible, one in a stone building where the usual attempt is possible, and a normal minefield attack. The same is essentially true for the next strongest attack.

Fire Attack Strength		4			8			16			24		
Unit Morale		6	7	8	6	7	8	6	7	8	6	7	8
D R M	−3	6	8	9	5	7	8	3	4	6	1	2	3
	−2	6	8	9	6	8	10	5	7	8	2	4	5
	−1	6	7	8	7	9	10	6	8	10	4	5	7
	0	5	6	6	7	9	10	7	9	11	5	7	9
	+1	3	4	4	6	8	8	7	10	11	7	9	11
	+2	2	3	3	5	6	6	7	9	10	7	10	11
	+3	1	1	1	3	4	4	6	8	9	8	10	11

Table 2. The probability that various infantry units will be Pinned or Grounded as a result of some typical fire attacks.

Thus, the decision for or against booby traps will not be made on economic grounds. This is as it should be. How, then, does one decide? The starting point is a recognition that these types of weapons are, to an extent dependent upon your opponent, largely psychological in character. By this I mean that they may make him nervous more frequently than they will blow away any significant number of troops. If any are to be used, they are probably best placed where they will be encountered, if you're lucky, early in the game. If you can make him hesitate to use good shelter, or be cautious in entering a building, you slow his tempo. In any event, the exercise of exploring lines of advance from a foe's point of view should prove useful.

While on this same general subject, Table 5 also provides information concerning the effects of minefield density. As an example, which is more dangerous to attempt to pass through: a single hex with four minefield factors, each containing two factors; or four hexes with one factor in each? From Table 5, for a squad with a morale of seven, the probabilities of survival are 58, 51 and 50%, respectively. These numbers are not radically different and constitute a general conclusion in all the cases considered. Thus, the logical conclusion is to use a larger number of low density minefields in order to increase the probable number of units walking into mined hexes. Unless you're dealing with a very cautious player, two factors per hex is probably a good, cost effective density. More hazardous fields should only be placed where there is an excellent chance of the enemy's entry into that hex.

Over the River (and through the woods)

About 15% of *COD*'s rules are devoted to rivers and the things that go with them: bridges, boats, marshes and mudflats. That makes this general topic one of the longer ones in the rules, and a marvelous addition it is. I've placed it here because the most significant new tactical problem posed by *COD*'s rules is that of the opposed river crossing. And when all is said and done, that's an infantry operation.

A bridged river also presents its challenges because of the drastic restrictions upon movement they impose. They also represent a wholly new type of objective. Wooden, stone, foot and pontoon bridge counters are provided, along with rules for their demolition.

The boats, however, are what most attract my attention. Each of the three types of boats has its own individual character. The only self-propelled one, the sturmboat, is twice as fast as the others, more durable, and its inherent driver can make round trips without imposing a drain upon one's troops. Both of the slower, pneumatic rubber boats are paddle powered and require a crew (for the small one) to move normally or a squad (for the large one) to move at all. As we shall see, passengers on board the larger model are in greater danger, but only the larger boat can carry more than three portage points worth of gear.

Direct ordnance fire holds little terror for boats. Treated as hull down vehicles on land, Case J (meaning a +2 TO HIT DRM) as well as at least a +1 size modifier also apply to a boat in the water. Even though any hit is an automatic kill, boats in the water are in very little danger from such fire.

Other forms of attack, however, are vastly more lethal. Table 6 contains information on just how lethal certain attacks are. Since boats fall into the same category as do trucks as far as indirect HE fire goes, even comparatively small caliber stuff is quite dangerous. The remaining entries in this Table show the effect of small arms fire. Realistically, even a single enemy squad can be a real hazard.

Remember, the values shown are for a single shot. If not suppressed in some way, that squad might well get off four shots in the time required for a kleineflossack to cross the river. If the boat contained a morale level 7 squad its chance of surviving a four FPF attack four times is just about one in three.

Looking at these values and the purchase cost of the three boats, the sturmboat is definitely a best buy as far as passenger safety is concerned. Its per attack survival is not that much better, but its greater speed and maneuverability increase the overall crossing survivability by more than enough to compensate for the greater cost. Also, while on the subject of purchasing, those of you who do your own scenarios, should certainly purchase board 8, the second river board.

THE ARMOR GAME

Here, the new things are mostly odds and ends. My objective is to bring up to date two of the sections in the second article.

Infantry Versus Armor

In this area AFVs pick up a little and they lose a little. The gain comes in the fact that pre-1942 infantry and Inexperienced Infantry at all times are less likely to engage an AFV in Close Combat. Such an infantry unit, beginning its player turn next to and under the manned and functioning guns of an enemy AFV, must pass a normal MC in order to avoid having to leave. This test can be avoided only if the infantry is equipped with specific anti-tank weaponry.

The loss comes about because early armor is deemed to be more vulnerable to immobilizing MG fire. After 1941 this new rule still applies against vehicles without at least one positive armor modifier. The rule allows any crew-manned MG (except one in an AFV) to attempt the immobilization of any enemy AFV in the same or an adjacent hex. The mechanics are similar to the Defensive Fire Phase method of infantry attack against AFVs. Quite importantly, however, this new type of attack can be made during any fire phase and from any type of terrain, provided the MG is not at a higher level. If, in addition, the squad occupies favorable terrain, it may also attempt an immobilization using its inherent capability. Since a squad must pass a Pre-AFV Attack MC and leadership modifiers do apply, the success of these attacks will be strongly influenced by the availability of leaders.

Since all but LMGs already had the ability to kill an AFV, this new rule introduces the question of when does one attempt the usual TO KILL attack and when does one try this new option. A similar question arose in connection with Deliberate Immobilization and Intensive Fire, and was explored in the last article.

As this is the last of the matters to be explored quantitatively before we get to the artillery topic, let's see if we can't reduce this answer to a simple doctrine. As a starting point, let's just consider the MG immobilization attempt, without regard to any second, infantry only, attempt. Table 7 shows us how MG type, squad morale, and leader influence the success of such an effort. This, by the way, is for a single squad in the hex. One of the interesting observations from an earlier analysis of the Defensive Fire Phase attack versus AFVs was that the number of squads was much less significant than was the caliber of any leader present.

The dramatic impact (generally, a doubling of the probability of success) due to the presence of even a 8-1 leader is clear. So also is the fact that a leader's leadership modifier is much more important that is his morale level. Contrary to the gut feeling I had before I began making these types of

analyses, the morale level of the squad is also much less critical than is the leadership modifier. As the rule states, an AFV's armor modifiers and facing have no effect.

The same, as we see in Table 8, cannot be said for the normal MG versus AFV attack. However, such an attack is not influenced by any leader who might happen to be present.

As a basis for the construction of a simple doctrine, note that, with no leader present, the probability of a successful immobilization with a MMG varies from 3 to 6%. From Table 8, a side shot by a MMG against –1 armor is successful 3% of the time. Since the latter does not require Sustained Fire, let's say that this is a situation in which a normal attack is best. Looking further in the Tables, for the same MG and facing situation, I'd favor a normal attack against –2 armor if a –1 leader were present. So, we can say that, starting from the first case considered, one subtracts one from the armor level for each leadership modifier increment. Similarly, I'd subtract one for a front shot or if the weapon were a HMG, while I'd add one for a rear shot or a .50 cal HMG. In any given scenario the range of factors is normally narrow enough that the best attack can be worked out before hand.

Before moving on it wouldn't hurt to consider how much the chance of success for this new type of attack is increased if a second attack, using the squad's inherent capabilities, is also possible. While this is a function of terrain, it's a fairly reliable rule of thumb that such a second attack increases the overall probability of success by half.

Guns Versus Armor

Here, too, AFVs gain a bit and lose some. In the loss column, anti-tank rifles and all 40mm or less AP-firing ordnance get two hits when the TO HIT dice roll is less than or equal to one-half the final TO HIT value. Something called Partial Armor Penetration Shock is now possible whenever the AFV TO KILL roll is just one greater than the value necessary to destroy/immobilize the target. Should the crew fail a normal MC the vehicle is incapable of further activity for the balance of the player turn. The real hazard, however, is that the crew is liable to further, more stringent, morale checks if the AFV is hit again by kill-capable fire before a pair of Rally Phases have passed.

On the benefit side, for final TO HIT numbers of five or more, there is a 40 + % chance of any hits being turret or upper body hits. Since a number of tanks have superior armor there, this is to their benefit. So, too, is a rule that allows non-aquatic vehicles to be considered in motion during the enemy player turn. No movement then is possible, but the vehicle receives a 10% bonus during its owner's player turn. What's usually of more benefit, however, is the –2 TO HIT modifier.

THE ARTILLERY GAME

Parts of the artillery game have been covered in other connections. The impact of the mechanics of offboard artillery upon the availability of Fire For Effect (FFE) missions is at the center of what's considered here. After one gamette in which this general topic went unaltered, it now has its turn. As we shall see, the net effect has been to diminish our certainty as to what we can expect, while also expanding the potential effect of offboard fire.

Perhaps the best way to begin is to review the mechanics, both old and new, whereby a FFE mission is obtained. In almost all of what follows it is assumed that the player's intention is always to obtain as many FFE missions as soon as he can. To some extent this reflects my own bird-in-the-hand philosophy. In general, once I begin calling, I have little use for the tactic of chasing enemy units with a spotting round. The results presented below serve

to reinforce this view. Based upon these results, however, the very vital question of just when does one begin this process will be considered.

With that constraint, the procedure requires that an attempt to contact the battery be made during a Rally Phase. If successful, an Artillery Request counter is placed within the observer's LOS. During the following Close Combat Phase this counter is inverted to show a blue Spotting Round (SR). After carrying out the accuracy routine, a red SR is placed in the hex determined by the routine, provided that this hex is also within the LOS of the observer. Then, in the next Rally Phase, provided that radio contact can be maintained, the red SR is inverted to show a FFE mission.

In terms of this part of the mechanics, *COD* introduces two additional dice rolls. Both before the Artillery Request counter is placed and before the red SR is inverted the player must roll at or below the battery access number. These rolls have nothing to do with maintaining radio contact. They're still talking to you, but they've other fish to fry.

Unlike the situation we've had up to this point, the battery access number also controls the number of FFE missions available. Before this, this number was determined by drawing one of the eight "chit" counters numbered one through four. Thus, the player with the module knew the limit to what he had available. The basic battery access number is "eight", modified according to the DRMs given in Table 9. Note that the first and last DRMs are permanent. In effect, then, one can think of beginning a game with an initial battery access number of seven, eight or nine, depending upon whether you have a scarce, normal, or plentiful supply of ammo back at the battery. This viewpoint is used here. Thus, unlike what existed under the original rules, the probability of getting the next FFE is a function of how much success you've had up to that point.

DRMs	Condition
−1	Scenario specifies plentiful ammunition
−1	Continuation of existing FFE counter
+1	Per Fire Mission of that module used thus far
+1	Scenario specifies scarce ammunition

Table 9. Battery Access DRMs

Unlike most other parts of the system, many aspects of the artillery game are influenced by events over a large number of turns. This fact is the central problem in developing a feel for how some things work, on the average, based upon experience.

One simple calculation of some practical concern is the probability of getting a shot off in the minimum of two player turns. The results are shown in Table 10. As with all of the results presented, these assume that radio contact has not been made prior to the start of the first player turn. Before considering the numbers, note that only three of the possible contact values are listed. Overall, the results for '6' are essentially the average of those for '5' and '7'. Depending upon the particular aspect of the business considered, the values are slightly one way or the other from this average. Field telephone results, practically, are the same as those for American artillery.

Clearly, the *COD* changes require that one anticipate more. Targets of opportunity can still be taken under fire, but, now, a normal ammunition supply halves the probability of getting off that quick shot.

However, the type of calculation just made is simply not practical if we are going to explore some very important aspects of the artillery game. The difficulty is that the chain of events keeps branching as the number of game turns increases. To briefly illustrate, there are three possible outcomes to the single event possible (an attempt to make contact) during the first Rally Phase: contact, no contact, and no contact with a radio breakdown. If we con-

Attack	1	2	1x2	4	2x2	1x4	6	2x3	1x6
Infantry 6	79	65	63	50	42	40	32	28	25
Morale 7	84	71	71	58	51	50	41	36	35
8	89	78	79	67	61	62	52	48	49

Table 5. The probability that a unit will survive, alive and unbroken, the minefield attacks indicated.

		Attack			
		4	8	16	24
Indirect Fire, All Boats		28	42	58	72
Squad Morale of 6	SB	23	40	59	76
	KF	28	47	66	82
	GF(1)	33	54	73	87
	GF(2)	40	63	81	92
Squad Morale of 7	SB	20	36	54	73
	KF	24	42	61	78
	GF(1)	28	47	66	82
	GF(2)	35	58	77	90
Squad Morale of 8	SB	17	31	49	69
	KF	20	36	54	73
	GF(1)	23	40	59	76
	GF(2)	31	52	71	87

Table 6. The probability of boat destruction by crew morale and boat type for various attacks.

Squad Morale		6			7			8		
MG		L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H
L	None	1	2	7	2	5	10	2	6	12
E	8-1	4	8	14	5	10	17	6	12	20
A	9-1	4	9	15	5	11	.18	6	13	21
D	10-1	5	9	15	6	11	19	7	13	22
E	9-2	10	17	26	12	20	31	13	22	34
R	10-2	11	19	28	13	22	33	14	24	36
	10-3	21	32	45	23	35	50	25	38	53

Table 7. The probability of successful, deliberate, AFV immobilization by MG fire alone.

MG		MMG, HMG			.50 Caliber HMG		
Target Facing		Front	Side	Rear	Front	Side	Rear
A R M O R	M O D I F I E R	−5	28	42	58	42	58	72
	−4	17	28	42	28	42	58
	−3	8	17	28	17	28	42
	−2	3	8	17	8	17	28
	−1	0	3	8	3	8	17
	0	0	0	3	0	3	8

Table 8. The probability of AFV destruction or random immobilization.

Radio Contact Number	Squad Leader Rules	Crescendo of Doom rules Ammunition availability		
		Scarce	Normal	Plentiful
5	16	6	8	11
7	49	17	25	34 ·
9	81	28	42	56

Table 10. The probability of getting a FFE mission in the minimum number of player turns.

sider the original rules, the following events are possible during the second Rally Phase: an attempt to make contact because the first effort failed; an attempt to maintain contact prior to a second attempt to place a red SR; an attempt to maintain contact in order to obtain a FFE mission; or an attempt to repair the radio. In turn, each of these events has three possible outcomes.

As in many other situations in which the analytical approach becomes awkward or impossible, the answer is to turn to a computer. A pair of programs were written which in effect directed the computer to get as many shots as it could, as soon as it could. A random number subroutine rolled the necessary dice, modified the result as required by any DRMs, and then followed the result. The poor dumb thing continued doing this until the radio broke down permanently, or it reached the maximum number of FFEs possible, or 20 player turns passed. In effect, it did no more than you or I could, but it did it a lot faster, while at the same time keeping track of what happened.

For each contact value, or combination of contact value and initial access number, the machine repeated this process 500 times. In effect, the program generated and recorded certain significant results of playing 500 games under each set of conditions. In terms of all of the possible outcomes this is not a large number. For example, in 500 tries as the American under the *SL* rules, it never took the machine more than seven player turns to get off its first shot in games in which it got off at least one shot before breaking down the radio permanently. There is, of course, a finite probability of going 20 player turns without either getting off a shot or breaking down, but the frequency of such a result is a lot less than once in 500 tries.

However, for the most significant items reported, this many attempts seems reasonable. This conclusion is based upon the fact that these items did not change significantly between 250 tries and 500 tries. Oh, after 500 tries something might be found to happen 26% of the time, whereas the figure after 250 tries was 28%, but that's not really very important.

The Original Game

One of the troubles with computers is that they can generate huge piles of numbers, so that, frequently, the trick is to find the ones that really tell us something. To me, the important questions came down to a matter of how much and how soon. If, for example, I was sitting there with a chit that read two, how frequently would I actually get that many shots and how long would it take?

Table 11 attempts to answer that kind of question by presenting the probabilities of getting the various numbers of shots possible within the numbers of player turns indicated. Five, ten, and twenty player turns were selected because they seem representative, respectively, of the short-, medium- and long-term game. Each entry consists of a pair of numbers. The first is the probability of obtaining the number of shots indicated if there is a 100% probability that the initial spotting round will land within the observer's LOS. The second is the corresponding probability if the spotting round will so land just 70% of the time.

Looking at the unparenthesized numbers for a radio contact roll of 5 we see that, after five player turns, the numbers are 55, 24, 14, 5, 3. This means that, after five player turns, a player, if his chit draw was "four", could expect to have made no shots 55% of the time, one shot 24% of the time, two shots 14% of the time, three shots 5% of the time, and all four a mere 3% of the time. But what about that draw of "two" I mentioned earlier? Well, the number under the "2" column is the probability of getting *just* two shots. Thus, the probability of getting *at least* two shots off is the sum of the entries under "2", "3" and "4", for a total of 22%. In passing, note that some of these sets of numbers, as in this example, add up to more or less than 100. This is just the result of rounding off to the nearest whole number.

Depending upon the type of scenario being played we do know that a particular radio might not be around for the entire game. For the player, the type of information in Table 11 lets you see something of what you can expect for a given chit draw.

Table 12 considers things somewhat more generally and is, therefore, the basic tool for comparing the worth of a single artillery module in both systems. The entries under the *SL* rules heading in-

Radio Contact Number	No. of Player Turns	Number of FFE Missions								
		0		1		2		3		4
5	5	55	(62)	24	(21)	14	(8)	5	(6)	3 (2)
	10	32	(37)	23	(26)	17	(13)	10	(10)	17 (13)
	20	14	(19)	12	(12)	12	(16)	12	(17)	51 (36)
7	5	17	(25)	15	(16)	22	(20)	20	(18)	26 (21)
	10	7	(10)	6	(6)	6	(8)	10	(9)	71 (67)
	20	5	(6)	2	(2)	2	(4)	5	(2)	89 (87)
9	5	3	(7)	4	(7)	3	(10)	11	(24)	79 (51)
	10	2	(3)	1	(2)	1	(2)	2	(3)	95 (91)
	20	2	(3)	0	(1)	0	(0)	1	(1)	97 (95)

Table 11. The probability, under the original *SQUAD LEADER* rules, of obtaining the number of FFE missions indicated, given a chit selection of "4".

Contact No.	No. of Player Turns	Squad Leader Rules	Crescendo of Doom rules		
			Scarce	Normal	Plentiful
5	5	0.6 (0.5)	0.3 (0.3)	0.4 (0.4)	0.6 (0.5)
	10	1.2 (1.1)	0.7 (0.6)	0.9 (0.9)	1.2 (1.1)
	20	1.9 (1.7)	1.3 (1.1)	1.6 (1.6)	2.2 (2.0)
7	5	1.6 (1.5)	0.9 (0.9)	1.4 (1.1)	1.7 (1.5)
	10	2.2 (2.1)	1.9 (1.8)	2.6 (2.4)	3.2 (3.0)
	20	2.3 (2.3)	2.8 (2.7)	3.6 (3.5)	4.5 (4.2)
9	5	2.3 (2.1)	1.6 (1.4)	2.2 (1.8)	2.6 (2.3)
	10	2.4 (2.4)	2.9 (2.7)	3.6 (3.4)	4.3 (4.2)
	20	2.4 (2.4)	4.0 (3.8)	4.8 (4.7)	5.6 • (5.5)

Table 12. The value, in terms of the average number of FFE missions actually fired, of an artillery module. See text for details.

Radio Contact Number	Initial Access Number	No. of Player Turns	Number of FFE Missions								
			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5	7	5	79	14	5	2	0	0	0	0	0
		10	57	23	13	5	1	0	0	0	0
		20	35	26	23	11	5	0	0	0	0
	8	5	69	21	7	2	0	0	0	0	0
		10	48	24	15	10	1	0	0	0	0
		20	29	21	23	17	8	0	0	0	0
	9	5	62	23	9	4	2	0	0	0	0
		10	38	28	17	11	6	0	0	0	0
		20	19	17	22	19	17	5	1	1	0
7	7	5	41	32	19	7	1	0	0	0	0
		10	18	20	27	25	8	1	0	0	0
		20	9	9	18	33	23	7	2	0	0
	8	5	26	27	31	13	2	0	0	0	0
		10	11	10	24	30	20	5	1	0	0
		20	7	4	9	22	27	25	6	1	0
	9	5	20	23	32	21	5	0	0	0	0
		10	7	7	18	25	24	15	4	1	0
		20	5	2	4	10	23	30	19	7	0
9	7	5	17	30	35	17	1	0	0	0	0
		10	4	7	22	37	25	5	0	0	0
		20	3	2	5	19	38	29	5	0	0
	8	5	10	13	37	31	9	0	0	0	0
		10	2	2	9	27	36	18	3	0	0
		20	2	1	2	7	20	37	25	5	0
	9	5	4	9	30	40	17	0	0	0	0
		10	2	2	4	15	30	33	12	2	0
		20	2	1	2	3	6	22	35	23	4

Table 13. The probability, under the *CRESCENDO OF DOOM* rules, of obtaining the number of FFE missions indicated.

corporate the equal probabilities of drawing anything from one through four. As before, the values in parentheses are for a spotting accuracy of 70%.

If radios never broke down, observers never died, and games never ended, the average module would yield 2.5 shots, since that's the average of the eight chits. As we can see, only an American artillery module comes really close to being worth that much. Early Soviet offboard artillery is, as you probably already knew, a disaster. This Table shows just how bad it is in the short run. An average of less than one shot is depressing. Over 20 turns it is not, however, all that much worse than the standard German module.

If there's useful information in these two Tables for those who play the standard scenarios, the second Table is, hopefully, of value to those who utilize the point value charts to construct their own scenarios. Ideally, this kind of information would also aid those, both amateur and professional, who design scenarios for others to play.

The COD Game

Table 12 also contains comparable information for the revised game. To understand these numbers it is necessary to know that the total number of shots possible in a single module is equal to the original access number, provided you're lucky enough to get the last two shots in consecutive player turns. Since, for that last shot, the net access number is only two, that many shots is, even for an American module, something like a thousand to one shot in any given game.

If, as Table 10 showed us, a *COD* module gets off to a slower start, it is, over the long haul, a more potent weapon for all but the early Soviets. For them, a plentiful module is only marginally superior to a standard *SL* module. The other two contact numbers, however, show a considerable long term profit. Unlike the long term situation under the *SL* rules, a German module shows a two-to-one superiority over a Soviet one with the same ammunition supply. The difference between a German and an American module is a very interesting one, capable of being made large or small, or even biased in favor of the Germans by the ammo availability.

All in all, the new system adds some useful flexibility to the artillery game. Hopefully, we'll all be able to figure out what to do with it. And that's the reason for Table 13. As I mentioned earlier, the theoretical limit for the number of FFE missions is the initial access number (seven, eight or nine). Questions of much greater practical concern are how many shots should you expect to get, and when, in a given game, should you quit trying for more. The principal value of Table 13 is that it tells us that the averages in Table 12 are close to being the answers. This is *not* necessarily true of averages.

To illustrate, consider the long-term prospects of an American module with normal ammunition supply. From Table 13, there's a 32% chance of getting less than five shots off and a 30% chance of getting off more than five. Thus, the average, from Table 12, of 4.8 fire missions doesn't look too bad. It looks even better if one explores details of the computer runs in which more than five missions were obtained. In about half the cases the sixth shot was obtained on the turn immediately following the fifth. The moral, then, is, if you get the average number of shots, try for one more then quit, unless there's nothing else to do for that leader to do. One of the things that it's quite easy to determine from Table 13 is that the contact value plays a major role in fixing the practical number of FFE missions to be had for a given access number.

Tables 10 through 13 provide the statistical basis for exploring the question of when, in a scenario, should one start trying to call down off-

board fire. As with many other aspects of game playing the answer will vary with the personality of the player.

My approach is generally a conservative one. I normally start calling whenever I have a reasonable LOS into a worthwhile target area. I prefer having at least a 50% chance of placing the red SR within my observer's LOS. What sometimes makes this a rather difficult problem has to do with the options my opponent has available. If he is on the offensive I must consider where he is likely to be by the time I can reasonably expect to receive a FFE mission. This should also have a very strong influence upon where I locate my observer. It is entirely possible to perform the artillery equivalent of baseball's throwing behind the runner.

When your opponent stands on the defensive, one must also consider this time lag. Particularly if you begin without any good observation points, being too quick to start calling may leave you without any worthwhile targets when the fire is finally there. If your opponent has the option of withdrawing from a location you threaten into one just as good which you cannot see you may be wasting your time. True, radios and observers move, but the necessary movement might also expose them to danger. While doing all of this, remember that the chance of a radio breakdown within ten player turns of continuous usage is just about one in four.

Once the fire starts coming in, I prefer to keep it coming, as best I can, as long as there are any worthwhile targets. Table 1 along with information in the second of these articles, should help you decide what damage you can expect to do with the artillery you have. Now, decide what chances you're willing to take and play accordingly.

In closing this topic there are two new rules areas of some interest to be considered. The first is concerned solely with new effects on the targets of offboard fire. Various simple rules revolve around the idea that such fire makes people think of the virtues of being small and inconspicuous. Thus, any such fire, regardless of other effects, will make the target harder to hit in the future, while also penalizing its fire in its next fire phase.

Of more immediate interest is the rule that provides for the drop of targetted troops's morale by one level after two consecutive game turns during which they've been hit by offboard FFE missions. Each additional, sequential, game turn of such fire lowers it another level. The question that occurred to me had to do with whether or not it was practical to attempt to produce this result deliberately. Since this morale level loss is purely temporary, with the victims regaining a level for each game turn during which they are not bombarded, I limited my look to what happened during the first five player turns. The results of that look are shown in Table 14. From those values it appears pretty clear that only well-stocked Americans can hope, intentionally, to produce this result with much regularity.

Contact	Initial Access Number		
Number	7	8	9
5	4	6	12
7	20	35	43
9	38	62	75

Table 14. The probability of producing at least a one level morale drop, due to suppressive fire effects, within five player turns.

The last area of concern has a simple description, but leaves us with a difficult question to answer. Something called the harassing fire option is now available. When selected, it extends the blast area to include everything within two hexes of the FFE counter, thereby increasing the area of effect by 171%. The firepower effect of such expanded fire is reduced as shown in Table 1, where the values in parentheses are for that caliber of gun employed in a harassing mode.

The question, of course, is how many additional targets does one have to reach in order to compensate for the reduced firepower effect in each hex. As one would imagine, the answer is a function of the type of target. Fortunately, after considering a lot of numbers, the answer's not terribly complex. Against unarmored vehicles (including boats) the option is worth taking if it allows you to increase the number of targets by 50% for guns of 100mm or less.

Harassing fire will turn a profit if it doubles the number of open top AFVs or infantry squads in the open or in trees that get thumped. The same is true for unarmored vehicles if the guns are over 100mm. For stouter targets (e.g., tanks, SP guns, infantry with +2 cover or better), forget it.

Hopefully, parts of this will help you to a fuller understanding of what's going on in connection with some aspects of the game system. Such people as your editor and Tom Oleson have written persuasively on the joys of playing at least some games well. I agree, and wish you good fortune in using this material to that end. Playing well isn't easy, but then neither are a great many other worthwhile activities.

A SCENARIO SAMPLER

In each of the five scenarios considered you can expect to find certain things. Because each of these scenarios is of the attacker-defender mode, rather than of the meeting engagement type, a possible setup for the defender is always given. Where the attacker sets up on the board, rather than entering on turn one, a possible setup for his forces is also given. In either case there is some discussion of the options open to both sides, both in general and for the specific setups used. Information of this sort is not intended to supply you with a "perfect plan" which will ensure your success. In the first place, if the playtesters have done a good enough job, there shouldn't be any such plans. Secondly, if such things do exist, I doubt I'd be the one to discover them. Since the forces available and their missions should determine the deployment, these matters are covered. As appropriate, numbers are used to show you what kinds of considerations motivate what is shown and written. To avoid repetition, the insights obtained from the analyses in the first part of this article are not repeated here. Significant new rules, where their presence is not obvious from the situations considered, are also mentioned, as are the changes made as a result of playtesting.

As best I can tell, this type of introduction has been well-received. Hopefully, it fulfills two functions. One of these is to help the owners of *COD* to gain some useful insights into some basic aspects of the scenarios. The second function is that of showing the person who has yet to buy the gamette something of the diversity of the tactical situations which existed during the opening rounds of WWII. There is a different flavor to these times which become particularly apparent when one compares the *COD* scenarios with those in *COI*.

How did these five scenarios come to be chosen? For one thing, each is one I happen to like, which makes the labor of preparing these words that much easier. Then too, for those of you who haven't seen them, I wanted you to have a look at the two new boards. Those considerations still leave me with more than five scenarios, however. The next consideration was that each of the scenarios should be such that some specific things could be said about it in the manner outlined above. That, by the way, happens to be the reason why I haven't included two of my particular favorites, numbers 30 and 32. And, finally, the five finally selected are all variations on a theme. In each case the attacker wants something the defender has, but

the totally different natures of the play of each of these scenarios, and the factors which produce this variety, are part of the benefits to be found in learning to play a tactical level game.

Scenario 21—Battle for the Warta Line

As if, perhaps, to wean us away from *COI* gradually, the first three scenarios of *COD* are eastern front ones, but they are probably different from what you usually think of. In this scenario it's 1939, Germany and Russia are allies, and this scenario has elements of the SS Liebstandarte Regiment trying to break through a thin line of elite Polish troops. These troops had been delaying the German efforts to encircle the Polish Poznan Army. The assault force is built around fifteen 6-5-8 squads, sustained by the efforts of seven leaders (8-0 to 9-2). Two MMGs, a crewed 75* infantry gun, one of those soft SdKfz7t halftracks, an offboard 105mm artillery module with plentiful ammo, and two PzKWIB tankettes support the effort. To win, the German player must get a majority of his squads across two board widths within eight turns. At 4-5-8, the 13 Polish squads do not represent a pushover, but it is the time available that proves particularly burdensome to the German player.

Reflecting the more limited changes of *COD*, just over three pages of new rules are required to get this first scenario underway. The major sections are those dealing with pre-1942 infantry, infantry bypass movement, and the revised artillery rules.

The setup rules allow Polish deployment anywhere but hexes on board 5 having a grid coordinate of '4' or less. Thus, the Polish player will fix the initial character of the game by his choice of a defensive position. Figure 1 shows a deployment intended to maximize the Polish capacity to shift forces. All the old sayings about he who defends everything defends nothing don't really work here, at least initially. The nature of the victory conditions necessitates a defense stretching the length of the board, even though half of it might well be abandoned in the opening turn or two.

In developing this defensive plan, the emphasis was on good communications behind the Polish position, the availability of positions into which broken troops could retire, and, of course, fields of

fire. The large forest mass at the south end of board 5, and the lack of any significant amount of natural features to aid a defense at the north end, encourage a position in the general area of that shown. Defense against enemy fire and overrun attacks suggest that the entrenchments go in forest hexes, while field of fire considerations argue that hilltops are best. The result is a compromise weighted heavily in favor of forest hexes.

Under the circumstance prevailing here, a PzKwIB poses a very real threat to an entrenched unit in clear terrain. True, an overrun has no chance of destroying a Polish squad and only a 10% chance of breaking one, but the AFV can elect to remain in the entrenchment hex. This will cause the displacement of the squad into an adjoining hex at the end of the Defensive Fire Phase, where its chances of survival are poor. While a Defensive Fire Phase attack against an AFV attempting an overrun is possible, there's only a 6% chance of immobilization if the squad is without an ATR. With an ATR the chance of AFV destruction is 14%.

Against a squad entrenched in a woods hex the picture is radically different. The chance of breaking the squad falls to less than 2% while the chance that, one way or another, the AFV will be immobilized rockets up to over 40%.

All four MGs are on the line, as are two of the three ATRs. Cpt. Reid and his two squad reserve in 3R3 have the last ATR in order to improve their chances against a marauding PzKwIB.

Wire has been deployed so as to inhibit movement at the extreme edges of the board and around certain of the defensive positions. While tracked vehicles can remove wire counters, be certain to note that the current version of 53.8 restricts that removal to one hex per turn, even though the vehicle may pass through many more.

You may have noticed the three entrenchments located away from the general line. The one in 3DD7 is there because insertion of a unit into that general area during play has proven difficult. Those brave fellows out in 5V5 and 5C7 represent the sort of positioning that will give a cautious German player some concern, while a reckless one might get a nasty surprise. If not destroyed, one or both of these will be on the flank of any enemy

advance. With just a bit of luck, the elimination of one or both will cost the German player men and/or time.

Drawing upon the lessons of the past, the Polish leaders have been distributed with the hope that the two 8-0 ones will have a chance to rally someone and/or speed the movement of troops to a threatened sector. From past calculation we know that an 8-1 leader is the neutral one in the sense that a squad stacked with one has about the same chance of survival as the squad has by itself. Thus, stacking an 8-0 leader with troops who may come under attack is a bad idea.

Unlike the situation typical in later years, and involving other forces, this is one case in which the German player may be able to just put his head down and charge with his infantry. The defensive firepower is weak compared to much of what we've seen in past scenarios, and, of course, the SS have a high morale level and loads of officers. Because of this an advance along the northern edge has a chance of success. More conservatively, there is the advance along and in the southern edge of the main patch of woods on board 5, followed by an assault on hill 547. For the more tenderhearted there is the advance through the patch of woods itself. Each of these approaches is worth playing through, and each has options involving the use of the infantry gun, artillery fire and the armor.

A key ingredient in German success, in any case, is the manner in which the armor is handled. As a general rule I dislike the unsupported use of armor because the generally close terrain of the various map sections allow infantry to pose a very real danger in the Close Combat Phase. Here, however, the risk is reduced because of the initial dispersal of the Poles. Thus, it becomes practical to consider using the two tankettes in an effort to penetrate the defensive line and interfere with Polish efforts to reinforce the threatened section.

From what I've said so far it is probably clear that I favor a concentrated assault. This is the case, and I have come to the conclusion that the infantry portion of the attacking force is best utilized in one area, without any detachments entering elsewhere.

Figure 1: A possible Polish starting position in Scenario 21.

Since the mobility of the German armor impresses me more than does its firepower, I do favor its use as indicated above.

Turning to the artillery, I use the infantry gun aggressively, and usually employ it, at the beginning, to fire smoke. My gun crews tend to have short, but glorious, lives. I attribute this to too much time spent with Napoleonic era games. For the Poles, the use of their artillery module is easy: start trying to use it as soon as possible. For the attackers there is the problem that, in general, they do not have many good observation points. It seems more efficient to save this fire until the opening moves have revealed something of the Polish positions and intentions.

When playtesting reveals imbalances in a scenario, the ways in which it's fine-tuned are frequently quite interesting. Here the changes made were to introduce six concealment counters and to give the Poles that module of 81mm mortar fire. For those of you interested in designing and developing your own scenarios, try to balance things by first exploring the specific ways in which one side exhibits its superiority. To simply add or subtract troops is not necessarily the elegant way to adjust balance. While the prohibition against examining the contents of an entrenchment hex has been with us from the start, just the height of the stacks gave the German player valuable information. In this, as in some of the other scenarios, a handful of concealment counters adds a little uncertainty to an attacker's life.

Scenario 22—The Borders are Burning

With regard to general type, this scenario has much in common with 21. Drawn from the opening days of the Russo-Finnish war, at a location in the north near Kuhmo, the victory conditions require that the Russian player exit a certain portion of his force across the western board edge road hexes. As in 21, losses to the defender are of no consequence. In both scenarios the defensive positions are prepared ones.

However, there are considerable differences to be found when one looks at the details of who's there and what they bring to the conflict. Among the new rules introduced for this scenario are those for Deep Snow, which expand upon what we were given in 61. Wheeled vehicles are, for all practical purposes, roadbound where the six Soviet trucks available here can only manage five hexes per turn. The tracked vehicles present (five of the T26s) pay 2MP per either road or clear hex. If the dangers of breakdown are to be avoided, this also limits a T26s to five hexes per turn. As before, infantry movement costs are doubled, but this penalty can now be avoided if an infantry unit moves with a tracked vehicle throughout the Movement Phase. Thus, all movement has a decided slow motion aspect about it.

In connection with movement, the longest of the new rules deals with vehicular bypass, and the introduction of this rule, in effect, changes the mapboards. As with infantry bypass, the rule introduces movement around obstacles (e.g., buildings, woods) along hexsides, provided there is sufficient space between the obstacle and the hexside. A board-altering aspect of this rule is evident when, as is possible between 2J7 and 2G8, a tank makes that trip by going around the trees in 2I7 and 2H7 without danger of immobilization. Thus, movement, while slower, may proceed along unaccustomed routes.

Besides the vehicles mentioned previously, the Russian force consists of 26 4-4-7 squads, four leaders (8-0 to 10-2) and *ten* MGs. Against this the Finns have a dozen 6-4-8 squads, a pair of leaders (9-0 and 10-1), five MGs, two excellent ATRs, and five of the improvised Klorihartsi anti-tank grenades. This is all to be deployed in and around a collection of wire, entrenchments, roadblocks and mines.

To this point (who knows what we've yet to see) the Finns are, by virtue of the rules covering them, the best infantry in the *SL* system. As is the case with the Americans, they are not subject to Desperation Morale. Unlike any other squad, they are capable of self-rally on a roll of four or less. This combination of characacteristics is ideally suited to the defensive task of the scenario.

In order to win the Russian player must exit at least 20 squads, with tanks being worth two squads apiece, off the west edge road hexes within 13 turns. The two obvious routes are the two roads themselves. Since the scenario restricts Russian starting positions to hexrows east of and including hexrow T, six game turns represent the minimum time required for enough unencumbered squads, marching with tanks, to exit. Unencumbered infantry, without leaders, could still do it in eight turns. Because of the snow, however, off-road movement is not all that much slower. A column moving along the extreme southern edge would take only a turn longer, as would one moving along the center of the playing area.

The significance of these numbers is that any defense must consider a wide range of approaches, and this is what the Finnish position in Figure 2 attempts to do. Those of you who have the scenario card handy will note that a squad, the MMG, one of the Finn's grenades and one entrenchment are missing. All of that is some distance to the west in woods hex 2B6, adjacent to the northern exit road. In addition, the position has a clear LOS to the southern edge of the playing area.

The terrain on the northern board is much more open than is that in the southern one, with the mass of hill 621, however, serving to effectively divide the board into two parts. Thus, a position along the spine of hill 621 is quite attractive, although the

absence of trees makes such positions vulnerable to enemy armor. Since the setup rules prohibit Finnish positions east of hexrow Q, it is impossible to position forces along the forward edge of the southern board's forest mass. Taken together, these factors form the basis for the Finnish position.

