GENERAL

★ AVALON HILL

$2.50

September-October 1982

Volume 19, Number 3

Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 93

Once again it is time to pause and give our readership a glance at work in progress. With changes in staff (hence new expertise and methods) and an ever frenzied pace, this brief review can but lightly touch on a few of the titles to be expected from AH through the winter months.

The *SQUAD LEADER* saga continues apace. While working on the inevitable errata generated by *G.I.,* I continue to take notes for the next big project — the rewrite and compilation of the entire series into one rulebook. That rulebook will include point values for all units of all nationalities to accompany the revised vehicular OBs of the Germans and the Russians, whose new vehicular counters will be included in the next gamette featuring armored warfare in the desert and Russian steppe. As we conceive this project as being the final word in the *SL* game system, we will endeavor to make it as complete as possible. This will mean the inclusion of chapters on strategy, analysis of play, and perhaps even play-by-mail methods. Such a project cannot be rushed and I will definitely be looking at it as a long term project with no anticipated completion date in sight at this time. In fact, I will wait at least six months for feedback from *G.I.* before starting work on the initial draft.

In the meantime, I will be completing development of a related game design by Courtney Allen. His card game, which we have tentatively entitled *UP FRONT,* is a simple, fast playing simulation of infantry combat in WWII. Any similarity to *SQUAD LEADER* is strictly intentional. The resemblance is inescapable — right down to the multi-scenario and Design-Your-Own format. The basic tenets of what may be the hobby's most involved game have been distilled into what may well become its most playable variation. It is a quick and fun-filled alternative to *SQUAD LEADER* that doesn't lose as

G.I. Anvil of Victory

6³-6-6

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It is December, 1941; Europe lays stricken beneath the Nazi boot. Only Britain, sheltered by her fleet and the English channel, stands fast before the swastika. To the East, German panzers stand stalled by winter at the very gates of Moscow. However, the Third Reich is nearing its high water mark for the tide is about to turn. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor will usher the United States into World War II and seal the doom of the Thousand Year Reich. American industry will supply the Allied armies with vast quantities of war material, and a fresh, new breed of fighting man will enter the fray against Hitler's tested Wehrmacht. The G.I. will become the anvil on which the victory over a bled white Wehrmacht is forged. **G.I.; ANVIL OF VICTORY** allows you to command the full gamut of American fighting men as they drive the Germans from Africa, Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and back across the Rhine and into Germany itself. **G.I.** adds the complete American arsenal of fighting men and machines to your **SQUAD LEADER** repertoire, while expanding and enriching the most acclaimed historical gaming system yet devised. Can the greater numbers and superior gunnery control systems of the American Shermans compensate for the more lethal guns of the feared German Panther? **G.I.** provides a gripping and graphic answer unmatched by any book.

But **G.I.** offers far more than just American tanks. It contains more components than any of the preceding games in the series. The entire game system has been streamlined while enhancing realism even further. German, British, and even French infantry counters have been revised to enhance unit identification, add inherent smoke values, and more clearly distinguish the differences between squads, crews, and half-squads.

Like its sister games in the **SQUAD LEADER** system, **G.I.** need not end with play of the 14 scenarios provided; the opportunities to design your own scenario based on any historical or hypothetical situation are myriad. A veteran user of the game system needs only his imagination and inclination, for the entire Order of Battle and corresponding counters have been provided for every nationality. **G.I.** is much more than just a game. When combined with **SQUAD LEADER**, **CROSS OF IRON,** and **CRESCENDO OF DOOM**, it provides the ultimate in a tactical gaming system which can be used to portray any company or battalion level action. Be forewarned! **G.I.** cannot be played without first having mastered the other three games in the series.

G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY is available for $30.00 from the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% for postage and handling (20% for Canadian orders, 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

New features include:

Gun Traverse DRMs	Heroes
Simplified TO HIT Table	Graveyards
PIAT	Fortifications
White Phosphorus	Tunnels
Terrain Overlays	Crags
Aerial Observation	Climbing
Sunken Roads	Swimming
Brush	DD Tanks
Elevated Roads	Fighter-Bombers
Streams	Canals
Hedgerows	Recoilless Rifles
	. . . and much, much more
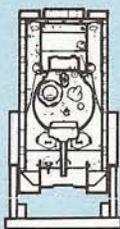
TITAN

Dragon's breathe fire, Unicorns trample, and Warlocks conjure bolts of lightning. Giant Serpents slither and crush, Gargoyles shreik down from the sky with claws bared, and the mighty Colossus hefts a dripping battleaxe. Into the midst of this carnage step two powerful Titans for the climactic struggle. Only one can survive. Only one can be the winner of TITAN.

Legions become engaged in the same land on the Masterboard, play is transferred to the respective Battleland where the Engagement is resolved in a tactical Battle. In Battle, the characters of the two Legions maneuver among any hazards of the terrain and strike to slay the members of the opposing Legion. Each strike is resolved by rolling dice, with certain numbers being hits. When a character takes enough hits, it is slain and removed from the game. The more powerful characters generally take more hits, are harder to hit, and do more damage.
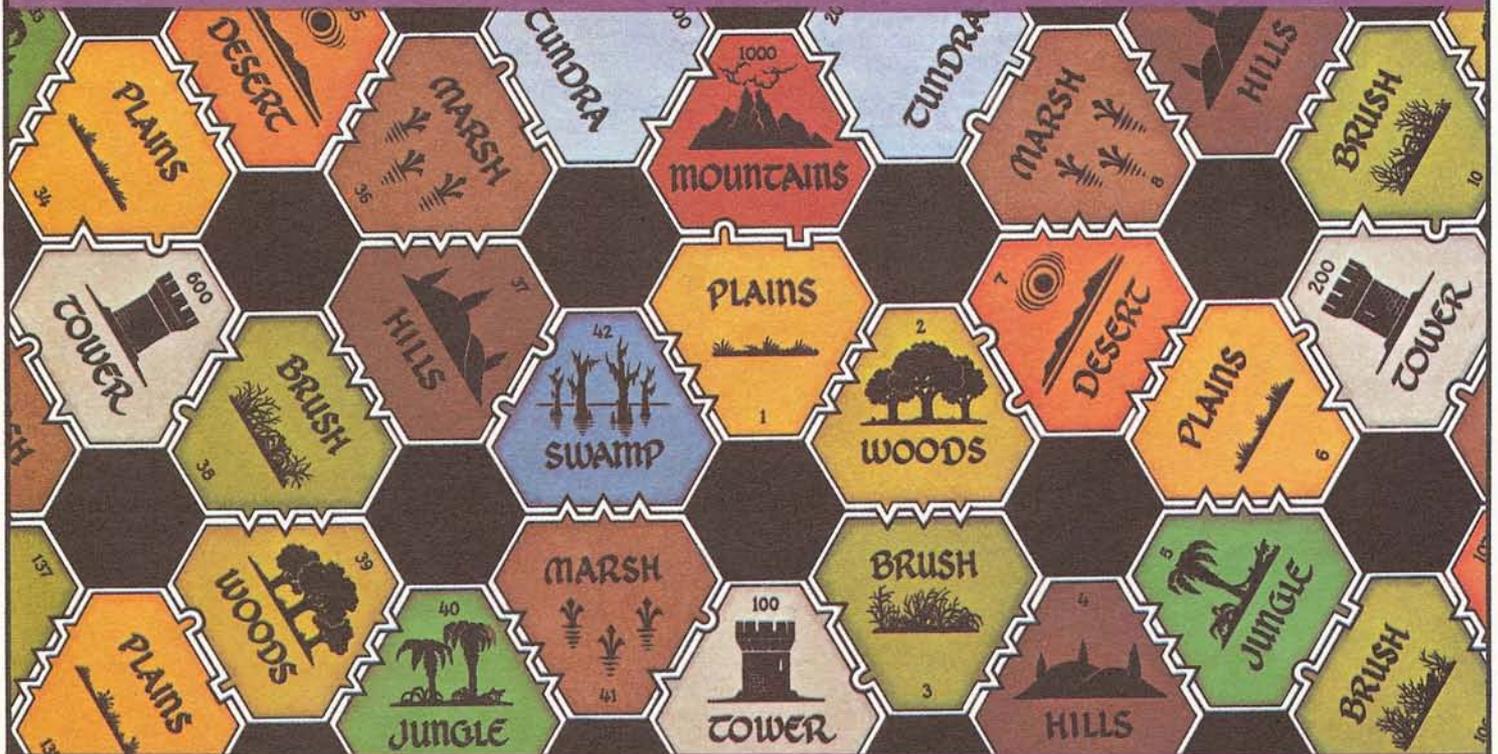
TITAN, a fantasy game for 2 to 6 players, is actually two games in one . . . the first strategic and the second tactical. Players will move their Legions of characters around the strategic Masterboard racing to muster the largest and most powerful army. Depending on the characters already in the Legion and the terrain which it has entered, a new character can be added to the mustering Legion. When two

Complexity Rating: 4 (10 being highest)
Playing Time: 2 to 12 hours

THE WAY OF THE GUN
A Double-Barrelled Examination of GUNSLINGER
By Richard Hamblen

I. THE GAME OF THE GUNFIGHT

Many myths have been promoted and debunked about the Old West, but one fact stands unchallenged: it was a dangerous place, filled with dangerous people. Violence was so prevalent that men commonly went armed simply to defend themselves. In saloons, quarrels, politics, business, feuds and on the range, men were in the habit of calling on their guns to punctuate their arguments. And often the guns would speak out, creating a situation where a few seconds' worth of skill, wit and speed would decide who would live and who would die.

GUNSLINGER is designed to recreate the high-strung excitement of such gunfights from the split-second decisions to the explosive outcomes. Each player takes the part of one participant in the gunfight, choosing exactly what he will do during each fraction of a second as the bullets begin to fly. In a confrontation that lasts only seconds (in game time), the critical question is: who will fire the first shot that hits? Luck, special abilities and other advantages can all affect the outcome, but victory will usually go to the one who plays skillfully enough to get that crucial first *effective* shot.

This article explores both how *GUNSLINGER* creates the dynamics of a split-second gunfight and how the players can function most efficiently (and successfully). Since the article explains two things, it is [what else?] double-barrelled.
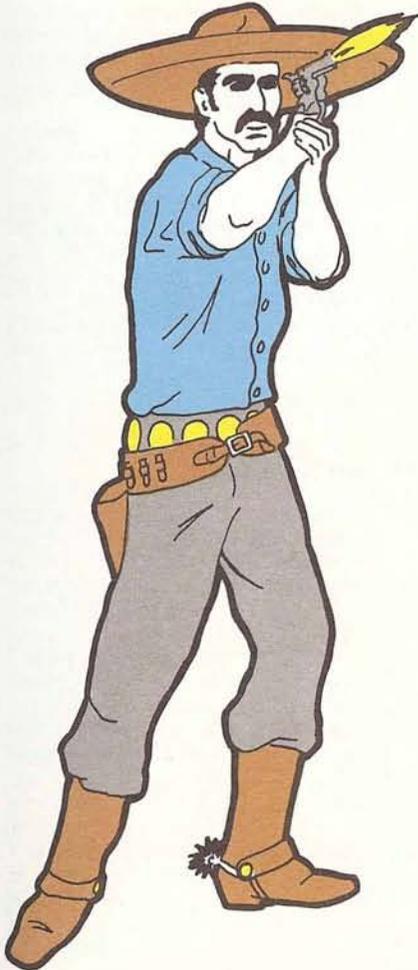
II. SET UP: CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE GUNFIGHT

GUNSLINGER was intended to be a game system that could recreate famous gunfights; so the first problem was to find some famous gunfights that were suitable—small gunfights that either side could win. The current fad of debunking western legends had left me uneasy about how authentic the great gunfighters and infamous gunfights actually were, and how much they owed to the dime novels. To my horror, initial investigations confirmed my fears: the most celebrated gunfight, the *Gunfight at the OK Corral*, was little better than a firing squad execution. The most celebrated gunfighter, *Billy the Kid*, did most of his shooting from ambush or with a gang. The most celebrated outlaw, *Jesse James*, rode with a large gang behind him to overawe opposition and avoid gunfights (actually, very sensible for a robber, when you think about it); and the most famous lawman, *Wild Bill Hickok*, had intimidated lawbreakers so thoroughly that he had only one major gunfight during his most historic tenure, as Marshal of Abilene (which made him impressively successful as a lawman—but I was looking for gun battles)! Alarmed, I began reading about those lesser-known names—Doc Holliday, Ben Thompson, John Wesley Hardin, and so on. Slowly the chrome plating deposited by dime novelists and screenwriters wore away, as I found the accounts of what had *really* happened.

I should have realized that the "famous" gunfighters had wide reputations *in their own time and place*, among men who knew them—hard men who knew how to handle a gun and who would not be impressed by empty reputations or backshooters. The gunfighters were far from the plaster saints pictured by Hollywood, but they were the epitomes of a society that lived by a violent code of honor and they had all the attendant virtues: unbridled courage, skill with weapons, intolerance of "dishonor" in their own actions or in the comments of others, and a callous willingness to kill. Different gunfighters had these qualities in differing amounts, and some of them were notorious primarily for the blackness of their villainies and their sullying of the "Code of the West". But most of them were striking in their honesty and character, and above all in their courage.