Although the position in 2P5 is quite exposed, the character of the troops keeps it from being a foolhardy one. The weaponry present is a considerable danger to both vehicles and men. Depending upon distance and target facing, the very lethal 20mm ATR has from a 6% to a 53% chance of eliminating a T26s. Since a threat such as that posed by the ridge formation also makes it an attractive target, the position should be supported. This, in part, is the mission of the forces in 2N2 and 2N10. Because of its control position, the force in 2N10 includes an extra squad as well as the second ATR.

The position at 5P3 is attractive because of the field of fire it has to the east and to the north, as well as its proximity to the forest road. An advance along the extreme southern edge is practical so the final position in 5P9 is intended to delay an enemy advance there. The whole southern sector has been allocated the lion's share of the 20 mine factors the Finns have available. Because the field cannot be covered with fire it would, at this density, be no more than a nuisance, but it could reasonably be expected to cause some delay.

A similar rationale lies behind the positioning of the remaining mines, the wire, and the two roadblocks. For example, on board 2, any unit seeking to pass to the north of hill 621 must pass through the Q1, Q2 bottleneck. A very basic consideration of any defense is that both roads should be mined because of the threat posed to the Soviet trucks by even two mine factors.

Prior to the start of the scenario, four separate Russian 120mm Harassing Fire FFEs are resolved. The arrival of the fire is certain, although it is subject to the usual accuracy considerations. Because of the newly-introduced rule concerning air bursts, units entrenched in a woods hex are more vulnerable to indirect HE fire than they would be in a clear terrain hex. From Table 1, however, for a unit having a morale of eight, the chance of surviving unharmed changes less than five percent so that such a unit, entrenched in the woods, has almost nine chances out of ten to survive unharmed. Thus, given the protection woods provide against direct fire and overruns, the air burst threat is not a decisive factor.

Since the location of the fire is made prior to seeing the Finnish set up, the fire should support the initial Soviet moves, but little should be expected of it. All locations specified should be at least nine hexes from any Russian infantry, to avoid the embarrassment of seeing friendly fire injure your own troops.

Figure 2: A Finnish starting position in Scenario 22. Each red dot equals one factor of unseen minefields.
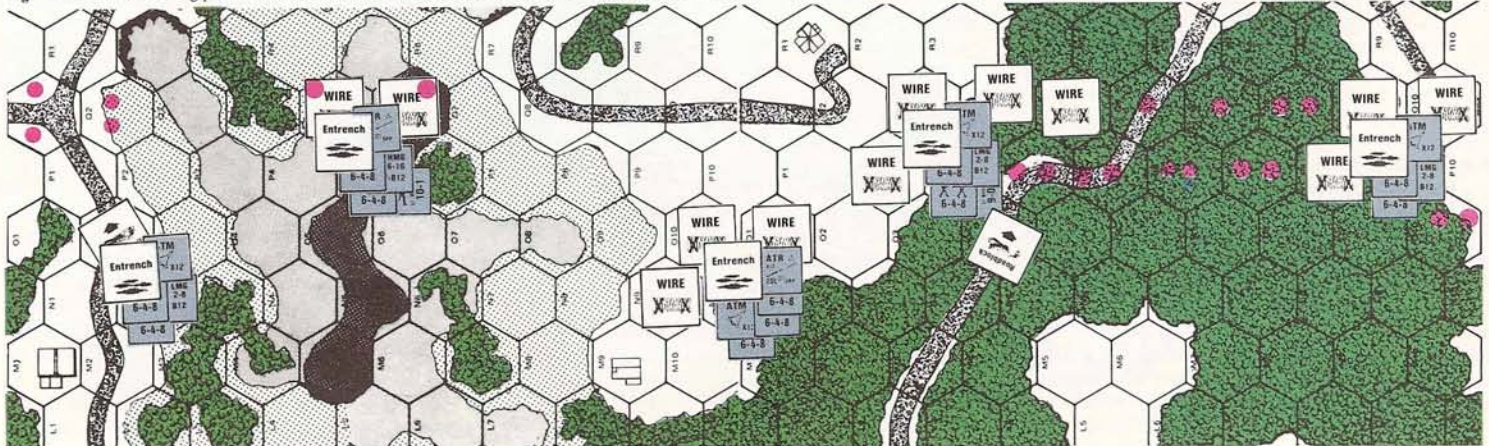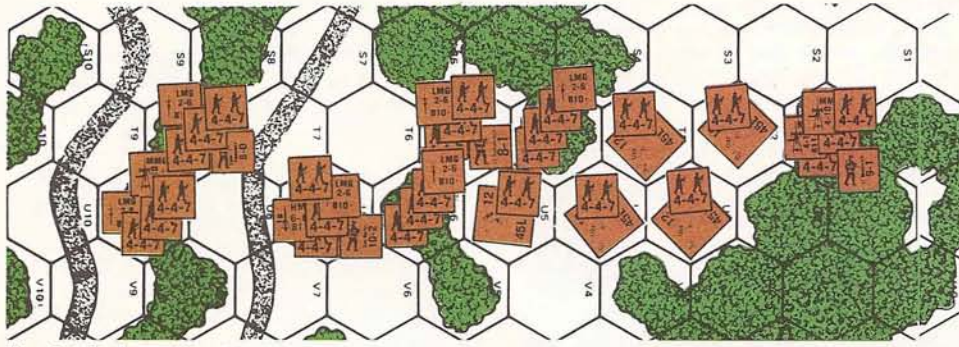
Figure 3: A Russian starting position in Scenario 22.

Despite their numerical superiority and the length of the scenario, the Russians do not have an easy time of it. Despite the hitherto unheard of number of LMGs, this is not a German assault force. The small number of leaders makes the force a brittle one, and presents a strong argument for a concentrated advance, at least as far as the infantry is concerned. The Russian starting positions shown in Figure 3 show one answer to the problem posed by the defenders. Initially, those stacks at 5T1 and 5U9 are to remain where they are in order to provide fire against the two southernmost Finnish positions. The five stacks between them are to advance immediately due west. Ultimately, the responsibilities of these squads include clearing the road and engaging any enemy squads they encounter. Their advance will be followed by the six Russian trucks which begin the game along road hexes to the rear of these squads. Even if these vehicles do not prove particularly useful in transporting squads off of the board, they do come in handy for getting rallied squads back up to where the action is.

In addition to what is essentially a frontal assault on the main forest mass, there is also a secondary thrust provided by the infantry-carrying tanks. The direction of this thrust is to be to the northwest, with the specific tasks to be determined by circumstances. However, whatever happens, the primary responsibility of this force is to hamper the southward movement of the Finnish forces on hill 621 and to tempt some or all of the squads in 2N10 to remain where they are. A secondary mission is to position some infantry behind the majority of the Finnish troops. Rather heavy losses are to be expected, particularly if the force at 2P5 remains where it is, but its failure to move south and west should give the main Russian advance an easier time of it.

In its original version, this scenario was three turns shorter and only the western road hexes on board 2 could be used. Our experience, which must have been shared by others, was that this made things extremely difficult for the Russian player.

In closing, it should be mentioned that board 5 seems to bring out the pyromaniac in many players, and, indeed, setting the main forest ablaze is sometimes a very good idea. Under the Deep Snow condition of this scenario, however, one cannot reasonably base a strategy upon an attempt which will be successful only once in 36 tries.

Scenario 24—Action at Balberkamp

The six-month period of 'the Phoney War', that pause in German activities following the fall of Poland, ended abruptly with the invasions of Norway and Denmark. One of the key points seized in a seaborne assault in the assault on the former country was Trondheim, the key to central Norway. The action portrayed in this scenario is typical of what occurred many times as German forces advanced northward from Oslo. For the Germans it was a race against time as they sought to establish contact with their weak forces in Trondheim. These forces faced a grave threat posed by British landings, a

week after the German ones, both north and south of Trondheim. The southern striking force, however, was delayed by the necessity of diverting troops into the Gudbrand valley in support of the Norwegians.

Thus, what we have is a five board scenario that begins with a poorly equipped Norwegian combat group deployed on board five, awaiting a German advance across board four. To win, the Germans must have a continuous road, connecting the north and south edges, no hex of which is occupied by or adjacent to an unbroken and unmeleed Allied squad, at the end of 14 game turns. While the previous scenarios only required a penetration of the defender's position, this one requires that they be contained and/or eliminated.

The scenario's most novel feature, however, has to do with the reinforcements each side is to receive. Cunning creatures that they are, the Germans have dispatched a light flanking force which arrives on one edge of one of the three center boards, with the precise location to be specified prior to the placing of any pieces on the board. The defenders will receive a somewhat larger and better-equipped company of British troops at the north edge of board 6. What complicates things for both sides is that the time of arrival of these forces is dependent upon dice rolls. During each Rally Phase the player whose turn it is rolls the dice. For the Allies, a roll equal to or less than the current game turn is good enough, while the German player must roll less than the current game turn.

Any one who plays wargames is, of course, accustomed to the idea of having chance play a part in things. While I do not consider myself a highly competitive player, one of my personal quirks is that I normally dislike the games in which chance plays a role in determining the arrival of significant reinforcements. However, the nature of the randomizing process here is such that, in most playings, it introduces a degree of uncertainty that adds a very enjoyable and wholly plausible element to the scenario.

Before considering the statistical specifics of reinforcement arrival, let's look first at just what the scenario's victory conditions will require given the arrangement of the boards. Starting at the south edge, there is just one possible road for almost half the total distance. From the fork just south of the village in the center of board 3 to hex 2U7 there exists two separate roads. From this hex to 2U3, between the cliffs of hills 538 and 621, there is again but a single road. Since the road leading west from U3 splits again there are, ultimately, three distinct routes across the width of board 6.

Comparing this scenario with the two already discussed reveals both similarities and differences. In all three situations it is necessary, initially, to defend across the playing area. Failure to do so will allow rapid enemy movement into the defender's rear area. Why he would wish to do so has already been discussed for the first two scenarios.

Some of the differences appear when one considers the motivation for such movement. In 21, all the attacker needed to do was get across the playing area. While Scenario 22 required exit via just two roads, the effect was much the same. In the current scenario, however, we have what is really a positional battle. Now movement through or around the initial defensive positions has two motivations. The first is to pin the defenders into an area in which they can then be destroyed. The second is linked to the existence of those British reinforcements. But the specific problem they pose depends upon when they arrive. If they arrive early enough they might well be able to manage to link up with the Norwegians. No matter when they arrive, that length of road between 2U3 and 2U7 will be a tempting target. In connection with both of these motivations the German player must consider what part he will assign to that flanking force he will ultimately receive.

There are really two aspects to the reinforcement question. The first, of course, is the question of when, in the game, they will arrive. The second has to do with the arrival of one player's reinforcements relative to the arrival of the other player's troops. This becomes particularly important if each player intends to have his force attempt to gain control of the board 2 bottleneck.

In terms of when, over 75% of the game will see the British entering on turns 4, 5, 6, or 7. The same percentage of games will see Germans appearing on turns 5 through 8. Individually, the percentages for these turns are 14.9, 20.6, 22.3 and 18.3. In only 13% of games played will the British appear after turn 7 or the Germans after turn 8. Because of the likelihood of British arrival during the first half of the scenario and the existence of that single road across the center of board 2, I conclude that, most of the time, the German flanking force will be required to act against the British.

Just what this might involve brings us to the second statistical matter. As with the first one the British have the edge, but, since the Germans move first, in each game turn, it's not much of one. In 16.5% of games played the British will arrive the player turn immediately before the one in which the Germans do, while the Germans will repay the favor only 15.2% of the time. Taken together, this means that 31.7% of the time reinforcement arrivals will be in sequential player turns. There is a 27.1% chance that one player will get in a second player turn before his rival receives aid, and a 19.7% chance of a three player turn advantage. Based upon both my experience with this scenario and these numbers, I find that the random arrival factor is a controlled one. True, it might happen that the German company appears on turn 3 while the British one doesn't show up until turn 12, but, on the average, it won't happen more than once in every 2,500,000 plus games.

Turning now to the cast of characters present, the Norwegian force of 16 squads is evenly divided between 4-4-7s and 3-4-7s, and led by four (7-0 to 8-1) leaders. Their weapon support includes only two HMGs and a crewed 37L ATG. The British bring as many leaders for their twelve 4-5-7 squads, but two of them are 9-1s. They carry a half dozen support weapons, equally divided among LMGs, MMGs and ATRs.

The infantry component of the northbound German force consists of 18 squads rather indifferently led by six leaders, the best of whom is a single 9-1. Local artillery support is provided by two 50mm mortars and two short barreled 75mm guns. The five vehicles provided consist of a PzKwIB, an MG armored SPW251/1, and three trucks. While the flanking force brings only three LMGs, its nine squads are better led with four leaders, including a 9-1 and a 9-2.

The first decision of any game is selection of the board and the edge upon which the last-mentioned German force will appear. My favorite is the east edge of board 2. After that the Norwegians appear. More accurately, one should say that a number of stacks topped by concealment counters appear. Restricted to whole hexes of board 5, the initial placement should be made with an eye toward how the game will develop.

The main possibilities are to stand and fight on board 5 or to attempt a retreat under pressure into board 3. My experience has been that the former is a poor choice. In its most extreme form it allows early German penetration into the village area, particularly by the AFVs. This places them in a central position from which they can intervene in either of the battles. Moreover, in a battle of attrition in the forest mass on board 5, the advantage is with the Germans. Since the only common terrain effects modifier will be a +1, broken units will be the most common adverse fire combat result. With a broken side morale of seven for the Norwegians versus two for the Germans, and the Germans having twice as many −1 leaders, it's easy to see where that will lead.

The only way to improve that situation would be to inflict sufficient losses upon the Germans as they advanced across board 4. My limited efforts at that sort of thing proved to be quite ineffective. The scattered trees (remember, no wheatfields at this time of year) are numerous enough to block LOS in all too many cases, while the 75s are very handy for smoking the hexes with the HMGs in them.

Figure 4 shows what I've been trying lately. The idea is to encourage the German player to advance with some caution, or to cause him losses if he is rash. The AT Gun is located where it has a good field of fire. At this point in the war, this weapon should still command respect. In the three to six hex range against a small, moving target (i.e., seven or less TO HIT), a 37L kills the halftrack from 42 to 72% of the time, depending upon target facing. The corresponding figures for the PzKwIB are 29 and 56%, respectively. Trucks would perish 65% of the time.

The other stack with a large concealment counter on it, plus two of the eight infantry stacks, are dummies. One of the new *COD* rules that makes its appearance in this scenario allows a stack topped with a concealment counter the ability, subject to certain restrictions, to move without losing its concealed status. That potential, coupled with some low cunning, represents one weapon available for the delay of the German advance.

Figure 4: A Norwegian setup for Scenario 24.
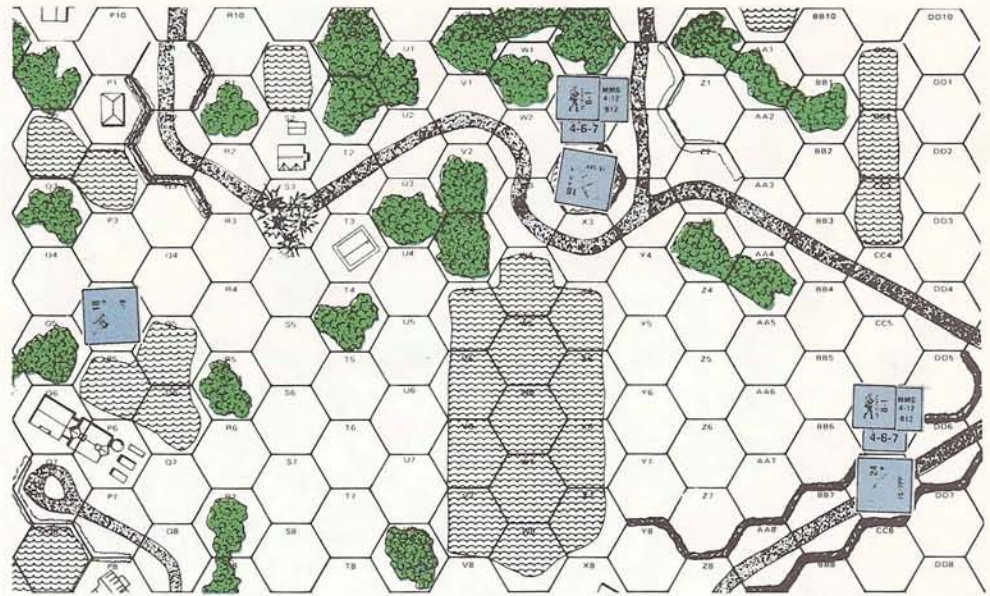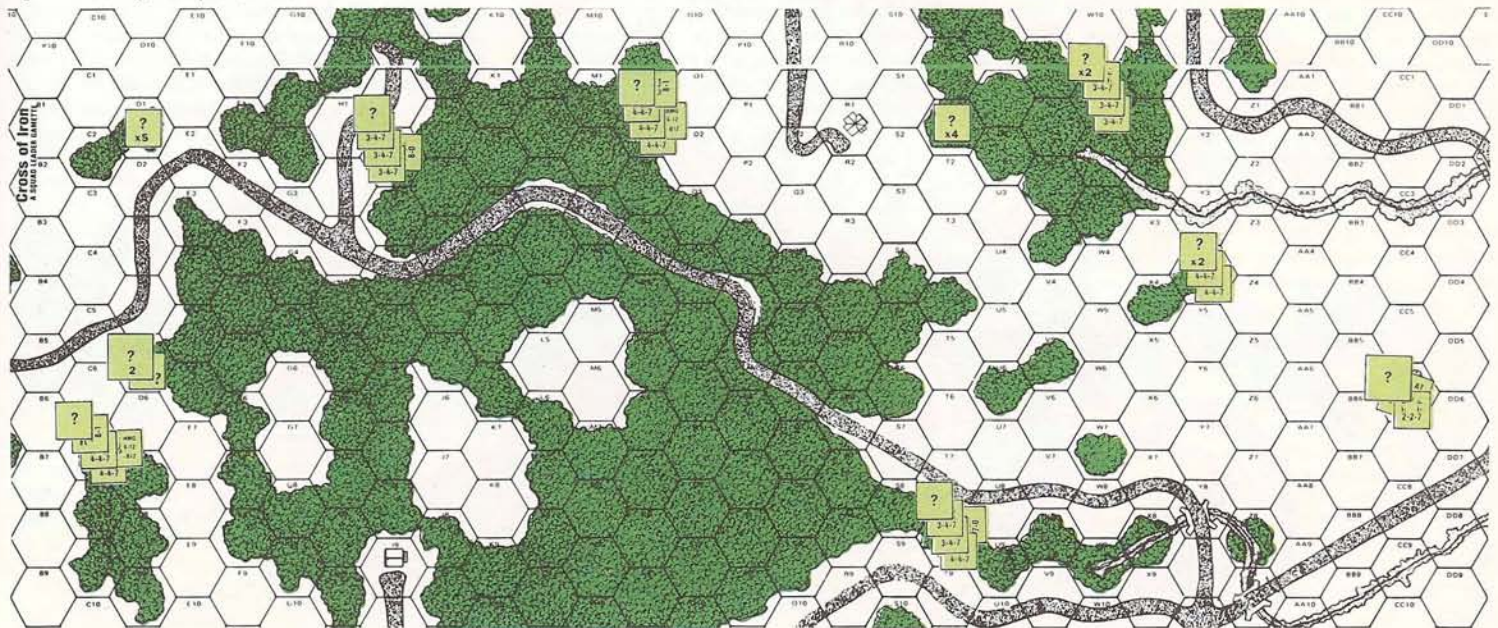
Figure 5: Position of a German covering force in Scenario 24.

Because of the structure of the IFT it follows that the two different types of Norwegian squads should not be mixed together in the same stack. In order to get the most out of them, each HMG has one of the 8-1 leaders stacked with it. Hopefully, also, they will be around when it comes time to move. Taken together and mixed in with the number of concealment counters provided, the above considerations go a long way toward determining the number and composition of the stacks.

Where they go is much more of a problem. The HMG stacks have been positioned to cover the center and the east flank, but they do not have good fields of fire. Deployment further south, either initially or during the course of the game, will not help much, and risks their isolation. In general, the distribution of forces is based upon the idea of a withdrawal once the German player approaches the junction of boards 4 and 5 in strength. Prior to that time, if the dice allow, some rear guards should entrench in hexes along the perimeter of board 5's main forest mass, with preference given to hexes (e.g., I2 and P3) which are adjacent to the road. Other entrenchments are to be constructed by the stack starting the game in T8. Likely locations include 5S10, 5V10 and 3R8.

The German player's advantage stemming from the superior caliber of his troops can be dribbled away by a sloppy entrance. A sloppy entrance is one which considers only the existing enemy fields of fire and ignores the potential ones. While, as I've just mentioned, I don't think much of Norwegian movement to the south, that attitude is based upon the supposition that the German player has not done something foolish. If, for example, he's left large numbers of squads milling about in that field around 4W6, consider what harm might be done if the stack at 5N1 were to move into 4W1.

Since most of the German troops will enter on foot, a thoughtful entrance will provide them with a reasonable degree of protection. This is best accomplished by using the halftrack and one or more trucks to position troops in commanding terrain. The lone tankette is also handy in this protective role. Figure 5 shows a possible shield for an advance along the eastern half of the playing area. Only the vehicles transporting troops, their cargos and the PzKwIB are shown.

Turning now to the conflict of the reinforcements, each side requires three turns in which to occupy the important hexes on both sides of the only road crossing the center of board 2. As we've

Figure 6: Recommended west bank starting positions for Scenario 27. **A** = three squads, a LMG, radio, and 8-1 leader. **B** = three squads, a MMG, radio, and 9-1 leader.

already seen it's quite likely that neither side would have that much time. Should the Germans be so fortunate, their best move is to occupy the relevant terrain of hills 538 and 621. By itself this will, of course, be insufficient since there are other points, north of the bottleneck, at which the roads can be threatened. The buildings at 2T1 and 6X8 will serve quite nicely, and have the advantage that there is some cover connecting them. Defending a ground level position on board 6 against an attack across that board is a difficult task. Thus, I prefer to keep the Germans up on the hills, where they wait for help, rather than to place them at or north of a 2T1 to 6X8 position.

If it's the British who get lucky one has a choice of trying to hold both sides of the road or of concentrating on one of the hills. The decision should be made in response to the game situation at that time.

This scenario was one of the original group accompanying the first version of *COD*, which makes it about two years old. In that time the changes made have been minor, except for the reversing of board 5. Such changes as have been made have been in favor of the Allies, whom I still see as having the more difficult side in what is, nevertheless, one of my favorite scenarios.

Scenario 27—The Dinant Bridgehead

When I learned that *COD* would contain one of the river boards, I made a bet with myself that the situation portrayed in this scenario would be one of those included. The crossing of the Meuse River was the last major German problem posed by an advance through the Ardennes. In evaluating this possibility the French thought in terms of a timetable based upon the assumption that the Germans would need to bring up a considerable amount of heavy artillery before a crossing would be attempted. As in other things, the French failed to recognize the tempo of events possible under the direction of the gifted among their foes. Thus, here, as at other locations along the Meuse, the stage was set for a confrontation between a force led by an aggressive commander and one not yet brought up to the strength really required to defend a vital natural barrier.

Playing this scenario a few times should give you food for thought every time, in divisional or corps level games, your units zip across a narrow blue line. To the extent that the approaches and the river itself can be observed by a foe provided with artillery or airpower, a river crossing is one of the most difficult military operations. The whole process is so *very* slow.

Because of the way in which the victory conditions dominate the scenario, they require careful attention. The objective for the German player is to secure a safe crossing point, defined as a contiguous band of five letter rows stretching from bank to bank. Such a crossing point includes the bank hexes on each side of the river. The crossing point selected is secretly recorded prior to any other activity in the scenario. There are three requirements for a secure crossing point. On the positive side there must be an unbroken German squad in each of the two bank areas after ten turns. The negative conditions refer to those things which the German player must prevent. By game's end he must see to it that no French squad is within ten hexes of any crossing point hex unless it lacks a LOS to any crossing point hex, is broken, or is locked in melee. In addition, no French leader with a functioning radio can have a clear LOS into any crossing point hex. Smoke is dealt with quite carefully. It is considered to block the LOS of a leader, but is not a factor as far as squads are concerned. As befits the strategic importance of such a crossing, casualties are of no consequence, except that the KIA elimination of the 10-3 leader that represents Rommel leads to an automatic French victory.

Figure 7: Recommended German east bank starting positions for Scenario 27. **A** = S, 2 LMG, SB, and 9-1 leader. **B** = S, LMG, SB, and 8-1 leader. **C** = 2S, MMG, HMG, and 10-3 leader. **D** = 2S, LMG, and 2KF. **E** = 3S, LMG, 2KF, GF. **F** = S, MMG, SB, and 8-1 leader. **G** = 3S, ferry, and KF. (S = squad, SB = sturmboat, KF = kleine flossacks, GF = grosse flossacks).
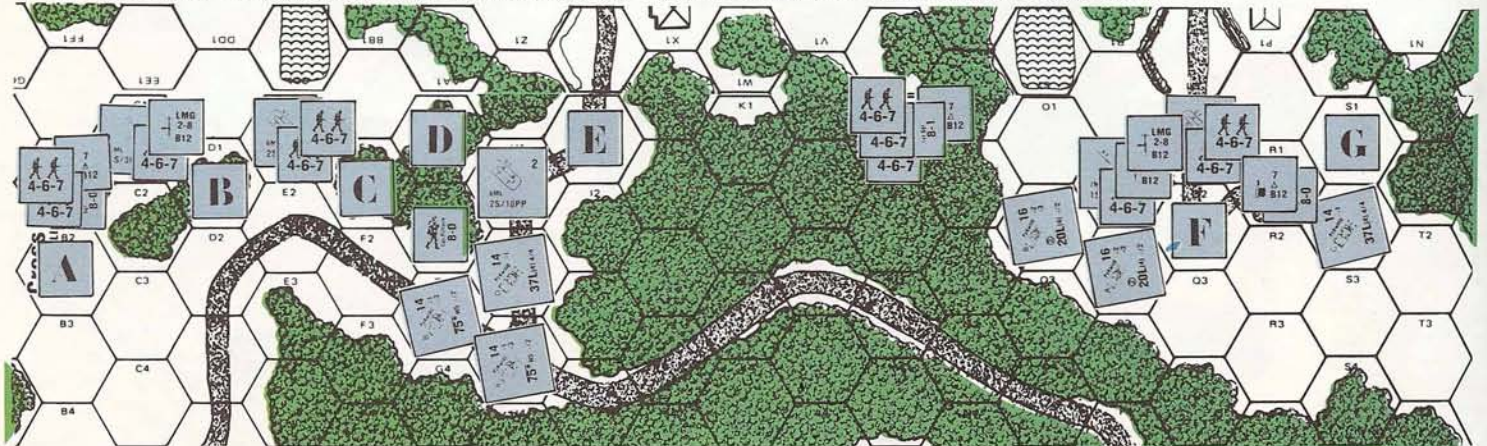
As the scenario opens, a weak German force consisting of five squads, a 9-1 leader, a 9-2 leader, and two LMGs is isolated on the west bank. On the east bank wait two dozen squads led by seven leaders besides Rommel. They carry a HMG, two MMGs and eight LMGs. In direct support they have two PzKwIIDs, a pair of PzKwIIIDs, and two of those short gun PzKwIVCs. Their lift capacity is provided by four sturmboats, four grosse flossacks and six kleine flossacks. (I ask you, what other game gives you any kind of a flossack, let alone both big ones and little ones?) Finally, the offboard artillery modules are one of 80mm and two of 105mm.

Against this mass of men and material the French manpower consists of 16 of their 4-5-7 squads, four leaders, two crews and a −2 sniper. Their support weapons consist of a 60mm mortar, two MMGs and four LMGs. The onboard artillery is a pair of 25LL AT Guns. Offboard, the French have available a 75mm module and a 105mm module. To help protect them and/or confuse the foe, the French also have eight concealment counters.

The first question to be considered is, of course, the location of the crossing point. This area need not have any connection with the location of the German assault crossing, but the latter must ultimately secure the former. Study of the victory conditions and the terrain of board 3 provides us with some useful guides to a sound German selection.

Practically, the first requirement, of a squad in each bank, is the easy one. Of the remaining two conditions, the last is the more pressing because the range is not limited. On board 3 the high ground consists of four hills and one two level building. A careful study of the lines-of-sight from each of these reveals that every possible crossing point is visible (from one or another of the top level hexes of the five locations in question) from at least four of the locations. This means that the German player must be prepared to eliminate the hazard posed by all French leaders from well over half the area on board 3.

A number of crossing points at the south end of the board have no hexes visible from hill 498. In addition, there's a much narrower band just opposite hill 522 where the trees in 3W8 block the LOS from hill 522. Two factors argue for a southern crossing point. First of all, the elevated observation points are more closely packed for a crossing point in that area, thereby making them easier to reach by infantry and/or artillery fire. Looking at the third requirement for a secure crossing point gives us the second reason: there simply aren't many places for a French squad south of one there. At the crossing points opposite hill 522 there are a number of good observation points, within ten hexes, both to the north and to the south. In addition, there are many more ground level lines-of-sight. For discussion purposes, then, let's pick BB through FF as the crossing point.

The deployment of forces opens with the placement of the German recon unit on whole ground hexes on the west bank of board 7. Practically, there are three possible locations, given that all units must be within eight hexes of each other. Figure 6 shows them occupying buildings close to hill 534. The other possibilities are the woods and building hexes around L9 and the woods hexes around C10. In either of these latter two cases some units might be placed in G10. The argument for the placement shown is that it will allow fire to be brought to bear on French units on hill 522. Given the commanding nature of hex 3I8, that is a reasonable objective no matter what crossing point is chosen. Thus, this placement does not tip the German's hand. Of the other possible locations, I prefer the one around L9. This one can be seen as an effort to take hill 522 in order to secure a

southern crossing point, or as an effort to produce a secure beachhead for a more northerly landing. From this you should conclude that the French setup should not be particularly sensitive to where the west bank Germans go.

The function of most of the French forces shown in Figure 6 is probably clear, but some aspects are worth mentioning. The stacks of squads with the radio-equipped leaders are there to attempt entrenchment. With three of them there's a 62% chance of success, even without aid from a leader. That stack in O10 is there because of the Germans in V9 and the fact that the opposite bank is one of the better places to get boats into the water. When possible, I like to have something in the way of a reserve, and that's what we have in R6. Because the Germans on the west bank are to the south, the stack in W10 will be free to move into 7K9, 7L9 or 7M10 depending upon German intentions as they are revealed by the German setup. Finally, the minor deception in DD8 is not expected to last very long, but it might be worth something.

That leaves us with the AT Guns. Versus the boats, they have less than a 5% chance of doing any damage to them once they're in the water. They'll do two to five times better than that versus enemy armor on the opposite bank, so that makes them their natural prey, along with the vehicle being ferried. Unfortunately, there aren't all that many good locations which don't also happen to be close to other useful pieces of terrain. With three artillery modules on the other side one has to worry about things like that. Because of the favorable height modification the one at K7 stays where it is. The one starting in R9 will move to R10 to improve its field of fire.

And now for the German side of things. First of all, will Rommel get out there and fight? Yes, say I; it is, after all, only a game. With that out of the way, one faces the questions of where do you go into the water and when do you do it?

Everything considered, I don't have much use for smoke as a means of wrecking a French leader's LOS. The wind this day is a mild breeze; according to the current weather rules there is a small chance that the breeze will increase to a heavy wind and completely eliminate all smoke effects. By itself, the chance that that would happen might be small enough to ignore. But, when you couple it with the uncertainties of firing smoke or setting fires on demand, I see smoke as a last ditch effort, not as something upon which one plans.

Belief in that line of reasoning places the responsibility for dealing with the question of control up to the German infantry and artillery. Hopefully, for the German player, what one can't accomplish the other can. Given the time available, I don't see an alternative to an immediate rush across the river. One of the reasons I enjoy this scenario so much is because it's so much fun to pull the trigger and watch it go.

As you can see, I've split the German force into two parts. You have probably noticed my tendency to advocate concentrations on the part of an attacker. In general, I do find that useful, but this is an exception, determined by three factors. Firstly, the objectives are disbursed. Secondly, not all easy bank hexes are conveniently reached from board 5 in one turn. Thirdly, disbursion reduces the effect on the enemy's offboard artillery.

Starting from the north, the ferry and all but the sturmboat can reach the river in one turn by moving straight west. The PzKwIIID is the ferry's passenger and moves accordingly on the first turn. Because its trip across will probably take around seven turns, no other vehicle can possibly make it. This relegates the other five tanks to taxi service or a fire support role. The other two vehicles in this northern group are a reserve, intended for use at the water's edge as soon as the development of the scenario indicates their best use.

The stack in M1 moves straight west to the river, where the squads will attempt to entrench while the leader tries to find someone back at the battery. Having dug a hole, these troops, like those attempting to dig in in B1, will, for the most part, head across the river. How they will travel depends upon how many sturmboats have managed a round trip back to the east bank. If too few of these are available when the time to cross comes, the boats left behind in 5H1 and 5I1 will be used.

The main German force is in the south, and most of what you see there is heading across the river as quickly as it can. All of the infantry units in B2, C1, D1, E1, G1 and I1 can end their first movement phase adjacent to a river hex, or, in the case of the group starting in I1, a marsh hex. Thus, all will be able to launch during the Advance Phase of the first German player turn. In order to accomplish this, the MGs and the leaders are distributed as required, with a bias toward placing them in the sturmboats, in which, as we've seen, they are safer.

One kleine flossack and one LMG remain behind in I1, as do the large model rubber boats in H1 and the 8-0 leader in G2. Of the group in B1, the leader moves down to 7DD3 while the two squads stop in 7EE3, where they will attempt to dig in during the next turn, thereby giving that 8-0 leader a better place from which to direct fire. Rommel's stack stays in F1 in order to place hex 3I8 under fire. This, initially, is the same mission to be undertaken by the German tanks in G3, H2 and H3. I like to move that second IIID down to 7AA5; the IVs might stop in 7Y3 and 7Z3.

The German force available as the scenario now stands is weaker than the original one. Initially, the recon group had an additional squad and two more LMGs, while the Germans had twice the present allotment of medium and heavy MGs. The French have benefited to the extent of gaining those eight concealment counters. As one would expect of any scenario with this much artillery present, the dice will contribute an enormous amount to the outcome of any particular playing, but that doesn't bother me, and I hope it won't trouble you.

Scenario 31—Chateau de Quesnoy

To place this scenario in proper perspective, the decisive battle for France was over. The date, June 6, 1940, is four days after the end of the evacuation of Dunkirk, and is the second day of the German offensive against the French line along the Somme and the Aisne. With perhaps a third of the original number of Allied divisions lost, the survivors had to defend a front longer than their original one. Off balance and short of time, men, and material, construction of a defense in depth was not possible. Some places, however, were, at least in part, prepared, and the chateau of the title was one of them.

To win, the German player, in command of a portion of the 25th Panzer regiment, must have uncontested control of the chateau after 14 turns, while losing no more than 25 squads and/or crews. Since each crewed AFV counts as two crews, this means that the assault can cost the German player no more than 40% of his force.

That the assault could cost more than that is the result of the caliber of the defenders, elements of the 4th North African division, and the weapons with which they are equipped. A dozen 4-5-8 squads and half as many 4-5-7 ones are led by five leaders (two 8-0s, an 8-1, a 9-1, and a 9-2). The squad-served support weapons are a mixed lot: two HMGs, four LMGs, a 60mm mortar and a rather odd 37mm infantry gun. Given the numbers and mobility of the attackers, the above force would be hopelessly outclassed if that was all with which the French player had to work. Fortunately, for him, there are four of the famous French 75, a pair of 25LL AT guns, six crews, and 75 mine factors. In
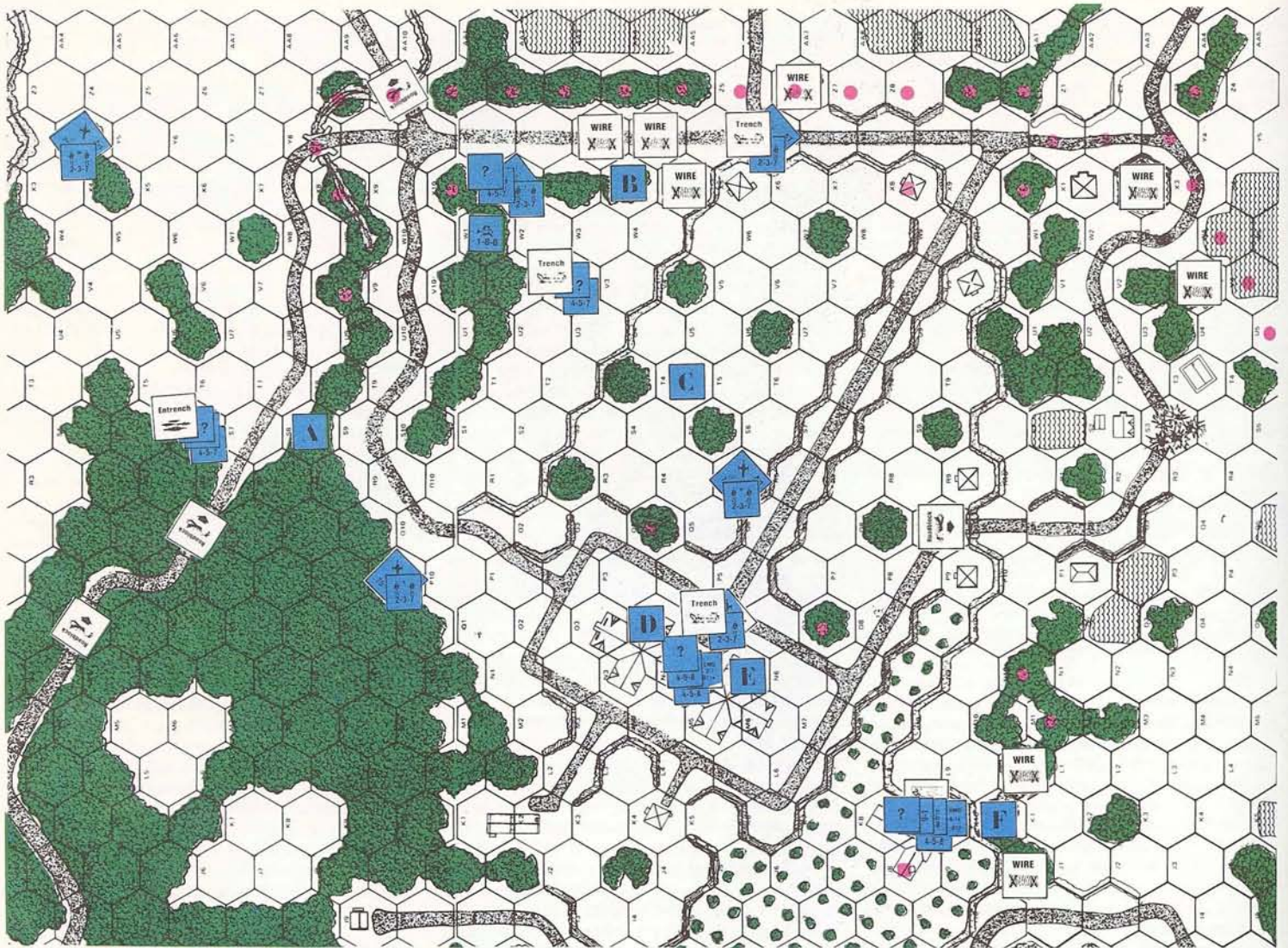
Figure 8: Recommended French initial position for Scenario 31. **A** = two 457s, 8-0, and ? in a trench. **B** = two 458s, 8-1 LMG, and ? in a trench. **C** = two 458s, 8-0, LMG, and ? in a trench. **D** = two 458s, 9-2, HMG and ? on second level. **E** = two 458s, LMG, 37mm IG, and ? on second level. **F** = 457, 60mm mortar, and ? in entrenchment. Minefields are shown by red dots. Booby traps are shown with red squares.

addition there's a handful of trench, entrenchment, roadblock and wire defenses, plus some concealment counters. One extremely important aspect of the setup rules is that the six guns and their crews may use Hidden Initial Placement. The set up restrictions allow placement of the French forces anywhere on the southern three-quarters of the boards. Before deploying everything one must, of course, consider the German capabilities.

This German force is both formidable and reasonably well-balanced between infantry and armor. Ten leaders (8-0 through 9-2) direct the efforts of 29 squads and six crews armed with nine MGs and three 50mm mortars. The five tanks aren't bad by the standards of 1940: three PzKwIIIDs, a IVC and a IVD. Regrettably, for the German player, both of the IVs have the short barrel. What he's apt to find more regrettable, however, is that tanks with −1 armor DRMs must beware of the French 75. As any player of the *SL* system knows, the probability of killing an AFV is a function of several factors. However, when all of the modifiers are added up, one shot from a 75 will generally kill more than half of the time. Overall, in this scenario, the 25LL is about half as deadly as is the 75, against tanks.

But tanks aren't all that come across the north edge of the map. A half dozen assorted, armed, halftracks are joined by an interesting assault gun, the sIG IB, which sports a 150mm gun. While ideally suited for the role of building destroyer, it has

two defects. First of all, it suffers the same longer range accuracy problems as do the early model PzKwIVs. Secondly, it shares the −4 armor DRM common to halftracks. Against this latter group of vehicles the one shot kill probabilities range from around 40% to 80 + %, for common situations, for the two different French guns.

Finally, the Germans have a module of 81mm mortar support, four trucks and an unarmed Kubelwagen. Because of their vulnerability to all sorts of fire, the trucks should be held off of the board until the French position has been developed and, in some area, neutralized. One might be able to accomplish part of the first of those activities, and annoy your opponent, by sending the Kubel off on a glory ride intended to draw fire. Even if it doesn't draw fire, one can always park it adjacent to terrain likely to contain a gun, and go exploring with its passengers.

In the course of developing *COD*, this scenario underwent changes at least as significant as any I can recall seeing in the other *SL*, *COI* or *COD* scenarios. The most obvious change was that, initially, all French units were deployed using Hidden Initial Placement. I imagine that the reasons for dropping this had more to do with the problems of handling that many hidden units rather than with play balance considerations. In addition, the French lost both an 8-1 and a 9-1 leader, while the Germans gained three 4-6-8 sapper squads. In com

pensation, the French received a dozen concealment counters, a pair of 4-5-7 squads, and the two 25LL AT Guns, complete with crews.

This is one of those scenarios in which the terrain is particularly important. All of these boards feature close terrain so that, particularly when the wheat is up as it is in this scenario, the LOS problem is quite significant. Board 6, about which so much of the action of this scenario centers, is particularly bad in this respect. Only the chateau (6N4) and nearby building 6J8 are multistory structures. Thus, each possesses an obvious military significance over and above the importance assigned to the chateau by the victory conditions.

One of the things that makes this scenario the enjoyable thing it is is the fact that the French player can win in either of two ways. It's been my experience that most gamers think first of denying the chateau to the German player. Since, to paraphase H. G. Wells, cardboard soldiers leave no cardboard widows and orphans, we might be forgiven the (no doubt infrequent) times when the butcher's bill runs too high. Here, however, the casualty ceiling is a very significant factor since the scenario does not end merely because the German player holds the building at some point prior to the end of the 14th turn. He then must maintain control without losing too many units. This fact expands the number of options open to the French player. Obviously, the chateau must be defended, but

possible French positions should also be examined with an eye toward the long term chances of making a German geographical success too costly.

My experience with this scenario has been sufficient to persuade me that a defense solidly concentrated about the chateau is probably a weak one. With Hidden Initial Placement restricted to the guns, an infantry concentration is obvious. Subject to no known danger, but that due to long range MG fire, a sweep of an area by German infantry and scouts will, one way or another, soon disclose any guns there. Unsupported, the guns will not last long, and the German player should then be able to get his armor on the board and close to his objective fairly rapidly. In addition, broken German units that manage to reach cover are unlikely to be threatened by bypassed French infantry.

Figure 8 shows one way in which the French might be deployed. While there are numerous ways in which this can be done, this one will illustrate some basically sound ideas. Looking first at the chateau, the positioning of a pair of long range weapons there, on the second level, offers quite obvious advantages. Two squads with each such weapon increases the probability of their continuous use, although moving the unneeded squads to different hexes might be worthwhile. The first floor troops in N4 represent the French reserve. About the gun in O5, I have a confession to make. I am completely unable to resist the picture of a 75 pointed down that long, elegant drive.

Building 6J8, the only other multistory structure on the map, is also a logical candidate for a long range weapon. As mentioned before, control of this building is not a direct requirement of the victory conditions, but seizing this building is an attractive idea to the German player for at least two very good reasons. One is that it then ceases to be a threat against his forces. A second is that it is an ideal spot from which to call up the offboard mortar support. Because of this type of thinking I've included a defensive force just to the east, which also allows use of the light mortar in an indirect mode.

The remaining French infantry has been deployed in an arc around these two positions. The hope is that those forces in the area assaulted by the Germans will inflict some losses before they are overrun. In addition, they frequently provide a degree of protection to some of the gun positions. Those left untouched by the initial assault will, of course, be able to make their way toward the action. Only by attacking along a broad front, or by detaching a fairly strong flank force, can the German player prevent movement into his rear area as he advances. Either of these courses will weaken his main drive.

This leaves us with roadblocks, guns and mines to consider. The last of these topics is complicated by the introduction of booby traps. I think that it's appropriate to consider these together, because they represent the principal means whereby the French player creates uncertainty in the mind of the German player. I went on at some length about the business of uncertainty in an earlier article in connection with scenario 18, so I'll keep this treatment short. Briefly, the idea is that any hidden placement of a source of peril should be considered a means of provoking caution and uncertainty in the mind of an opponent. The longer the peril goes unrevealed, the greater becomes the tension.

Roadblocks are, at best, a temporary obstacle. Combined with hidden guns capable of inflicting considerable damage upon anything the Germans have, however, they become very thought-provoking items. Does, for example, that clump of trees in 4O1 contain an AT Gun just waiting to take a side or rear shot at a tank sitting motionless in 6Q10? What significance is there to the particular placement of those two roadblocks across forest-road hexsides?

Clearly, those types of questions evaporate as hidden units are revealed. For this reason, the guns should not fire until a worthwhile target presents itself. Hopefully, at least some of the guns will be where such targets do appear. For those not so fortunate, they may be moved toward the action or simply left. An example of a gun in the first category would be the one in 5Y4 if the German advance is along the eastern edge. There is, however, little need to move the one in 5P9, since something of value will almost certainly appear if one but waits.

The minefield factors can be utilized in many ways. Here I've chosen to booby trap the building in 6X8 and the stairway in 6J8 with two factors each, at a cost of four minefield factors. Most of the remaining factors have been placed in an arc beyond the infantry position, with two factors per hex except for hex 4R6, which has one, and 5X10 which has four. No antitank mines have been used. Hopefully, these mines will inflict some delay and a casualty or two.

To close off the discussion of this scenario, what might the German player do? To begin with, I do not recommend a blind charge across some portion of the north edge in the hope that there would be nothing there. I would find that as disagreeable as I would the idea of stacking all of the guns in one locality and hoping that the German player would guess wrong and enter there. My playing time is far too limited for me to have any use for that sort of silliness.

Given what would be visible to an attacker here, I'd be inclined toward holding most of my force off of the board while a limited force probed for the French positions. Such an approach costs time, but heavy, early losses will cripple the attack.

One possiblity is to approach along board 6 with an initial objective of determining what the tree line just south of the wheatfields contains. A single squad transported to 6AA10 by a PzKwIIID and unloaded into 6Z10 should do the trick at that end of things. The other end is easily reached in two turns by infantry advancing via the buildings lying north of the wheatfields. If the woods were empty this might plausibly be followed by the movement of men and MGs by tanks and halftracks into the woods opposite the French position at 6X3 for the purpose of eliminating whatever might be there. With that accomplished attention would then likely turn toward the AT Gun in 6Y6. My enthusiasm for that plan would, of course, be severely dampened by the discovery of those minefields.

Some Final Remarks

By now it must be obvious that my enthusiasm for *SL* and its children remains high. I hope that what you've read helps you to be a better player at this, one of the most interesting games in our hobby. If all goes well we'll meet again, in a year or so, when, I fear, Cpl. Medrow will encounter the greatest dangers of his cardboard life. Stay tuned for further bulletins.

☆

SOFTENING UP

A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO AVALON HILL'S NEW MICROCOMPUTER SOFTWARE

by Richard Christie

Richard Christie is an experienced software programmer who tests and evaluates outside programs for Microcomputer Games as well as designing his own. His evaluation of the Microcomputer game software as presently constituted makes interesting reading for both computer enthusiasts and the mildly curious.

The exhibition of Avalon Hill's new microcomputer games *(NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER, MIDWAY CAMPAIGN, B-1, NUKEWAR,* and *PLANET MINERS)* at Origins '80 caught many by surprise—a pleasant surprise for most. TRS-80®, Apple®, and Pet® computers were in constant use at the Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games booth, as gamers of all ages and levels of computer experience, from first-time computer users to professional programmers, enjoyed learning and playing the games. In contrast to most conventional board strategy games, the basics of play of the microcomputer games are very rapidly learned. The computer asks for the information it needs to conduct the game and makes sure that all of the rules are followed exactly, thus allowing the player to concentrate on the important strategic planning without getting bogged down in play mechanics. An important feature of the games is that the computer plays one side and has been programmed to give even experienced players a challenge.

Several questions were frequently asked about these computer games at Origins '80. Before going into detail about each game individually, it will be helpful to answer the general questions for the benefit of those who were unable to attend Origins.

1. WHAT COMPUTERS CAN THE GAMES BE PLAYED ON?

For now, the three most popular personal computers are being supported: TRS-80 (Level II), Pet 2001 CBM, and Apple II (Plus). All of these need at least 16K memory to run the programs. (By the way, in computer lingo, 1K = 1024 = 2^{10}.)

Older versions of the Pet and Apple can also be used. In the case of the Apple II with INTEGER BASIC instead of APPLESOFT BASIC, a separate cassette containing APPLESOFT (provided with the computer) can be loaded in memory before loading the game program. You will need 32K memory for this (16K for APPLESOFT, 16K for the game).

Older versions of the Pet will have a different style keyboard but will run the same program. (You will still need 16K memory.)

2. HOW IS THE PROGRAM LOADED?

Each game comes with one cassette which contains versions of the game program for each of the three computers. Each version is recorded twice (one right after the other) in case there is a problem loading the first one. The TRS-80 version is located at the beginning of side 1 of the tape. The Pet version is located at the beginning of side 2 of the tape. The Apple version is located immediately following the TRS-80 section of side 1, and can be found easily by listening for the "pure" sounding Apple calibration tone approximately two-thirds of the way through the tape.

Complete, step-by-step cassette loading instructions are provided with each game.

3. WHAT LANGUAGE ARE THESE PROGRAMS WRITTEN IN?

The five games above were all written in BASIC. Once they are loaded, the programs are available to be listed or modified if desired by the player. Any modifications are strictly the responsibility of the purchaser, of course.

4. WHAT ABOUT SUPPLYING THE PROGRAMS ON FLOPPY DISKS?

Many home computer owners have added floppy disk drives to their systems. On the other hand, many have not. While it is certainly true that floppy disks load programs more quickly and reliably than cassette tapes, no one can argue with the fact that all floppy disk users can also load a cassette, while not all cassette users can load a floppy disk! Therefore, it makes more sense to supply a cassette to everyone in the interests of efficiency.

If you have a floppy disk drive, then simply load the program from cassette and save it on your floppy disk. From then on, you can load it from your floppy disk. The cassettes were professionally duplicated using the latest equipment and have proven to be highly reliable.

5. WHAT ABOUT SUPPORTING OTHER COMPUTERS?

It is very disappointing, of course, to be interested in these programs but have a type of computer other than TRS-80, Apple, or Pet. During Origins, there were requests for support of the Atari®, Sorcerer®, Ohio Scientific®, North Star®, and others. Our best indication is that these computers represent a small fraction of the total home computers currently in use. To add programs for them would increase significantly the programming and distribution costs without a proportional increase in sales. If you think we are missing a potential market, by all means write and let us know what type of computer you would like us to support in the future.

6. DO YOUR PROGRAMS MAKE USE OF THE HIGH-RESOLUTION GRAPHICS CAPABILITY OF THE APPLE?

This was one of the most frustrating questions at Origins, both for us and for the people who asked. Graphics is this year's fad concept. Unfortunately, implementation of high-resolution graphics in low- to moderately-priced user-programmable microcomputers (as opposed to arcade game special-purpose computers) is still a few years off. The reason for this requires some explanation.

By high-resolution, we mean the capability of clearly displaying a mapboard the size of half of a *SQUAD LEADER* map section with all details, preferably in color (for example). It could conceivably take 64K memory just to store the display, plus additional memory to hold the programs needed to draw and manipulate the display. The generation of such a high-resolution display is technically feasible today, but the cost is prohibitive for home computer users.

At a more reasonable cost, a fully expanded Apple computer comes close to high-resolution color graphics capability as we have defined it. For about 3K bucks, you can buy an Apple with a color monitor (which gives better picture definition than a regular T.V.) which is capable of drawing a simple map display, a tank, an exploding building, or whatever you want. At their best, graphics displays can add tremendously to the aesthetic appeal of a game. However, these features are primarily cosmetic, like the chrome on an automobile. They do not make a program a better simulation of an historical battle or fantasy world, but they do add considerably to the memory requirements and programming time. The bottom line is that any strategy game program with extensive graphics will be more expensive for the player than one without graphics, especially if the graphics must be individually tailored for each different computer.

The key decision to make is whether fancy graphics displays can be added without detracting from the mechanics of the game or adding an unsupportable cost burden to the player. By limiting ourselves to 16K memory, and by trying to make the programs as interchangeable among the three computers as possible, we are able to produce game programs with sophisticated strategy elements at a reasonable price. Unfortunately, one of the things which had to be sacrificed was the special graphics capability of the Apple.

This is not to say that Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games will not be producing programs for the Apple with graphics in the future. If you have an Apple computer, you can influence us on this point by writing to us and asking for Apple graphics programs.

Now that the preliminary questions have been answered, let's look at each game in detail.

THE B-1 NUCLEAR BOMBER GAME

The *B-1 NUCLEAR BOMBER GAME* has the deepest roots of the computer strategy games released by Avalon Hill. Its ancestor was originally written in 1970 on an IBM-360-50 computer under the title *MOSCOW*. As such, it has some claim to be the first recreational computer wargame (as opposed to those used by the Department of Defense).

The game places you, the player, in the pilot's seat of a highly automated B-1 bomber conducting a solo penetration of the air defenses of the Soviet Union. Perhaps a total nuclear war is underway, or perhaps this is a surgical retaliatory strike. The pilot of the aircraft—You!—wouldn't know. A message is flashed on the screen ordering the strike and assigning a primary target. A fail safe code, which you will need to know later to arm your bomb, is also displayed. You are informed of secondary targets and defense complexes. You must now pilot your aircraft to the target, drop your bomb and return to base.

You must communicate with your airplane (also with your computer) by using two letter command codes. Any geographic location in the Soviet Union, as well as your home base, Thule AFB, is also referenced by the first two letters of its name. MO is Moscow, LE Leningrad and PS the Pskov Defense Complex.

Let's look in on parts of the adventures of a happy-go-lucky B-1 driver as he attempts to smear Leningrad off the face of the Earth.

First he finds the way to Leningrad . . .

COMMAND? NA
WHERE TO? LE
LENINGRAD BEARS 142.1T RANGE 2815KM.
COMMAND? CO
NEW COURSE? 142.1

(It may seem like the computer is doing a lot of talking, but it takes the computer almost no time at all to print a one line message.)

Our hero flies towards Leningrad . . .

COMMAND? AU
TIME FOR AUTOPILOT (S,M,H)? 0,30

for thirty minutes, or until . . .

PECHENGA LAUNCHES A SAM-6.
SAM-6 INTERCEPTS IN 144 SECONDS.
COMMAND?

Our hero elects to use electronics this time . . .

COMMAND? EC
SAM--6 SELF-DESTRUCTS.

Much later in the flight our hero arrives over the target (hotly pursued) and decides to take care of first things first . . .

MIG-27 IN PHOENIX RANGE.
LENINGRAD IN BOMB RANGE.
KONOSHA LAUNCHES A MIG-27.
ONEGA LAUNCHES A SAM-3.
PSKOV LAUNCHES A MIG-31.
TALLINN LAUNCHES A MIG-27.
VYBORG BASE IN PHOENIX RANGE.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 458 SECONDS.
MIG-31 INTERCEPTS IN 222 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 201 SECONDS.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 573 SECONDS.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS in 10 SECONDS.
COMMAND? PH
PHOENIX MISSILE ARMED. TARGET?
PHOENIX AWAY!
MISSED!

MIG-27 IN PHOENIX RANGE.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 453 SECONDS.
MIG-31 INTERCEPTS IN 217 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 196 SECONDS.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS in 568 SECONDS.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS in 5 SECONDS.
COMMAND?

As you can see, things are not breaking our hero's way. Nevertheless he persists, and eventually succeeds . . .

COMMAND? BO
TARGET? LE
CONFIRM DROP (Y/N)? Y
LENINGRAD DESTROYED.
KONOSHA LAUNCHES A SAM-6.
SAM-6 INTERCEPTS IN 299 SECONDS.
COMMAND?

Fighting off the desperate efforts of the Soviet Air Defense Command to avenge the population of what used to be Leningrad, our hero flees across the north of Russia. At last, at low altitude, out of missiles and with Electronic Countermeasures rendered ineffective by the Russians, he attempts a desperation evasive maneuver . . .

SAM-3 IN PHOENIX RANGE.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 1 SECOND.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 420 SECONDS.
COMMAND? EV
B1 CRASHES INTO HILLSIDE.
MISSION SUMMARY:
PRIMARY TARGET, LENINGRAD,
    DESTROYED.
DEFENSE COMPLEXES DESTROYED:
    PECHENGA
    VYBORG
CREW DEAD.
GO AGAIN (Y/N)?

And so our hero doesn't make it back to Thule AFB. Still, he made it to the target. He'll probably get the Air Medal—posthumously, of course—if there's anyone left alive in Washington, D.C. to hand it out.

NUKEWAR

The *NUKEWAR* computer game is a semi-serious simulation of a nuclear arms race and hot war between two hypothetical countries. 'Semi-serious' means that the capabilities of the weapons and the resources of the countries in the game are not necessarily realistic. The human player—you—will act as the head of government of one country, and the computer will act as the premier of the other. Much of the fun of the game comes from the fact that the computer has exactly the same capabilities as you do, and is faced with identical choices.

Each country is an 8 by 8 grid of 'squares'. Eight cities are randomly distributed among the squares. Each city represents eleven million people. The remaining squares are considered rural areas, with a population of one million each, making the starting population for each country 144,000,000. Bases may only be built on rural areas which do not already have a base. Each player starts with one bomber and one missile base. The starting year is chosen at random in the range 1955 to 1965. At the beginning, although the computer has the same things in his country, you don't know where they are. Conversely, the section of the program that makes strategic decisions for the computer doesn't know where your cities and bases are either. A typical display might look like:

```
· · ·C· · · ·        · · · · · · · ·
· · ·C· · ·          · · · · · · · ·
· · ·C· ·C· ·        · · · · · · · ·
· · ·C· · ·C         · · · · · · · ·
C· · · · · ·B        · · · · · · · ·
· ·M· ·C· ·          · · · · · · · ·
· · · · · · ·        · · · · · · · ·
· · · · · · · ·      · · · · · · · ·
```

where the 'C's are cities, the 'M' a missile base and the 'B' a bomber base.

The game proceeds in one year turns during the cold war period. Each year you (and the computer) must decide among three options:

1. Build two bases.

2. Spy (about three times as well as when building two bases) and build only one base.

3. Start the war.

Each player then decides (if no one has started the war yet) what kind of bases to build. In addition to missile and bomber bases, starting in 1965 submarine bases can be built, and starting in 1970 ABM bases. The computer then updates the map and reports what the spies have found in the enemy country. In addition, nuclear accidents can occur at bases in either country (and the effect may spread up to one square). Late in the cold war phase the map may look like this:

```
◁ · ·C·◁ · ·        · · ·CM· ·M
ωⅢ Ⅲ C◁ ·◁          ⅅ ·ⅅ ·C· · ·
Ⅲ · ·C·C· ·         · ·C· ·M· ·
ⅅⅢ ·C◁ ·*C          ·◁ · · · · ·
C ·ⅅ · · ·*ⅅ        Ⅲ◁ · · · ·ⅅ
◁ ·Ⅲ · ·C·ⅅ         ·C· · · · ·C
ωⅠⅢ ◁ⅅ ◁ⅅ ·ω        · · · · ·C· ·
ωω ·ⅅ ·ω ·ω         C ·ω ·◁ ·Ⅲ ·
```

where the bases are represented by the first letter of the base type and the asterisk ('*') represents a square devastated by nuclear explosion or fallout, in this case a nuclear accident. Of course, the com-

puter (on the right) has more cities and bases than shown. Their location hasn't been discovered yet by your spies.

The hot war can start in one of two ways:

1. You can start it (if your generals let you—if they don't you lose a turn.)

2. The computer can start it.

Just who started the war is important to determine how likely bases are to activate automatically, and later to determine the effect of world opinion on the victory conditions.

On the first hot war turn, some types of bases may automatically activate. Submarines may put to sea, and then must 'cruise' to a launch location, from which they will later fire their missiles. Once at sea, submarines are invulnerable. Bomber bases may launch their aircraft, dividing them between fighters and bombers. Bombers attack the enemy once they fly over to his country. Fighters shoot down enemy bombers attacking their country. ABM's, once activated, can intercept most enemy missiles. As bases activate they are removed from the map of the opponent's country. The 'spy map', however, is not affected, because the spies wouldn't have time to report the changes back to head-quarters. You are kept fully informed of the status of your airborne fighters and bombers, of missile subs at sea and of activated ABM's.

On each hot war turn each player selects one base to activate. In addition, other bases may automatically activate. Unlike the first turn activation, the player can decide how many bombers to send and how many fighters to keep if a bomber base is activated. Activating a missile base entails selection of targets for its missiles in the enemy's country. The results of missile attacks are applied and displayed immediately. A submarine arriving at launching position is treated just like a missile base. Bombers arriving over the enemy country must get through the fighters, but then can 'see' the real country, and seek out and destroy bases and cities which are present on the real map, even if they aren't on the spy map.

At random intervals during the hot war, the premier of the enemy country may offer to negotiate. If you agree, the computer will consider the ratio of offensive weapons left to either side and decide whether to settle or continue to fight. The war continues until a negotiated settlement is reached or all offensive weapons are expended. Victory conditions are then evaluated based on population ratio modified by world opinion (usually against the country which struck first) and total population surviving. The spy map of the computer's country is also updated. A typical end of game display may look like:

```
· · ·C· ·*· ·        *· ·*· · ·*
·*· ·*· · ·*·        · ·*· · · ·
· · ·*· ·*· ·        ·*· ·*· · ·
*· ·*· · ·*·         ·*· · · ·*·
·*· · · · ·*·        *· ·CC· · ·
*· · · ·*·*·         ·*· ·*· · ·*
·*· ·*· ·*           *· · · ·*· ·
*·*· ·*· ·           · · · · ·*· ·
```

with victory conditions evaluated below the map.

Although the range of options is limited, the number of strategies which can be (and have been) used is enormous. To mention just a few, the bomber strategy involves building huge numbers of bombers with the idea that enough will get through the enemy balanced air defense to trash his country.

The spy strategy involves building a lot of missiles, spying to locate enemy bases, then conducting a first strike. The idea is to destroy his forces on the ground, then pick off his cities at leisure. The game has resulted in every outcome from a complete wipeout of the computer by the human to the exact opposite. Having the computer handle die rolls, and 'fog of war' effects makes this game tremendous fun to play.
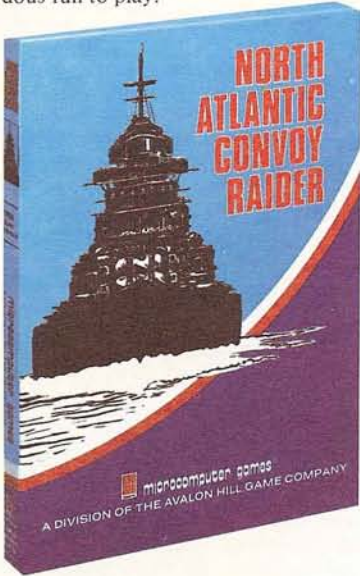
NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER

NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER is a simulation of the *Bismarck* breakout into the North Atlantic Ocean during May 1941. Opposing the *Bismarck* are the British ships *Prince of Wales, Hood, King George V,* and *Rodney.* These represent the battleships which actually contacted the *Bismarck* historically. For advanced players, there is a simple method for adding the *Repulse, Renown,* and *Ramilles* as well (just change "B = 4" to "B = 7" on line 10 of the program). The British also have convoys and air search planes.

As the simulation begins, the *Bismarck* is pulling out of German-controlled waters near Norway after having waited for foggy weather, the optimum conditions for attempting to break the British blockade and head for the open waters of the North Atlantic. The British know the *Bismarck's* approximate sailing schedule but do not have a good fix on her. The best they can do is sail in the general direction of Norway and hope to intercept when the fog clears. Meanwhile, the convoys have panicked and are fleeing west at top speed (which isn't very fast).

From this point, the player will assume the role of Captain of the *Bismarck* while the computer controls the British forces. The Captain of the *Bismarck* has two key decisions to make. When there are no British battleships nearby, he must choose a course for his ship, keeping in mind the locations of German-controlled waters (to which he must eventually withdraw) and the probable locations of British battleships and convoys. When British battleships are present, he must decide whether to attempt to evade them or turn and fight. While this may not seem like much to decide, it is not a trivial task to set the best course for the *Bismarck* and decide when to fight and not to fight.

The British strategy is fairly simple. Once they have located the *Bismarck* by spotting it with aircraft or ships, all battleships will compute interception courses and hold them until the *Bismarck* changes course while it is spotted. When the British battleships get close enough, they will open fire. Of course, the *Bismarck* will get to fire also, usually with unfortunate consequences for the British! Many one-on-one battles which result in the sinking of the British battleship can be false victories,

though, if the *Bismarck* is slowed sufficiently so that other British battleships can close in and finish her off.

If the *Bismarck* should happen upon a convoy and not have a defending British battleship within shooting range, it will automatically fire all guns at the convoy. The number of merchant ships sunk will be reported. Each of these is worth points when the level of victory is determined at the end of the game.

The game continues until the *Bismarck* is sunk or it retreats into German-controlled waters heading east. When the game is over, points are assigned for British battleships and merchantmen sunk. The British get points for driving the *Bismarck* back to port (depending on the state of the ship when it arrives) or sinking it. The computer will calculate the level of victory (or defeat) and display it on the screen. Remember that Hitler had very high expectations for the *Bismarck,* and so don't expect a victory if you simply sink the Hood and run back to port!

The computer keeps track of ship positions very accurately, but displays the positions rounded to the nearest 100 nautical miles on an abstract display of a portion of the North Atlantic Ocean. The Captain of the *Bismarck* is allowed to select any course from 0 to 360 degrees, and the *Bismarck* is assumed to travel at maximum speed all the time. All random events are handled "invisibly" by the computer. This saves a great deal of time and allows the player to concentrate on making the correct strategic and tactical decisions.

Serious students of military history will find that several aspects of the actual battle were abstracted or left out of *NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER.* Specifically, cruisers and aircraft carriers play no part. (Note that this is not a computerization of Avalon Hill's *BISMARCK* game, although it does simulate the same battle.) However, the game does capture the essential flavor of the battle and is quite easy to learn. For students of naval battles who crave a more realistic simulation, the *MIDWAY CAMPAIGN* computer game is for you (see below).
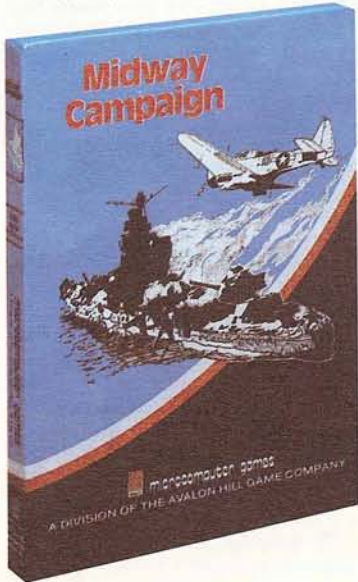
THE MIDWAY CAMPAIGN GAME

The *MIDWAY CAMPAIGN GAME* is the most complex of the computer strategy games released by Avalon Hill. It provides a realistic simulation of the capabilities and limitations an Admiral—more specifically, Rear Admiral Raymond A. Spruance—had to face in the carrier action called the Battle of Midway.

The game places you, the player, in Admiral Spruance's shoes, commanding US Task Forces 16 and 17, with orders to stop the invasion of Midway.

As the US player, you know as much about Japanese plans as Admiral Spruance did, and you have almost the same control over your forces as he did. Specifically, you can control where these forces go, and you have complete control over Combat Air Patrol and strike spotting and launching, including aircraft on the Island of Midway.

The computer operates the carriers and aircraft of the Japanese fleet. The complex, inflexible and awkward strategy the Japanese adopted lends itself well to duplication on the computer. The computer's style of play reproduces the decisions the Japanese Admiral could have made very realistically. With the benefit of 20/20 hindsight, any student of naval warfare could easily crush the US fleet by concentrating all Japanese ships around the carriers and utilizing the superior range and speed of the Japanese aircraft. The computer, fortunately for the US player, is not that smart. It faithfully follows the original Japanese plan, with all its inherent weaknesses.

The mechanics of playing the game are absurdly simple for the human player. The computer keeps track of all positions and of the status of all necessary parameters. The computer 'invisibly' rolls the dice, reporting only the results. The computer enforces the rules automatically. The human player is free to concentrate on the true command decisions: where to go, when to arm, when to launch and whether to keep the fighters or send them with the strike.

Tactical information is provided to you, the US player, in the form of a map of the part of the Pacific Ocean around Midway Island:

```
1200 3 JUNE 1942
TF-16 C205T
TF-17 C205T

  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   7
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   6
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   *   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
  .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .   .
```

FLEET COMMAND:

On the map, TF-16 and -17 appear as the numbers '6' and '7'. Midway is the asterisk ('*'). Course information is shown adjacent to the map. Japanese forces, when and if spotted, appear as 'J's, and the Japanese carriers as 'C's. Aircraft status is a separate display:

1200 3 JUNE 1942
STATUS

CV	On Deck			Below			Damage
	CAP	VF	VB	VT	VF	VB	VT	
Enterprise	0	0	0	0	27	38	14	None
Hornet	0	0	0	0	27	35	15	None
Yorktown	0	0	0	0	25	37	13	None
Midway	0	0	0	0	14	14	10	None
None								

FLEET COMMAND:

VF, VB and VT are fighters, dive bombers and torpedo planes respectively.

To launch a strike requires arming the aircraft first. This takes one turn. During this time the carrier is in a much more vulnerable condition. Launching also requires having a target spotted to attack. When a strike does conduct an attack the results are reported to the player:

YORKTOWN TDB'S MISS TARGET.
YORKTOWN STRIKE ATTACKING CARRIERS!
CAP ATTACKS SBD'S.
CAP SHOOTS DOWN 21 SBD'S.
ON THE WAY IN,
CARRIERS AA SHOOTS DOWN 0 SBD'S.

4 SBD'S ATTACK AKAGI.
AKAGI TAKES 0 HITS.
4 SBD'S ATTACK KAGA.
HIT!
KAGA TAKES 1 HIT.
SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS ON KAGA.
(etc.)

Although based on the same historical battle, *MIDWAY CAMPAIGN* was designed, developed and programmed independently from the Avalon Hill (or any other) *MIDWAY* game. This, combined with the use of the computer, makes playing *MIDWAY CAMPAIGN* totally different from playing the board game.

MIDWAY CAMPAIGN is a very unstable game. This means that the result is usually heavily in favor of one side or the other. Marginal victories are rare. The actual battle was of course a strategic victory for the US, but it is well to remember that the major reason was the blind luck involved in the split-second timing of the US attack which caught the Japanese carriers with a full deckload of armed aircraft, and in the delay of *Tone* search plane number 4, which kept Admiral Nagumo, the Japanese commander, uninformed of the presence of US carriers until it was too late. The actual battle could have easily gone either way, and in this respect the game is a faithful recreation. Even the most experienced player cannot win all the time. With proper tactics, however, and with a little bit of luck, he can maximize his chances of victory.

The *MIDWAY CAMPAIGN* program as presently constituted is so large that it just barely fits into the 16K memory limit. In order to stay within this limit certain aspects of the actual battle had to be discarded or abstracted while retaining the major elements affecting the course of events. Surface combat, for example, was completely ignored. The justification for this was that, although there were a few occasions during WWII when carriers managed to get under the guns of the opposition (*Hornet* at Santa Cruz, and TF-34 at Leyte come to mind), in general surface actions were an insignificant part of carrier battles. Submarines were eliminated for similar reasons. Supporting ships—battleships, cruisers and destroyers—were abstracted as an AA factor 'buried' in the program.

With respect to aircraft, search was abstracted and buried in the program on the theory that Admiral Spruance had no control over the operations of the PBY's which bore the brunt of the US search responsibilities. B-17's were discarded based on their almost total ineffectiveness in the actual battle and subsequent engagements. Because there was no room for more than three aircraft types per side, the number of each type based on Midway Island was adjusted to account for the difference in effectiveness between the obsolescent · aircraft the Marines were flying, such as F2A Brewster Buffalos and SB2U Vindicators (also known as 'Wind Indicators') and the more modern F4F Wildcats and SBD Dauntlesses operating from the carriers.

Despite these design compromises the player will find that sufficient realism has been maintained in *MIDWAY CAMPAIGN* to give a good feel for the problems and decisions facing Admiral Spruance as he sailed through the Pacific's chill waters on those warm June days in 1942.

PLANET MINERS

The premise behind *PLANET MINERS* is that some time in the middle of the next century, the planets (including moons and asteroids) will provide raw materials for industry based on earth. Actually, the industry for processing these raw materials will probably be based between the earth and moon at one of the two stable "Lagrange" orbit points, either "L4" or "L5" (or both). Needless to say, the organization which can control these

resources will reap immense profits. At the same time, the governments on the earth will feel that they must have a large degree of control over the utilization of resources upon which they are so dependent. Thus, what evolves is a system of a Mining Council of Earth granting franchises (or concessions) to various private companies to mine certain areas of the solar system. The game *PLANET MINERS* simulates the time period during which the solar system is opened for filing mining claims. What results is a situation similar to the Oklahoma land rush, with the four biggest corporate conglomerates attempting to claim the best mining areas.
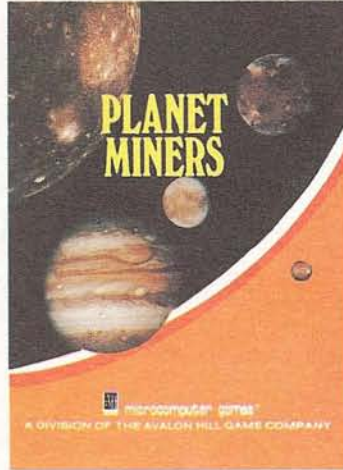
Each of the four giant conglomerates is organized along the Japanese paternalistic style (taking care of the employees and getting loyalty in return), with the founder of the company having absolute rule. It is natural therefore to think of them as being "families" in some sense of the word. The families are mutually hostile to each other, but will never take overtly violent actions. Not that they are morally above that sort of thing, you understand, but they realize that overtly violent acts are likely to be punished in kind.

By this time in future history, the technology of space travel will have progressed to the point that a ship can maintain its engines running for an entire trip, accelerating constantly at "1 gravity" or "1g" (the same force you feel all the time on earth) half way to the destination and decelerating at the same rate the other half. A trip can be made to Jupiter in only a week with such a ship, as opposed to the several years it takes with today's technology.

As the game begins, each family has five spacecraft in orbit around the earth. The crew of each spacecraft has a finesse or skill rating which reflects the crew's ability to stake mining claims, influence the Mining Council at earth, sabotage other ships, and jump mining claims. When the Council opens the solar system for mining concessions, each family must send its ships to planets in the solar system to claim the available mining concessions. At the same time, they will be attempting to thwart the other families by sabotaging their ships, jumping their claims, and protesting against the claims that can't be jumped. The Mining Council maintains a fleet of patrol ships to guard against such sneaky tricks, but they are spread thin and can't be everywhere at once.

A unique feature of the *PLANET MINERS* is that either the computer or a person can play for any of the four families. The game is usually played solitaire, with the player taking the part of one family and the computer taking the parts of the other three. It can also be played by as many as four persons, or even by the computer all alone! The computer has been programmed to take every advantage it can, and so winning is not an easy task.

The key to successful play of *PLANET MINERS* is to send your ships to the right planets. Since the number of available mining concessions at each planet is not known before the game begins (it is different each time), there can be no "perfect strategy" which will work every time. Generally speaking, it is best to keep the ship with the highest finesse value at earth to influence the Mining Council and send the others to planets with many available claims. Keeping in mind that the other families will be using a similar strategy, it is often a good idea to send one of your less valuable ships to a marginal mining location like Mars, in hopes that no one else will go there and you can grab all of the available claims with no opposition. Whenever possible, it is best to send a ship to a planet and leave it there for many days, since ships in transit are useless.