The numerous gunfights fell into a limited number of patterns, ranging from simple murder through spontaneous bar fights to classic Main Street showdowns. Naturally enough, men who expected gunplay would have their guns out when they entered into a confrontation; but many, law officers in particular, would keep their guns holstered right up to the last moment in hopes of avoiding gunfire. This resulted in a lot of peaceful resolutions, a few law officers caught off-guard and shot down (the fate of Ed Masterson, among others), and some fast-draw shootouts (often starring Wild Bill Hickok as Marshal of Hays City, where he made the reputation that served him so well in Abilene).

Unfortunately, the historical gunfights did not provide enough variety: some types of gunfight were simply too unfair to be used, while the usable showdowns were often so similar in interaction that they played identically with each other. Equally annoying, many interesting situations that sprang out of western fiction (and the developing *GUNSLINGER* system) either were mentioned only in passing or had no historical precedent at all. In particular, the popular

histories are short of hand-to-hand combat and multi-sided battles, even though there are some general references about barroom free-for-alls. The obvious solution was to combine annoyances, so the historical showdowns were augmented by apocryphal showdowns based on interesting situations not detailed in the histories.

The lack of detailed information and the need to use standardized mapboards made it impossible to recreate any of the gunfights with total authenticity, so the emphasis was put on capturing the relationships between the characters during the gunfight rather than on historical details such as the exact layouts of buildings and such. This approach made it possible to allow limited flexibility in each showdown's set up: the characters are allowed to set up as they wish, as long as they do not modify the basic relationships that existed at the start of the showdown (the SET UP restrictions in each, force the characters to preserve these relationships). For example, characters who "know" gunplay is imminent are *alerted* and can take such precautions as they choose.

The characters generally set up in the order of the enemy attention that is on them-the most-watched characters placed first. The rationale is that characters to whom less attention is being paid can move into positions of their choosing without provoking counter-maneuvers from other characters. Ambush showdowns start at the moment the victim hears a gun cock or a twig snap, and the hidden bushwacker sets up last.

The premier consideration when setting up is to *save time during play*. A judicious placement can save a character time that he would otherwise spend in moving later on. The key to setting up effectively is to devise a plan for the first few turns and then set up to minimize the time needed to fulfill that plan (for example, a character planning to move should set up upright, close to his destination and facing so he can use ADVANCE, RUN and SPRINT to get there speedily). If a character has a variety of plans

which depend on what his opponents do, he should make a compromise setup from which he can swiftly switch into whichever plan the developing situation warrants. In a two-sided showdown, or if the character is one of the last to set up, he faces few contingencies, so he can settle on a plan and set up to fulfill it most efficiently. If the showdown has more sides or the character is one of the first to set up, he faces more possibilities, must make more contingency plans and his set up is likely to be a compromise.

III. PLAYING ACTIONS: COMMITMENT

At the start of each turn, each character must select the actions he will do that turn. This commits him to the type of things he must do, but he keeps the flexibility of exactly how to use each action when he reveals it during the course of the turn. In practice, at the start of the turn he plans what he will do and during the play he adjusts his plan to meet unforeseen contingencies. This sequence reflects the fact that he can make adjustments to an existing plan more easily than he can devise a new plan. He starts each turn concentrating on his latest plan, and as the turn progresses he is observing developments and developing a plan for next turn.

Being committed to an action has several potential drawbacks: changing circumstances can transform the action into an irrelevant waste of time or a step in the wrong direction (which the player will have to reverse on a future turn), or the action can put the player in danger because a new threat has materialized. To a certain extent a player can reveal actions that are generally useful, avoiding actions that are potentially wasteful or risky; but, eventually he must stop waffling and take a course of action that risks these drawbacks. To minimize this risk, he should use multi-option actions to give himself some flexibility *during* the turn.

There are three ways that a character can maximize his flexibility, and the profits that he gains from this flexibility. First, he should play actions that allow him to follow and alternate plan of action in case his original plan suddenly becomes unrealistic or undesirable. Secondly, he should try to predict when he will want to change plans, and arrange his actions so he will smoothly make the transition at the desired moment. Third and last, the riskiest action should come late in the turn, both to maximize the information he gets before deciding how to use the action and to minimize the time until he can play a new set of actions to escape unpleasant developments.

Of course, with all of the players choosing their actions secretly and simultaneously there is a lot of second-guessing going on—players who feel in danger playing defensively, players with an advantage playing offensively, and everybody else trying to outguess each other to gain an advantage. Having an advantage is so much a matter of timing and can change so quickly that even players who have a temporary edge must be careful or they can rapidly find themselves in trouble.

[Note: The rest of this section consists of a somewhat intimidating discussion of the theory behind the *GUNSLINGER* system of playing actions. If this is intuitively obvious to you, or if you do not care about theory, skip to the start of Section IV below. Be warned, however, that the rationale behind *GUNSLINGER* is *not* as simple as it looks.]

In reality, an action is a series of motions ranging from preparing to do the action to recovering after the action is complete. The body does most of these motions automatically once the action has been decided on, so a person can actually be doing several actions at the same time, as long as the motions involved are not mutually exclusive. This is most obvious when the actions use different

parts of the body—but it is also true when different actions use the same motion, even if the motion occurs at different stages of completion for the actions (for example, the motion of crouching and drawing back the fist is both the start of a SWING and the completion of a DUCK action). As a result, actions done by a person within a short time tend to blend together, with actions overlapping in time and going on simultaneously.

GUNSLINGER transforms the complex, overlapping actions of reality into simple, sequential actions that have the same effect. The key concept behind this transformation is viewing the actions in combination instead of individually; in other words, individual simple actions may not correspond with individual real actions, but each *combination* of simple actions *does* correspond to a *combination* of real actions. *GUNSLINGER* accomplishes this correspondence by requiring the actions to be played in combination each turn. And during the turn, these actions should be viewed as overlapping in time so that the person is making progress on all of them at once, at different rates of speed. The sequence in which the actions are arranged defines the order in which their effects occur, rather than the order in which their motions occur. For example, if a character plays ADVANCE and LOAD, he is actually walking *and* loading at the same instant: if the LOAD is first, he walks slowly until he finishes shoving in the shell; if the ADVANCE is first, he walks quickly while he ejects the empty shell casing and slows down to insert the new one. Exactly when he executes the ADVANCE indicates when he crosses the line between hexes.
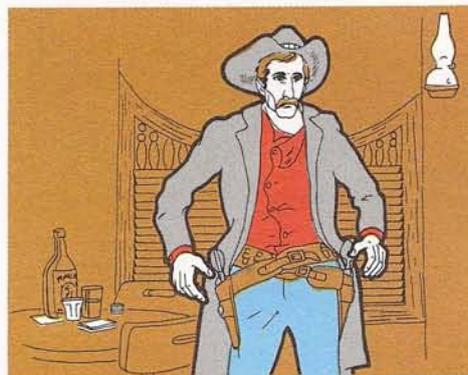
Following this approach, the game's actions were designed so that they could be combined only in the proper ways. The division of turns into five segments, the assignment of action times and the layout of the action cards were all designed so that a character could combine only those actions that he should be allowed to combine. The time values on the actions reflect the time from deciding to finish an action (once preparatory motions are complete) to the time it takes effect; but in some cases these time values were adjusted to allow certain combinations or prohibit others. For example, LOAD should take five full segments but it was shaved down to three so it could combine with ADVANCE or certain other actions. Conversely, a running or sprinting character is required to use ADVANCE as part of his move to keep him from having extra segments in which to make unrealistic combinations. Most of the prohibited combinations were avoided by the simple expedient of putting the actions involved on opposite sides of the same card, so they could not be played together.