In the dirty tricks department, the standard method for getting a claim away from your opponent is to protest its validity in the Mining Council. For this, you will need a good finesse value at earth compared with your opponent. If a protest fails, the worst that can happen is that the Mining Council will be unfavorably disposed toward you for the rest of the day. If it works, the claim will be made public again. In this case, it obviously helps if you have the only ship at the planet where the claim has been made public. Otherwise, it is very likely that someone else can get it after all the trouble you went through!

More risky dirty tricks, with better payoffs if they succeed, are sabotage and claim jumping. A sabotage is an attempt by agents in the crews of your ships in orbit around a planet to disrupt the controls of an opponent's ship and send it spinning out of control. If this works, the opponent's ship will be useless for a number of days while his crew repairs it and gets back in a stable orbit. The finesse values of both players will influence the chances for success. One of the hallmarks of successful sabotage is that the perpetrator escapes undetected, and so no one can be sure who did it. One of the best places to sabotage is in orbit around earth, because gaining a finesse superiority at earth will make influencing the Mining Council easier.

If the sabotage fails and the agent fails to escape, the consequences are quite messy. If there are patrol ships nearby, then the ship of the player attempting sabotage is escorted forcibly back to earth, where the crew will be held in jail a number of days until the family lawyers can get them released on bail. This will also displease the Mining Council. If there are no patrol ships, things are even worse. The crew on the ship which was the target of the attempted sabotage will torture the captured agent for family secrets and thus gain one finesse point at the expense of the agent. After they release the agent, it will take him several days to recover, during which time his ship is useless.

Claim jumping is an attempt to tamper with the mining claim marker beacons of another player at a planet, then convince the Mining Council to transfer ownership of the claim to you. This is done in two steps. First, the marker beacons of the other player are altered. This is similar to attempting sabotage and the results of failure are the same. (Nobody likes claim jumpers.) If the marker beacon switch is successful, then the Mining Council must be persuaded to change their records to transfer ownership. If this second step fails, the penalties are much less severe (similar to failing to protest a claim).

The computer is programmed to make its own decisions about when to use these "dirty tricks" on you or other players. If you are getting ahead, the players controlled by the computer are very likely to gang up on you with a flurry of dirty tricks! The game ends when all mining concessions have been granted or the Mining Council gets tired. The nominal victor is the family with the most mining claims, but a solitaire player should only consider it

a victory if he can get more than the other three families combined. It is possible under the right combination of lucky circumstances and skillful play for a solitaire player to get all of the mining claims, but this is extremely rare.

LORDS OF KARMA

"What, a sixth game? I thought you only had five."

This one was in the final stages of development during Origins. Several people were fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to try out *LORDS OF KARMA* on the Apple computer at Origins. Based on their experience, we have "fine tuned" some aspects of the program and it is now ready for release.

LORDS OF KARMA is a departure from the philosophy of the first five games. To begin, it is only available for Apple computers with at least 32K memory. In the second place, *LORDS OF KARMA* is a machine language program, not a BASIC program, and so it is nearly impossible for the player to figure out how the program works or modify it in any way. Thus, *LORDS OF KARMA* will be a direct gauge of the fraction of the computer game market having expanded Apple computers (as opposed to 16K Apples or TRS-80's or Pets), which will in turn influence us one way or the other about supplying programs specifically for the Apple in the future (see the previous comments about high-resolution graphics).

Now to the game itself: *LORDS OF KARMA* is an "adventure" type game in which the computer is your link to a complete fantasy universe. When the game begins, you find yourself in the central square of the mythical city of Golconda. All you know is that the object is to get to heaven with as many karma points as possible. Exactly what you have to do to accomplish this must be discovered during the course of play.

In order to do things in the fantasy universe, you must type requests in English to the computer. The computer will then try to decipher what you typed into its own internal computer language and do whatever it thinks you want to try. For instance, if you type "WALK NORTH" as your first command, the computer will try to go north from the central square of Golconda. The computer will put messages on the screen to indicate whether your command is successful ("YOU WALK NORTH") or unsuccessful ("IMPOSSIBLE RIGHT NOW") or undecipherable ("I CANNOT TRANSLATE THAT").

The whole point to adventure games is that you will not know before playing what "commands" will work; the fun comes when you try different things and some of them work. An important point to remember is that the computer is rather "stupid" and has a very limited vocabulary and a very crude understanding of English syntax. If one thing doesn't work, try rephrasing your command or try something else. After you have gotten to heaven the first time, the game can still be fun by trying to get there with more points the next time. Depending on how resourceful and lucky you are, it can take anywhere from ten to over a hundred hours of play to discover all the secrets.

One aspect of the *LORDS OF KARMA* game that veteran adventure game players will find vastly different is that the universe of KARMA is very active. In *LORDS OF KARMA*, you cannot expect the monsters to sit still while you do things like look around or take inventory of what you are carrying. Also, not every living creature is a monster that should be killed. Some may actually be friends who will help you on your way. If you aren't careful, you can do things that will result in your losing karma points rather than gaining them. You can expect

that the universe of KARMA will contain enough clues to help you figure out what you should and should not do—if only you will pay attention to them.

We must apologize to TRS-80 and Pet owners who are intrigued with *LORDS OF KARMA* but can't buy it because it only runs on the Apple. In preparing a BASIC program, all that is needed is a computer large enough to hold the program. Avalon Hill has a 16K TRS-80 and a 16K Pet, and so preparing a BASIC program on these computers is "simply" a matter of typing in the BASIC program lines and making any necessary modifications (each version of BASIC is slightly different).

Machine language programs are another story. First, the source program must be prepared. This is usually in assembly language, but in the case of *LORDS OF KARMA*, we used a special subset of the Pascal language which we tailored to produce Apple machine code (actually, 6502 microprocessor code). All of this was developed on two computers (one of them an Apple) with floppy disk drives and fully expanded memories. In addition, the two computers were custom modified to be able to trade data and programs over a data cable. In order to be

able to make *LORDS OF KARMA* available on the TRS-80 and Pet, the TRS-80 and Pet would have to be expanded well beyond their present 16K memory capacity, have floppy disks added, and also have a similar data transfer cable installed. Before we do this, there will have to be sufficient justification in terms of customer requests or sales. If *LORDS OF KARMA* is popular, we will probably be offering similar adventure programs that will fit in a 16K TRS-80, Apple, or Pet.

IN CONCLUSION

We hope that these brief descriptions have given you a good idea of what the new Avalon Hill microcomputer games are all about. What's in store for the future? Your response to the first games will help determine that. Computer sports games seem to be one good direction. If you would like to have a big influence on the development of this new field of strategy gaming, by all means drop us a note at

THE ASYLUM, No. 9
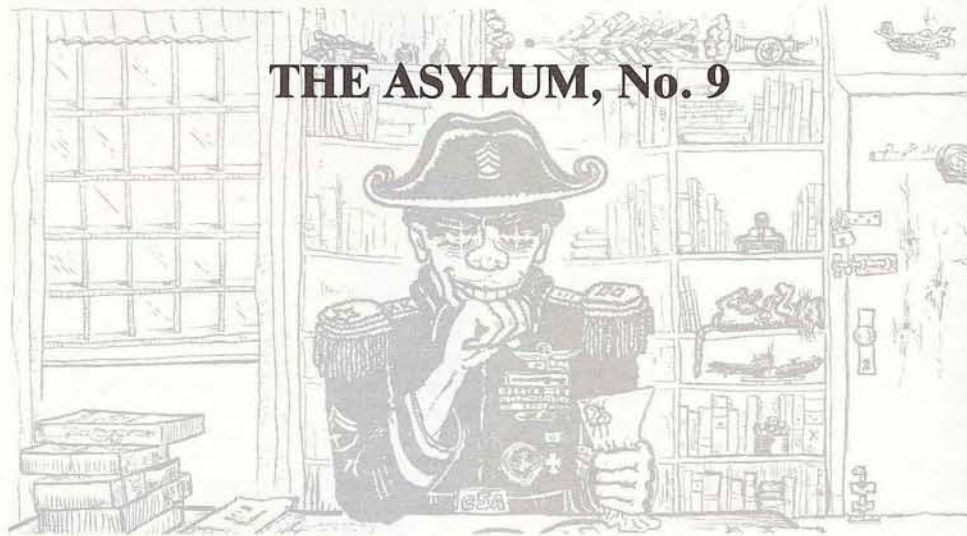
BABYGAMER By Alan R. Moon

8:19, 25 December 1980, Mercy Hospital, Baltimore.

An eight pound baby boy is born. Joe Wargamer, the father, is not married. He has not impregnated a female (or so he says). The baby, to be named Joe II, is a clone. An experimental program, only recently opened up to the public, has made Joe a daddy sans mommy.

Joe's real happiness is somewhat more subtle than appears on the surface. Joe has been a wargamer for years and has hungered for opponents. As of late, in particular, for one competent opponent, who is readily available to play games with him anytime. Joe II is the answer to Joe's hopes, or so Joe hopes.

A nurse takes Joe to the window of the maternity ward where dozens of babies lie in their first beds. A sea of screaming flesh, seemingly all hands, toes, and mouths, waiting to be formed into bodies. The nurse points out Joe II.

Joes waves. Joe II is not crying or moving around much like the others. He looks puzzled. Pensive. Almost contemplative. His hand moves to his chin. The thinker. His mouth opens and seems to speak. Joe looks again. Joe II mouths "daddy". Joe melts. The realization hits him. Joe has spawned a son, not just a wargamer. Self-interest is no longer his only motive. Joe is a proud father.

Joe II does not speak for several weeks when Joe brings him home. He seems cautiously quiet, checking out the surroundings. One day, Joe holds him in his arms and Joe II speaks the word again. Except this time Joe hears it. He is shocked as he realizes his mistake. The word is not "daddy", but "D-Day".

In the fourth week, Joe begins to spout forth a wargamer's vocabulary. In fact, he seems to know almost nothing else. Game titles, probabilities, strategy, historical unit makeup, battle plans, weapon specifications, rules pour out.

Joe begins to worry. There seems to be no sensitivity, no humanity, in Joe II.

At five weeks, Joe II announces he is ready to play his first game. Joe suggests *AFRIKA KORPS*. Joe II sneers and says he will skip the menial, basic stuff and start with *THIRD REICH*. Joe rigs up a special table that will be as high as Joe II's crib. They play. Joe II is like a machine at the table, alternately sucking on his bottle and doing computations out loud. Joe II wins. . . .

Seven centuries later, Joe XI and his Joe XI clone-brothers plot to take over the world, and succeed. Joe, who has been rolling over in his grave since his death due to inferiority, gives up the ghost and passes on. His soul finally admitting he's been a heel. Drs. Frankenstein and Mengele welcome him.

CROSSING THE SAMBRE

Waterloo from the Beginning

by Elwood Carlson

This scenario is the second in a series of three by the same author to appear on our WATERLOO game. The first, "East of Waterloo", appeared in Vol. 15, No. 4. This scenario, although a complete mini-game in its own right, is also usuable as a variant opening for the original game itself, beginning at dawn on June 15th, 1815. In this latter case, it opens up a lot of new strategic "terrain" for veteran players of this old classic. Mini-games aside, the modifications to the basic rules proposed here go a long way towards bringing this old war horse back up to the current "state of the art".

WHAT YOU NEVER SAW

The opening face-off between Napoleon's and Blucher's armies is a constant in *WATERLOO*. Over years of play, this one fixed starting point has made the terrain between Ligny and Quatre Bras as familiar to wargamers as their own backyards. Maneuvers in these close quarters are the forte of many gamers, experts in matters of soak-offs, location of forest squares, stacking limits, and the liberal use of dice.

But this setup for the game leaves out the longer-range maneuvering of the opposing armies which had gone before, on June 15th. The fact is that Napoleon's record of successes (and in this campaign, defeat) depended just as much on his ability to concentrate that bulk of his own army against more dispersed opponents, and to force combat on his choice of battlefield.

The border of France lies off the south edge of the *WATERLOO* mapboard. Between nightfall on June 14th, 1815, and the morning of the 16th when the game begins, the entire French army poured out of concealed positions at the eastern end of the frontier. The advance during those intervening hours is the subject of much disagreement among historians, but by dawn on the 16th, Napoleon had managed to drive Prussian forces back upon their reserves to the northeast, away from Wellington's Anglo-Allied forces. Blucher had to stand and fight, or be pushed even further from his allies, and that was exactly what Napoleon wanted. On June 16th, he engaged the Prussians while Ney tried and failed to take Quatre Bras and cut communications between Wellington and Blucher. You know the rest.

Of course, historians may quarrel over what might have been done, in the midst of Belgium in 1815. The following remarks review what did happen, and outline a new extension of the *WATERLOO* game which lets wargamers actually try the entire affair again, to discover what was possible and what was not.

The Grande Armee advanced in three columns. Marshal Ney on the left was to cross the Sambre to the southwest, capture Binche, advance up the north bank of the river, and ultimately capture Gosselies and Quatre Bras and ward off any of Wellington's forces which tried to interfere. Marshal Grouchy was to advance on the right flank, taking Chatelet and Fleurus. The Emperor himself commanded the main force, which was to push up the main highway through Charleroi to force an engagement with the Prussians. The march began in the late night hours of the 14th; by dawn the next morning, problems were already in evidence.

On the left, Reille's II Corps forged ahead, capturing Binche and appearing on the mapboard by early morning. But D'Erlon had just arrived from Paris to lead the I Corps; he wasn't even certain who his divisional commanders were. The I Corps took much longer to get started. Ney stayed behind to try to help get things organized.

On the right, the roads were narrower than anticipated and the orders of march for units got mixed up. Grouchy's column was delayed in its entirety, so that the first elements of the IV Corps did not reach the Sambre at Chatelet until after noon. The reserve cavalry under Milhaud did not pass that point until the morning of the *next* day, the 16th.

The center column headed by the Imperial Guard advanced to Charleroi, attacking Prussian troops there and finally capturing the city shortly before noon. Vandamme's III Corps was close behind, along with Napoleon himself and two Cavalry Corps, and during the afternoon these forces pressed on from the Sambre to the north-northeast in pursuit of Zeiten's I Prussian Corps.

Zeiten began the day spread across the mapboard, with whole divisions as "pickets." Suddenly that morning, he found himself facing the whole French army, and only with difficulty managed to pull Steinmetz's division back across the Pieton before Reille's advance on the left would have trapped them on the far side of the enemy host. Resistance was offered at Charleroi, though the result was a foregone conclusion. Some scholars maintain that this first sharp combat played a part in the slowness of the French advance for the rest of the day, but others point out that the French had already marched most of the night, and had to be ready for a major standup battle with Blucher as soon as he could be provoked to form up.

The Prussian II Corps moved west as soon as word of the French march was received, arriving around Ligny early in the afternoon. Shortly afterwards, the I Corps came marching back to join them, in the face of the advancing French. Blucher was as close to Wellington's cautiously dispersed forces as he would get; further movement wouldn't help. The III Corps was on the way (arriving on the morning of the 16th.) Blucher decided Napoleon had to be held where Wellington could most easily move to join the conflict. The stage was set; the initial day of maneuvers in Napoleon's last campaign had brought the combatants together for battle. The fundamental question to be answered by replaying these events is simple: could you have done any better, as commander of either side?

RECREATING JUNE 15TH

The "At Start" positions for units from the I Prussian Corps and the I Anglo-Allied Corps reflect the location of the command of each unit at dawn on June 15th. Prussian reinforcements arrive along the Namur Turnpike (DD-10) all through the day, and on the morning of the 16th as well. The exception is Henkel, whose division marched up from a more forward, southerly position. Anglo-Allied units arrive from Brussels, where Wellington held his army's reserves, and from Braine le Comte, where the I Corps had the bulk of its forces. The French appear in their three columns from the south edge of the mapboard (a turnpike should continue south from Charleroi.) All these details are included in the P-A-A and French Order of Appearance Charts.

Beginning from the setup shown for dawn on June 15th, "Crossing the Sambre" can be played as a variant opening for a regular game of *WATERLOO*. In this case, strategy is wide open. The French can drive for Nivelles to avoid the unpleasant terrain around Quatre Bras, try for Brussels straight away while screening off the Prussians, or follow Napoleon's own plan of defeat in detail of the two opposing armies before him. A few

little tricks will emerge with repeated play, such as using the first French units (Reille's cavalry) to force Steinmetz to retreat north instead of east, or bringing the Dutch units forward from Quatre Bras to defend the line of the Pieton. Players will be able to explore for themselves considerable new realms of campaign options which they never saw by starting the game a day later. In the full game, be sure to follow the revised order of appearance through *1 PM* on the afternoon of the 16th. Further, the Prussian IV Corps can enter the game in *two* ways: on the Namur turnpike at 5 PM on June 16th, or on the road to Ligny from the east board-edge at 1 PM on June 17th. (Neither of these entrances correspond to the original game.)

To play "Crossing the Sambre" as a free-standing Scenario, use *only* the units shown on the order of appearance charts, and end the game after the 5 PM turn on June 16th. Victory is determined simply. Either player wins by controlling any three of the following five towns when the game is over: St. Amand, Ligny, Tilly, St. Gery, and Quatre Bras. ("Control" is defined as occupation with a combat unit, free of all enemy zones of control.) This effectively means if Blucher can keep *both* Tilly and Quatre Bras out of French hands, history will be repeating itself and Napoleon will have been stalled enough to allow the Prussians and Wellington to combine on the following day. The Prussians cannot therefore hole up in Quatre Bras (they would be abandoning the IV Corps if they did so, anyway.)

MODIFICATIONS TO RULES

These rules revisions actually can be applied to *any* scenario or game of *WATERLOO*. They are suggested to improve the realism of play.

Rule 1. Automatic elimination of a defender means the eliminated unit's zone of control and presence is ignored by all the attacker's units *not* engaged in the attack itself, during the remaining movement portion of the attacker's turn.

Rule 2. Allow cavalry the option to enter any clear terrain square vacated by enemies as a result of combat involving that cavalry (whether as attacker or defender) in the same way units already occupy vacated squares of units doubled on defense. This movement after combat may be considered a "charge bonus."

Rule 3. No more than one infantry division (or two brigades) may occupy a square. No more than one cavalry division (or three brigades) may occupy a square. No more than one artillery battalion, horse or foot, (or three batteries) may occupy a square. Within these limits, the three different types of units may stack together freely.

Rule 4. Some unit strengths, originally based on simple totals of men, do not reflect the power of units. For the French Guards, change Friant (the old guard) to an 8, Morand and Duhesne (the middle and young guards) to 7's. Change Cooke (the British guard battalions, including the Greys and the Coldstream Guards) to an 8.

Rule 5. Prussian and Anglo-Allied units which stack together lose one point of combat strength on attack and defense. This point is subtracted from the largest unit in the stack, *before* any doubling for defense.

Rule 6. Movement *along* a primary road counts as ½ movement factor, except when the road square is in enemy zone of control. This replaces the old four-square "extra move" rule.

FRENCH ORDER OF APPEARANCE

7 AM 6/15 — XX-23

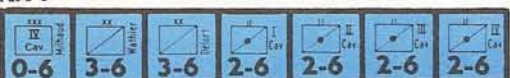**9 AM** — XX-23

11 AM — XX-13 to XX-16

1 PM — XX-15

XX-6

3 PM — XX-23

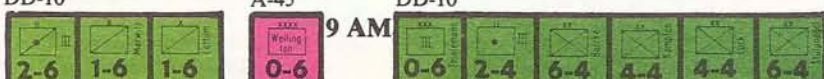XX-14 & XX-15 — XX-6

7 AM 16th — XX-14 & XX-15

XX-6

P-A-A ORDER OF APPEARANCE

AT START

Fontaine L'Eveque — Charleroi — Fleurus — Gosselies — Nivelles — Quatre Bras

9 AM — DD-10 — A-45 — U-48

11 AM — KK-6 — DD-10 — A-45 — DD-10 — **1 PM**

3 PM — DD-10 — DD-10 — **5 PM**

7 AM 16th — DD-10 — A-45 — **9 AM** — DD-10

A-45 — **1 PM** U-48

Rule 7. To reflect the time and care required to execute linear tactics effectively, add one to the movement cost of entering any square in enemy zone of control, *except* for horse artillery.

Rule 8. For "Elim" and "Exchange" combat results, affected players remove only *one* unit of their choice per result, ignoring the "matching points" rule. Others in "Elim" results retreat, but "Exchange" leaves surviving units in place to advance after combat if possible.

Rule 9. Whenever a unit retreats from combat, invert it and consider it "dispersed" for the next *half*-turn. Dispersed units may not attack, move at half speed and defend at half strength, both rounded down.

The use of any or all of these optional rules leads to a more faithful simulation of the way Napoleonic battles actually developed. For example, only two or three infantry divisions per side will now "fit" in a stand-up battle for the Quatre Bras heights (and that's all there were on the 16th) but the French Guard artillery could make a *big* difference, as it usually did. The old stacking rules made it common to find *twenty* or more divisions brawling over a battlefield a few squares wide, when in fact at Waterloo itself, something like that total number of commands fought in a continuous front stretching eight to ten squares from end to end, and still found themselves too close for combat. Uniform stacks of 15 factors also destroy the unique character and capabilities of the individual units so carefully recreated for us by Avalon Hill, but these optional rules bring out many new and fascinating aspects of this classic wargame.

☆

THE WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY

Containing thirty-six pages of the best of *THE GENERAL* articles on the game plus previously unpublished material as well, this guide is a must for every fan of the game. Several official rules changes update the game and erase its few minor flaws. A tribute to one of the hobby's eldest citizens that has never needed a major revision. A game which has grown old gracefully, maturing by getting better.

Almost all of the reprinted articles are from unavailable issues of *THE GENERAL*, many from volume 9 or earlier. Included is the first major variant, "Leyte Gulf", and the most in-depth article on the game to date "The MIDWAY Thesis" by two of the game's experts, Harold Totten and Donald Greenwood. "The Pacific Theatre Via MIDWAY", the other major variant that spawned the MIDWAY Variant Kit, has been expanded to include many more optional rules (some applicable to the MIDWAY game as well) and an additional scenario. "The Battle For Australia", a previously unpublished article adds the ultimate with a hypothetical monster scenario using the components of both the game and the variant kit. Other articles deal with strategy, analysis, variants, and other hypothetical situations. The best of three Series Replays that have appeared in *THE GENERAL* is also reprinted, useful in itself as a fine example of the subtle strategies involved when experienced players meet.

THE WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY sells for $4.00 plus 10% postage and handling charges, and is available from our mail order dept. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax.

STAFF BRIEFING

An Interview with Frank Davis

by Alan R. Moon

Alan's third victim is our first SPI refugee. This is no small feat as Frank habitually locks himself in his office—a small cubicle rapidly gaining a reputation as the Great Redoubt. When asked how he gained admission, Alan said something about knocking and making a noise like a simulation.

ARM: Frank, would you tell us a little bit about what you did before you began working for wargame companies?

FD: I became interested in wargaming before there was an industry, in the early 1950s. I began designing games with a friend of mine when I was only seven years old. In 1955, we finished a game called U.D.T. about underwater demolitions, sort of based on the Cockleshell Heroes. We sent it to Parker Brothers in 1956. They were very interested and sent us a contract, but our parents intervened because they didn't want us to get commercially involved at such a young age. So the negotiations were dropped at that point. I continued to design games though, and was surprised when Avalon Hill came out with the first wargame in 1958. After that, my work was influenced by what was going on commercially and I tried to cut down the size and complexity of the games I was working on. I continued designing games through my teens and college years, a lot of these similar to *TACTICS II*. After finishing school, I was back on Long Island, visiting a hobby store in Hempstead when I came across a copy of *S&T*. I think it was number 25. I was very impressed with it. *S&T* was interesting primarily because it matched a historical article with a game and examined the military history in depth. I made up my mind I wanted to work for them and began going to their Friday night playtest sessions in New York City. They were a small operation with about six people and after six months I applied for a job and got it. That was 1971.

ARM: Would you tell us a little about your professional years?

FD: My career there lasted from Sep 71 to Sep 77, during which I worked on eighteen games. A few of the titles were notable, such as *FREDERICK THE GREAT* and *WELLINGTON'S VICTORY*. Some of the other games were notable in a different way such as *WOLFPACK, OPERATION OLYMPIC* and *PUNIC WARS*.

ARM: Did you begin as a developer and then become a designer, or were you doing both right from the start?

FD: When I first began working there, I was not involved in designing or developing except as a playtester. For the first six months I was the lone person in the shipping department. Then, when a Customer Service department was setup, I took that over. I was also answering game questions and this was a tremendous learning experience for my later work as a designer and developer. I found that general rules were not acceptable and far less complete than they needed to be for people to understand them. I began developing in 1972, my first game being *OPERATION OLYMPIC*. This and my second game, *WOLFPACK* were both solitaire games. I put a lot of time in on the rules and it was at this point they began to concentrate on completeness of rules, a subject that has remained a controversial topic to the present time.

ARM: Do you think your time in New York has helped you in your work for AH?

FD: Absolutely. A person who works for any major company benefits from being in a designing community. The people are serious about their work and the interchange of ideas and design approaches is the only way to learn the craft of game design.

Frank Davis
Avalon Hill Swallows   Pitcher
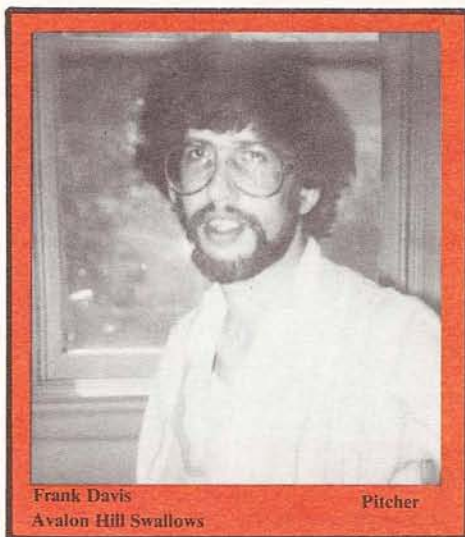
Frank Davis
Born: 1947, Huntington, NY
Started Wargaming: 1955
PBM Experience: None
First Wargame: U.D.T. (non published design of my own)
Favorite Wargame: None
Favorite Period: 12th, 17th, and 18th centuries
Favorite Non-Wargame: Charades
Outside Interests: art, literature, music, movies
Employed at AH: 1977
AH Designs: None
AH Developments: War and Peace, Rising Sun (unpublished)
Other Published Designs: WWI, Frederick the Great
Wellington's Victory, Red Sun Rising (all SPI)
Other Published Developments: Punic Wars, Russian Civil War,
Napoleon At War, North Africa Quad, Wolfpack, Sixth Fleet,
Operation Olympic, Upscope! (all SPI)
Awards: None

ARM: What is your favorite historical period?

FD: My favorite period is the era from Marlborough to Napoleon.

ARM: Is this your favorite period in games?

FD: No. My favorite period in games changes very often. I remain interested in the warfare of these periods, but am also interested in other periods such as the Elizabethan or Medieval periods.

ARM: What are the best games on the Napoleonic period?

FD: There aren't a lot of good games on the Napoleonic period, or the eighteenth century in general. There are a few games whose initial efforts in the area are worth remembering, but the same is true for wargames in general; there have been a great number of wargames but only a few stand out. The only two games I would pick are Richard Berg's *TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD* and my own game *WELLINGTON'S VICTORY*.

ARM: How about *WAR AND PEACE*?

FD: I recommend *WAR AND PEACE* because it is the only presentation of the entire Napoleonic period from 1805-1815. The game has good play balance in all the scenarios and is extremely en-joyable to play. It is not as much a simulation as *WELLINGTON'S VICTORY*, but I strongly recommend it to people who are beginning to be interested in the period.

ARM: How did you wind up working on *WAR AND PEACE*?

FD: Mark McLaughlin, the designer, brought the game in to Don Greenwood in February 79. Don thought it was a very professional job and gave it to me for a week during which I playtested it with Mark. I decided AH should do the game because it covered a broad subject that had never been covered before. In addition, the game had an all inclusive feel to it, and the rules seemed quite complete.

ARM: Do you feel pleased with the way the game turned out?

FD: I am very satisfied. To me the game is one of the most attractive and appealing games that AH has put out. I have certain reservations about some of the mechanics in the game, but the critics have not mentioned these so far, so I don't think it would be worthwhile to go into these. I would rather have people decide for themselves.

ARM: Where is the focus in *WAR & PEACE*?

FD: I did not design *WAR AND PEACE*, it was designed by Mark McLaughlin. It is, therefore, a different sort of game than I would have designed on the same subject. I think Mark's focus in *WAR AND PEACE* is on simplicity. It is an elegant design that takes into account leadership, attrition, morale, terrain, supply, and sieges; all the important factors of Napoleonics. It was unnecessary to change it. In particular, the treatment of leadership and morale ably demonstrates the absolute importance of those two factors.

ARM: Will there be a second edition rulebook and/or other changes in the game in the near future?

FD: Very definitely. *WAR AND PEACE* is in an unusual situation. Nine out of the ten scenarios are almost problem free. I have received almost no questions on any of them. The campaign game is another story. The campaign game was a mammoth undertaking, especially in playing time. We have continued to play it at AH since the game's publication and I've discovered some ambiguities in the rules. A lot of the improvements were published in *THE GENERAL*, Vol. 17, No. 1. I will continue to collect further comments about the game and am hoping to revise the rulebook in the winter of '80.

ARM: You've done a lot of both designing and developing. Which do you prefer?

FD: Basically I have no preference. I try to do the best job possible in either capacity. There is a lot of overlap in both roles, and they are now highly integrated. For instance, I have done the development on all my own designs. It is a continuous process, not two separate jobs, and the most important part of a design is playtesting which is usually considered development. However, nothing can be proved or made clear about the game without the designer participating in the playtest.

ARM: You and I have a lot of similar outside interests like poetry and art, but when it comes to games we differ drastically. I have been quite shocked at some of your statements about games, in particular in several of our discussions when you've

said you do not play games for fun. Would you explain this and tell how this relates to your design philosophy?

FD: Anyone who is doing a job professionally has a different responsibility and a concern that is completely different from that of someone who is playing a game or doing any sort of work strictly for their own benefit. When I say I don't play games for fun, what I mean is that I try to transcend my own desire for enjoyment and concentrate on pleasing the mass audience, an audience made up of people with different tastes who want things other than what I want in the game. My primary concern is to find problems in the game and to polish it into a final product, making sure the rules are understandable and the scenarios are balanced. I can't lose myself in winning or losing during the play of a game. I tend to take a very objective stance and usually I'm the chief critic of the game; my playtesters having far less objections than I.

ARM: It is hard for me to separate my job from my hobby and being an AH staff member has basically just involved me in the hobby more than before; I haven't stopped playing games. Do you still play games for fun on your own time?

FD: Because I began as a designer and not a player, I have never played games for fun or competition. I am interested in playing games as a form of artistic expression. I'm more interested in sharpening my skills as a designer than as a player.

ARM: So, is designing games fun for you and is designing your hobby as well as your job?

FD: There's no simple answer to that. I have a continuing interest in the hobby particularly in what ideas are being put out, and I try to keep up with all the literature and review as many new designs as possible. But I've never spent much time playing games for the competitive challenge or camaraderie involved. I have an avid interest in reading and writing, both fiction and poetry. When I read, I cannot read strictly to escape into fantasy or something like that. I read to learn more about the craft of writing and that is exactly the same reason I play games.

ARM: Do you believe designers develop a personal design style, and if so, what is yours?

FD: Absolutely. Any designer who has been working for awhile has a viewpoint and a manner of expression that is his alone. In my case, I think my years as a developer served as a training ground to form my design philosophy. My personal style is sifting through a historical topic to pinpoint the primary concerns of the commanders participating in the event. I use a reductive approach, focusing in on the one, two, or three most central issues. For instance, in North Africa the focus might be supply, and in Napoleonics it might be leadership or forced marching. My object is to whittle down the subject to get to the absolute core of what was important in that period of history and how the armies and the combat actually achieved the ends they did.

ARM: Do you want people who play your games to learn something from them?

FD: Yes. A person who buys a Napoleonic game should get an enhanced understanding about what was unique about that period. A person who buys a game on the desert war in North Africa should come away with some increased understanding of how that campaign differed from the campaign in France in 1940. The emphasis in the game should be on what is unique about the historical period.

ARM: So, is it fair to say that you are more interested in realism than playability?

FD: The subject of realism versus playability has been around for at least ten years. The way I feel about it now is that realism versus playability is a misnomer. The real issue is simplicity versus complexity, neither of which ensures realism or playability. The designer who stresses simplicity has no guarantee the game will turn out playable, unless he pays attention to making the rules complete and intelligible. And the designer who attempts to design a complex game will not produce a more realistic game unless he first ascertains what were the crucial aspects of the period. Many times complexity added to the game detracts from it. Many games used to be designed without supply rules. Then everyone got tired of that and started adding supply rules. But were the supply rules accurate? Accuracy does not mean complexity. Merely adding supply rules to a game did not make it more accurate. The same thing is true with command control rules and the whole question of terrain. I don't think any designer can afford to ignore playability and pursue realism. If a game is unplayable, there is no way to determine if the game is historically accurate. Playability can be used to test the interpretation of history in a game; it is where the sense of realism comes from. If a game is unplayable, it is guaranteed to be unrealistic too.

ARM: Are there game designers you admire and feel influenced by?

FD: The designer I consider the most original is John Prados. I think that John always has a fresh approach to subjects that are often beyond the reach of other designers. In particular, both *THIRD REICH* and *PEARL HARBOR* seem ingenious in their conception. The other designer I admire is Jim Dunnigan. He is an extremely innovative and imaginative designer who has a great range of experience and yet is always able to come up with a new idea. I think he's probably the best designer in the industry but he attempts to do too much. Unfortunately, although the overall number of designs he puts out is tremendous, many are duds. If he was able to work on fewer games, he would have a much higher batting average; certainly the best in the hobby.

ARM: Have these two influenced your work?

FD: Not directly. The one thing I learned from both of them is to stay away from easy answers and to continually look for new and better ways to simulate events. I don't think there is much similarity between games by the three of us. Any good designer rejects more ideas than he accepts, and this is what I learned from John and Jim. I don't feel influenced by other designers mainly because ideas I see in games are many times ideas I have considered and rejected. I do feel that Jim and John don't overload their games with chrome and we all have the reductive, focusing approach.

ARM: It has been somewhat amazing to me that there have been so many developments in the hobby in the last few years. The explosion of fantasy/roleplaying games for instance. What developments in the hobby interest you, if any?

FD: I am very interested in the tremendous growth of science fiction and fantasy. Fantasy games are very subjective, but are successful because they are very imaginative. I think the audience we are catering to is no longer adults, as the younger age group is not interested in historical perspectives. There is nothing we can do about it. It has to do with the changing generation and their attitudes towards history. Fantasy games appeal to people on an emotional level and it is hard to make any kind of intelligent criticism or comparative analysis about them, in that there is no hard data underlying the games. It will be hard for people to judge the design efforts in these games. AH began by publishing games that were more serious than games by companies like Parker Brothers. They built a reputation as a publisher of adult games. The advent of wargames gave an aura of seriousness and maturity to the industry. Now, after twenty years, we are returning to games that have no historical basis, in the pursuit of profit. I think the game industry is losing its interest in the adult segment of the public.

ARM: Do you think the hobby is running out of game topics?

FD: The days of the blockbuster titles are over. There have been too many games produced too quickly. The companies just can't keep up the same quality they did when the pace was slower. Fantasy and science fiction will continue to produce original ideas, but wargames will be more involved in subtle insights into topics already covered.

ARM: What are you working on now?

FD: At present, I am working on *THE GUNS OF AUGUST,* a World War I game.

ARM: What level is it on?

FD: It is a strategic game on the corps level that encompasses the whole First World War in Europe.

ARM: How much work has been done by the designer and how much is left for you to do on the game?

FD: The designer, Rob Beyma, is an old AH veteran and a well known classic player. His intention was to create a classic AH game similar to *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.* The design-development tasks are similar to *WAR AND PEACE* in that Rob has done a thorough job, and the main problem is with the combat system and the CRT. Other than that, my work on the game consists of developing short scenarios for both the eastern and western fronts. The basic game system will remain mostly untouched.

ARM: Can you tell us a little about the components?

FD: It will have a standard sized AH mapboard and the total number of combat counters will be between three and four hundred. There will be a number of additional marker counters used for supply and entrenchment.

ARM: Where is the focus of the game?

FD: Typical of other AH classics, the focus will be on combat. That's the reason I said my work will deal with the combat system and the CRT. People familiar with World War I will know that it is an attrition situation and both players will be fighting an attrition war. Since the game will revolve around the land game, the naval and air aspects of the war will be handled very abstractly with minor rules; there will be no naval or air counters.

ARM: I have always felt, and I'm sure I'm not alone, that World War I makes for a very dull game because of the stagnant trench warfare situation. How will *GUNS OF AUGUST* avoid this?

FD: A lot of people do view the war that way and that is unfortunate. However, *GUNS OF AUGUST* has the right scale for a World War I simulation and will make a very mobile and interesting game. The game deals with the whole war with corps size units and one month turns. The game will be similar to *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* on the eastern front, and this will involve two thirds of the map. The western front, historically, will be quite static because the front is short and the unit density is high. Players who are interested in the balance between the two fronts will find it an interesting situation. Most of their attention will be directed towards the eastern front while the western front remains relatively dormant. Most of their efforts in the game will center on how many units can be stripped off the western front and sent to the eastern front. It will be absolutely vital to fight an attrition war on the western front to engage the enemy and help produce victory, but the war will be won on the eastern front. The game will have a lot of tension and unique player decisions. ★

DESIGN ANALYSIS

PzKw VIa

AB S 3.2" 12
AB F 4.0" 12
GPres 14

15 A 12

GUN 88mm/L56 Eff Rng 3000m
AMMO 92 PEN 4.9" 2 MG 34

8 Wt 60.5t HPWt 11.6

CRESCENDO OF DOOM
A GAME SYSTEM IN EVOLUTION

By Don Greenwood

Those who follow the evolution of the *SQUAD LEADER* game system closely have, no doubt, wondered why what was once touted as being an easy to do extension of the original game is taking so long. *COI* took a year. *COD* took a year and a half. Carrying this chain of events a bit further can we expect *G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY* to take two years?

The answer is an unqualified "maybe". To say that I underestimated the work and time involved in the production of the *SL* gamettes has to rank as one of the biggest understatements of all time. Granted, the scope of the gamettes grew with the continuing popularity of the game and the projects soon left the realm of new board and a handful of new counters to major undertakings involving much more research and testing than was required with the initial game itself. Although the basic system was already done, every change or new piece of equipment had to be grafted into that system in such a way that wouldn't foul up what work had already been done. With a set of rules as voluminous as the *SL* system has become, that is a major undertaking. Originally, if we wanted to make a change to, say, the smoke rules we just tacked it onto section 24. Now any such change not only must jive with section 24, we must also cross check what happens to things like artillery, AFVs, weather (all kinds), different terrain types, aircraft, nationalities, mortars, etc., etc., ad nauseum. In short, the more the system attempts to include, the more problems that can arise and these problems often have a multiplicative (as opposed to simple additive) effect. Not being very fond of answering "nutmail" inquiries from confused gamers, I've become a firm believer in letting the development process take its course with as complete a playtest period as possible. It's far simpler for me (and ultimately for the consumer) to answer queries from a few dozen "blind" by-mail playtesters, than from 30,000 confused gamers. This attitude paid immediate benefits in the release of *COD* which, up to this point at least, has generated approximately 10% of the errata and questions of it's predecessor. As a consequence, I'll be waiting even longer this time around for the feedback from *COD* to filter down before setting my team of trusty playtesters to work on *G.I.*

Following is a complete listing of the errata compiled for *COD* to date. I suggest you note the changes as neatly as possible in the appropriate margins of your rulebook, unless you care to wait for the inevitable 2nd edition rules following the release of *G.I.* (. . . protracted sigh).

THE COUNTERS

Considering the immense amount of detail on the vehicular counters and the sheer number of them, *COD* came through the production gristmill in pretty good shape, but was not able to completely avoid the printer's gremlin. The French counters will be a little lighter and the neutrals a little darker in the second edition (now available) counters.

These changes make them easier to read and increase the differentiation between the French and the incorrectly printed *COI* German vehicle counters. If you still have a set of very dark blue *COI* German vehicle counters you should probably order the lighter blue set (with white wreck backs) from our parts dept. I regret to report that AH will not replace these counters free of charge.

As far as actual counter data goes the changes can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The A22X should have a main armament breakdown number of X11+. The British 203*mm artillery piece should not have a breakdown number and the 152*mm pieces should be overscored to indicate lack of AP ammunition. The German SPW 251/16 should have a two factor AA MG. All these changes have already been incorporated in the second printing.

THE RULEBOOK

104.233 Add: "against infantry" to end of sentence.

104.51 Add: "in any scenario fought on Finnish soil" between "Morale," and "they".

109.3 Delete: "is adjacent to the target hex"; substitute: "needs only a final To Hit number of 7 or more,".

109.6 Add: "Partisans receive a 0 DRM for an air burst in woods."

116.2 Delete the last sentence. Substitute: "A side may never create more than four scouts in a scenario."

123.42 Add: "Unlike most vehicles, motorcycles must be dismounted into the same hex."

126.6 Delete: "(not pond)".

126.62 Add: "Ponds have no reverse slope effect."

129.43 Add: "turret" between "malfunctioned" & "weapon".

131.3 Delete: "is greater than the white die". Substitute: "on the To Hit roll is a '1',".

Add: "131.7 A shocked AFV loses any acquisition (69) benefits it may have previously had."

Page 101 the "14" MP of the A15 Crusader III should be printed in red.

Page 103 Insert behind "Sappers" in the parentheses: "First line or Elite". Add: "Glider . . . . 12".

Page 104 Change answer to "25.4" to: "No (25.5)".

Page 105 Add to answer "53.8 & 53.9" between "each" & "per": "(the first one encountered)".

Page 106 Change answer to "112.41 & 112.2" to: "yes".

Page 106 Change answer to "112.42" to: "Only the +1 DRM for infantry on foot beneath an AFV.

Page 108 Add to list of references for "TI": "66.3, 120.1, 136.83".

THE SCENARIOS

There is no errata for the scenarios but those who value play balance in their games might enjoy a brief synopsis on how each of the scenarios evolved

during playtest. Play balance in *SL* scenarios is a tricky thing; people seldom agree on which side is favored. Such things always sway back and forth depending on styles of play, but *SL* scenarios seem to be far more difficult to pin down than other games. A certain amount of that is attributable to the luck factor. Few games have as many dice rolls with as wide a variety of results as *SL,* and a "snakeeyes" here or a "boxcars" there can really throw a wrench in the works of even the most balanced scenario if it occurs at a critical time. There is also the matter of the rules being utilized. No game that I know has as rich a multitude of "optional rules" to choose from as *SL.* Although my approach is to play with all but a few prior agreed upon advanced rules, there is no limit to the assortment of rules selections that various groups agree to play by. For example, a group which uses the Double Time rules will have far different results than a group which doesn't. These problems plagued us as far back as the very first *SL* scenario. The overwhelming opinion of that first playtest group was that the Germans were favored in THE GUARDS COUNTERATTACK. As a result, I gave the Russians that lone squad in N2 to help balance things. Judging from public opinion since then, that squad must have been full of Hero of the Soviet Union medal holders because there is now a strong consensus that the Russians are heavily favored. The scenario still remains enjoyable because the vagaries of the dice rolls make a German victory quite possible, and it is a challenge to whip a numerically superior foe—a strong factor in what I attribute to be the relative appeal of the Russo—German scenarios. However, I'm afraid we haven't gotten much better at predicting play balance in *SL* scenarios in the three years since then. As part of the testing procedure for the Quick Play scenarios found in this issue, we sent them out to two different "blind" groups for one final test. Each group was asked to pick the favored side after repeated playings. When the results were in the groups had disagreed on four of the five scenarios! That seems to be the ultimate guarantee of play balance in these things.

BATTLE FOR THE WARTA LINE was a pretty straight forward scenario and of interest primarily in regards to what effect PzKwIBs would have on unsupported infantry. The scenario was generally regarded as acceptable from a play balance viewpoint although it was felt that the Poles were getting the worst of it. Generally speaking, I like to see the "burden" of attack represented as such in a game so I over compensated somewhat by deducting a German squad and giving the Poles a field phone and a limited amount of concealment.

THE BORDERS ARE BURNING presented us with our worst play balance problem as it was generally agreed that the Finns were dishing out punishment in pretty generous, proportions. The combination of quality units, high ground, weather, and stringent victory conditions were just too much for the Russian armor and numerical advantages to overcome. The best solution here was deemed to be a lessening of the victory criteria by allowing the Russians to leave the board from either west edge road. Initially, we had required Russian exit off the board 2 edge and this proved to be too much of a funneling factor on the Russian advance given the twin pressures of bad weather and not enough time. The latter problem was lessened by allowing the Russians to set up five hexes closer to the Finns and extending the game length by two turns.

SILENT DEATH was one of those love/hate affairs where half the testers thought the scenario completely unenjoyable and the other half thought it was the best of the lot. It certainly was different

and a personal favorite of mine so it stayed, albeit with many changes. Scenario 23 is the ultimate solitaire scenario because the initiative lies almost entirely with the Finn. The Russian can do little more than watch the action unfold and try to scrap together the rudiments of a defense which will enable him to "win" by virtue of the Finn's extremely difficult victory conditions while he is getting the hell kicked out of his force. If ever there was a pyrrhic victory in wargames, this is it. Because the Finn gets the lion's share of the enjoyment in this scenario, all the changes were directed towards making his lot harder, while offering a potential Russian player some solace for seeing his units mown down in terms of "winning" the game. This took the form of increasing the Finn's required number of kills by one, improving the Russian's first turn sighting opportunities for his leaders and sentries, and prohibiting the sissi from taking prisoners. These effects were softened somewhat by giving the Finns two more molotov cocktails to fire buildings, and allowing the pulkkas to cart off broken units. The latter move was a great improvement as they were previously limited to a conveyance role for the MMG. Not only did this give them a valuable function to perform in play of the scenario, it closely mirrored their role in the campaign as transportation for the wounded and equipment.

ACTION AT BALBERKAMP was the consensus favorite scenario from the outset, although it was generally agreed that the Allies were getting the worst of it. I compensated for this with a variety of minor changes to the victory conditions, force pools, and special rules. First, the victory conditions were changed so that they couldn't be attained until the end of the game or the complete elimination of the Allied forces. This prevented cheap German victories should they batter Group Ruge sufficiently before the arrival of reinforcements in the form of the Leicesters. Secondly, the Leicesters were given what amounted to a '1' DRM advantage in arriving on the board as it was found that if the German flanking company reached the heights on board 2 before the British, the latter would be in real trouble. Lastly, the Germans lost a 8-0 leader while the Norwegians gained three 2nd line squads and the British traded in their two MMGs for one HMG. The scenario was shortened by one turn to increase the time pressures on the German player. This scenario is also excellent for three player play by dividing the Allies into a British and Norwegian commander. The resulting communications problems that occur are both realistic and highly interesting in their simple, yet important, effects on the Allied chances.

RESISTANCE AT CHABREHEZ gave us very little trouble as one might expect from such a simple scenario. The object of the scenario was to illustrate the use and worth of motorcycles in a combat environment and in this it succeeds admirably. The "feel" of a highly mobile recce unit in a fluid front with only scattered pockets of resistance is captured nicely. This high risk/high yield type of military operation is a special situation one wouldn't find in a stalemated front or "hot" battle, and hopefully the players have gained an appreciation of the fact that motorcyclists are not meant to be shock troops. The confrontation between a highly mobile but vulnerable force and a hidden, lightly armed enemy is classic and offers an entirely new type of battlefield situation to *SL* enthusiasts. Our testers again agreed not to agree, but the consensus of opinion seemed to be that the Germans were winning more often than not. As a consequence we added the three 2nd line Belgian squads while detracting from their cohesiveness as a unit by deleting an 8-0 leader. The Belgian force was thus transformed from a reasonably well led

compact force to an essentially less efficient larger force with more firepower and less staying power.

ASSAULT ON A QUEEN is the only hypothetical scenario in the *SL* system although it is based on a scheduled German raid which never came about. The extremely well led, handpicked German force was found to be a mite too effective for the Dutch, although a great deal depended on the timely arrival and composition of the Dutch reinforcements. Our play balance efforts were thus dedicated primarily to beefing up the Dutch forces and increasing the likelihood of their early arrival. The Royal Dutch Grenadiers were given additional concealment and an extra squad while the 6th Jager Regiment was upgraded to 1st line infantry.

THE DINANT BRIDGEHEAD was one of the second generation scenarios in *COD* and as such received only one round of blind testing as opposed to the two rounds which most of the John Hill designed initial scenarios received. The river crossing assault was also a subject which had never been broached in the *SL* system before and therefore used a large assortment of brand new rules. As a consequence, the changes it underwent were considerably more than any of the others. When I designed this scenario I was admittedly impressed with the rigors of an opposed river crossing. Too much so it seems because I gave the Germans so much firepower they blasted anything that moved and literally walked across the river unopposed. So we gave the French some concealment, practically halved the German MG support and reduced the size of the recon unit already across the river by one squad and a couple LMGs. The piece densities here are still a mite high for my tastes, but this is a special situation requiring a special reading of the appropriate sections of the rules and isn't intended for light fare in any case. If one uses the optional Special Rules 27.8 & 27.9 in which French armor can appear, any attempt at play balance has been lost to the whims of the dice anyway and the game will become more of an adventure than a test of skill.

COUNTERSTROKE AT STONNE is really the only pitched battle relying heavily on armor in the *COD* package. As such, it was a favorite among the armor buffs. The piece density was still too high for my tastes and most of the changes made were more along the lines of playability than play balance. This resulted primarily in substituting concealment counters for the German infantry's HIP (Hidden Initial Placement) capability and increasing their squads by two as a result. No one ever really beefed too much about the play balance, but I think that was because the scenario was too taxing for them to play it more than a few times.

IN ROMMEL'S WAKE uses a design element which I really appreciate in a game: guesswork. The German is working under rigid time pressures with variable victory conditions depending on the forces which are opposing him, but because the French use HIP he doesn't know for sure just what is opposing him. As play progresses he'll uncover clues which should allow him to figure out what he is up against but the longer this takes, the less time he has to accomplish his task. Yet, if the opposing force is larger than he has reckoned on, time is not the crucial concern—preventing his own force from being blown away in a too hasty advance is. Scenario 29 was swiftly declared balanced in an unflattering way; the Germans usually won when the French drew chits 1 or 2, and the French won or held their own with forces 3 or 4. Therefore, our changes were aimed at making chits 1 and 2 a bit more palatable for the French. This was done by giving each force an additional squad and increasing the time pressure on the German by shortening the game length by one turn.

AD HOC AT BEAURAINS was probably the most controversial of the *COD* scenarios. Not only was opinion equally divided on which side was favored, but many hated this one with a passion while others declared it the best of the lot. The plodding, yet seemingly impregnable, Matildas certainly offered a new type of situation. As opinion on the balance of this scenario was so divided from the outset, changes were limited, for the most part, to increasing the types of action which could occur as opposed to helping one side over the other. To this end the Gen. Martel counter was added at the cost of a Matilda, and the German infantry was increased in expectation of some Close Combat action against the unescorted British tanks.

CHATEAU DE QUESNOY was another one of those scenarios for those who persist in their masochistic attraction for large piece densities. Those who delight in pitched battles loved this one, although even they admitted that the French HIP made things a bit tough to keep track of. The German players found it especially so. This was the first case in my memory where the German enjoyed both armor and infantry superiority in a scenario—but he couldn't win! Doing away with the French infantry's HIP helped solve both the play balance and probability problems, but it wasn't enough. The French were stripped of an 8-1 and 9-1 leader and given a pair of additional 4-5-7s so that their ratio of leadership to squads was more in keeping with their national characteristics—elite unit or not. The Germans, for their part, were satisfied with the addition of the sapper squads to help them wade through the prepared positions of the French.

REHEARSAL FOR CRETE paid homage to the tradition of concluding each game with a "monster" scenario. Scenarios which use opposed paratroop drops are usually more for "fun" than any attempt at realism or balanced competition, and this one is no exception. The main concern here was to avoid the possibility of sure-fire strategies that could circumvent the purpose of the scenario—to take the bridge intact. Under the original victory conditions, the German could purposely drop in a secluded section of the board, thus avoiding the bridge and its heavy defenses altogether, and just clean up on the isolated resistance in that area and still win. The "automatic win" tag on holding the bridge intact at the end of the game solved that problem. Now, the Germans must make taking the bridge their first priority and the British must do everything possible to defend it. If destruction of the bridge is achieved, both sides can get down to the mundane business of counting casualties to determine a winner. The only real adjusting of forces with this scenario took place in deciding the mechanics for entry of the British armor. Initially, the number of arriving tanks was tied to the amount of German airpower it was tying up off the board. The less tanks which arrived the less available airpower the German had at his disposal. Eventually, it was decided to let the vagaries of the dice have their way and allow for a wider selection of events. Play balance here is an illusion—this scenario is to be experienced—not to be played competitively.

☆

THIRD EDITION COI

The *CROSS OF IRON* rulebook is now in its third edition. The changes therein are restricted to those amendments listed in the *CRESCENDO OF DOOM* Rules Amendments section. Purists who would find it convenient to have a *COI* rulebook with these changes actually printed in the appropriate rule sections may find it worth the $2.00 purchase price plus the customary 10% postage charge.

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

Allies: Ron Wright
Japan: Chris Roehl
Commentary: Grady Hendrix
& Don Greenwood

This game was played over three FTF sessions in Jan-Feb-'80, in San Antonio. The players agreed to employ Optional Rule 25 described in GENERAL, Vol. 14, No. 4:

25. Other Pearl Harbor Rules

25.1 The Japanese may assign no more than ten ships to their Pearl Harbor surprise attack, due to fuel limitations. This is the number of ships involved in the actual raid.

25.2 The first round of combat after the air raid is automatically a "day action"; if the Japanese elect to stay and fight, they must select their targets immediately, *before* the Allied player rolls for his "location uncertain" groups.

Both contend this rule helps to overcome a Japanese edge in play balance. Grady concurs and further advocates written deployment of the I-Boat during the Japanese placement of patrols for disclosure after placement of Allied raiders. Your editor prefers the nine turn game but without the additional POC's for Japan.

Between them our three participants have nearly twenty years gaming experience. Grady was the WARCON, '80, VITP tournament winner. All have experience with VITP since its initial release. And because your editor is a confirmed VITP addict, he couldn't resist putting in his two cents worth where his opinions varied from those of Mr. Hendrix. Buttinsky's remarks are set off in brackets following those of the real neutral commentator.

TURN I

JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: Ron is an experienced *VITP* player who specializes in Allied play. He is extremely perceptive of available options, calculates the odds, and acts according to careful analysis, not whim. He is not a gambler. He will take his time in closing with me. He knows time is *his* ally and will use all of it. I must be aggressive and unorthodox—but not reckless. This is my usual opening. It is intended to put the most air shots on the targets in the opening raids. No CV's are sent to Central Pacific as the one US CV which percentages say will be there, should withdraw after one round. The submarine goes to Hawaii in anticipation of finding a CV target. The fast BB's and CA's are withheld to patrol areas the US cannot or should not send his few CA's. These high speed ships are conserved for future turns. His move was as expected.

TURN 1

ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: Chris Roehl is the best "Japanese" player I know. We have played many games of *VITP* and I suppose our win/loss ratio is about 50-50. If the dice average out and neither of us makes a major blunder this game should go to the final turn with the winner holding a slim margin in victory points. We once played *VITP* for over six hours and the result was a draw! Not much to do initially but there are a few decisions to make. I move the two CA's based in Australia to "submarine proof" the Coral Sea and Mandates. I move the three CA's based in the Indonesia area to safer waters. And now—hope for bad dice from the Japanese player at Pearl Harbor and Indonesia.

TURN 1

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER MOVE-MENT: *Japan opens with a good distribution of force. Note the Tone class of CA's are placed in areas of relative safety. These jackrabbits are very valuable on turns two and three and shouldn't be lost on turn one. I do not agree with Chris on Indonesia. I would place the CA's and the Hosho in the Central Pacific. If an American CV shows up, (50/50 chance), the Hosho will get in a lick with a day roll. Why do I feel this is a good gambit? 1. The Hosho is expendable. 2. If day is rolled, the USN might hit a CA because the Hosho can't pursue. 3. The loss of a CV rally hurts the USN. 4. The Hosho really has no other worthwhile use on turn one. The extra four CA's will assist the Imperial Fleet in obliterating the USN on a night roll. The four land-based air in Indonesia are more than enough to shoot down the 5th AF and get at least one BB. In the vast majority of games I've seen, the British never get to use their surface fleet anyway, so why sweat over them? The other area in which I question Chris is the use of his marine to take Dutch Harbor. This is a very difficult decision for the IJN; one that Chris, Ron, and I have argued since 1977. Chris already invades Dutch Harbor. I prefer Midway. Admittedly both choices have advantages. The drawback to Midway is the possibility of losing the marine to an airstrike by an American CV. But the immediate fall of Midway is certainly more important than Dutch Harbor. On turn two, the Central Pacific cannot be defended by American land-based air, plus Dutch Harbor can be invaded by Sasebo. Another advantage is the very real fact that Japan could lose the Central Pacific on turn two, say in exchange for Hawaii, and the victorious USN will have nowhere to go but outside the perimeter! This strategy virtually forces the USN to place land-based air or CV's in the Aleutians on turn two. If they don't, and Japan takes Hawaii, the entire northern portion of the board is cut off! With the USN at least in part committed up north, Japan should be able to grab Hawaii and hold the South and Central Pacific. Basically Midway is a high risk, high yield investment, while Dutch Harbor is a no risk, lower yield move.*

Just a word on the USN as their options are extremely limited. Make sure the Coral Sea and US Mandates are patrolled by two CA's each, as Ron did, to prevent the I-Boat from costing you control points. If possible, send a CV to Australia as a threat to Indonesia on turn two. This will force Japan to place three land-based air units there on turn two, or risk certain disaster.

[Although not well practiced with this particular set of play balance rules, I still find fault with a few of these comments. I agree that the cruisers don't belong in Indonesia and whether the Hosho should be there or in the Central Pacific is a moot point, but the Japanese battleships do belong in Indonesia. While Grady is correct in limiting the value of the British warships—especially if he feels, as many do, that the full offensive weight of the IJN should be focused on the Americans—he is foolish to let a trapped enemy off the hook. Rather than

risk a cruiser in a night action, he should have at least four of the heavy battleships standing by to dispatch the British survivors. On the other side of the board, having agreed to the ten ship raid limit, there is no need for the Japanese to further handicap themselves. The two possible screening vessels should be included, even though he has no intention to chance a third strike. In those rare instances when the first two strikes bottom everything in Pearl he may have cause to regret the absence of a few screening vessels which might give him the gumption to risk a third and fourth strike. Two more cruisers in the Central Pacific is just senseless overkill.]
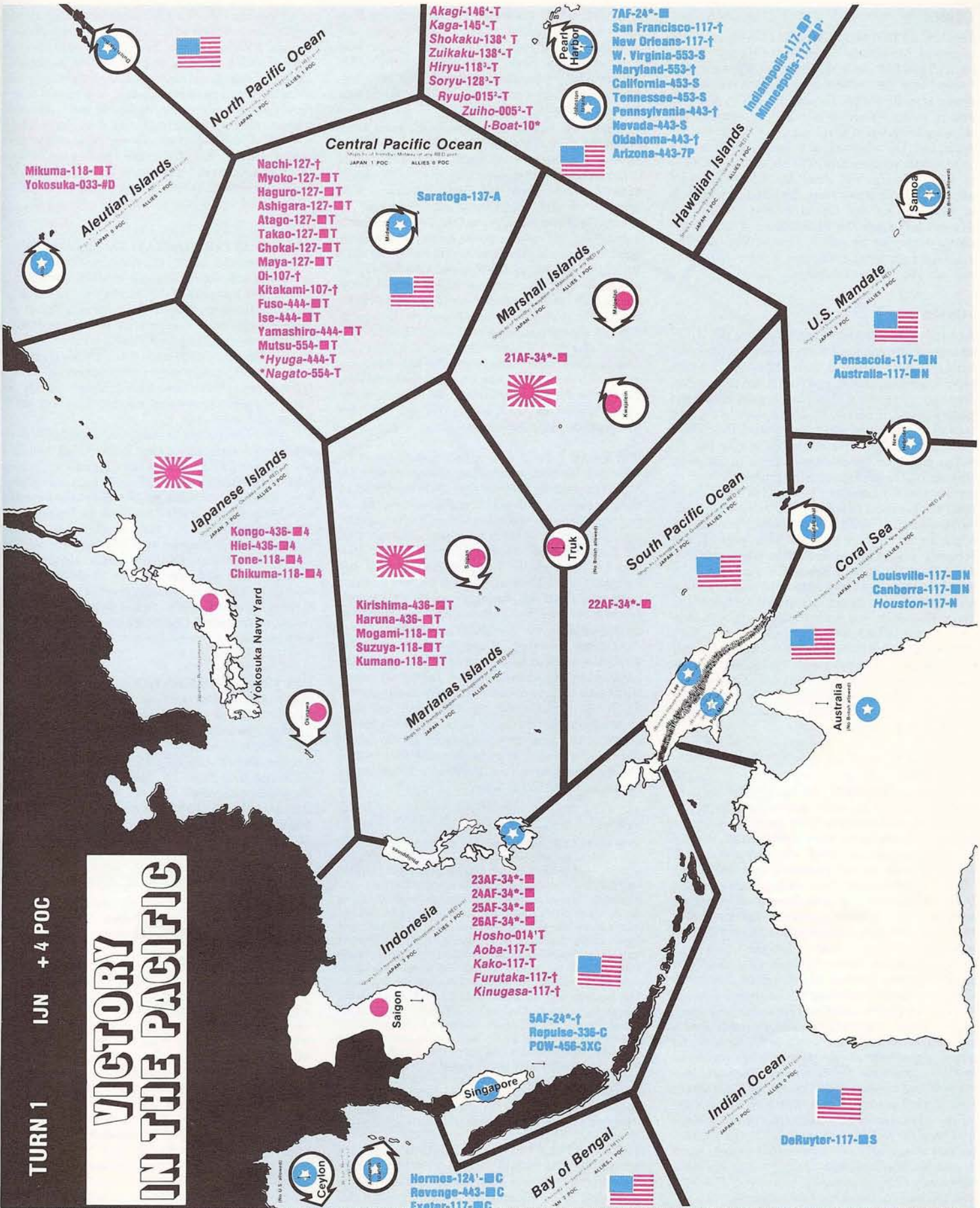
TURN 1

THE BATTLES: The Pearl Harbor raid focused on destruction of ships. The 7th AF was ignored. The CA's are prime targets and first to go. The BB's seem invincible as *every* shot missed! Fourteen dice and not one '5' or '6'! The second raid fares better but four BB's are left unscathed! Considering the ramifications for the IJN CV's under the 10 ship rule, discretion is the better part and the IJN withdraws. IJN dice in Indonesia are even worse and the 5th AF is barely destroyed and the *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* left afloat. The British get a night action and sink two CA's without loss or damage to themselves and withdraw to Ceylon. Finally, in the Central Pacific the *Saratoga* faces half the Japanese navy alone. The odds are with her to get a day action and she does, then pouncing on a sure kill, down goes the *Kitakami*. Obviously it's a good idea to withdraw. The Japanese pursues with CA's seeking the night action he should get about 25% of the time counting day/night. However the *Saratoga* does not oblige and sinks two more cruisers. After seeing his best chance of a night action (rolled a '6') dashed by *Sara's* '8', the IJN loses interest, (hope), and breaks off. The I-Boat scores a hit on *Enterprise* but only inflicts two damage points and it too gets away.

JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT: The results of my raids were the worst I've ever had! Why *this* game? My attempt to salvage it in Central Pacific backfired and showed me how the dice are falling today. I figured I had a one in four chance of at least a day/night action and pursued only to lose more cruisers. His getting day despite my roll of a '6' dropped my morale to zero. Losing five cruisers on turn one is disastrous! I already forgot my own game plan—I was reckless in attempting to salvage a bad raid. I must calm down. He wins turn one unquestionably. IJN gains 4 points. Total 4.

ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT: To say the least, I came out of this turn in good shape. It was one of the worst first turns I have ever seen from Chris. Unfortunately, the nemesis of the American player struck and his submarine damaged the *Enterprise*.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COM-BAT: *Chris has obviously either: 1. Not gone to church in six months, 2. Used all his luck against me, or 3. Improperly shaved the dice. The first turn can be called a disaster for Chris and left at that. Chris correctly points out the value of nailing the CA's in Pearl and ignoring the air unit.*

North Pacific Ocean

Central Pacific Ocean
Ships by all friendly Midway or any RED port
JAPAN 1 POC   ALLIES 0 POC

Akagi-146[4]-T
Kaga-145[4]-T
Shokaku-138[4] T
Zuikaku-138[4]-T
Hiryu-118[3]-T
Soryu-128[3]-T
Ryujo-015[2]-T
Zuiho-005[2]-T
I-Boat-10*

Pearl Harbor

7AF-24*-■
San Francisco-117-†
New Orleans-117-†
W. Virginia-553-S
Maryland-553-†
California-453-S
Tennessee-453-S
Pennsylvania-443-†
Nevada-443-S
Oklahoma-443-†
Arizona-443-7P

Johnston Island

Indianapolis-117-■P
Minneapolis-117-■P

Hawaiian Islands
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

Samoa
(No British allowed)

Mikuma-118-■T
Yokosuka-033-#D

Aleutian Islands
JAPAN 0 POC   ALLIES 0 POC

Nachi-127-†
Myoko-127-■T
Haguro-127-■T
Ashigara-127-■T
Atago-127-■T
Takao-127-■T
Chokai-127-■T
Maya-127-■T
Oi-107-†
Kitakami-107-†
Fuso-444-■T
Ise-444-■T
Yamashiro-444-■T
Mutsu-554-■T
*Hyuga-444-T
*Nagato-554-T

Saratoga-137-A

Midway

Marshall Islands
JAPAN 1 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Maloelap

21AF-34*-■

Kwajalein

U.S. Mandate
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

Pensacola-117-■N
Australia-117-■N

New Hebrides

Japanese Islands
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

Kongo-436-■4
Hiei-436-■4
Tone-118-■4
Chikuma-118-■4

Yokosuka Navy Yard

Kirishima-436-■T
Haruna-436-■T
Mogami-118-■T
Suzuya-118-■T
Kumano-118-■T

Saipan

Truk
(No British allowed)

South Pacific Ocean
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Guadalcanal

22AF-34*-■

Coral Sea
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

Louisville-117-■N
Canberra-117-■N
Houston-117-N

Okinawa

Marianas Islands
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Lae
Port Moresby

Australia
(No British allowed)

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

TURN 1   IJN   + 4 POC

23AF-34*-■
24AF-34*-■
25AF-34*-■
26AF-34*-■
Hosho-014[1]T
Aoba-117-T
Kako-117-T
Furutaka-117-†
Kinugasa-117-†

Indonesia
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Saigon

5AF-24*-†
Repulse-336-C
POW-456-3XC

Singapore

Indian Ocean
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 0 POC

DeRuyter-117-■S

Bay of Bengal
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Ceylon
(No U.S. allowed)

Hermes-124[1]-■C
Revenge-443-■C
Exeter-117-■C

Turn 1: With the exception of the Saratoga, the uncommitted US carrier groups are not shown above. Group W and X arrived in the Hawaiian islands where the *Enterprise* took two damage points from the I-Boat. Both carriers returned to Australia but left their cruiser escort behind in Pearl Harbor. The two carrier Group Z was on the West Coast and will enter the game next turn. Each unit is listed by name, factor, strength at start of the turn, and disposition at the end of the turn. Raiders are printed in italic type. Raiders which attained that status by virtue of failing a patrol speed roll are further differentiated by an asterisk before their name. Ships under repair have an R before their name. All land based air units were placed in numerical sequence. The symbology for final disposition is as follows: ■ = Control, † = Sunk, X = Disabled, # = Marine Landing, and numbers equal amount of damage sustained. All other letters refer to port returned to; T = Truk, C = Ceylon, S = Samoa, Y = Yokosuka Navy Yard, N = New Hebrides, D = Dutch Harbor, A = Australia, P = Pearl Harbor, M = Midway, Pp = Philippines, G = Guadalcanal.

TURN 2

JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: I have no cruisers in reserve. My objectives are to take Hawaii, South Pacific, and Indonesia. Central Pacific is a gamble. I need those lost cruisers here. Aleutians is a pipe dream after he put his air unit there. The *26th Air Flot* in North Pacific is intended to trap any US ships based in Attu if he takes a CV, CA force to the Aleutians. The Marshalls are abandoned this turn to be fought for next turn. The air units and CVL's in South Pacific will deter his CV's—he can't afford their loss at this stage. By placing an air unit in Marianas he has forced *Sasebo* to join the *Mogami* to invade the Philippines. (A break—he didn't deploy an air unit in Central Pacific.) The *Kaga* will fight for the Marianas as it has four shots and can absorb heavy damage.

TURN 2

ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: Since the Allies have the disadvantage of being on exterior lines, the basing of the US fleet is quite important. I based *every* American, Dutch, and Australian ship so that they may move to the Hawaiian Islands during the raiding phase, if necessary. Chris plays to capture Hawaii on turns two and three (I think that this is the best Japanese move also) so it is wise for the Allied player to be able to threaten to move to Hawaii forcing the Japanese to commit the bulk of his fleet there. I based two US CV's in Australia to force the Japanese to commit the bulk of his land-based aircraft in Indonesia, hopefully leaving the South Pacific and/or the Marshalls weak. If the Japanese player leaves Indonesia weak then the American CV's and the British CV's and US land-based air units can blow Indonesia, and the game wide open. I move three CA's to gain control of the Marshalls—if the sea is controlled by the US then Hawaii cannot be reached by Japanese patrollers from Truk on turn three. I patrol the Bay of Bengal, Coral Sea, and Mandates with "patrollers" enabling my land-based aircraft to be used *offensively* on this turn. The bulk of my fleet is on raiding status—the US player must use the advantage of moving last to the fullest.

TURN TWO
NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER MOVEMENT:
I'll direct my comments to the USN first. I consider it vital that the USN conserve his land-based air on turn two in order to have all six ready to defend Hawaii on turn three. The only areas worth gambling them in are Indonesia and the South Pacific, and then only if success is virtually certain. If you gamble with your land-based air on turn two, and lose, learn to speak Japanese. The air unit in Marianas isn't a bad move but by placing it there you are exposing it to loss—a loss the USN can ill afford. However, since Chris only placed one patrol ship there I can see why Ron did it. I violently disagree with the USN move into the North Pacific. With Dutch Harbor gone, and Hawaii falling, these ships will have to go to Samoa, or Australia. Ron is exposing his precious CV's to loss for virtually no return. Faced with the northern strategy employed by Chris, forget the northern areas. The move into the Marshalls is good, but I think two CA's would have worked as well as three. Ron is correct in staying out of Hawaii and Indonesia this turn. I will not fault Ron for failing to go into the Central Pacific, because he had only two carriers which could reach it, and his edge although strong, would not have been overwhelming enough to risk loss of fleet carriers this early in the game. I will fault him for placing too much carrier strength in Australia and not using it. By placing his land-based air in dangerous areas, and piecemeal to boot, he is inviting disaster. Faced with this IJN move, all three land-based air units should be held in safe areas such as

Coral Sea, or US Mandates. This is assuming Ron didn't wish to exploit the Central Pacific. If so, one in Marianas and two in the Central Pacific and Chris would be very, very hard pressed. This violates what I have said previously, but my comments relate to a normal turn one, and this one was far from normal!

Japan has three areas he absolutely must have: Indonesia, South Pacific, and Central Pacific. I know Chris goes for the throat, (Hawaii), and he didn't let the first turn debacle deter him. He should have. As we all know, the Central Pacific is wide open. With three land-based air, supported by British CV's and possibly the USN, even Indonesia is tempting. Of course, since Japan has six land-based air units, he has three to place after the USN has expended his, so Chris could have reinforced Indonesia had Ron made a major commitment. Faced with what happened on turn one, I might have been tempted to merely secure the perimeter. The IJN should remember this: tempt the USN into committing his CV's on turns two and three. By making areas super-strong the USN will avoid you and his CV's will hurt you on turns four and five. This is the beauty of an assault on Hawaii. It virtually forces the USN to fight when they are weakest and you are strongest.

[I'm afraid I can't be so generous. This is an atrocious Japanese move. Any attempt to take the Hawaiian Islands without first securing the Marshalls is pure folly. Given the realization that he has had the Marshalls handed to him on a silver platter, the American response is no better. He must take the Central Pacific. Doing so not only saves Midway but prevents the Japanese from getting any patrollers to the Hawaiian Islands on turn 3. There is suspicion that the American deliberately passed up the move into the Central Pacific for the sake of an interesting game. The object of a Series Replay is to exhibit winning strategy—not generosity. Therefore I will exhibit none of it here in broadly condemning the American player for not seizing on the chance to place the game securely out of jeopardy. While it is true that the Allies must use their Ultra advantage to avoid even or near-even battles in the early-going, he can't win by sitting on his hands either. Even a four carrier raid into the South Pacific would have been preferable to collecting barnacles in the Coral Sea.]

TURN 2

THE BATTLES: Action opens in the North Pacific. The IJN wants to see where the USN CV's return if disabled or withdrawn. The battle is a draw as both sides take a significant loss, but the US gains control of the sea and the point. The importance of control in the Aleutians is diminished as the *Junyo* proves a tough opponent for the *10th AF* and shoots down the air unit the first round. Attu falls and Japan secures the north. In the South Pacific the US tried for night to escape but the IJN prevailed and shot down the *11th AF* but not before it sank the *Zuiho*. The most interesting battle of the turn took place in the Marianas. The Japanese tried for night to invade Philippines but the US got a day action. Surprise! The *Kaga* blew the *7th AF* out of the sky. The US player shows his knowledge of the game by ignoring the SNLF and attacks and sinks the *Mogami*. Now to capture Philippines the IJN has to use his SNLF, so the US player got two units with one hit—very clever. The British mark time waiting for more CV's before testing their luck in Indonesia. The rest of the USN avoids early action and rallies at New Hebrides. Predictably the *Arizona* is destroyed by waves of IJN raiders.

JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT: This turn's dice went my way and I'm back in the game. His loss of three air units and a CV will leave him short in any day actions next turn. Winning the Aleutians was a real surprise. His insight in attacking *Mogami* when he lost his air unit really impressed me—he forced me to use the SNLF, sank a cruiser, and cost me the sea! I should have had two patrollers there but where would it have come from? Those lost cruisers

are haunting me. With 20/20 hindsight I see he could have wrapped up this game by attacking me in Central Pacific. I would have had no patrollers in Hawaii turn 3. Sporting of him? Or is he saving me for a more dramatic victory? Characteristically he bides his time and moves his fleet to a central position. Attacking me in North Pacific was a mistake without also attacking me in the Aleutians with a CV and CA force. Abandoning Hawaii was expected. He may fight for it turn 3 but the loss of the three air units may force him to let it go. With the Marshalls opened up he will have plenty of targets. I claim turn 2 and 4 points. Total 8.

ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT: The battles brought mixed results. My mission was certainly accomplished in the Marianas—one CA, two POC, and an SNLF expended for the cost of a land-based air unit. However, I suffered a surprising defeat in the Aleutians and his submarine struck one of my CV's again—two hits in a row! I tried to escape from the lopsided battle in the South Pacific (I placed a land-based air unit there only to draw his there) but managed to take down a CVL. Unfortunately, I am down three land-based aircraft. This will hurt me on turn three.

With Chris down so many CAs I seriously considered making this a big turn for the US. I thought about placing an air unit in the Central Pacific instead of the South Pacific to fight to hold onto Midway. Since he conceded me the Marshalls I could have taken my raiders and attacked the Japanese in the Central Pacific. If I sank or chased away the enemy ships the Japanese would be unable to patrol Hawaii on turn three (North Pacific and Marshalls in US control) and Pearl Harbor would remain in my hands. The move was tempting but I declined to make it because this is a "Series Replay" game. If the move succeeded Chris may have conceded and we would have to start all over!