Of course, the limitation of combinations to two-second turns was artificial, since the overlap between actions would actually be continuous. The special rule about having to ADVANCE and RUN on the turn before you SPRINT covers the only circumstance in which this turn-to-turn overlap had to be covered by a special rule, however. The real annoyance is that all of the characters' com-

binations end on the same segment each game turn; it would have been nice to stagger turns so that different players played their actions on different segments, but this was deemed unworkable.

An enormous amount of analysis and playtesting went into refining exactly which actions should be allowed to combine, and which card formats and time costs were needed to allow the actions to combine only in the desired ways. Anyone who fiddles with the time costs or the number of segments in a turn will rapidly discover that it takes a lot of work to make adjustments that result in a semblance of reality. Fortunately, you do not have to fret about this problem—I already did the fretting.

IV. SEQUENCE OF PLAY: REVEALING AND DOING ACTIONS

GUNSLINGER's time segments are so short and events happen so fast that reaction time limits each character's ability to recognize events and act. One limitation is that the character can concentrate on only one action from the time he commits himself to do it until it takes effect, so he must play actions in sequence and do them one at a time. Another limitation is that other players do not recognize the action until he commits himself to do it, so the action is concealed until he makes that commitment. When he commits himself he must decide which of the the action's options he will do (if the action allows no options then his commitment is just the point when he starts to put it into effect), reveal the action and then concentrate on that action for the number of segments shown by its time value. The time value is the number of segments from the commitment until the action takes effect. When the action takes effect, his commitment is over, his concentration is freed and he must commit himself to his next action. Notice that preparations for the action, before the commitment, and follow-up after the action do not appear in the game: they do not add to the action's time value and they do not betray the action to other players.

Unfortunately, this rationale makes it necessary for each action to be executed at the end of its time, just before it is removed. This is unfortunate because everybody's natural inclination is to do the action when it is first revealed. It is essential that the pause come after the action is revealed and committed to, however, or the characters have an unrealistic ability to react instantaneously.

Delay points represent effects on the character's consiousness more than his body. When incurred, delay points break the character's concentration so his current action is delayed. Therefore, they delay his ability to make commitments (decisions). Halving the delay at the end of the turn represents how his head clears as time passes.

Events that happen on the same time segment are meant to be simultaneous, but game actions that modify each other *must* be sequential to avoid ambiguities. In the mechanics of the game, the priority of shots and movement must be established so that the range, line of sight and target status are defined when a target moves on the same segment he is shot at. Playtesting revealed that moving first made it too easy to evade shots, so shots precede movement each segment. Similiarly, attacks precede movement to make the attacks more effective and defenses precede attacks to make the defenses more effective. Otherwise, actions do not modify each other and can be left simultaneous. To maintain the effect of simultaneity each segment, all actions done before any penalties go into effect. Since a character should not have to commit himself until after he sees the result of the last action, and since the actions are meant to be simultaneous, each player commits himself to his next action after penalties go into effect.

The order in which the characters do commitment is critical because each character will know the commitments done by earlier phasing characters; so characters who are later to commit have an advantage over characters who are early in the sequence. This advantage is magnified because it affects every character at least once a turn, on *Segment 0*. The alternative is to make commitment secret and simultaneous, but this involves the disadvantage of having to write down the commitments and is greatly magnified because each character does several commitments per turn, creating a lot of paperwork. In the end, the trouble and paperwork deterred us from recording commitments, so characters do their commitments in the order specified in the showdown. The advantage gained by later characters is taken into account in designing and balancing the showdowns. [See the REVEALING ACTIONS sidebar in this issue for some alternate rules that approach this problem in other ways.]

The time lag before doing actions means that instead of acting instantly you must predict events and play accordingly. The key to gaining an advantage from this (apart from predicting accurately) is to minimize your own time lag and maximize your enemies'. Use multi-option actions that allow you to update your own plan or detrack enemy plans during a turn, and favor short actions to minimize the time you spend waiting to act. You can gain time on an enemy by inflicting delay through attacks, but avoid getting delay yourself if possible (do not be in a hurry to SPRINT or LEAP/DROP when alternatives are available); if you must get delay, try to get it at the end of the turn, so it delays as few actions as possible before going away.

V. TERRAIN AND MOVEMENT

GUNSLINGER recreates the positional factors that affect gunfight tactics. Hexes are scaled to six feet in order to precisely define positions near buildings and obstacles; fewer feet per hex does not allow a town to fit on the map, while more feet per hex makes positions ambiguous and limits small buildings to a single hex within which positions are totally ambiguous. Each character's counter shows where he is facing and whether he is upright or down. Hex coordinates hug obstructions to show the positions of characters who stay near them; a character on an obstacle uses it to represent his position because he is assumed to be more visible.

Foot actions allow maneuvers appropriate for the time and ground scale. The movement rate is one hex per action to prevent zipping past danger hexes and each action allows a choice of moves in a specific direction (forward into the aim zone or back out of it), except that SPRINT must be straight ahead to limit one's speed sideways; four actions allow a realistic top speed forward. A facing change action also allows a choice in the specified direction. Each character needs two actions to allow him to get up or down slowly and safely (GET UP/DOWN) or quickly but with more risk (LEAP/DROP). Movements requiring unusual coordination suffer movement penalties. The penalty for crawling is automatic because crawling cannot be done gracefully; the penalty for vaulting fences and obstacles, running at top speed, leaping up and dropping are chancy because these actions can be done quickly but they can go wrong.

Characters can see around corners, doors/windows and obstacles by putting head counters on the other side of these obstructions. To allow looking around corners, each building corner is between two hexes and each hex is adjacent to only one corner; similarly, each window, door and obstacle lies between hexes. A character has two HEAD OUT/BACK actions so he can pull his head back the same turn he sticks it out; each has a time of 2 to allow enemies enough time to shoot when his head pops up. The action forces his head to go straight ahead because a choice of hexes during the turn

could be used to cancel the action, violating its purpose. In order to allow him to look around, his head remains on the map when he turns.