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COMBAT: *Japan does well in the Aleutians-North Pacific areas as a critical land-based air unit and CV of Ron's go down at minimal cost to Chris. The American land-based air in Marianas hurts the IJN but the Kaga's Zeros do their job and send the American land-based air into the drink. Ditto for the grossly misplaced 11th AF, which is flamed in the South Pacific. This was a big turn for the IJN as Midway, Attu, Lae, Singapore, and the Philippines fall. But the real victory is three American land-based air units and one CV killed, for one IJN air unit and one CVL. All the IJN needs to do on turn three is to hold the South Pacific, Hawaii, and recapture the Marshalls and the American will be hurting. On the plus side for Ron, Chris has very few POC for this point in the game.*

TURN 3

JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: I must return to Hawaii to complete the capture move. The problem is I can only hold three areas and must fight for the Marshalls. Hence, either South Pacific or Indonesia must be abandoned. It has to be Indonesia. If I fight for it he *will* commit the British and the *Enterprise* and perhaps another CV—at least eleven shots. I can't afford to lose the sea *and* the air units defending it. The air units will be better used making South Pacific and Marshalls too dangerous for carriers. Without bases in Indonesia his turn four options to exploit loss of the sea will be limited to raids from Australia while I hope to regain control of Indonesia next turn since I should have six air units and a secured perimeter and he will have to withdraw two British CV's. So, all Midway based ships were sent to patrol Hawaii. Both CVL's missed their speed rolls leaving my patrol

Hawaiian Islands
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

26AF-34*-†
I-Boat

Minneapolis-117-■S
Hornet-027⁴-XS
Yorktown-027⁴-†

Myoko-127-■T
Haguro-127-■T
Ashigara-127-■T
Atago-127-■T
Takao-127-■T
Chokai-127-■T
Maya-127-■T

Pearl Harbor
(No British allowed except Yorktown)

Soryu-128³-T
Hiryu-118³-T
Akagi-146⁴-T
Zuikaku-138⁴-T
Shakaku-138⁴-T
Ise-444-T
Nagato-554-T
Mutsu-554-T
Fuso-444-T
Hyuga-444-T
Yamashiro-444-T

North Pacific Ocean
ALLIES 1 POC

R-Arizona-100-†

Johnston Island

*Kongo-436-T
Junyo-124³-T
Hiei-436-■T
Chikuma-118-■D
Tone-118-■D

Samoa
(No British allowed)

Aleutian Islands
JAPAN 6 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

10AF-24*-†

Central Pacific Ocean
JAPAN 1 POC   ALLIES 6 POC

Midway

Kirishima-436-■M
Haruna-436-■M
Mikuma-118-■M
Kumano-118-■M
Aoba-117-■M
Kako-117-■M
Shoho-005²-M
Ryujo-015²-M

Marshall Islands
JAPAN 1 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Kwajalein

DeRuyter-117-■S
Australia-117-■S
Canberra-117-■S

U.S. Mandate
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

Pensacola-117-N
Indianapolis-117-N

Japanese Islands
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

Suzuya-118-■T

Yokosuka Navy Yard

Saipan

Truk
(No British allowed)

South Pacific Ocean
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

Guadalcanal

Coral Sea
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

New Hebrides

U.S. Fleet-N

23AF-34*-■
24AF-34*-■
Zuiho-005²-†
Hosho-014'T

11AF-24*-†

Okinawa

Marianas Islands
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Mogami-118-†
Sasebo-033-Pp
Kaga-145⁴-Pp

Australia
(No British allowed)

R-Enterprise-016-A

7AF-34*-†

21AF-34*-■
22AF-34*-■
25AF-34*-■

Indonesia
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Saigon

Singapore

Bay of Bengal
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Indian Ocean
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 9 POC

Ceylon
(No U.S. allowed)

British Fleet-C

Andaman

Resolution-443-■C
Royal Sovereign-443-■C

TURN 2   IJN   +4 POC   +8 TOTAL

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

Turn 2: The *Prince of Wales*, *Enterprise*, and *Arizona* undergo repair in their respective ports. Not depicted in the illustration are the British fleet in Ceylon (three cruisers, three CV's and five battleships) and the main U.S. fleet on raid in the Coral Sea (two carriers, eight cruisers, and five battleships) which will return to New Hebrides.

vulnerable to a night action. Heavy CV reinforcements joined this group as raiders. (*Hiyo* failed speed roll and remains in Japan.) Marshalls were secured by air units and the South Pacific by an interesting combination of air units, CV's, and an SNLF to draw attention from Hawaii. Diversions were also sent to Mandates and Coral Sea. Marianas is patrolled by ships of high survivability and Central Pacific by two cruisers as bait—to chase them out will require a much larger force and divert ships he'll need to counter my main thrust. His response surprised me. I really expected a fight for Hawaii or South Pacific, but to pounce on my battleships full force seems a wasted turn for the bulk of his fleet. But there are no surprises elsewhere. He's still saving his strength by pouncing on exposed smaller forces. I should say my diversions worked, but if he sinks them all I will say I lost my ass.

TURN 3

ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: I based the bulk of my fleet at New Hebrides to give myself a "central position". From this base I can threaten Indonesia, the South Pacific, the Marshalls, Hawaii, the Central Pacific, and the Marianas. After observing the Japanese moves I decided to make the destruction of Japanese ships, with little loss to myself, the objective for this turn. I had hoped for the possibility of recapturing the Marshalls and thus two forward bases but Chris skillfully abandons Indonesia and concentrates land-based air units in the Marshalls to thwart my plans. Another major American objective this turn is to commit land-based air units and surface units to destroy the *Yokosuka* SNLF unit and keep Guadalcanal in American hands.

TURN THREE

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY AFTER MOVEMENT: *A very important point is brought out here. If Indonesia is held on turn two along with the South Pacific, the Allies have no bases in Indonesia. This means if things get tight elsewhere, the IJN can give up Indonesia one turn to secure Hawaii. This will cost Japan a few POCs, but by securing it with land-based air on turn four, the Allies really can't exploit it because the Royal Navy cannot get past Indonesia. The full value of this ploy is illustrated here. The IJN adventures into the Coral Sea and US Mandates are interesting, but are strictly diversions. Hiyo should have gone to Central Pacific as the Allies placed no land-based air in Hawaii. The Japanese forces are very weak in surface ships in Hawaii, especially since the U.S. has nine BB's. However, since the U.S. committed ten ships to patrol, his surface superiority was greatly reduced. Except for the lack of air cover in Central Pacific, a good Japanese move.*

The Allies are down, but not out. The question is, where to fight? If South Pacific, Marshalls, and Hawaii all go, the American will be on his knees. The Allied player should have anticipated hordes of enemy land-based air in the Marshalls and South Pacific. Five CA's in Marshalls are far too many; two or three would suffice. Three BB's in US Mandates? By placing two CA's each in Marshalls and US Mandates, the USN could have returned to Hawaii with nine BB's, four CV's, and 12 CA's. IJN would have five BB's, six CV's, and eight CA's. Admittedly, a day roll would have been the end of the USN CV's, but Japan only has an advantage of three more air factors. Therefore, with a lucky break or two, the IJN CV's would have been battered too. Of course, if the Allies maintained their luck and got a night action, the USN BB's would have leveled the Japanese CV's. Even with a day action, the CV's would tend to balance each other out, leaving surface ships to shoot it out. The

Allies certainly could have sunk or disabled all the patrolling ships and saved Hawaii, plus the marines. As I see it, this option is a big gamble, but they needed to gamle here. The Allied land-based air could have been placed in Coral Sea, US Mandate, and South Pacific. The only other option would have been to hit the South Pacific with all four CV's and all available surface ships. This would save Guadalcanal for sure and threaten the home islands and Indonesia. But more than likely, all the USN CV's would have gone down, so if the Allies had chosen to fight, it should have been in Hawaii.

[I too condemn the Allied move (or non-move) but for different reasons. The decision to fight for Hawaii is not that clear cut. That 3 factor Japanese edge also enjoys a two carrier advantage. A four factor carrier is not equal to a pair of two factor flattops. The Japanese targets are less concentrated and therefore harder to sink in total. Such a battle could easily leave three unopposed Japanese CV's to mop up the American screening force at a rate of three ships per round. The Japanese enjoy control of the Hawaiian Islands and would have a +2 DRM edge in opting for day combat. Hawaii should have been fought for, but not at a disadvantage! Due to the great number of patrollers used by the Japanese, it was easy to deduce a major effort at Pearl Harbor was in the offing. By placing all of his land-based air in the Hawaiian Islands the American could have enjoyed air superiority in both factors (22 to 19) and targets (7 to 6) knowing full well that the Japanese had nothing more to add. The newly arriving battleships could then add to an overwhelming American screening force instead of being sacrificed to the wolves. But anything would be an improvement over his actual move. Blowing away four battleships is small solace for losing three of your own, plus two marines, plus Pearl Harbor, and perhaps Guadalcanal. Preserving your carriers will do you little good if you're blockaded against the edge of the board.]

TURN 3

THE BATTLES: The Japanese want to move the actions toward their own CV's so disabled ships will *consider* (even though remote) the possibility of an air raid. So the shooting starts in the Central Pacific where the IJN CA's sink one and disable two American CA's in three rounds of combat before losing *Takao* and getting chased out of the sea. (The disabled USN CA's *did* avoid the IJN CV's and withdrew to Australia.) Luck is with the USN in the Marshalls as he gets a night action and withdraws, avoiding the massed land-based air and sea units against the Japanese. The IJN goes for ships since the US air units will be disabled if *Yokosuka* gets through to Guadalcanal. *New Mexico* is disabled and the *Idaho* is damaged and disabled but the US air strike leaves the SNLF a disabled wreck. The IJN committed *Hosho* to the night action, screening *Junyo*, but the *Chester* missed, and the USN withdrew; mission accomplished. But surprise! The IJN gets night in Coral Sea and bubbles the two patrolling CA's with concentrated fire (8 shots apiece). Seeing he's got the outnumbered and slower BB's "bagged", the USN cruisers concentrate on one at a time and blast *Fuso*. The three remaining BB's scatter and the USN lets one go to assure destruction of the other two by dispatching each with two fleet carriers. The Japanese get their revenge in Hawaii as their fleet annihilates the three American battleships in a day action. The IJN also uses the tactic of mass over several rounds of action to assure the total destruction of the fleeing marine units in surface actions since the targets cannot escape by speed and to disperse the attacks among them increases the likelihood of their escape through a disabled result. No Japanese losses in Hawaii—the USN didn't get to shoot back. In the Mandates the Japanese get a day action but no hits are scored by either side and the IJN withdraws.

JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT: Marshalls, Central Pacific, and South Pacific need no comment. I was lucky to get Hawaii. In retrospect I won it on turn two when he lost three air units. With them he could have kept his new ships in Pearl Harbor and forced

a protracted air battle pitting my carriers against his six air units. This would be a heads he wins, tails I lose situation because his lost air units come back as reinforcements after a turn in the dead pile. My lost carriers stay on the bottom. In the Coral Sea my battleships were very lucky to get night and sink both patrolling CA's. The *Ise* was also fortunate to escape. It may be argued that this was a waste of battleships, but he did use his CV's against *them* rather than the Marianas or Mandates, and two points may well be the margin of victory. In the Mandates I stood a very good chance of getting my clock cleaned if I stayed. The fast ships were sent there as a diversion and they accomplished their mission to some extent so I ran while I could. I picked up seven POC, captured Pearl Harbor, and established a southern perimeter while giving up Indonesia. Ship losses were almost even but the loss of the two marines will thwart American offensive options until turn 5. I therefore claim the turn and 7 points. Total 15.

ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT: Battle brought many surprises. The Central Pacific developed as expected and I accomplished my mission in the South Pacific by maintaining control of Guadalcanal but failed to sink the Japanese SNLF though I threw boxcars! Despite US possession of both seas, the Japanese won both day/night rolls in the Coral Sea and the Mandates. His battleships succeeded in their suicide mission—I lose two CA's and two POC. A night turn in the Mandates could have brought great results for me but in the end it was a standoff. Considering the possibilities I had for this turn I am disappointed.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COMBAT: *Chris makes an excellent comment regarding his luck in Hawaii. The luck this turn was fairly even, but actually no major engagements were fought. If Yokosuka had taken Guadalcanal this game would look real bad for the Allies. Chris shows how to react if the USN blows a hole in the perimeter. Let them in, but slam the door behind them. The Allied victory in the Central Pacific thus cannot be exploited.*

TURN 4

JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: This turn I *must* regain control of Indonesia. Four air units will assure it. The remaining air units are split between Hawaii and the Empire. His CV's in Australia could raid Japan and really embarrass me *and* cost me 3 POC. So an air unit is spent here though it would be better employed on the perimeter. I have no doubt that with five CV's he will be able to open a hole in the perimeter and after expending three battleships to wrest two points from his last turn I'm not in the mood for giveaways. The air units are paired with a CV in each area to add "bonus" shot firepower to the air unit's high survivability. In the Marianas I've deployed in enough strength that if he chooses to attack, the forces required will deplete those needed in the more important perimeter areas. In the Marshalls I've offered him expendable carriers to make this an exchange he may find too expensive. Obviously the main thrust is in the South Pacific with Guadalcanal the prize. His reaction is still conservative as he pounces on my weak areas and avoids decisive combat. He still has four more turns and will probably take it to the wire.

TURN 4

ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: With the British CV force at full strength and the US CV force in striking range of Indonesia, Japan commits the bulk of its land-based aircraft to Indonesia. I place

Chikuma-118-■T

Haruna-436-■T
Kirishima-436-■T
Kako-117-■P
Aoba-117-■P
Mikuma-118-■T
Kumano-118-■T
*Shoho-005²-T
*Ryujo-015²-T

Hiei-436-T
Kongo-436-T
Yamato-695-T
Shokaku-138⁴-T
Zuikaku-138⁴-T
Soryu-128³-T
Akagi-146⁴-T
Myoko-127-T
Haguro-127-T
Ashigara-127-T
Atago-127-T

Hawaiian Islands

North Pacific Ocean

Pearl Harbor

Indianapolis-117-†
Vincennes-117-A
Louisville-117-XA
Houston-117-XA

1 Marine-043-†
2 Marine-043-†
Mississippi-453-†
Colorado-553-†
N. Carolina-565-†

Samoa

Aleutian Islands

Takao-127-†
Chokai-127-XT

Midway

Central Pacific Ocean

RAAF-24*-■
California-453-■N
W. Virginia-553-■N
Tennessee-453-■A

U.S. Mandate

Marshall Islands

Majuro

Canberra-117-S
Australia-117-S
DeRuyter-117-β
Pensacola-117-A
Minneapolis-117-A

21AF-34*-■
22AF-34*-■
23AF-34*-■

Hiryu-118³-T
Tone-118-T
Suzuya-118-T

Kwajalein

Japanese Islands

Kure-003-■T
Maya-127-■T

Coral Sea

New Hebrides

Ise-444-T
Fuso-444-†
Yamashiro-444-†
Hyuga-444-†
I-Boat-10*

Yokosuka Navy Yard

Saipan

Truk

South Pacific Ocean

Guadalcanal

RNZAF-24*
SAF-24*
Idaho-453-X2A
New Mexico-N53-XA
Chester-117-A

Lexington-137⁴-A
Enterprise-016¹-A
Salt Lake City-117-†
Northampton-117-†
Saratoga-137³-A
Hornet-027*-A
Nevada-433-A
Chicago-117-A
Astoria-117-A
Quincy-117-A
Portland-117-A

24AF-34*-■
25AF-34*-■
Junyo-124³-■T
Hosho-014¹-■T
Yokosuka-033-X3T

Kaga-145⁴-■T
Nagato-554-■T
Mutsu-554-■T

Okinawa

Marianas Islands

Australia

Indonesia

Repulse-336-■C
*Valiant-444-C
Warspite-444-■C
Dorsetshire-117-■C
Cornwall-117-■C
Exeter-117-■C
*Revenge-443-C
*Ramillies-443-C
Hermes-124¹-C
Formidable-027²-C
Indomitable-027²-C
Illustrious-027²-C

Saigon

Singapore

Indian Ocean

Bay of Bengal

R- POW-445-C

Ceylon

Andaman Islands

Royal Sovereign-443-■C
Resolution-443-■C

TURN 3   IJN   +7 POC   +15 TOTAL

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

Turn 3: The *Prince of Wales* continues to repair in Ceylon. The *Hiyo* remains in Yokosuka Navy Yard due to failure of a raid speed roll.

all of my land-based air units in the South Pacific to attempt to prevent the landing of the Japanese SNLF's at Guadalcanal. If I am successful I will be able to place land-based air units in the South Pacific on turn five, (the turn of decision in most games), placing great pressure on the Japanese defense. I divide my fleet to strike at the Japanese defense in Hawaii and the Marshalls, although I erred in patrolling only one of these areas.

TURN FOUR

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY AFTER MOVE-MENT: *The Allies need to take advantage of the fact that most of Japan's land-based air is committed to Indonesia. Six or seven IJN CV's could show up in South Pacific, so I probably would place seven Allied land-based air in South Pacific and one in Coral Sea. Guadalcanal absolutely must be held. The Allies must guard against Japan placing marines in the Coral Sea and taking Guadalcanal from the back door. Since Japan has only 15 POC, the Allies must consider raiding Japan or Marianas if an opening is left. They must minimize the IJN point gain the next two turns and blow a hole in the perimeter turn five. The Allied player has done a good job of protecting his CV's. If he has three or four CV's going into turn five he should be able to open a hole for the flood on turn six.*

The Japanese move is a good one—any offensive moves by the Allies will cost CV's. Japan uses the tactic of "a wolf in sheep's clothing" in Hawaii. At first glance it looks weak, but attacking this type of defense can be costly. I should know—I invented it (well, at least in Texas). Throw in the I-Boat and if the USN goes in with four CV's, he could easily lose three of them. Of course the control marker will go USA, but the beauty of this tactic is that the IJN commits nothing vital and in order to attack it, the USN must commit his scarce and valuable CV's. Only use this when you control the area, (thus your chances of getting burned in a night battle are small) and the USN cannot place land-based air in the same area. I would say this is the best move of the game for the Japanese. The Allies must get all three marines with their land-based air or Guadalcanal goes. American CV's are going down no matter where they go. The Allied move is strictly a reaction to Japan's. Ron will hurt if Guadalcanal goes. Indonesia is definitely too strong for the Allies to even think about. The Enterprise should have been sent to Hawaii. He exposed his CV's to three more shots, (with attack bonus), than he should have. The shiny new USN BB's can take a bunch of damage and they probably could carry Marshalls by themselves. Maybe a few CA's could have come along for the ride. Let's see how many USN CV's go down!

[This is indeed an excellent Japanese move. The Allied chances of saving Guadalcanal are even less than the 50-50 proposition of a day-night battle in the South Pacific as the odds of turning back all three Japanese marines are slim. Elsewhere the Japanese deployment is such that the American really can't afford to strike in more than one area. That he did is just one more reason why the Japanese will probably win this game. The Enterprise is actually at a disadvantage against the Junyo and Hosho and shouldn't survive. Faced with this situation I would have either put everything into the Marshalls or split my raid between the Marianas and Marshalls.]

TURN 4

THE BATTLES: The massed Japanese air units miss the British in the dark as they make good their escape. In the Marshalls the US gets the elusive day/night action the Japanese are still grumbling about after their drubbing on turn 1, and exchange *Enterprise* for *Junyo*, and disable *Hosho*. In Hawaii the USN gets day/night *again* which permits him to concentrate on the air unit and leave the *Shoho*

for his cruisers, but not before they lose the *Wasp*, and the *Hornet* is wrecked. Finally, in the South Pacific, the US gets his choice again but his air units let an SNLF get through to Guadalcanal and the action ends after two US air units are shot down.

JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT: Considering he won or drew every day/night determination roll, I was fortunate to sink two CV's and escape with the *Hosho*—a lucky ship. I'm mystified by his choice of targets here and especially so after *Junyo* damaged *South Dakota* before being inundated. Missing the chance to bomb the British was a disappointment. However, on the bright side I did take Guadalcanal with loss of only an SNLF—but it was close. Had he disabled the *Kure* SNLF he'd have clearly won the turn and be on his way to Tokyo. But now he has some distinct weaknesses I can exploit on turn 5. I rate this turn a draw. IJN gains 4 points. Total 19.

ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT: The Allies suffer a severe setback. My land-based air units in the South Pacific could not destroy or disable all of the enemy SNLF units despite a day round (that Japanese SNLF that I failed to sink last turn has come back to haunt me). I lost two CV's sunk and one damaged this turn—out for the crucial turn five. The loss of one of those CV's was my own fault. I rarely divide my CV's at this stage of the game and I paid the price by giving the Japanese too many shots at those valuable ships. In short, the *Enterprise* should have gone to Hawaii, trusting that my surface fleet would eventually destroy the *Junyo* and *Hosho* in the Marshalls. It is too late now. I have only two American CV's and the *Victorious* in the eastern Pacific and no forward bases to attack the Japanese perimeter with land-based air units. Turn five is going to be rough.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COMBAT: *Two CV's sunk, another without airstrike ability and Guadalcanal gone. Not a good turn for the Allies. Hawaii was a draw. The Allies got control but Japan took, in effect, two CV's. South Pacific was a big win for Japan: no ship losses and Guadalcanal in the bag. If the Allies had sunk or disabled the third marine, the game could have hung in the balance as the Allied land-based air and IJN CV's dueled to a finish. Japan still doesn't have a commanding lead in POC, but does enjoy excellent board position. It looks bad for Ron with only two CV's and the Victorious available to punch a hole in the perimeter on turn five.*

TURN 5

JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: This is the turn of decision in most *VITP* games and it is especially apparent here. To win I must restore my perimeter and extend my lead beyond 20 POC. Otherwise I will not have the POC margin to canalize his offensive to my advantage by withdrawing behind controlled areas while concentrating in others. His objective will be to open a hole in the perimeter for his turn 6 and 7 CV's to exploit. However, he has several weaknesses this turn *I* must exploit. Specifically: he has no air bases in my perimeter; he has only three CV's to extend his air power and they are of limited use (*Saratoga* in Australia, and *Victorious* cannot raid past the perimeter); six BB's will have to make long shot speed rolls to raid my backfield (and one can't make it at all); and all ships but one CV and one BB are at Samoa and only the CV in Australia can threaten Indonesia. However, with eight air units to patrol his areas I can be sure *all* his ships will be available to assault my line. My initial reaction is to defend my perimeter with air units and CV's. Two air units in Hawaii reinforced by *Hiyo*; two air units in Marshalls; and one air unit in South Pacific accompanied by *Ryujo* and *Hosho*. The fleet would be divided between In-

donesia and Marianas with one CA each in Japan, Central Pacific, and North Pacific. But this leaves the South Pacific vulnerable and with the three marines he could take the sea, Lae, and Guadalcanal. Then *his* airpower would be loosed upon *me* turn 6. Another option would be to ignore Indonesia again and put three air units in Hawaii, two in Marshalls, and the fleet in the South Pacific less some bait CA's in the rear. However, he could still take Lae and Guadalcanal and even lose or withdraw in South Pacific since he would have control of Indonesia to supply Lae. The problem is I want to fight his CVs now so the only ones I will face on turn six will be the damaged *Hornet* and those entering as reinforcements on turn seven—hopefully in Samoa. This would permit me to defend Indonesia with a weak force and mass against the Americans. Faced with my perimeter his new carriers would waste a turn closing with me as I will withdraw behind the perimeter turn six except in Indonesia where he can't reach me if I hold South Pacific. So I have to deploy in a manner which will encourage an air battle in Hawaii or Marshalls. Given his control of Hawaii and the chance to retake Pearl Harbor, he will probably go there if I don't shut it off with three air units. If I place the extra air unit in Marshalls he will know I *want* him to go to Hawaii, so it is placed in Indonesia and supported by a fast carrier which can run if the air unit is lost. This move I violate one of my own tenets by patrolling with CV's instead of holding them back as raiders. I don't want to commit my main fleet until I see where his marines go and how many ships patrol and where. The fast ships in Marianas and Central Pacific will try for day and withdraw if raided. I don't expect *Shokaku, Hiyo*, or *Soryu*, to survive this turn but they are deployed to exchange for a CV and in *Soryu*'s case, for the marine threatening to invade Guadalcanal. His patrols make the available surface forces about even with my own, so South Pacific will be held by the remainder of my fleet supported by the four carriers on patrol. My four carriers to his three guarantee the survival of at least one in a round of day action.

His move is not well thought out. He has squandered his marine and surface ship superiority. The marine in the Marshalls would be better used in the Coral Sea to join the *2nd Marines* in taking Guadalcanal, especially considering my *Yokosuka* SNLF was not opposed. Even if he does get a base in the Marshalls he cannot base there without being trapped turn six by my control. I do not fault him for avoiding the South Pacific but in his eagerness to recapture Pearl Harbor he has overlooked his opportunity to capture Guadalcanal and get control of Indonesia. (Marines, *Lexington*, and *Victorious* to Coral Sea; *Saratoga* to reinforce the British in Indonesia.) However, if everything goes right and he clears Central Pacific *and* Hawaii he can say his *was* the right move and I'll have to agree as I'll be in serious trouble.

TURN 5

ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: He has spread his power across the perimeter so that he can hold everything unless I get lucky. An air battle in Indonesia and a surface battle in the South Pacific look inviting for the Allies but I decide to gamble and attempt to defeat his CA force in the Central Pacific and recapture the Hawaiian Islands. In Hawaii I control the sea with a night turn I can blow away the Japanese CV and land the marines at Johnson Island if the enemy submarine does not intervene. If I can trade my CV's for his land-based air units, I capture Pearl Harbor, three POC, and can base much of my fleet there to threaten his inner perimeter on turn six. The POC count will be relatively low and the US will have an excellent chance to win the game. A secondary objective is to land a marine unit (if I get a night round) at Kwajalein to establish a forward base for next turn.

Aoba-117■D

North Pacific Ocean

25AF-24*-†
Shoho-005²-†

Hawaiian Islands

Hornet-027⁴-X2A
Wasp-026⁴-†
Saratoga-137⁴-A
Lexington-137⁴-S
Chester-117-S
Chicago-117-S
Vincennes-117-S
Australia-117-S
DeRuyter-117-S
Canberra-117-S
Louisville-117-S
Houston-117-S
Pensacola-117-S
Minneapolis-117-S
Astoria-117-S
Quincy-117-S
Portland-117-S

Pearl Harbor

Johnston Island

Aleutian Islands

Kako-117-■T

Midway

Central Pacific Ocean

Samoa

Marshall Islands

Junyo-124³-†
Hosho-014¹-XT
I-Boat-10*

U.S. Mandate

5AF-24*-■

Enterprise-016⁴-†
Washington-565-S
S. Dakota-565-3S
Indiana-565-S
California-453-S
W. Virginia-553-S
N. Mexico-453-S

Kwajalein

South Pacific Ocean

Hiyo-124³-■T
25AF-34*-■

Japanese Islands

Kaga-145⁴-■T
Haruna-436-■T
Kirishima-436-■T

Hiryu-118³-T
Chikuma-118-T
Shokaku-138⁴-T
Zuikaku-138⁴-T
Soryu-128³-T
Akagi-146⁴-T
Ryujo-015²-T
Kongo-436-T
Hiei-436-T
Tone-118-T
Suzuya-118-T
Kumano-118-T
Sasebo-003-†
Kure-033-#G

Mikuma-118-T
Yamato-695-■T
Nagato-554-■T
Mutsu-554-■T
Ise-444-■T
Hagoro-127-■T
Chokai-127■T
Maya-127-■T
Atago-127-■T
Ashigara-127-■T
Myoko-127-■T
Yokosuka-000-XT
Marine AF-24*-†
11AF-24*
7AF-24*-†
RAAF-24*
RNZAF-24*
10AF-24*

Truk

Guadalcanal

Coral Sea

New Hebrides

13AF-24*-■
Idaho-431-NH

Yokosuka Navy Yard

Marianas Islands

Saipan

Ominato

Australia

TURN 4   IJN   +4 POC   +19 TOTAL

VICTORY
IN THE PACIFIC

21AF-34*-■
22AF-34*-■
23AF-34*-■
24AF-34*-■

Indonesia

Dorsetshire-117-C
Cornwall-117-C
Valiant-414-C
Warspite-444-C
Repulse-336-C
*Hermes-124¹-C

Saigon

Singapore

Indian Ocean

Bay of Bengal

Ceylon

Andaman Islands

R-POW-456-C

Royal Sovereign-443-■C
Resolution-443-■C

Turn 4: The *Prince of Wales* completes repairs in Ceylon which also harbors the remainder of the British fleet (three cruisers, two battleships, and a carrier) which failed to raid after seeing the Japanese land-based air commitment in Indonesia. *Tennessee* and *Nevada* hole up in Samoa after failing their raid speed rolls.

TURN 5

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER MOVE-MENT: *If the Allies only had one more CV! They need to puncture Hawaii, Marshalls, or South Pacific. Indonesia is a side show. It would be nice to take three POC away from Japan, but a hole here cannot be exploited. Therefore, only British should be committed. Obviously, Japan must hold the previously mentioned perimeter areas and Indonesia, and Marianas if possible. Japan makes a tactically poor move. The Marshalls look very inviting. The Soryu would look much better in the Marshalls. With two land-based air and a CV in Marshalls and Hawaii, the Allies would be extremely lucky to pierce either. The South Pacific, while important, is over-protected with three CV's and two CVL's. The Ryujo would be much more valuable in Indonesia or Hawaii. The CA's committed in Central and North Pacific are asking for it. At least the Kumano and Mikuma can escape on a day roll unless the Allied player sends CV's which is doubtful. Why do this at all? The US player has a bunch of CA's that certainly are spoiling for a fight. The Allied player decides to attack Hawaii, which is certainly understandable. If he holds it, the Allies take back Pearl and Japan will be pummelled the last three turns. The only objection I have is that since the American is so weak in airstrike ability his chances of winning are very small. His chances in the Marshalls look better. Admittedly the benefits are not as good, but the chances of success are much higher. An attack into the Marshalls with all available CV's and a marine just might have done it. This maneuver, coupled with two marines in South Pacific to grab Guadalcanal, could give the Allies not only a hole, but forward airbases as well. This move would at least have given Japan a good reason to send Soryu into the Coral Sea. I do feel the Japanese have enough strength in Hawaii, but the Ryujo would have guaranteed this critical area. Both players commit minor forces to Indonesia and the Americans, as expected, raid the North and Central Pacific. The US raid into Hawaii will decide the game, and the odds are greatly with Japan. If only they had the Hornet.*

[This is a badly flawed move by both players. Each has given the other the chance for victory. As Mr. Hendrix points out the South Pacific is too heavily defended at the expense of the Marshalls and Hawaiian Islands. Furthermore, the Soryu is literally thrown away in the Coral Sea. By using the Soryu, Hiryu and Ryujo in the Marshalls and Hawaiian Islands the Japanese player could almost guarantee the integrity of his perimeter on turn 6. The American response is no better. This is the turn of decision. He has saved his fleet for four turns—now is the time to use it. Maximum pressure should be applied on this turn to break the perimeter for the counter-offensive to follow. To that end the raiders in the North Pacific and Central Pacific should have been joined by more units in the Marianas. However, the real fault lies in the complete misuse of the 2nd Marines in the Coral Sea which cannot hope to accomplish anything given the presence of the unopposed Yokosuka marines in the South Pacific. Guadalcanal cannot fall to this deployment. Fortunately, the Japanese player was foolish enough to waste the Soryu in an attempt to counter this mismove. Moving the 2nd Marines to the Marshalls or reinforcing it with the 3rd Marines from the Marshalls would have been an infinitely better move. If the American can retake Pearl Harbor and claim a forward airbase he will win the game. Neither player has played this most crucial turn very well. Why the Allied player is suddenly interested in controlling the Indian Ocean when very real threats exist in the Coral Sea is beyond me. At least three of the Allied land based air forces on the west half of the board belong in Coral Sea or the U.S. Mandate.]

TURN 5

THE BATTLES: Action begins in Indonesia where the Japanese player is anxious to know the status of his back door before resolving the battles on the rest of the board. The Allies again win the day/night roll but lose the battle as both CV's are disabled without downing the air unit. In the night action the British blow away the *Shokaku*, then follow their carriers back to Ceylon. In the Coral Sea the marine-hunting *Soryu* becomes the hunted and is quickly put away by *Indiana*. The marine will wait to see what develops before landing as *Yokosuka* in the South Pacific offsets its invasion threat to Guadalcanal. In North Pacific, the *Aoba* goes down without any fight and in Central Pacific, *Kumano* and *Mikuma* are caught and sunk for the loss of *Astoria*. Things are looking too good for the Allies up to now. However, the Japanese have saved their luck for the crucial battles. In the Marshalls, the air units sink the marine and reclaim the sea. In Hawaii it is yet *another* day/night battle. However, this one is all over after the day round. The Japanese threw the hits and requisite damage to sink *both* of the big US CV's—the US missed the Japanese air units completely! To add more than a dash of salt to these wounds, the riddled *Hiyo* sinks *Quincy* with her parthian shot and *then* the *I-Boat* throws a hit *and* the necessary five damage points to sink the marine! The Allies throw in the towel.

JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT: *Shokaku* and *Soryu* were indeed expended and *Soryu* with nothing to show for it. However, control of Indonesia is certainly worth *Shokaku*. Losing the two fast cruisers in Central Pacific was a shock though. I really expected them to get away in the daylight. Down two CV's and three CA's already, I'm shaken and questioning the validity of my move and my early confidence. I'm lucky he didn't raid the Marianas too! But after cold dice elsewhere the luck factor swings dramatically my way in Hawaii—where neither of us can afford to lose. This is one of those battles where *all* the dice go one way and *both* his heavy carriers are sunk and neither air unit is hit. To top it off, the submarine not only hits, but it sinks the marine. With this last straw the Allied player resigns the game.

Had the turn continued, *Yokosuka* would have reinforced Guadalcanal and Japan would gain eight POC for a total of 27. Turn 6 I would have withdrawn behind the perimeter and patrolled Marianas, Japan, Central Pacific, and North Pacific with a cruiser each. Indonesia would be held with air units and this would leave the fleet free to raid in response to Allied moves. At worst there would be no points won or lost. Turn 7 I need only patrol Japan to retain a 17 point lead which cannot be beaten. To tie he would have to control the entire board on turn 8. So to assure a win, Central Pacific must be held turn 7 if the Allies have scored enough points on turn 6 to threaten a tie. This would yield the POC necessary for a win and is a good Japanese move turn 7 regardless as it precludes raiders reaching Japan from Pearl Harbor on turn 8. So Ron's assessment of the situation was correct and he should know—he's done the same to me.

ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT: What a disaster! The minor battles in the North Pacific and Central Pacific opened the turn auspiciously, but every other mission failed. Indonesia looked promising for a fleeting moment but ultimately remained in Japanese hands. My marine failed to land in the Marshalls. And then Hawaii! He destroyed all of my CV's and I failed to roll a single hit. His submarine certainly came through for him—he not only hit the US marine unit but sank it as well. So much for putting land-based air units in forward positions next turn. With this loss I concede. I have no forward bases and my turn six reinforcements are totally out of position at Samoa without a hole in the perimeter to exploit. As the Japanese player a few weeks ago I had an opponent in this fix and won the game easily. I know what to expect, especially against an able opponent like Chris.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COMBAT: *Indonesia ends with a Japanese victory, but this battle is a preliminary. The Allies would have been very lucky to control Indonesia due to his greatly inferior air strength. The only chance he had was to roll a night action and sink the Shokaku. If this had occurred, the battle could have gone either way. Ron complains about his marine being turned back in the Marshalls. This is a minor problem because he'd be able to control it on turn six anyway. [Yes, but not with the more efficient land-based air.—ed.] The IJN probably would abandon it. The Central and North Pacific go well for the U.S., but these are meaningless battles unless they also take Hawaii. Hawaii; the big battle of the big turn. I will not go into probability computation in detail, but in order to shoot down a land-based air unit you must roll a six, and even then you only have a 50% chance of destroying it. With ten shots Ron will only get one air unit; very possibly none; very, very remotely both. Chris will certainly sink or disable at least two carriers on the first round. Ron had better shoot down one air unit in the first round. In addition to all this, the I-Boat is lurking about, ready to nail yet another CV. I don't like the Allied chances at all. The Allied player must open with a night battle to dispose of the Hiya. The game comes to a sudden conclusion with the demise of the American CV's in Hawaii. The I-Boat getting the marine only adds insult to injury. Chris explains in his comments why the game is over, so I will not comment on this further.*

SUMMARY

JAPAN: Ron no doubt feels I got away with murder—and with some justification (the night action in Coral Sea turn 3; taking Guadalcanal turn 4; and the crushing victory in Hawaii turn 5). I cannot deny that I got sixes when I needed them most, but this game was won on turn two when he lost his three air units and did not oppose me in the Central Pacific. Be this   a gift or not, the lesson of my narrow escape that turn should not be obscured by later events. Turn two was decisive as it left me in position to patrol Hawaii, and left him without sufficient air power to defend it. This game was unusual from the outset and clearly illustrates that in *VITP* anything can happen on each and every turn! *Expect the unexpected!*

ALLIES: Hindsight reveals that I made errors in the game and I never seemed to win the *crucial* battles. I threw away my carriers on turn four and gambled and lost on turn five. All in all it was the worst game of *VITP* I have ever played as the Allies.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY: *This replay does not represent a normal game of VITP. The ridiculous luck on turn one threw the game into a very strange course from the outset. The Japanese stretched themselves very thin on turn two and got away with it due to Ron's generosity. By doing so, Ron placed himself under a barrel from which he never escaped. War is an unforgiving business, and by passing up the best move for the sake of a more interesting Replay, Ron paid a heavy, but just, price. The critical event of the game occurred on turn four when Japan took Guadalcanal. If Ron had hit the Marshalls on turn five and won, the game would have gone down to the wire. Overall I felt Lady Luck was with Ron, but she failed him on the super-critical battles. I am surprised Ron kept it as close as he did. I thought his timid move on turn three would doom him for sure. With just one more CV on turn five the Allies might have been able to turn the tide. Ron did well in protecting his CV's on turns one through four, except for the slip with the Enterprise on turn four. The USN must resist the temptation of committing carriers early, unless it's*

Hawaiian Islands

JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

Aoba-117-†

Portland-117-S
Wichita-117-S
Vincennes-117-S

21AF-34*-■
22AF-34*-■
Hiyo-124³-†
I-Boat-10*

Pearl Harbor
(No British allowed except Victorious)

Johnston

Lexington137⁴-†
Saratoga-137⁴-T
Victorious027²-S
Massachusetts-565-S
W. Virginia-553-S
S. Dakota-543-S
N. Mexico-453-S
Idaho-433-S
California-453-S
Tennessee-453-S
1 Marine-043-†
Canberra-117-S
Chicago-117-S
Quincy-117-†

North Pacific Ocean
JAPAN 1 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Aleutian Islands
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Kumano-118-†
Mikuma-118-†

Midway

Samoa
(No British allowed)

Attu

Central Pacific Ocean
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

Washington-565-S
Louisville-117-S
Houston-117-S
Pensacola-117-S
Minneapolis-117-S
Astoria-117-†

Marshall Islands
JAPAN 1 POC

Maleolap

U.S. Mandate
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

Naval AF-24*-■
13AF-24*-■

Tone-118-■

23AF-34*-■
24AF-34*-■

Australia-117-S
DeRuyter-117-S
Chester-117-S
3 Marine-043-†

Kwajalein

South Pacific Ocean
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

New Hebrides

Japanese Islands
JAPAN 3 POC

Kako-117-T
Haruna-436-T
Kirishima-436-T
Kongo-436-T
Hiei-436-T
Haguro-127-T
Chokai-127-T
Maya-127-T
Myoko-127-T
Atago-127-T
Ashigara-127-T

Guadalcanal
ALLIES 2 POC

Coral Sea
JAPAN 2 POC   ALLIES 2 POC

11AF-24*-■
14AF-24*-■
Nevada-443-N
Indiana-565-XN
2 Marine-043#G

Yokosuka Navy Yard

Saipan

Truk

Yokosuka-000-#G
Akagi-146⁴-■T
Kaga-145⁴-■T
Ryujo-015²-■T
Hosho-014¹-■T
Zuikaku-138⁴-T
Musashi-695-T
Yamato-695-T
Nagato-554-T
Mutsu-554-T
Ise-444-T

Port Moresby

Hiryu-118³-■T
Chikuma-118-■T
Suzuya-118-■T

Chichi

Marianas Islands
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Australia
(No British allowed)

R-Hornet-016⁴-A

Soryu-128³-†

TURN 5   IJN   +8 POC   +27 TOTAL

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

25AF-34*-■
Shokaku-138⁴-†

Indonesia
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 1 POC

Royal Sovereign-443-C
Prince of Wales-456-C
Repulse-336-C
*Ramillies-443-C
*Hermes124¹-XC
Illustrious-027²-XC
Exeter-117-C
Devonshire-117-C
Shropshire-117-C
Dorsetshire-117-C
Cornwall-117-C

RNZAF-24*-■
10AF-24*-■

Saigon

Singapore

Indian Ocean
JAPAN 3 POC   ALLIES 3 POC

Ceylon
(No U.S. allowed)

Andaman Islands

5AF-24*-■
RAAF-24*-■

Bay of Bengal
ALLIES 1 POC

Turn 5: *Hornet* is under repair in Australia.

a do or die situation. I've let all my CV's sit in port a few times just so the I-Boat can't torpedo them. Chris sank five USN CV's in one game against me with the I-Boat! If the USN goes into turn five with three CV's and the Victorious he's done fairly well.