The elevation and plateau effect rules replace vertical triangulation in determining if an obstacle is high enough to block line of sight. Gully walls are high and steep enough to block LOS to ground level, so they are defined as ground level (the higher) in order to block LOS by plateau effect. Hill slopes do not block the LOS from hill to ground, so they are defined as the highest thing at ground level and thus block LOS between ground level characters, but since the plateau effect does not take effect they do not block LOS to and from hills. Of course, any obstruction blocks the LOS to an adjacent, lower character because he is assumed to be huddled down behind it.

The "Plateau Effect:" The bank blocks the LOS from A to B because it has the same elevation as the higher character (B). C is at a higher elevation than the slope and bank, so C has a clear LOS to both A and B.

The same example viewed from the side.
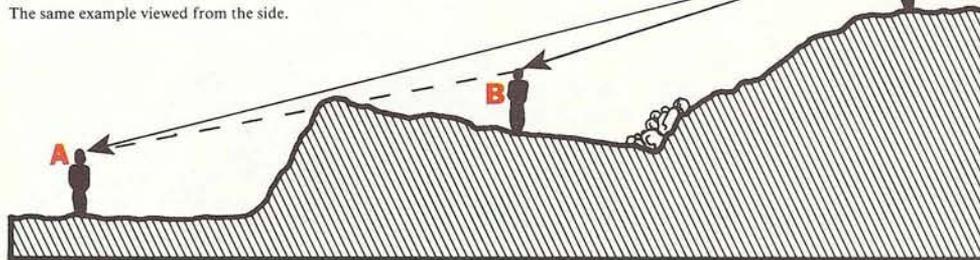
As noted in section III, anyone who plays a foot action is moving throughout the turn and therefore has *Move* Target Status throughout that turn. This allows a tricky play: he can use TURN to turn "straight ahead" and gain the benefit of *Move* Target Status even though his counter doesn't move. This quite legal play represents that he is weaving where he stands to make himself a more difficult target.

Many *GUNSLINGER* neophytes think only of aiming and shooting, without realizing that a character can move into a powerful position of advantage. Most obviously, he can get *Down*, use *Move* and/or *Head* Target Status to decrease his chances of being hit. He can also maneuver to fight at a range where he has an advantage due to weapons or skill. Finally, at close range he can slip behind an enemy to temporary safety. The most mobile character has the most control over how the situation develops, so each character should avoid getting pinned down at the same time he tries to pin his enemies down.

VI. GUNPLAY AND TIMING

The COCK/AIM/SHOOT action is based on the image of the classic duel, the aiming race in which either opponent can suddenly decide to fire with the aim he has so far. The decision to fire can be sudden, so aiming and shooting are options that are selected when the action is revealed. Cocking the gun is a natural part of this sequence, so it is another option. When a character does SHOOT he is concentrating solely on whether to squeeze off a fast shot; the shot takes place more quickly, but since his concentration is centered on shooting the action cannot increase his aim or cock his gun. A total of three COCK/AIM/SHOOT and SHOOT actions can be played during a turn, which gives a normal player the right number of chances to choose whether to shoot.

Each character uses AIM markers to show how carefully his gun is aimed: zero markers means it is waving around, one marker (2 AIM points) means it is aimed from the hip, two markers means it is between hip and shoulder, three markers means it is aimed from the shoulder and four markers means it is sighted in. Actions that would jerk the gun off target cause it to lose aim. Aiming at a moving target implies that the aim is following the target, so AIM markers move with their target; a character can even turn to follow a target. Since aim can move it reasonable to allow it to shift to a nearby target, so transferring aim is legal; this also allows a character to aim at a location (hex) and then shift when a real target appears.

A character's total aim value consists of his AIM time plus his skill plus the aim value on the action he uses to shoot: the aim values on COCK/AIM/SHOOT and SHOOT represent his last-second aim correction, and his skill shows how well he aims "by eye", even when his gun is out of position. Two-handed guns have low aim values on SHOOT and COCK/AIM/SHOOT due to their clumsiness at making last-second corrections, but their range factors increase their accuracy once they are in position: carbines get this bonus when aimed from the hip (one AIM marker), but rifles must be nearer the shoulder (two AIM markers). Fanfiring moves the gun around so much that all aim values are cancelled except the character's ability to aim by eye, his skill.

Time is the critical factor in a gunfight. The first hit can be decisive because even a minor wound will be a severe disadvantage temporarily, so the gunfight is a race to get the first hit. Time is most critical at close range, where it takes less time to aim and hits are more dangerous; at long range even rifles must aim long enough to earn the range bonus, giving the victim time to recover from a minor wound before the shooter can capitalize. The problem is judging when to stop aiming and shoot: aiming increases accuracy (and is essential beyond short range), but any shot can miss or misfire.

A way to make the best use of time is to get the most accuracy for each segment spent cocking, aiming and firing. Ignoring bonuses, the most efficient aim time for a handgun is "2" or "3" at zero hexes, "5" at one hex, "7" or "8" at two hexes and "8" or "9" at longer ranges. Less aim does not gain enough accuracy to balance the time to cock the gun, while extra aim does not gain enough accuracy to be worth the time. Factors that save time (skills and bonus cards) tend to reduce the optimal time while factors that reduce accuracy (target status, wounds) tend to increase it. If a skilled character is in a situation where he does not have to worry about emptying his gun, fanfiring is optimal out to a range

equal to his skill (when using COCK/AIM/SHOOT to fanfire) or a range one greater than his skill (when using SHOOT to fanfire). Similarly, a shotgun is most efficient with no AIM markers when reloading is not a problem, but one AIM marker is best if it will have to be reloaded. At anything over immediate range, rifles and carbines should be aimed long enough to get their aim bonuses. Other time losses—such as drawing a new gun, reloading, losing a segment due to delay or inefficient play, etc.—all tend to increase the optimal aim time. In practice, these considerations should be viewed only as a guideline: in most cases a character can fire one segment early or late without hurting his efficiency too much; in any case, maximizing efficiency is not as important as getting in that first effective shot.

Maximizing the chance of getting the first hit is far from simple. Aiming increases accuracy but gives the target time, so a player should aim only when he can make better use of the time than his target. When he shoots his chance of hitting reduces his target's chances (the target will lose his aim) but the shot's chances of missing give the target the time it takes to recock. Usually the best tactic is to shoot just before the enemy shoots, especially if either side has good chances of hitting. A player should arrange his actions to fire one segment earlier than he thinks his enemy will fire (if the probabilities justify a shot) or to keep aiming for a better shot later (if they do not). He should favor SHOOT at crisis points because it is fast and, when preceded by COCK/AIM/SHOOT, it allows a choice of adjacent segments in which to fire. When players reveal actions on the same segment, knowing what the others are doing is a large advantage to the one who reveals last; earlier players must be particularly wary of aiming in situations that invite a pre-emptive shot.