If only the Hornet had dodged that last Kate!

[Despite my harsh criticism of both players, I should point out that it is easier to theorize about a perfectly played game, than it is to actually play one. Both players displayed a reasonable grasp of the game system and looked bad only under the unforgiving magnification of a Series Replay microscope. The game was interesting, if only to prove how many times the American could have won it given slightly better dice or a different move.]

☆

AH PHILOSOPHY . . . *Continued from Page 2*

In all fairness to the old PENN CON organizers they did have to make do with the facilities of Widener College after a late change of site due to difficulties with the University of Delaware. In other areas they fared much better. The conduct of tournaments and seminars was quite adequately handled with ample facilities providing a stark contrast to the terribly crowded conditions of the year before. Registration was also handled smoothly with little or no congestion in the registration areas. Unfortunately, this writer cannot give them unreserved applause due to the no-show policy adhered to. This year's sponsors had made much ado about their no-refund policy to tournament and seminar registrants to discourage people from signing up in advance for more events than they could partake in, and thus "selling-out" such events to late comers. Unfortunately, they did not tell the various sponsors of events that they were going to keep these no-show funds for themselves, as opposed to turning them over to the event sponsors as has been the case in ORIGINS past. As no-shows at ORIGINS traditionally run from 10 to 30% of paid registrants, this amounted to a considerable sum. Tournament sponsors almost invariably lose money hosting such an event, but they are glad to do it to provide fields of competition in their products for their customers. However, many of them try to balance the prizes they offer to the various winners to approximate roughly the entrance fees taken in during the tournament. To "sneak" these funds away from them at the last moment without prior notice is a low blow. ORIGINS deserves better.

Other than that, ORIGINS '80 was a great improvement over ORIGINS '79, although still a far cry from the highlights of ORIGINS '78. Much of this was due strictly to the inadequacies of Widener as a site, however, and the organizers can scarcely be blamed for the lack of nearby motels, restaurants, or sufficient dormitory housing.

Perhaps the most distressing part of ORIGINS '80 for those who care about such things was the blatant commercialism associated with the Charles Roberts Awards this year. One company printed ballots with the names of its products already filled in, while another blatantly advertised that attendees vote a straight company "ticket"—posting signs which requested specific voting patterns for that company's products. Such blatant attempts at ballot box stuffing threaten to destroy all credibility of the awards. Perhaps the awards committee should consider disciplinary action similar to that imposed by the NCAA on errant colleges for illegal recruiting techniques on those companies which violate rules of good taste.

The AH tournaments and seminars were once again well attended and much good competition was enjoyed by all. The prestigious AH 500 was once again won by a first-timer as this most tortuous competition continued to defy repeat winners. For Phil Evans success came after five previous tries at the elusive AH 500 plaque symbolic of the AH boardgaming championship. We do not have a complete list of tournament winners due to illegible handwriting and lost certificates but, as is our custom, we pay homage to those winners we are aware of in the following listing.

EVENT	WINNER	ORIGIN
RAIL BARON	Roger Hoffecker	Bear, DE
RICHTHOFEN'S WAR	Andrew Hoffman	Bethlehem, PA
DUNE	Ronald Weimar	Chalfonte, PA
WIZARD'S QUEST	Ronald Weimar	Chalfonte, PA
WIN, PLACE & SHOW	Bill Cleary	Baltimore, MD
KINGMAKER	Frank Gardner	Santa Maria, CA
AIR FORCE	Bob Jones	Pointe Claire, QUE
SPEED CIRCUIT	Andrew Wright	Baltimore, MD
AH CLASSIC 500	Phil Evans	Arlington, VA
RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN	Robert Beyma	Pocomoke, MD
CRESCENDO OF DOOM	Bert Baker	S. New Berlin, NY
FOOTBALL STRATEGY	Mark Maticek	Milwaukee, WI
WAR AT SEA	Richard Bauer	Germantown, MD
WS&IM	Mark Hancock	Plymouth, MA

To many the best news coming out of ORIGINS '80 transpired at the annual business meeting on Friday evening. There, the newly organized Games Manufacturing Association comprised of five manufacturers awarded the ORIGINS '81 franchise to the PACIFICON sponsors who will finally bring ORIGINS to the west coast on the July 4th weekend at the Dunfee Motel in San Mateo, CA. Aside from questions about adequate space, ORIGINS '81 promises the most luxurious accommodations for an ORIGINS yet, as it marks the first time that the national convention has left the friendly confines of a college campus and it's attendant inexpensive lodging for that of a luxury hotel. The results may dictate the site of ORIGINS for years to come.

The Pacificon group was awarded the ORIGINS franchise over a competing bid from the Baltimore ORIGINS Committee, which had proposed hosting the event at the University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus on July 24-26. However, the facilities at UMBC were so outstanding that the GMA also broke precedence by awarding the ORIGINS VIII franchise for 1982 to the Baltimore group. This appeared to be the best of both worlds and we applaud the GMA for their decision. Not only does the West Coast finally get a crack at ORIGINS, but the best facility used to date is guaranteed for the following year—when it will be an even better site due to additional construction now in progress. As a consequence the Baltimore group will now host a dry-run for ORIGINS '82 in the form of a regional east coast con called ATLANTICON to be held next July at the UMBC site. This show is expected to take up much of the slack created by the absence of ORIGINS from the east coast for the first time and should serve as a palatable substitute. Avalon Hill has already committed itself to attendance and will run a full slate of its usual activities. In fact, due to the proximity of the site to the company and the additional expenses incurred in travel to California we will probably run more events at ATLANTICON, including the annual AH-SPI softball game, which due to travel restrictions, will have to be altered to some sort of All Star game on the West Coast. Similar commitments have been received from most of the other major companies in the hobby. Anyone interested in aiding the Baltimore ORIGINS Committee by sponsoring events, or volunteering their services in any way are urged to write: ATLANTICON, INC., P.O. Box 15405, Baltimore, MD 21220. All publications, clubs, or potential exhibitors in-

terested in getting on their mailing list for a series of monthly progress reports should address their inquiries to the same address. That sums up the recent convention goings-on; a mixed bag of good and not-so-good news but things are looking up for the future.

Lastly, lest we forget the most imporant part of the weekend's activities, it should be reported that the Avalon Hill Swallows emerged still undefeated following their third annual softball game. Notice I said undefeated. We did not win, but we didn't lose. Yes, fans, the immortal Swallows and the Gnomes from Gotham engaged in another tie—as the Swallows roared back from behind to tie the contest 14-14 on the strength of coach Wes "WS&IM" Coates' 9th inning homerun. The Swallows appeared to have fallen on hard times when they fell behind 10-1 after just two innings due to their own comedy of errors and solid hitting by the SPI squad. Fortunately, the Swallows were able to chip away at the Gnome lead led by Doug Burke's third consecutive five hit, one homer performance and solid fielding by venerable left fielder Tom Shaw. They say a tie is like kissing your sister, but after trailing 10-1, my sister looked like Raquel Welch.

Before bringing this column to a close for another month I should mention the efforts of the various authors whose efforts brought the *CRESCENDO OF DOOM* special issue to pass. The contributions of Bob Medrow who has made a habit of winning our annual Editor's Choice awards with his *SQUAD LEADER* analyses goes without saying. Not as obvious, but every bit as important, are the efforts of other *COD* playtesters Jon Mishcon, Joe and John Suchar, Courtney Allen, Steve Spoulos, and Martin Anderson. Courtney and his group put much work into the design and playtest of the Quick Play American paratroops scenarios included in this issue as a special insert. Jon and his group did yeoman work with the playtest as well as providing the play balance modules for the COD scenarios which Bob Medrow did not address. These latter comments will appear in the Sept.-Oct. issue due to a lack of space this time. Many *SL* fans are anxious to get on with the American end of things and are chaffing at the bit for the American armor specs. We're not about to go out on a limb and release the American armor stats yet, but these scenarios should at least whet your appetite for the *G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY* gamette which will follow. We introduced these scenarios at this year's ORIGINS *COD* tournament and the response there was enthusiastic. We think you'll enjoy them. The piece density is low specifically to allow you to get a complete handle on the entire game system. You'll appreciate the immense detail built into the armor system far more as you try to get the maximum usage from your single armored car in the Niscemi-Biscari Highway than you would trying to command a platoon of Panthers across the Russian steppes.

Lastly, I should direct your attention to page 48 where you will see that we have finally taken a step to answer the pleas of those readers upset over their inability to acquire copies of out-of-print back issues. We have reprinted Vol. 14, No. 5 and 15, No. 6 in black and white only. In addition, the word "REPRINT" appears on the cover to protect the collector's value of the original editions. The lack of color does cause some problems in unit identification with some of the diagrams, but otherwise the reprints are well done and comparable in quality to most of the other hobby publications.

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SPEED CIRCUIT CAMPAIGN GAME

Now available for the first time is a collection of ten Grand Prix race courses for our popular *SPEED CIRCUIT* game. These courses are printed individually in full color using the same color scheme which appears in the actual boxed game. These tracks are not the same as the ones published earlier in *ALL STAR REPLAY* or the boxed game. They come complete with an instruction sheet outlining the order of play for your own Campaign Game Racing Season and background on the individual tracks. The actual tracks included in the set are: Grosser Preis von Osterreich (Zeltweg, Austria); Watkins Glen; Grande Premio de Brasil; Grote Prijs Van Nederland; Gran Premio de la Republica Argentina; Long Beach Grand Prix; Gran Premio de Espana; Canadian Grand Prix; Grosser Preis von Deutschland; and the British Grand Prix. The complete set sells for $13.00 plus 10% postage and handling charges from: The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

AREA TOP 50

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	W. Dobson	18	2511RJP	1
2.	K. Combs	16	2482VNQ	2
3.	R. Chiang	24	2178GHN	3
4.	D. Cornell	18	2175OHK	4
5.	D. Garbutt	14	2107EGL	7
6.	T. Oleson	25	2104RSZ	5
7.	D. Burdick	16	2083EDJ	6
8.	F. Freeman	9	2018DEE	9
9.	J. Kreuz	12	2001FFK	11
10.	P. Huffman	19	1978EEG	12
11.	M. Sincavage	5	1972CCH	13
12.	L. Newbury	18	1964EHK	15
13.	D. Barker	23	1962GGM	17
14.	P. Siragusa	9	1962CEG	10
15.	R. Leach	18	1933GJN	18
16.	F. Preissle	13	1913JKT	20
17.	J. Zajicek	19	1865GJP	21
18.	R. Moore	1	1836CEB	—
19.	N. Markevich	8	1827CEE	23
20.	C. Combs	6	1822PKD	22
21.	G. Charbonneau	3	1820CEG	24
22.	B. Sinigaglio	1	1817CEE	—
23.	L. Kelly	9	1811UUZ	14
24.	W. Knapp	10	1795JLR	25
25.	R. Kolkick	1	1785CDF	—
26.	C. Olson	5	1771CEH	27
27.	F. Sebastian	11	1753FHM	28
28.	E. Miller	2	1732GJN	35
29.	S. Martin	9	1730EGH	39
30.	D. Greenwood	17	1728EEH	29
31.	N. Cromartie	1	1725FFM	—
32.	D. Wilcox	5	1724HJR	34
33.	W. Letzin	12	1720DDG	30
34.	P. Dobson	14	1718DEF	31
35.	K. Blanch	18	1705FGK	32
36.	D. Munsell	11	1698FDF	33
37.	R. Hoffman	2	1697DGK	49
38.	A. Smith	1	1694CBH	—
39.	T. Baruth	1	1693CDF	—
40.	I. LeBouef	4	1692GIO	48
41.	W. Scott	12	1681GFM	38
42.	T. Slafka	11	1681EFK	37
43.	D. McCarty	2	1669CEH	42
44.	D. Tierney	1	1660DEJ	—
45.	R. Zajac	5	1654EFH	36
46.	A. Sloley	1	1653CCH	—
47.	P. Carson	9	1650EDE	40
48.	J. Rarick	6	1647CFI	41
49.	B. Thompson	1	1642FFI	—
50.	D. Stephens	1	1636H1P	—
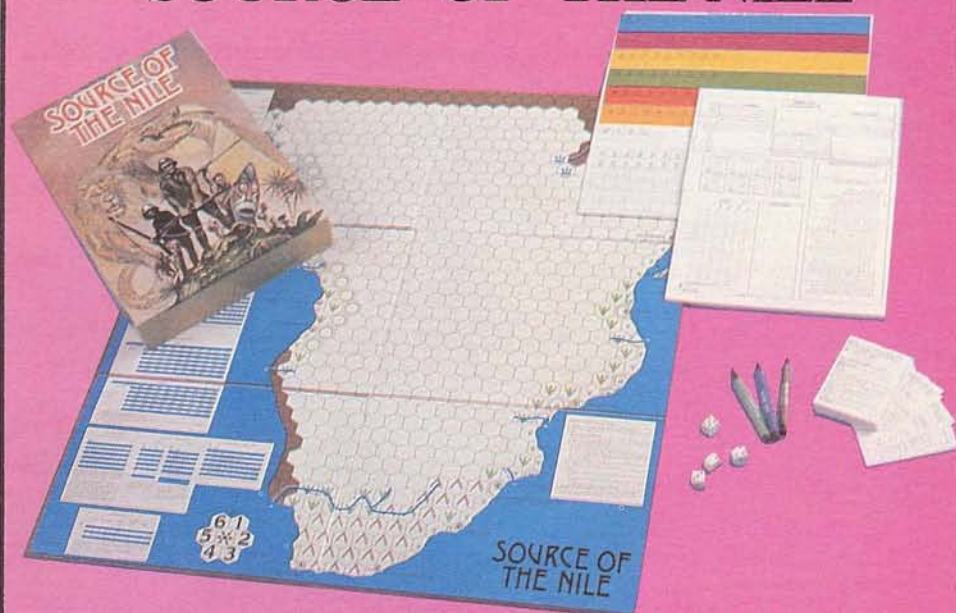
SOURCE OF THE NILE

Follow the great 19th-century explorers in their search for the source of the Nile. Discover mountains, jungles, deserts and great lakes in the uncharted heart of the Dark Continent. Meet and deal with native tribes—survive animal attack, disease, and starvation—overcome superstition, desertion and disaster to add your discoveries to the map.

Source of The Nile is designed to be an educating and challenging game in which players compete primarily with Nature *and* with each other. Luck tends to be an element in the game but can be overcome by careful play. Because the game situation is forever changing, there is no single best strategy; however, players must weigh risks against gains with every decision they make and good judgement will pay off.

The game is played on a mapboard showing Africa from Khartoum to Capetown and Lagos to Mombasa. The periphery of this map, showing the territory known ca. 1820, is filled in: the center is blank. A hexagonal grid is superimposed on the map to regulate movement and to delimit territory explored. In the course of play, each player moves a token (representing his explorer) from explored hexagons onto blank hexagons one at a time; terrain, native tribes and other discoveries within the hexagon are then semi-randomly determined, with allowance made for previous discoveries in adjacent hexagons. The player interacts with the discoveries (e.g., negotiates with new natives for guides) and records them on the mapboard using wax crayons. The mapboard surface is erasable; if the explorer dies before returning to Europe to publish his discoveries, all hexagons which only he has explored will be erased and "subsequent explorers will find that his discoveries were only rumors"; i.e., when other players explore the erased hexagons later they have to generate new discoveries there.

When explorers do return to civilization, however, they may publish their discoveries, after which they are safe from erasure. Players may also emulate real explorers by withholding some of their discoveries since they will enjoy some advantages when moving through terrain or dealing with natives known only to them. Points are scored for discoveries as they are published and once scored will not be lost if the explorer dies or is retired by his player. A player may retire his explorer at any time and then start a new explorer in Europe.

Before each trip to Africa, explorers will have to raise money to support their expedition. New explorers with no discoveries to their credit must do this by drawing chance cards for several turns until they feel their finances are adequate. Experienced explorers can accelerate this process by publishing discoveries, which will allow them to draw additional chance cards.

As there are over 420 blank hexagons to be explored, the game is not usually played to the bitter end at one sitting. Instead a reasonable time-limit is set, at the end of which all explorers retire and the player with the most points is the winner. The complete exploration of Africa—and the final determination of the source of the Nile—can be the result of several games, each starting where the last left off. After all, the adventure is in the search for the source of the Nile, not in the finding of it!

In this updated version of the original Source Of The Nile game published by Discovery Games, several new components and rules have been added:
• A player aid pad which can record not only the current composition of an expedition but the amount of provisions it can carry; the composition of caches; and the strengths of tribes encountered.
• Special discoveries which are secretly placed on the board. Players can now send their expeditions to search for Dr. Livingston or King Solomon's Mines.
• A simplified combat procedure which eliminates most of the dice rolling now needed without changing the probability of results.
• Easy access to charts and tables now located on the mapboard or the player aid pad.
• An expanded set of 108 cards which includes more disasters and donations. The mapping of unknown areas of Africa can now be accomplished quickly and easily by checking the result on the cards rather than by rolling dice.

Each game contains:
• A full color erasable mounted mapboard of Africa.
• One sheet of playing counters.
• A pack of 108 Event cards containing disasters, discoveries and donations.
• A player aid pad for maintaining the expeditions.
• One instruction folder
• Four dice
• Three crayons

SOURCE OF THE NILE is available for $15 plus 10% postage and handling charges from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

THE LONGEST DAY
The Assault, Build-up and Breakout from Normandy, June-August 1944

JUNE 6, 1944: The coast of German-occupied Normandy shakes with the pounding of thousands of tons of bombs and naval gun projectiles. Five thousand Allied ships unload a quarter of a million soldiers onto Hilter's vaunted "Atlantic Wall"! Now you can command each and every unit that fought on both sides of this most crucial of all battles in Western Europe.

The immense game package of *THE LONGEST DAY* includes five scenarios covering different phases of the campaign, along with a massive Campaign Game (87 turns in length and encompassing the entire struggle for Normandy!), plus many fascinating game variations which allow players to investigate alternative historical outcomes.

Scenarios include: *Normandy Beachhead* (June 6-June 8), which presents the critical landing and first few days of the campaign—the period when German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was convinced that the Allies would be at their weakest and susceptible to a smashing counterattack at water's edge. *The Fall of Cherbourg* (June 19-June 27) pits American forces against time and the Germans, in a race to capture the vital port of Cherbourg before its defenders reduce it to a useless pile of rubble. *Operation Cobra* (July 25-July 31) portrays the powerful American offensive that shook the Allies free of the Normandy bocage, and provides a unique challenge to the German player's ability to survive against overwhelming odds. *Mortain* (August 6-August 8) depicts the last German panzer offensive in France. *The Falaise Pocket* (August 17-August 21) demonstrates the ignominy of the German collapse in France. Finally, the *Campaign Game* (June 6-August 31) covers the entire period, from the initial landings until the final breakout from Normandy.

EACH GAME INCLUDES:
• Huge seven-section 55″ × 44″ full-color mounted mapboard of the entire Normandy campaign area, detailing over 2,000 towns and cities, as well as all major and minor road systems, ports, railroads, and the historically correct starting position for every German combat unit (down to company and battery level!) in Normandy on June 6, 1944, based on actual German situation maps for that date.

• Over 1500 two-sided counters representing every fighting formation present in the Normandy campaign, with the standard counter one battalion of German or Allied troops. Additional counters represent Allied air and naval forces, German railroad guns and rail repair units, Mulberries, troop trains, fortifications, and much more. Based upon the WWII German unit I.D. system, *THE LONGEST DAY's* counters yield a tremendous amount of historical information, as well as concise and easy-to-read game information. A typical artillery counter, for example, would show the size of the unit (brigade group, battalion or battery), its method of transportation (horse, wheel, half-track, full-track or railroad), the number of guns in the unit, the types of guns, their caliber, and their model number and nationality of origin, where appropriate. Yet with all this, the counters are designed so that the *historical* information is visually suppressed while the *game* information is highlighted.

• 48-page rules booklet containing complete relatively simple rules of play (this is *definitely* the easiest to play of *any* of the so-called monster games on the market, and requires *no* paperwork or mental gyrations). Booklet also includes completely indexed rules, optional and "what-if" rules, historical commentary, voluminous designer's notes, annotated bibliography, and much more.
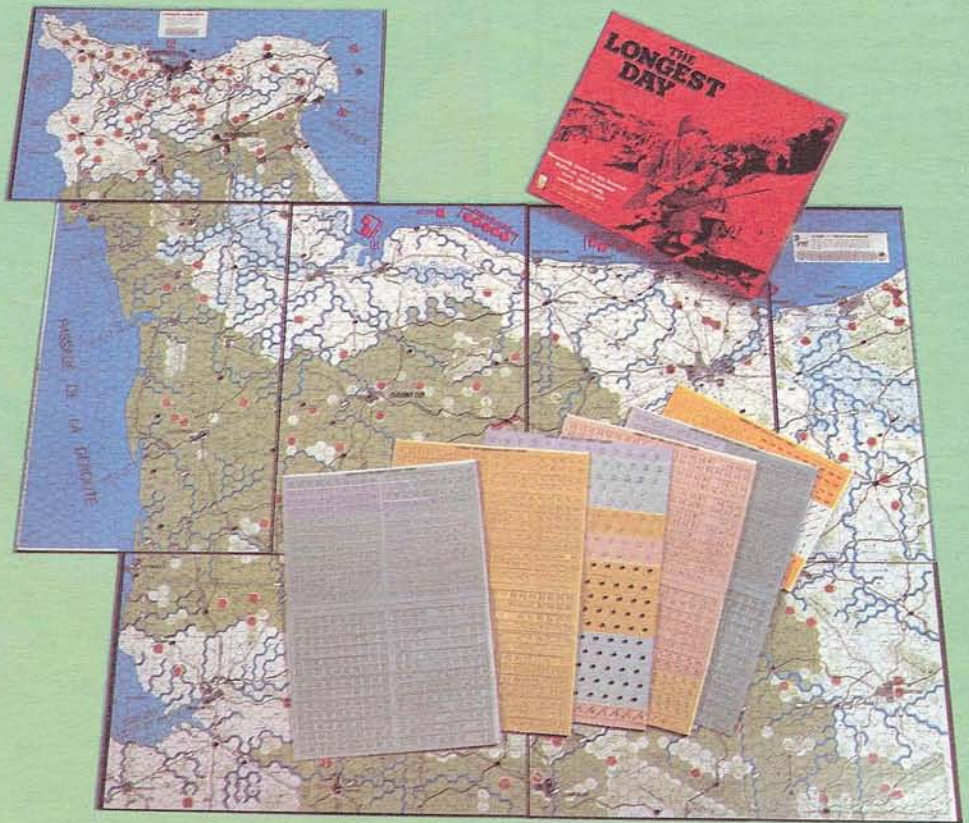
• Three massive, triple-paneled Player Aid Cards, each measuring 36″ × 14″. These charts present complete orders of battle for both sides, as well as order of appearance and scenario setup maps, German Strategic Movement (for off-board reinforcements in metropolitan France, as well as Allied Strategic Bombing of those units), supply and replacement schedules, and whole range of "systems", including: Allied Assault Landing Schedule, Allied Naval Gunfire Display, Allied Airborne Drift and Dispersal Tables, Naval and Coastal Artillery Bombardment Tables, Weather Cycle Table, Port and Mulberry Logistics Tables, Turn Record Track, Allied Aircraft Deployment, Railroad Bombardment Tables, and others. Each card contains the complete setup for a scenario (with map and orders of battle) on one side, and campaign charts and tables on the reverse.

• Combat Results and Terrain Effects Tables, including Fortification Charts and Combined Arms Modifier Matrix.

• Special discount coupon for counter trays for those 1500 counters.

THE LONGEST DAY is available from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 for $65.00 plus 10% postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
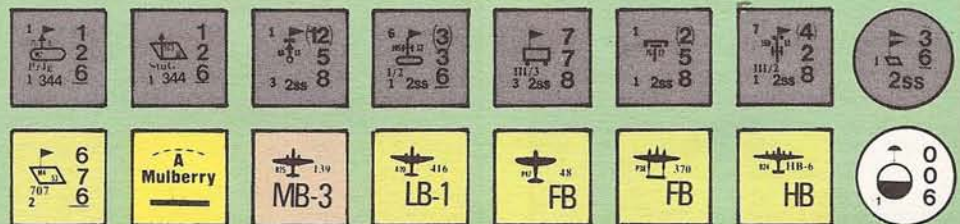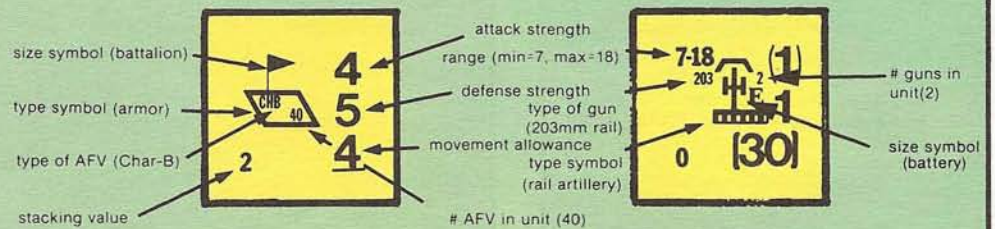
Gentlemen,

In respone to Vern Paxon's "Blood and Guts Starship Troopers" (Vol. 16, No. 5), there are a few comments I would like to make. Mr. Paxon seems overly fond of Scale 1 demos because of the automatic elimination and radiation areas they create. Yet one of his main objectives in demo placement is to create protected breaches. I am forced to point out that HE (High Explosive) demos will accomplish this objective just as easily and you can have twice as many. It would be an unlikely coincidence to have an M.I. (Mobile Infantry) on the demo hex when it is blown to collapse the tunnel, so the extra demo point you spend on the Scale 1 is wasted. Similarly, if your objective is to collapse the tunnel on M.I. using tunnel movement, the HE is again the demo of choice. A Scale 1 would kill the M.I., whereas HE would most likely cause damage only and trap him under tons of debris where he will be worth three times the KIA points as it is unlikely that he can be retrieved.

In his discussion of Scouts, Paxon misses two of their most important uses. Scouts are easily the best choice for evacuating WIA units since they are fast and otherwise almost useless in combat. Scouts are also fast and cheap units to send underground for reconnaissance. Personally, apart from an occasional HNG, I never give Scouts SW&E. They *always* draw fire since in most Scenarios they are worth the same victory points as the other M.I. and are far easier to kill.

Paxon mentions that there are usually six C.E.s (Combat Engineers) to five HWBs (Heavy Weapon Beams). This is true only if you forget the fact that there are usually two hives. The hives can be designed to be mutually supporting thus giving six or seven HWBs for the six C.E.s. This is frequently enough to completely eliminate the C.E.s and guarantee an Arachnid victory. Swapping demos between C.E.s is indeed a useful way for them to rearm, but it is just too time consuming to be of much value. If, for example, a C.E. suffers a HVY result during the Arachnid segment of Turn 5, he will not be able to begin demo emplacement again until Turn 11. This is true unless you allow the C.E.s to exchange demos while still loaded in their respective air cars which does not make sense. The C.E.s are also extremely vulnerable during the exchange when there will be two of them (and usually two air cars) in the same hex. This is a perfect target for a HWB.

Paxon next mentions something he calls "Guaranteed Bug Safety." I take great exception to this as it has been my experience that any Bug emerging onto the surface is as good as dead. They should be brought up only for a completely irresistible target. These targets are usually limited to the S.T. (Special Talent) and the C.E.s and definitely does *not* include a lone M.I. The problem of Bug survival is compounded beyond all reason if they actually leave the breach for the attack. This is foolhardy. I can think of numerous ways to eliminate the Bugs and prevent the capture of the WIA M.I. in the example that he gives. Which to choose will depend on your tactical situation at the time (e.g., SW&E available and in range).

The easiest thing to do is to assault all the Bugs in the stack (as he suggests) with enough units to ensure disruption of each. Of course this could be a sucker play to draw your M.I. into a demo hex (used it myself, works great, although it is a hell of a waste of a good HWB). Your *ST* map may be of some help here. Never, never, never leave any of the M.I. on the stack after close combat—why he suggests this I just cannot imagine.

Assuming you do not have enough M.I. around for close combat on all the Bugs, the next simplest approach would be to drop a HNG (Heavy Nerve Gas) down the breach which would prevent the Bugs from re-entering the tunnel and capturing the WIA M.I.

Instead of the "Nuc Overkill Shockwave Gambit" (it does work, but what a waste of nucs) a smarter approach would be to nuc the breach hex. Even if this does not kill the WIA M.I. it creates a rad area through which he cannot pass alive and so cannot be captured. It also gives you free 1-1 attacks on all the Bugs when they attempt to re-enter the tunnel.

Suppose the M.I. is only stunned or damaged during the initial attack. Disrupt the HWB by close assault and move a couple of M.I. into the breach. When they enter the tunnel next turn it will prevent the Bugs from returning to the brain cell after they re-enter the breach with the captured WIA M.I. since they will first have to eliminate the M.I. in the breach tunnel hex. I know what you are thinking—why not use the other Warriors in the brain cell to clear the path?

Remember that most of the Warrior strength is already on the surface. A few 2-1s are all the Bug will get even if he does attack which will give you a 33% chance of keeping a functional unit to block the tunnel. A HNG dropped into the breach while all this is going on will ensure elimination of all the Bugs and save the WIA M.I.

This guaranteed Bug safety thing is a farce, especially if you leave the breach. As Paxon himself states "a trigger-happy Bug player is a short-lived Bug player."

As an alternative to what Paxon says about Landing Boats, let me suggest the following. The landing beacon should set down in Turn 1 as close to the center of the board as possible. Use hex V17 as an aiming point and the beacon will scatter randomly but still be near the center. The Landing Boat sets down on Turn 2 and in spite of what you might think there is only about a 5% chance of landing on an automatic elimination hex (if you do, congratulate your opponent for a game well played and continue). On Turn 3, function the ST from the LB hex. Using Paxon's method the soonest you can function the ST is Turn 4 (despite what he says) since you waste a turn moving the ST by air car from the LB hex. The important thing is *time*, the Terran does not have enough of it and cannot afford to waste that turn. Your opponent will of course get wise to this strategy. You can vary the target hex for the landing beacon but you will still keep it near the center (somewhere along the 13-23 rows as the hives are most often located East and West). If for some reason your ST survives his initial functioning, use him again *immediately*. In this event you will not have to use extrapolation at all, you will know. Keeping the ST safe until later to draw fire as Paxon suggests is extremely poor play.

G. Scott Roberston
Westminster, CA

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Dear Mr. Greenwood:

I waited impatiently for *COD*, as I was anxious to take advantage of the British order of battle, and construct my own scenarios to depict the 1st airborne's stand at Arnhem in Sept. 1944. But when I examined the game, and read the rules I discovered your rules do not include British PIATs. What happened? Will these antitank weapons be included in *G.I.: Anvil of Victory*? Also I noticed the gamette did not include any modified American made tanks or tank-destroyers. Will these vehicles be included in *G.I.: Anvil of Victory*? If PIATs are to be included in the next gamette perhaps you have developed the rules for PIATs, if so would it be possible for you to inform me of their To Hit numbers? That way I could develop my own rules for this AT weapon.

Chris Dawson
Morristown, NJ

There is a limit to just how many counters you can stuff in a box! The PIAT counters and rules were not included because the weapon was not used in the years covered by COD and there was a very real shortage of half-inch counters. It will be introduced in the next gamette along with special scenarios pertaining to it. Similarly, as the introduction to the British armor section states all British armor which was actually manufactured in the United States such as the Firefly will be included in G.I. We will not offer this information piecemeal before we have completed testing as it would lead to confusion and constant requests for "future" information on the series. When testing is completed, this data and the appropriate counters will be made available in due course.

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Dear Don:

The initial Russian set-up suggested by my letter (Vol. 16, #5) is incorrect. One of the 2-5s in the Kiev district starts at S27, not U27 as printed. The U27 placement permits a 7-1 + Stuka AV on the 5-3 in Lwow and subsequent envelopment of the heavy Kiev group. The S27 placement precludes this.

Also, I usually play risk-averse in the Baltic, with the 5-3 at G19 and the 6-3 at H19.

Mark Brazas
San Francisco, California

Dear Don,

Gratified as I was to see in Vol. 16, No. 5 such an extensive and specific discussion of tactics in my favorite wargame, *THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN*, as provided by Mr. Jameson's article, "Tactical Alternatives in 1914," I must point out several shortcomings in Jameson's tactics.

First, he fails to see the necessity of setting up a unit on F19 to prevent the Germans from retreating forward past the defenders on H20, or from moving a HQ unit to hex D18 on second impulse (which would put Leningrad in stuka range on the next turn). J.R. Jarvinen's "Viipuri" setup had the same failing in the Baltic. I recommend this setup: 11 inf, 1 arm on H20, 7 arm on F19, 8 inf on H19. Note that in this setup, the 8 inf forms a connected line of ZOC's with the Riga garrison and the unit(s) on K20, insuring that German second impulse penetration will not be deep.

Second, his method for preventing what he calls the "Kaunas stampede" (I call it the "superblitz" because it can occur in other places besides Kaunas, and it is a super tactic for the Germans to use anytime they can), while adequate in standard games, will not prevent German AGN & AGS armor from pouring through an AV'd corridor at Kaunas if the Mediterranean Distraction variant is being played, which adds the four combat factors of the Fleigerkorps (German paratroops) to the fray. Some gamers (myself included) like to play a homemade variant in which it is arbitrarily assumed that the Fleigerkorps is used against Russia instead of Crete without invoking the whole Mediterranean Distraction. The following setup in the Western Military District will prevent the superblitz even when the Fleigerkorps is used in a game: 3 cav on J22, 3 inf on J21, 10 inf on K20, 5 arm on L23, 8 arm on L22, 6 cav on M21, 4 inf on O23. This works because in order to AV the 10 inf, units must be placed on hex K21, which is in the ZOC of the 8 arm on L22 necessitating a soak-off against the 8 arm. Even with the Fleigerkorps added, AGC has only one combat factor to spare after AVing the Kaunas corridor, and there are no units in AGC except for the HQ (which cannot move on 1st impulse) which have only one combat factor. Since the soak-off cannot be made, the final AV attack against the 10 inf cannot be made.

Third, he fails to accomplish his purpose with his Odessa and Kiev District setups, making it possible to attack the AGS armor to move to W26 on first impulse to attack the Russian unit on V26 while Rumanian units are disposing of the Russian 9 inf on Y25, and then on second impulse the AGS armor can move to X24 where it blocks the rail from Lwow and can attack the Russian 12 inf on W24 at 3:1 odds (4:1 with aid from the 49 mt), or at voluntarily reduced odds of 1:1 so the German armor can be retreated forward to W22, X22, Y22, cutting off the Kiev District units from supply or at least blocking all the Kiev District rail lines. Clearly, the 4 cav and 12 arm should be set up on Y25 and Y24 respectively, the way Jarvinen had them in his "Viipuri" setup. Even if the 4 cav is AV'd, the 12 arm still can only be attacked by Rumanian units on first impulse, and only two factors are left over from AVing the 4 cav. Thus the German AGS units are limited to X25 and W25 from which to attack the 12 inf on second impulse. Also, the 9 inf should be set up on BB25—not AA25, where it can be surrounded. Placing the 9 inf on BB25 will also prevent AGS armor from moving to CC25 on first impulse, giving them further to go to get to the Bug River, and forcing them to start from AA26 instead. When the AGS armor start from AA26, they can only break the Bug River at one point (AA22), whereas if they are allowed to start their second impulse movement from CC25, they can break the Bug River at three points (AA22, BB22, CC22). There is, of course, no advantage to the defender in being behind rivers on AA25 during the first turn of the game.

While I cannot claim my setup in the Kiev Military District is definitive, this seems to be the best I have found to date: 5 inf on R25, 6 inf on R24, 4 arm on T27, 3 inf on V27, 5 cav on V25, 11 arm on U26, 26 inf on W25, 12 inf on W24. This will keep the Germans out of the mountains southeast of Lwow at least on first impulse, so they cannot get beyond the mountains on second impulse, while leaving fewer units exposed to the onslaught out in the open. It also strengthens the seam between the Kiev and Odessa districts, to the point where few German commanders would care to attack there.

Fourth, I must protest indignantly the very idea of sending HQ units streaking out beyond the front line troops to complete the encirclements of Russian defenders, especially early in the game. Besides the fact that this is unrealistic, risking the immensely valuable HQ units early in the game is to say the least, zany!

Ron Lambert
Troy, MI

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Gentlemen:

Regarding my article "Tactical Alternatives in 1941" appearing in Vol. 16, No. 5 of *THE GENERAL*, the following corrections are offered to the diagrams that appeared with that article. The 3rd inf was left out of figure W-9. It should be in hex M21. The 5:1 attack against it in that figure is impossible with the pieces shown. Hex L22 should contain the 7th, 43rd and 8th inf; K22 the 57th panzer, 6th inf and 12th inf; and M22 the 47th, 46th and 39th panzers. The 26th inf is in S25 in figure K-3 and hex R26 in figures K-4, K-6, and K-7.

David Jameson
Glenelg, MD

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Dear Editor,

I would like to point out some errors in the illustrations of my Blood 'N Guts Starship Troopers article in Vol. 16, No. 5.

In figure 2, the Sample Bug Hive is missing a three hex secondary tunnel segment off of brain C's primary. It should be running up between the two HE demos which in the present illustration are not adjacent to a tunnel, contrary to the rules. Also, an HE demo should be adjacent to Brain D's primary, two hexes from the complex. Finally, a scale six demo should be two hexes west of the queen cell.