A character can gain time by maximizing his gunhandling efficiency many ways. He should try to cock, load or draw just after he shoots, or his enemies can play knowing he is temporarily helpless. He can widen his shooting options by aiming at a central hex while his aim builds up and then moves his aim hex by hex to his target before he shoots; any B2 or B3 SHOOT he has will allow him to move his aim hex faster. He can use a B2 or B3 to cock his gun without drawing, and its SHOOT gives him an extra chance to fire each turn, which is valuable at close range, particularly when fanfiring. If he has the skill, fanfiring allows him to shoot fast and also avoids the delay of cocking, but its low accuracy makes it chancy at a range of two hexes and wasteful beyond. Movement actions can also help him: he can move without hurting his fanfiring accuracy, which helps him to close in to the range where fanfiring is dangerous; and if he has a spare segment (when he knows he is just aiming, for example) he can play TURN to gain the benefit of MOVE targets status.

Special problems arise if obstructions interfere with the line of sight. The shooter must have a clear LOS from the time he reveals a shot until he executes it, so when his target is near obstructions it is prudent for him to aim at a hex adjacent to where the target will appear and transfer his aim when the target appears. However, if a running target is in LOS for only one segment, COCK/AIM/SHOOT is too slow to transfer and shoot so the shooter must schedule SHOOT for the segment when he thinks the target will be in view; if he guesses wrong he can only transfer his aim from hex to hex, following the target to get another chance on a later turn. A target can actually outrun aim, particularly in areas (the grove of woods) where there are a lot of blind hexes. The target should schedule his slow ADVANCE to happen when he moves from one blind spot to another. The bonus B2 and B3 SHOOT actions (if he has them) can give the shooter extra chances to catch the target in the open.

VII. SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

The Result Cards and IMPACT TABLE provide a fast and easy method of resolving shots while taking into account aim time, range, impact of the bullet, moving targets, down targets, targets under cover, misfires and the location of hits. The importance of most of these factors is obvious, but such things as shell impact are often overlooked even though gun experts wax rhetorical about the critical differences between shells. The system allows a lot of factors to be interwoven without referring to a lot of charts or doing a lot of adding and subtracting. The result puts the emphasis on events rather than a cloud of numbers, and plays with the fast pace a gunfight should have.

Penalties represent factors that interfere with the victim's ability to act. Delay points represent disorientation that limits what he can do. Endurance boxes represent the mental energy that enables him to recover, so *fatigue* and *wound* cards that reduce his endurance represent events that sap this energy. He passes out only if his delay exceeds his endurance for two consecutive turns, which means that, since his delay is halved each turn, each endurance box raises his blackout threshold by two delay points. When his endurance is low, he must be very careful about getting delay; but when it is high, he can eventually recover even if he gets enough delay to be helpless for several turns. SERIOUS penalties represent damage to the victim's system due to bleeding, pain, internal injuries; this damage continues to weaken him after the initial impact and at the end of the showdown he must check to see if the damage to his system is mortal. The other permanent penalties (GUN ARM and so forth) represent how damage to a specific part of the body interferes with specific actions.

The brawling system makes a virtue out of the necessity of resolving hand-to-hand combat. The possible actions are categorized into three attacks and defenses to allow a "rock-paper-stone" interaction with varying penalties. STRENGTH is a separate action to allow a choice between a fast, weak blow and a stronger but slower one. The wielding factor rules allow the same actions to be used for weapon attacks. In practice, only weapon attacks and bonus card attacks are powerful enough to dispatch an enemy outright, but barehanded attacks can gain critical time by inflicting a little delay. Fast, quick attacks that inflict a little delay can be followed by strong attacks that inflict a lot of delay, and then a weapon or a bonus card can be used to dispatch the victim (it usually takes too long to pound an opponent into unconsciousness using normal attacks). A character who is later in the order of play has an exaggerated advantage in brawling due to the way defenses work (his defenses are usually effective for an extra segment), so he should tend to favor closing in and brawling, while a character who comes earlier in the order should tend to avoid brawling unless his target has a delay disadvantage.

The key element in hidden movement is that each character chooses his actions without knowing where his enemies are. This could be done in *GUNSLINGER* by having each player move on a separate set of boards, with a moderator looking at all of the positions and telling the players when they could see each other. *Hunting play* uses a system of recording actions in advance to simulate this effect on one set of boards and without a moderator, on the theory that each character chooses his actions in ignorance of where his enemies will be when he does the actions. Since it would be tedious to record all of the actions and options for several turns in advance, the actions are stylized and simplified into *activities* to minimize the recording effort and to put realistic limits on what the characters can do. The paths represent the routes that characters automatically follow when they are hurrying to a general area;

when they are moving into a tactical position, they are assumed to be more cautious, so they can only MOVE when they leave the paths. The requirements to record at least two activities in advance and to PAUSE ensure that each character is recording far enough into the future so he is effectively ignorant of where his enemies will be when he does his activities. This system assumes a lot of hesitation and doubt due to uncertainty about where the enemy is, so it should never be implemented in the middle of a battle. As a result, a character stays in gunfight mode as long as he sees *or is seen by* an enemy. Even when he is running away from a battle, facing away from an enemy, he still knows where they are (presumably he is glancing over his shoulder). Once the character is in hunting mode, however, he stays in the mode when he is seen by an enemy who is behind him—he cannot see the enemy by glancing over his shoulder because he is busy trying to look everywhere at once and doesn't know exactly which way to glance.

The VICTORY POINTS system is designed to encourage realistic play. Survival rates most highly of course, and the other values reflect the "Code of the West": it is dishonorable to run away or surrender, it is highly desirable to be feared so a character gains by killing or knocking out his enemies and he gains by being on his feet when the battle ends, and so on. The bonus points represent allowances due to circumstances: merely running away would be a triumph for a character fighting his way out of a trap, more would be expected of a famous gunfighter. Money has its own value in the "Code of the West", so the money bag values are set arbitrarily to give them the proper values in the context of the other values. Each player should start each showdown by calculating exactly what he needs to do, to get the sense of the values his character would automatically be aware of in real life.