In figure 4, the troopers should be shown firing into a Rad hex, not a breach hex, northeast of the bugs. The breach should be at point A.

In figure 5, only the hexes adjacent to and underneath the nuke demo on the linear hive should be denoted as being destroyed upon detonation of the demo.

Vern Paxson
Orinda, CA

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Dear Editor,

This is a letter of appreciation for the diligent work that has produced such a consistent, high quality product. I have been extremely pleased with the subject matter and the format that has presented it over the past years that I have read your magazine. Hence the reason for distress when I read moronic complaints from people that seek to use the magazine as a springboard for their own ego instead of using it to benefit the readers.

The situation in mind occurred in Vol. 16, No. 5 with some distraught reader expressing his dislike of SF articles and his feelings towards the removal of military oriented subject matter to make room for said articles. I must agree that I do not enjoy SF games enough to warrant reading these articles, but by the same token I think that one has only to visit the nearest local hobby shop dealing in games that make up this hobby and it will be apparent that the number of SF games is constantly increasing in shelf space and total sales. Let's face it, good intentions don't pay the bills. Consequently, there is going to be an increase in the influence of SF material on the market and thereby the reader. If the demand is too great, then new magazines will appear to relieve that demand. If not, then they cannot take up that much space that they warrant static from these mental midgets who worry about such nonsense. Surely you can come with some better letters than this to print. Please spare us the rotten letters. You would not print an article that stupid. Show the same consideration with the letters page, save them for the dart board.

Larry Ludwig
Lubbock, TX

As I've explained previously, I print negative letters because I like to use the Letters Page to answer questions of the readership. If one reader cares that much about a gripe to write us a letter, the chances are that there are other readers who feel the same way. By answering them in print, hopefully I can explain why conditions prevail and soothe a few ruffled feathers. My apologies to the rest of the readership if I've been emphasizing the negative too much, but I try to give all points of view their chance to be aired in print.

CRESCENDO OF DOOM

5.74 & 48 Can a crew which enters a hex containing an abandoned AT Gun or ATR during the Movement Phase fire that gun in the Advancing Fire Phase?
A. Yes, but case D would apply.

8.5 + **106.51** Could two units in the same hex defensive firing into a bypass hex split their fire into two separate attacks—one at the hex center and the other at the hex juncture?
A. No.

12.22 If a leader fails a MC causing another leader in the same hex to take a second MC, does the first leader have to take a second MC also due to the failure of either of the second leader's MC's?
A. Yes.

14.2 If there are two leaders in a hex may they both try to rally the same broken squad?
A. No—a unit may attempt to rally only once per Rally Phase.

22.1 If a flamethrower is picked up and fired during the Advance Phase by an engineer that has moved into the hex during the just finished Movement Phase, is the flamethrower fired at full or half strength?
A. Half—provided the squad was not carrying 4 or more portage points at the time (5.74).

23.3 Can infantry debark a transporting vehicle into an adjacent hex and *place* a demo charge in a hex adjacent to his present hex during that Movement Phase?
A. Yes

24. Does smoke in a first level building hex affect the higher levels and vice/versa?
A Yes

THE QUESTION BOX

24.3 & 31.5 Can a passenger ever place smoke?
A No

25.3 May a unit already under a concealment counter "grow" another one?
A. No

25.3 Can units in bunkers grow concealment counters?
A. No.

34.2 Does a direct fire hit by any piece of ordnance against multiple infantry units in the same hex affect all of those units equally?
A. Not necessarily. Beside the obvious cases of different terrain modifiers which could apply to the IFT for such things as infantry in and outside of entrenchments, there are circumstances under which some units in the same hex would not even be hit and therefore not have to roll on the IFT at all. For example, a TO HIT roll might suffice to hit an acquired target but, due to different TO HIT modifiers might miss a moving or concealed target. In such a case only the unit which is hit must undergo an effects roll on the IFT.

45.2 When rolling for British off-board artillery does a "80+" result count as 84MM (12 factors) or 88MM (16 factors)?
A. 88MM

46.12 If radio contact is established, but the original requesting leader breaks or moves away can another leader use the same radio without reestablishing radio contact?

A. Yes, providing the other leader was in the same hex *before* the first leader broke or moved away.

53.4 + **73.4** Can a unit use double time movement to leave wire?
A. It not only can, it must do so if it wishes to leave a wire hex and doesn't have enough MFs remaining to do so.

63.22 + **64.7** If a gun tries to fire smoke on a hex containing friendly units but exceeds its smoke depletion number, can it opt for a "no effect" result as opposed to using HE or AP ammunition?
A. Yes, and it would not count as a Fire Mission.

63.24 & 63.31 Do indirect-firing mortars which happen to have a LOS to their target use SR/FFE counters?
A. No—although such weapons use "indirect fire" trajectory, their attacks are still resolved as direct fire using the TO HIT table for each "shot" of the direct fire rate of fire. Misses are ignored.

63.39 & 68.2 How do you resolve a Critical Hit by a mortar on an AFV?
A. Use the IFT with both the Critical Hit and 46.54 DRMs vs rear armor.

64.44 What happens if an already immobilized tank with a CE leader receives a KIA on the IFT?
A. After the stun effects wear off the crew must abandon the vehicle as per 39.2.

64.123 Errata: Delete the 2nd & 3rd sentence, substitute: If both the turret and vehicular covered arcs are changed *in relation to each other* during the Movement Phase both Case A and B would apply in the following Advancing Fire Phase.

76.6 Does an armor leader's modifier apply to: the main armament if buttoned up, and close combat order of attack and resolution?
A. Yes

78.2 Assume two squads in the initial placement hex with a MMG and one of them breaks. Is the bore sighting advantage still lost?
A. Yes, barring use of rules indicating possession of support weapons within a hex (see 5.7 on pg. 67).

81 + **102** Does a burning forest-road hex prevent units from moving into the hex along the road in that hex?
A. Yes, fire in an obstacle would also prevent bypass movement in that hex.

89.1 Does a leader receive Elan points for directing a unit which captures an enemy squad?
A. Yes—it receives double the normal allotment it normally receives for eliminating an enemy squad (6 for Close Combat captures, 2 for Rout Phase captures).

89.6 Errata—Change to read: The minimum guard for prisoners is one infantry counter per hex. If the prisoners consist of two or more squads the guarding unit must be a crew or squad counter.

AVALON HILL RBG RATING CHART

The games are ranked by their cumulative scores which is an average of the 9 categories for each game. While it may be fairly argued that each category should not weigh equally against the others, we use it only as a generalization of overall rank. By breaking down a game's ratings into individual categories the gamer is able to discern for himself where the game is strong or weak in the qualities he values the most. Readers are reminded that the Game Length category is measured in multiples of ten minutes and that a rating of 18 would equal 3 hours.

	Cumulative	Physical Quality	Mapboard	Components	Ease of Understanding	Completeness of Rules	Play Balance	Realism	Excitement Level	Overall Value	Game Length
1. CRESCENDO OF DOOM	2.04	1.93	1.64	2.33	3.20	2.31	2.18	1.36	1.56	1.82	19.5
2. CROSS OF IRON	2.17	2.09	2.04	1.88	3.37	2.52	2.44	1.60	1.69	1.94	20.5
3. RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN	2.24	1.98	1.85	2.02	2.24	3.07	2.78	2.41	1.78	2.07	28.5
4. SQUAD LEADER	2.25	1.97	1.85	1.82	3.58	2.94	2.36	2.02	1.82	1.92	13.6
5. W.S. & I.M.	2.34	2.40	3.07	2.38	2.88	2.39	2.07	1.85	1.88	2.10	9.2
6. ANZIO	2.36	2.11	1.74	1.94	3.74	2.88	2.62	2.00	2.09	2.15	21.7
7. BISMARCK	2.37	2.16	3.00	1.69	2.97	2.63	2.72	1.84	2.09	2.31	18.8
8. WAR AND PEACE	2.43	2.37	2.32	2.54	2.34	2.56	2.61	2.54	2.29	2.32	17.0
9. PANZER LEADER	2.50	2.41	2.17	2.34	3.65	2.60	2.67	2.19	2.34	2.20	13.1
10. RICHTHOFEN'S	2.52	2.28	2.62	2.12	2.63	2.94	2.60	2.66	2.39	2.45	6.0
11. CAESAR–ALESIA	2.53	2.92	2.71	2.78	1.71	1.85	3.36	2.64	2.71	2.07	27.9
12. 1776	2.56	2.16	1.76	2.45	3.27	2.62	3.08	2.72	2.63	2.36	33.4
13. 3rd REICH	2.57	2.12	2.47	2.34	4.15	3.22	2.59	2.24	1.95	2.05	34.9
14. PANZERBLITZ	2.58	2.00	3.00	2.03	4.03	3.00	3.06	2.05	2.07	2.05	14.0
15. KINGMAKER	2.60	2.26	2.84	2.34	2.83	3.07	1.86	3.65	2.14	2.41	20.2
16. DIPLOMACY	2.60	2.35	2.26	3.13	1.87	2.39	2.09	4.57	2.30	2.43	32.6
17. CAESAR'S LEGIONS	2.64	2.32	2.36	2.31	2.14	2.23	3.73	3.05	2.86	2.73	13.5
18. SUBMARINE	2.65	2.58	3.48	2.42	2.90	2.87	2.55	2.38	2.22	2.47	12.1
19. STARSHIP TROOPERS	2.67	2.27	3.11	2.07	2.43	2.70	3.57	3.39	2.20	2.32	17.3
20. ARAB ISRAELI WARS	2.68	2.34	3.03	1.86	3.31	2.70	3.57	2.31	2.51	2.52	13.5
21. CHANCELLORSVILLE	2.68	2.62	2.57	2.45	2.26	2.52	3.43	3.07	2.55	2.64	18.8
22. VICTORY–PACIFIC	2.70	2.47	2.36	1.85	2.21	2.79	3.38	3.91	1.94	2.53	18.0
23. DUNE	2.76	2.45	2.40	3.00	1.98	2.43	2.75	4.20	2.80	2.83	11.9
24. NAPOLEON	2.77	2.04	2.96	2.03	2.25	2.86	3.25	4.18	2.46	2.89	9.1
25. FRANCE 1940	2.82	1.75	2.05	1.85	3.30	3.25	4.05	3.00	3.40	2.75	16.0
26. JUTLAND	2.83	2.84	—	2.39	3.27	3.06	3.24	2.53	2.61	2.67	29.7
27. RAIL BARON	2.87	2.98	2.82	3.45	2.07	2.29	2.05	4.69	2.76	2.68	21.6
28. LUFTWAFFE	2.87	2.41	2.91	2.04	2.86	3.02	3.73	3.41	2.82	2.64	24.2
29. MIDWAY	2.88	2.75	3.12	2.56	2.78	2.90	3.66	3.08	2.37	2.73	15.7
30. AFRIKA KORPS	2.90	3.04	3.10	2.92	2.12	2.29	3.39	3.57	2.91	2.77	13.5
31. ALEXANDER	2.93	2.99	3.21	3.19	2.55	2.98	3.43	2.76	2.43	2.86	12.7
32. ORIGINS OF WW II	2.98	2.69	2.58	2.80	2.00	2.22	4.00	4.06	3.11	3.40	9.6
33. CRETE–MALTA	3.04	2.80	3.10	3.00	3.03	3.05	3.43	3.18	2.76	3.05	18.8
34. GETTYSBURG '77	3.04	2.52	2.48	2.50	4.32	3.79	3.07	2.46	3.02	3.21	27.6
35. D-DAY '77	3.07	3.72	4.54	3.69	2.19	1.94	3.00	3.19	2.94	2.44	20.2
36. BLITZKRIEG	3.09	3.39	3.28	3.30	3.14	2.89	2.25	3.67	2.81	3.05	24.0
37. TOBRUK	3.10	2.85	4.68	2.13	4.32	2.77	3.06	2.11	3.00	2.96	21.6
38. WATERLOO	3.18	3.29	3.27	3.11	2.01	3.11	3.27	4.32	3.21	3.01	16.2
39. WAR AT SEA	3.21	3.18	3.96	2.74	1.74	2.35	3.73	5.12	2.93	3.15	6.9
40. BULGE	3.21	2.93	2.80	3.31	3.08	3.40	3.53	4.11	2.81	2.95	20.0
41. FEUDAL	3.25	3.18	4.33	2.64	2.28	2.33	2.12	5.38	3.58	3.38	7.5
42. D-DAY '65	3.43	3.72	4.54	3.69	2.56	3.09	4.38	4.50	3.60	3.56	17.8
43. STALINGRAD	3.44	3.43	3.74	3.40	2.07	2.52	4.37	5.15	3.28	3.04	20.0
44. TACTICS II	3.51	3.43	4.30	3.59	1.45	2.18	2.32	5.57	4.59	4.20	11.6
45. MAGIC REALM	3.54	2.74	2.81	3.13	5.29	4.42	2.80	4.06	3.39	3.26	19.9
46. 1914	3.87	3.18	3.40	3.26	5.46	4.32	3.86	1.95	5.48	3.86	55.0
47. GETTYSBURG '64	3.88	3.59	3.84	3.54	2.68	3.39	5.08	4.51	4.34	3.98	12.5
48. KRIEGSPIEL	4.04	3.77	4.20	3.85	2.13	2.94	2.93	6.09	5.20	5.29	9.8
AVERAGE	2.92	2.73	3.02	2.70	2.79	2.82	3.24	3.38	2.90	2.84	19.6
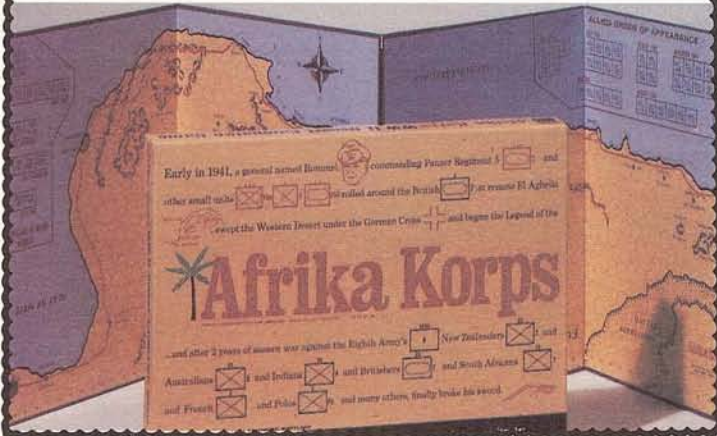
Vol. 16, No. 6 of *THE GENERAL* really raised the ire of the *wargamers* among the readership as they vented their displeasure with our second SF/Fantasy issue with their negative votes. The resulting 3.82 rating of the issue was the worst since Vol. 12, No. 3 polled a 3.96 with a *JUTLAND* feature. The message seems clear that we should steer clear of future SF/Fantasy features, or at least limit their appearance to a maximum of once a year. Scheduling *DUNE* so close to the *MAGIC REALM* feature was a definite gaffe on the part of your editor. Despite the negative feedback from the SF haters, ''THE ESSENCE OF DUNE'' ran away with best article honors with 526 points in our 1200 point rating system based on 200 random samples with three points awarded for a first place vote, two for second, and one for third.

We'd like to thank the dozens of readers who volunteered for recent playtests who weren't selected. We regret it is not possible to answer each application personally, but were we to do that we'd never get any work done. However, here's another chance for you. Our latest project is a revision of the *PANZERBLITZ* system to bring it up to the state of the art encompassed in *AIW*. Besides revising *PANZERBLITZ* and *PANZER LEADER* so that they will have a common set of counters and rules, it will also clear the way for several expansion gamettes on such themes as the desert war and the early years of Barbarossa. We have openings for a limited number of ''blind'' testers who have experience in the *PB, PL,* and *AIW* game system. Interested parties should direct their applications to the attention of Don Greenwood at Avalon Hill.

With all the self-praising hype one is exposed to from the various companies and ''name'' designers in the hobby these days it was reassuring to see that at least one game company president came out with a statement defending the gamer. Quoting Howard Thompson in issue 28 of *THE SPACE GAMER:*

''We've always felt that the poor gamer got the short end of the stick in our hobby. The publisher is known, the games are known, and the designer is known. But who is the best (player) in the country in a particular game? . . . Until a gamer is better known than anyone else in gaming our hobby isn't doing things right. Cash prizes for tournament play is one way to focus attention on gamers and the play of games as the hub of our hobby. This is one reason Metagaming (and Avalon Hill) doesn't feel that game covers should be cluttered with the names of designers, developers, and whatnot like movie credits. That encourages the ''author'' cultism that plagues and hinders science fiction fandom. There is more to gaming than just adulation for the producers. The gamer is the guy who pays the bill and plays the games. He should be the one to get the credit and attention. The day will come when more people in gaming know the leading gamer than know the president of a company or a designer. That is the day we should all be willing to work toward. That is the day our hobby will have grown up and done something more for our customers than count the dollars.''

Would that it were so today . . .

Infiltrator's Report

The latest bad news in our losing battle with inflation comes in the form of the following price increases which take place immediately. *TACTICS II* and *WAR AT SEA* go from $7 to $8, and *MIDWAY, BISMARCK, LUFTWAFFE, TOBRUK,* and *IMAGE* go from $13 to $15. *MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL* increases two dollars from $15 to $17.

DEPLOYMENT (Hex #)	FIRST ROUND (Hex #)	SECOND ROUND (Hex #)
GG8 Napoleon, Ldr B, 7I, 3GI, 4C, 1GC	HH7	GG7
FF7 Davout, Ldr A, 8I	GG7	GG7
GG6 Soult, Jerome, 6I	HH5	
CC9 Ney		
HH10 1I		

The solution for contest no. 95 shown above generally follows Napoleon's historical maneuver in 1815, but it has been strengthened by using Soult's corps to outflank Wellington and attack the English supply base at Antwerp—the very maneuver Wellington feared prior to Waterloo.

Briefly, the French maneuver is executed as follows. Beginning in hex EE8 with his original force minus Soult, Ney, and 1I, Napoleon force marches to hex GG8 (2MP), where he is joined by the reserve cavalry from Rheims (2MP), and Leader B and 2I from Metz (3MP). Detached from Napoleon, Soult and 1I begin with Jerome's corps at Amiens, and advance to hex GG6 to attack Antwerp (3MP). Marching from Paris, Davout joins Leader A in hex FF7 to attack Wellington (5MP).

During the first round of combat, Napoleon attacks Blucher at even odds; committing the guard, the die is modified by #3. The result forces Blucher to withdraw to Liege with the loss of four points to Napoleon's two. In the center, Davout attacks Wellington at even odds, the die roll being modified by one in Wellington's favor. This results in Davout and Wellington each losing one strength point.

In the north, if the British remain in the field, Soult attacks at 2 to 1. The die roll modification of #2 will force the British to withdraw. Conversely, if the British defend inside Antwerp, the even odds attack still leaves the British in an untenable position, since they will suffer losses not shared by the French.

During the second round of combat, after the Prussians have withdrawn and Napoleon has advanced into Namur, he will join Davout's battle raising the odds against Wellington to 2 to 1. If Wellington attempts to disengage and turn on Soult, the battle becomes a general engagement between the French and English at 2 to 1 odds. By committing his remaining guard, Napoleon can assure that the English will be forced to withdraw from both Brussels and Antwerp, leaving Wellington with no supply base until he recaptures a port.

At the end of the Combat Phase, the French should hold Antwerp and Namur with one strength point in each. With five remaining strength points, Soult should remain north of Brussels to prevent the Prussians from overrunning the French line. Napoleon and Davout should besiege the Allied garrison left in Brussels. Of course, the French will probably have to fall back to defend Paris against the Prussians and/or Austrians during the second Game-Turn, but the best Allied commander will be delayed at least one turn from being able to threaten Paris.

Note: All French forces which were not listed above, remain where they are initially deployed and do not participate in combat.

Your intrepid puzzle designer (Mick Uhl) admits to error in Contest 94. It was pointed out by some of the more astute in the audience that if the Bene Gesserit evacuates Habbanya Ridge Sietch, the solution doesn't work. When last seen, Mick was racing across the sands pursued by the Shai-Hulud, or was it Don Greenwood? Anyway, the winners are those who gave the most succinct analysis and criticism of the puzzle. The ten complainers-turned-winners were:

M. Simonitch, Concord, CA; D. Kaufman, Storrs, CT; L. Desy, Jr., Worchester, MA; J. Burnett, Clinton, TN; A. Dudderar, Frederick, MD; G. Boggess, Columbus, MS; G. Mallison, St. Marys, PA; R. Hotz, Chicago, IL; L. Zoet, Wyoming, MI; R. Whaley, Knoxville, TN.

The current free agentry problems of the baseball owners was superbly illustrated in the player draft of the most recent Avalon Hill Baseball Strategy League this past spring. Each manager paid a $10 fee for a franchise that entitled him to draft players based on the performances of actual American League players in 1979. After the draft was completed, an auction was held for those players who actually played out their options last season. Virtually all the free agents were selected for prices well above the draft cost and most of the better ones went for prices far exceeding the cost of an entire franchise. If it makes you feel any better, the biggest free agent spender finished third.

★ # GENERAL BACK ISSUES ★

Only the following *GENERAL* back issues are still available. Price is $2.50 per issue plus 10% postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax. *GENERAL* postage coupons may *not* be used for this or other parts orders. Due to low quantities of some issues we request that you specify alternate selections should your first choice be no longer available. The index below lists the contents of each issue by subject matter; feature articles are designated by an asterisk (*), series replays are italicized, and the number following each issue is the reader rating of that particular issue as a whole. The numbers following individual subjects refer to the number of articles about that game in that issue. Issues listed in red are one color reprints of previously out-of-stock issues.

CONTEST NO. 96

It is the start of the last player turn of an extremely hard fought Counterstroke at Stone *(Scenario 28 of CRESCENDO OF DOOM))* game. At the end of his move the French player controlled *all* of the 17 stone building hexes which constitute the Victory Conditions.

Fortunately for the German, a bypassed stock of broken units in 3Q4 returned to the cause of the fatherland during the French Rally Phase when Cpl. Uhl rallied not only himself but two of three broken squads in the same hex also. Unfortunately for him, the French squads in 3R5 and 3S5 managed to break one of those squads again during their Prep Fire Phase.

At first glance this still appears to be a truly hopeless situation for the German player. However, the German feels relatively confident that he can force his way with units already on board six into the big chateau (N4) on board six whose ground level contains all the French units on board six and thus eliminate that seven hex building from consideration, but the stone building on board four is out of reach and is thus secure for the French. This means that the German must regain control of five stone building hexes on board three for a tie, or six for a win, or neutralize enough multi-hex French buildings to decrease the number of German controlled buildings needed for victory. Your task is to record the best German move as it applies to board three and predict whether the most probable result is a draw, French victory, or German victory.
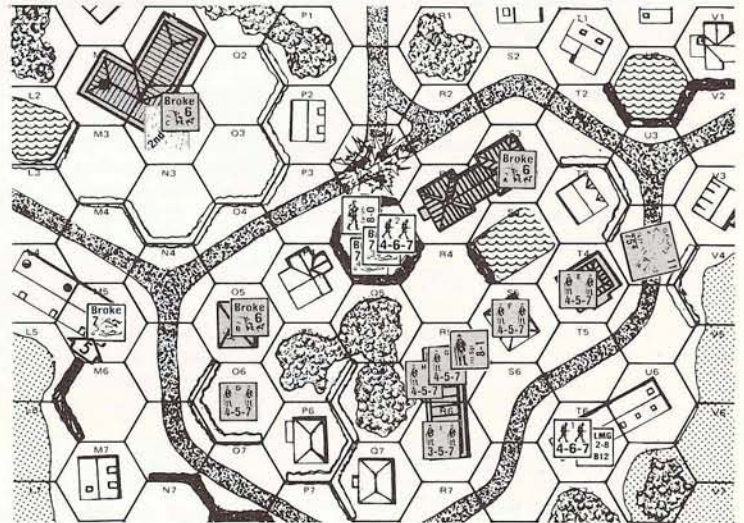
Fill in the chart below by recording the activity engaged in by each individual unit during each phase. If a unit fired, record the hex at which it fired and if it moved record every hex (in order) through which it moved en route. If a unit did nothing during that Phase leave the space blank. If a unit uses Double Time movement indicate this with the letters 'CE'.

Most Probable Result:
☐ German Victory   ☐ Draw   ☐ French Victory

Unit	Rally Phase	Prep Fire Phase	Movement Phase	Advancing Fire Phase	Rout Phase	Advance Phase	Close Combat Phase
Squad 1							
Cpl. Uhl							
Squad 2							
Sqd 3 (broken)							
Sqd 4 (broken)							
Sqd 5 (broken)							

Ten winning entries will receive certificates redeemable for free AH merchandise. To be valid an entry must be received prior to the mailing of the next GENERAL and include a numerical rating for the issue as a whole as well as list the best 3 articles. The solution will be announced in the next issue and the winners in the following issue.

Issue as a whole . . . (Rate from 1 to 10, with 1 equating excellent, 10 equating terrible)
Best 3 Articles

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HUNTERS FROM THE SKY

Scenario I

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

Board Configuration

◄ N

VICTORY CONDITIONS

To win, the German player must have undisputed control of the American "assembly building" as determined in special rule I.1 at the end of the game *or* eliminate six American squads. Squads that have scattered off the playing area and have not reentered by the end of the game are considered eliminated for determining victory conditions. The American player wins by avoiding the German player's victory conditions.

SPECIAL RULES

I.1 Before the game begins the American player must randomly determine his "assembly building" and secretly record his drop points. To determine the building prepare a special deck of playing cards consisting of four each aces, deuces, threes, fours, fives and sixes. Secretly draw one card. The

number drawn indicates the "assembly building" from the following list: ace = 4Y9, deuce = 4P6, three = 4I10, four = 2W9, five = 2M9, six = 4S2. The American player must reveal the building drawn in the German rally phase of game turn 4.

I.2 Hills 621 and 538 do not exist. Note that all woods hexes in these areas *do* exist.

I.3 AFVs may not enter *any* type of building hex.

I.4 All wheatfield hexes are considered "brushwood". Treat exactly like wheatfield hexes except it costs infantry units 2 MFs to enter.

I.5 The German reinforcement entry hexes are determined randomly on the turns indicated. Each German reinforcement group must roll one die separately when determining its entry hex according to the following table: 1, 2 = 5GG5/5GG6; 3 = 2Q1: 4, 5 = 4GG5/4GG6; 6 = Grop does not enter this turn, roll again next turn.

I.6 The weather is considered "Moist" with no wind.

TURN RECORD CHART

| ✠ German sets up first | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4✠ | 5✠ | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | END |
| ☆ American moves first | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Elements, 84th Infantry Division, set up on any whole or half hexes on boards 2, 4 and/or 5:

| 4-6-7 | 2-4-7 | Sgt Humbler 8-1 | LMG 2-8 B12 | AA ③ 20L (6) V | AA ② 20L (4) | Light truck 24 ★ 1S/7PP |
| 5 | 2 | 3 | | | | 2 |

Reinforcement Group 1, roll for entry starting turn 4:

| 4-6-7 | Sgt Kriegs 9-1 | LMG 2-8 B12 | 35 1C/1SW | Light truck 24 ★ 1S/7PP |
| 3 | | 2 | | 3 |

Reinforcement Group 2, roll for entry starting turn 5:

| 4-6-7 | LMG 2-8 B12 | 13 0 -1 75L 4/-/4 |

Elements, 513th Parachute Regiment, 17th Airborne Division, drop per rule *(99)* on turn 1:

| 8-4-7 | Lt Hill 9-1 | Cpl Jimenez 8-0 | 6 4 X11 | (parachute) |
| 9 | | 2 | 2 | 14 |

AFTERMATH: After a short but sharp fire fight, the paratroopers of the 513th Regiment were able to get the upper hand and finally assemble their battalions. With their

regiments in order the objectives for the first day were all seized and linkup made by nightfall with the British ground troops assaulting across the Rhine River.

THE NISCEMI-BISCARI HIGHWAY

SICILY, July 10, 1943: During the initial invasion of Sicily many American parachute units were given the task of blocking German unit movement toward the landing beaches. One such unit, the 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Regiment, landed two miles northwest of Biscari. After gathering as many of the scattered troopers as possible the understrength battalion moved out toward the town of Niscemi. As they approached the Niscemi-Biscari Highway, they encountered and captured two Italian antitank guns. With the newly acquired guns to bolster their defenses, the paratroopers dug themselves in with covering positions on the main highway.

Board Configuration

Row "Q"
(inclusive)
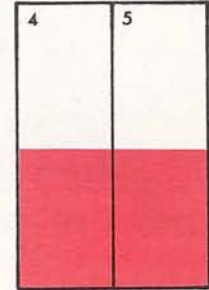
Playing Area
is shown in red

VICTORY CONDITIONS

To win, the German player must have uncontested control of any two of the following building hexes: 4X1, 4CC6, and/or 4Y9 at the end of the last game turn. The American player is considered to have control of all buildings at the beginning of the game. The American player wins by avoiding the German victory conditions.

TURN RECORD CHART

☆ American sets up first	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END		
✠ German moves first											

Elements, 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, set up on any whole hexes on board "4" within playing area:

8-4-7 — 5
2-4-6 — 2
Sgt Allan 8-1 — 2
Cpl Jones 8-0 — 2
6/4 X11+
MINES — 10
47 AT ② — 2
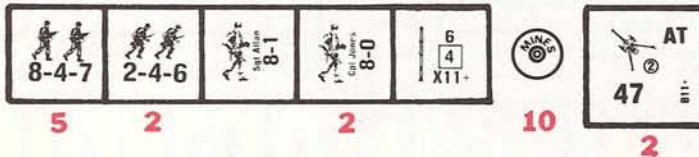
Kampfgruppe elements from Reconnaissance Battalion, Hermann Goering Division, enter turn 1 on hex 5Q6 *or* hex 5GG5/5GG6:

4-6-7 — 8
Lt Stahler 9-2
Sgt Pfitz 8-1
Cpl Pollock 8-0
MMG 4-12 B12
LMG 2-8 B12 — 4
35 -4 -5
20L(6) -/2

SPECIAL RULES

E.1 Building hexes may not be mined.
E.2 All building hexes are considered wooden.
E.3 The 47mm ATGs function as captured weapons *(rule 90)* for both the American and German player. For this scenario, both ATGs have gun shields *(rule 63.5)*.
E.4 The German initial entry hex may not be fired on in the German player turn one.
E.5 No entrenchments may be constructed during the game.

AFTERMATH: Not long after the Americans had finished preparing their positions with mines, a German column approached, made-up of mixed elements of the Hermann Goering Division. Caught initially by surprise, the Germans soon recomposed and pressed the attack. But the German troops never fully recovered and the stiff resistance shown by the paratroopers proved too much for the Germans to breakthrough. With the armor support destroyed, the German infantry finally broke and dispersed. In repeated efforts such as this, the American paratroops were able to harass and block the German units from reaching the invasion beaches.

THE POUPPEVILLE EXIT

Scenario F

NORMANDY, June 6, 1944: With the invasion at Normandy underway, the first Allied troops to see fighting were the men of the airborne divisions. Most of the early encounters for the 101st Airborne Division occurred at the many German strong points and scattered villages located behind the invasion beaches. In helping to secure the southern beach exits for the troops on Utah Beach, a small combat group from the 3rd Battalion of the 501st Regiment set out to clear the village of Pouppeville at beach exit number one. By 0800, Colonel Ewell and his men had reached the village and begun the attack.

Board Configuration
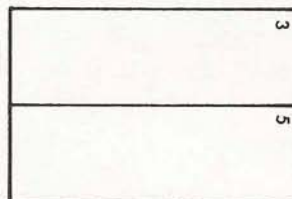
VICTORY CONDITIONS

The American player wins if at the end of any player turn he has uncontested control of two of the three multi-hex stone buildings on board "3" *and* has eliminated or captured both AA guns in hexes 3U2 and 3N7. The German player wins by avoiding the American player's victory conditions.

TURN RECORD CHART

✚ German sets up first		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END		
☆ American moves first												

Elements, 3rd Battalion, 1058th Regiment, 91st Division, setup on indicated hexes:

Elements, 3rd Battalion, 501st Parachute Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, set up on or adjacent to hexes 5CC8, 5BB8 and/or 3BB6, one squad maximum per hex:


SPECIAL RULES

F.1 The 37mm AA guns may not be moved from their initial setup hexes. Note that this does not prevent the guns from rotating within their hexes.
F.2 No units may start fires during the game.
F.3 All hexes of Hill 534 and Hill 547 are considered ground level "Marsh" *(rule 75)*. Note that building 3110 does not exist.

AFTERMATH: With numerically inferior troops the American paratroopers fought their way through the village in heavy house to house fighting. But with the garrison losing contact with their battalion headquarters in St Come-du-Mont, the German resistance soon faltered with the local commander finally surrendering. Later that day, first contact between seaborne and airborne troops was made at the village of Pouppeville between Colonel Ewell's men and the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Division.

DEVIL'S HILL

Scenario G
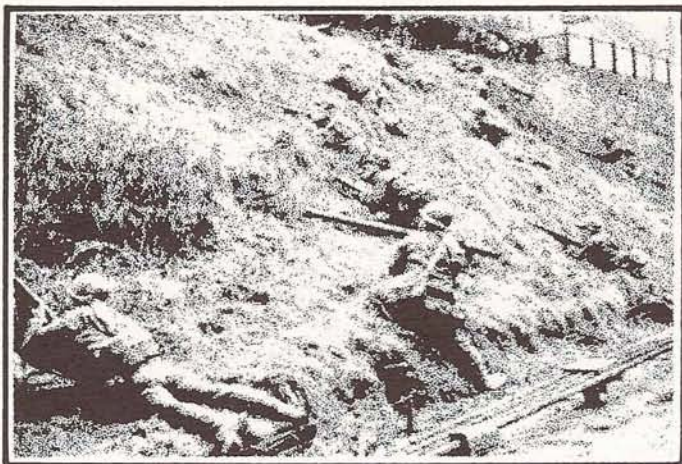
HOLLAND, September 19, 1944: Although the airborne portion of the "Market-Garden" Operation centered around the seizing of vital bridges, heavy fighting occurred over control of the highway section leading to the bridges as well. While parts of the 82nd Airborne fought to gain control of the bridges at Nijmegen, other elements fought for control of the Kleve-Nijmegen highway. One of the major objectives in the control of this highway was Hill 75.9. Better known as "Devil's Hill", control of this high ground meant a complete overview of the highway below. Even though German security troops operating in this area were small in number, when concentrated in defense of a natural strong point such as this, these troops often put up strong resistance. Such was the case when Company A of the 508th Parachute Regiment moved out to take "Devil's Hill".

Board Configuration
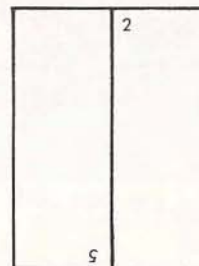
VICTORY CONDITIONS

The American player wins by being the last to occupy (with unbroken squads) the three entrenchments on Hill 621 at game end. The German player wins by avoiding the American player's victory conditions.

TURN RECORD CHART

		1	2	✛3	✛4	5	6	7	END		
✚ German sets up first											
✚ German moves first											

Element, 406th Landesschuetzen Division, Corps Feldt, set up anywhere on Hill 621:

Enter turn 3 on any east edge hex(s) from 2Y1 to 2I1 inclusive:

Enter turn 4 on any east edge hex(s) from 2Y1 to 2I1 inclusive:

Co. A, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, set up on any whole hexes on board "5";

SPECIAL RULES

G.1 The German entrenchments *must* be set up on three of the seven "level 3" hexes on Hill 621. No other entrenchments may be constructed during the game by either side.

G.2 The Americans may designate one squad prior to play which may place smoke once during the game.

AFTERMATH: Covering some 200 yards, the paratroopers' determined attack soon drove the Germans from the summit of the hill. But the Germans recovered quickly on the reverse slopes and counterattacked repeatedly throughout the day. By nightfall the Americans had gained control of the hill, though by morning the Germans had returned and infiltrated the paratroopers' positions. Once again the Germans had to be driven out from "Devil's Hill".

THE ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE PEIPER

Scenario H

THE ARDENNES, December 21, 1944: The key to the German Ardennes Offensive lay with a quick breakthrough and deep penetration. In the north the success of a breakthrough rested heavily with Colonel Peiper's Kampfgruppe from the 1st SS Division. But the quick victories which had taken Peiper's Kampfgruppe so close to the Meuse bridges also left it in a position of danger. The Kampfgruppe had outraced most of its follow up units and had almost completely run out of fuel. The back door to Peiper had not been kept open. On the morning of the 21st Mohnke, the commander of the 1st SS Panzer Division, collected the remaining assault elements and launched an attack in an effort to reach Peiper's Kampfgruppe. The main German effort came at a point south of Trois Ponts on the Salm River. There a company of the 505th Parachute Regiment had set up a small bridgehead on the cliffs across the river.

Board Configuration
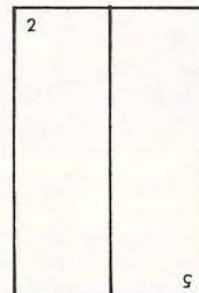
VICTORY CONDITIONS

To win, the German player must exit 7 squads (an AFV counts as 2 squads) off the west edge of board "2" via hexes 2Z10 thru 2P10 by the end of the game. The American player wins by avoiding the German victory condition.

TURN RECORD CHART

☆ American sets up first	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	END
✠ German moves first											

Elements, 2nd Panzer Grenadier Regiment, 1st SS Panzer Division enter turn 1 on any east edge hex(es) of board "5" from 5L10 to 5B10 inclusive;
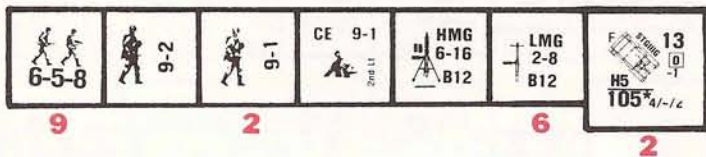
Elements, Co. E, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, set up anywhere on board "2" and anywhere on board "5" west of hex row "3" inclusive;
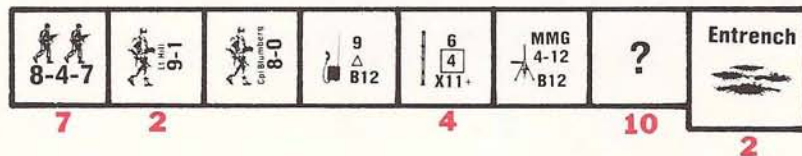
SPECIAL RULES

H.1 Consider all hexes of Hill 538 as ground level woods.

H.2 "Bore Sighting" *(rule 78)* is not allowed.

H.3 The American player may not make an "artillery request" until game *turn "3"*.

H.4 Because of frozen ground conditions, units *may not* roll for entrenchments.

H.5 The American artillery module is based on 105mm guns.

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