With rules for mechanics and motives, the game of the gunfight is complete. Gunfights were not isolated incidents in the West, however. The story of the great gunfighters is the story of men who lived their lives in the violent shadow of one gunfight after another. To give some sense of this, the *Showdowns* were selected to show various incidents in the lives of certain selected gunfighters—particularly Ben Thompson, Wild Bill Hickok, Billy the Kid, and the Earps and Clantons in Tombstone. In addition, the *Campaign* rules put individual gunfights in the context of the all-too-common range wars, where one gunfight led to another. Finally, the *Role-playing* rules allow the players to develop their own gunfighters and trace their careers through a ten-year period in a mythical western county. Role-playing, with its choices of goals and life-styles, its representation of the life of a gunfighter, is worth an entire article by itself. But we're out of space, so that must wait for another time.

☆

TOURNAMENT SHOWDOWNS

SHOWDOWN T1: BAWDY HOUSE

Description: A friendly fight breaks out in a bawdy house.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Kid
Side B: Second character: Gambler
Side C: Third character: Marshal
Side D: Fourth character: Yankee
Side E: Fifth character: Quiet Man
Side F: Sixth character: Ling Ho
Side G: Seventh character: Floozy

MAP

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C C
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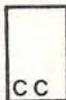
SET UP: No one is alerted. No one has a two-handed weapon. Each character sets up inside the Boarding House. The first character sets up first, then the second player, and so on.

SPECIAL RULES: Characters cannot surrender.

GAME LENGTH: 20 turns

BONUS POINTS:
1. Each time a character moves a gun to a HAND or HANDS box he gets –2 victory points.
2. Each time a character kills an enemy, he gets –10 victory points.

SHOWDOWN T2: TRADING POST

Description: A rough-and-tumble fight breaks out at a rural trading post.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: NCO
Side B: Second character: Axe
Side C: Third character: Mountain Man
Side D: Fourth character: Border Rider
Side E: Fifth character: Andy
Side F: Sixth character: John Henry
Side G: Seventh character: Barkeep

MAP

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C  H H
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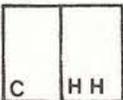
SET UP: Everyone is alerted. Each character sets up inside the Bar building. The first character sets up first, then the second player, and so on.

SPECIAL RULE: Characters cannot surrender.

GAME LENGTH: 20 turns

BONUS POINTS: Each time a character kills an enemy, he gets –6 victory points.

SHOWDOWN T3: SIEGE

Description: Old enemies meet in the wild, and a long-range gun battle breaks out.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Hawk
Side B: Second character: Drifter
Side C: Third character: Scout
Side D: Fourth character: Ike
Side E: Fifth character: Mountain Man
Side F: Sixth character: Gun Artist
Side G: Seventh character: Marshal

MAP

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E  B  F
         H
A  G
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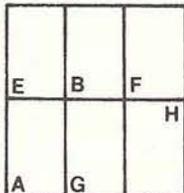
SET UP: Everyone is alerted. Each character sets up on any board. The first character sets up first, the second character sets up second, and so on. Once the first character has set up, each subsequent character must set up 8 hexes or more away from every other character.

GAME LENGTH: 30 turns

BONUS POINTS: Each character who surrenders gets an extra –2 victory points.

The following are the scenarios used to separate the tenderfeet from the desperadoes during the GUNSLINGER tournament at the recent ORIGINS '82. Each is designed for seven characters and, since seven would play in each round, no smaller versions were devised. To feel the thrill of tournament play, gather six friends of varying familiarity with the system, and then play all eight scenarios back-to-back without pause. If this appeals to you, we'll see you in the dusty cardboard streets of Detroit in '83.

SHOWDOWN T4: CONTESTED CLAIM

Description: Miner and claim-jumpers clash over a claim outside of a roaring mining camp.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Gun Artist
Side B: Second character: Dude
Side C: Third character: Border Rider
Side D: Fourth character: Ike
Side E: Fifth character: Scout
Side F: Sixth character: Texas
Side G: Seventh character: Guard

MAP

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H  E
  F
     B
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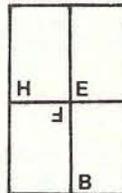
GAME LENGTH: 30 turns

SET UP: No one is alerted. Set up 4 money bags in hex N18 on board H. Each character starts exactly 3 hexes from the money bags, at least 2 hexes from all other characters. The first character sets up first, then the second player, and so on.

BONUS POINTS: Each money bag is worth +5 victory points.

SHOWNDOWN T5: VIGILANTIES!

Description: Outlaws clash as they try to escape from a vigilante raid.

MAP

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E  H  F  G  B  A  D
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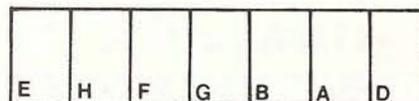
OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Driver
Side B: Second character: Fast Eddie
Side C: Third character: Eagle
Side D: Fourth character: Innocente
Side E: Fifth character: Texas
Side F: Sixth character: Hawk
Side G: Seventh character: El Jefe

SET UP: Everyone is alerted.
Side A sets up first, on board D.
Side B sets up second, on board A.
Side C sets up third, on board B.
Side D sets up fourth, on board G.
Side E sets up fifth, on board F.
Side F sets up sixth, on board H.
Side G sets up on board E.

SPECIAL RULES:
1. All characters can exit the map only along the east edge.
2. All characters on the map at the end of the showdown are captured.
3. Captured characters are killed.

GAME LENGTH: 30 turns

BONUS POINTS: Side A gets 1 bonus point, side B gets 2 bonus points, and so on.

SHOWDOWN T6: HIGH-STAKES POKER GAME

Description: Trouble starts at a poker game between professional card-sharps.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Marshal
Side B: Second character: Kid
Side C: Third character: Gambler
Side D: Fourth character: Border Rider
Side E: Fifth character: Dude
Side F: Sixth character: Quiet Man
Side G: Seventh character: Little Ernie

MAP

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D D
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SET UP: Set up as explained for showdown 14 in the rulebook, except each character *does* have his two-handed gun.

SPECIAL RULE: Use optional rule 7.2.

GAME LENGTH: 20 turns

BONUS POINTS: Each money bag is worth +5 victory points

SHOWDOWN T7: SOUR MEMORIES

Description: Seven deadly enemies chance to run into each other at the Stable while the Marshal is out of town.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Chief
Side B: Second character: Cattle Baron
Side C: Third character: Prospector
Side D: Fourth character: Happy
Side E: Fifth character: Old Man
Side F: Sixth character: Sodbuster
Side G: Seventh character: Clerk

MAP

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A
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SET UP: No one is alerted. Each character sets up in the Stable or within two hexes of the Stable, 2 or more hexes from all other characters. The first character sets up first, the second player sets up second, and so on.

SPECIAL RULE: Captured characters are killed.

GAME LENGTH: 30 turns

BONUS POINTS: Killing an enemy is worth an extra +2 victory points.

SHOWDOWN T8: BATTLE OF CHAMPIONS

Description: Professional gunfighters shoot it out.

OPPOSING FORCES
Side A: First character: Marshal
Side B: Second character: Gun Artist
Side C: Third character: Kid
Side D: Fourth character: Mountain Man
Side E: Fifth character: Dude
Side F: Sixth character: Ike
Side G: Seventh character: Border Rider

MAP

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              D D
C   G G       F F
                A A
B   H H  E E
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SET UP: Everybody is alerted. Each player writes the hex down where he is starting. Then all of the players reveal their starting hexes, and the players commence to set up. Each player must set up in the hex he recorded, but he can choose his facing, whether he is up or down, etc. at the moment he sets up (after finding out where everybody else sets up). The first player sets up first, then the second player, and so on.

SPECIAL RULE: No one can surrender.

GAME LENGTH: 30 turns

BONUS POINTS: Holding the field is worth an extra +2 points.

GLORY POINTS

Victory points show how players compare in the same game, but they can be translated into *Glory* Points that show how well they do in an absolute sense. To find each character's Glory Points, calculate his victory points (including bonuses) normally and add the points shown below for the game being played. If a player controls more than one character, he averages their Glory Points scores to find his own "Glory" score. Thanks to Mike Malone of Washington for starting me towards this system; I just wish I had thought of it before the game came out. This rule is optional but highly recommended.

Showdown	Add:
1v	−3
2	+2
4	−1
6	−2
6v	−3
7	+2
8	−1
9	−2
10	−2
11	−2
12	−2
13	+2
14	−2
15	−2
16	−2
16v	−4
17	−2
20	−2
20v	−2
21	−2
21v	+1
23	−3
25	+2
25v	+2
26	+1
26v	+1

Add no points in showdowns 1, 3, 5, 18, 19, 22 and 24, and variants 7 and 19.

1. Glory scores are interpreted below. Players who score below zero "lose", players who score above zero are "successful" and the player with the biggest plus score is the winner. *To win, a player's glory score must be above zero. If no one has a score above zero then nobody wins.* Players in different games can compare glory scores meaningfully.

GLORY

Score:	Meaning:	Effect on character:
+10	Fabulous	Penny-book hero
+8	Excellent	Legendary
+6	Very Good	Famous
+4	Good	Feared
+2	Average	Respected
0	Fair	Tolerated
−2	Poor	Scorned
−4	Bad	Sneered at
−6	Very Bad	Shunned
−8	Terrible	Run out of town
−10	Abominable	Moves back East

2. In role-playing, each player gets Success Points equal to the glory scores of all of his characters (both westerners and non-westerners). He also gets *Success* as explained in rules *51.3* and *51.4*, and his westerners earn Success Points normally from their goals.

AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	28	2598YOT	1
2.	B. Dobson	3	2392RJQ	2
3.	B. Sinigaglio	13	2135GHI	4
4.	D. Burdick	27	2134GFM	5
5.	D. Garbutt	26	2116FHM	3
6.	T. Oleson	37	2047WXZ	6
7.	F. Preissle	25	2027KMW	7
8.	J. Kreuz	22	2016FGK	8
9.	J. Zajicek	31	2004HJO	9
10.	M. Sincavage	17	1991DEI	12
11.	P. Ford	8	1984FCL	15
12.	B. Remsburg	11	1936FHN	17
13.	J. Beard	17	1935GGN	11
14.	F. Freeman	2	1924EEF	14
15.	W. Oweny	1	1917CEH	—
16.	W. Scott	24	1896IHR	20
17.	L. Kelly	21	1896VWZ	13
18.	J. Sunde	3	1878JJR	18
19.	R. Leach	30	1874HLR	19
20.	D. Munsell	23	1860GFL	27
21.	J. Anderson	4	1859CDE	21
22.	P. Flory	4	1858CEH	22
23.	F. Reese	8	1834GDF	16
24.	C. Wannall	4	1834GKO	34
25.	I. LeBouef	16	1830IKT	31
26.	G. Charbonneau	2	1827CEH	25
27.	R. Phelps	9	1827FHM	24
28.	R. Beyma	3	1826CCE	33
29.	P. Landry	2	1823GHL	26
30.	B. Schoose	8	1802FHK	37
31.	S. Martin	21	1801GHK	23
32.	R. Hoffman	14	1798EGL	28
33.	N. Cromartie	13	1796GGN	29
34.	E. Miller	14	1789GJP	39
35.	J. Wirt	1	1788CEE	—
36.	F. Ornstein	11	1784FGL	30
37.	D. Greenwood	28	1779FFJ	43
38.	R. Rowley	10	1779FHM	35
39.	C. Olson	11	1778DEJ	32
40.	F. Sebastian	23	1758FHN	38
41.	R. Jones	4	1753FIM	46
42.	B. Salvatore	5	1747FIM	42
43.	W. Knapp	22	1737JLS	44
44.	B. Downing	17	1724FHK	40
45.	J. Hunter	3	1721DFH	47
46.	R. Zajac	8	1719FGH	48
47.	C. Wyatt	4	1705CEH	36
48.	W. Letzin	1	1705DEI	—
49.	G. Smith	2	1704DDJ	49
50.	D. Eisan	3	1704GDG	50

MEET THE 50 . . .

Mr. Robert P. Rowley is 32, married, father of two and a teacher of music in Philmont, New York.

Favorite Game: PB
AREA Rated Games: PB
AREA W-L Record: 18-6-1   **% Time PBM:** 90%
Gaming Time/Week: 5 hrs.   **Play Preference:** PBM
Hobbies: white-water canoeing, soccer coach and player, zymurgy
Pet Peeve: Opponents who "fade away"

Mr. Rowley passes on his advice to the novice on rated play:

"Errors in early play can send a 'good' (assigned 1500 AREA) rating plunging drastically. Start and continue your rated play with good organization. Keep everything your opponents send you. Save all those old letters and moves. A large manila envelope works fine for each game. Retain these records even after a game's conclusion. It may be handy to look back at how a prior opponent took you apart and employ some of the same tactics in your current match. Have a system for recording the written aspect of each turn. Leaving units out, miscopied ID numbers and faulty board setups will cost you and your opponent time and stamps. Check all moves several times—sloppy paperwork will cost you games."

REVEALING ACTIONS

Being later in the order of play gives a player an advantage, particularly in hand-to-hand combat. The optional rules below remove this advantage by changing the order of play each turn. When using either of these rules, use the order of play listed in the showdowns only for set up. *These rules can change the balance of the showdowns, which were designed around the order of play in the rulebook.*
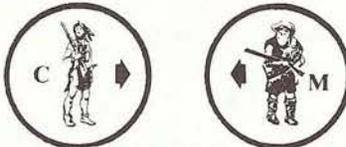
1. The order of play moves one character to the left each turn, so the listed *first character* plays first on turn one, second on turn two, and so on. This rule is easy and fast to use, but it allows the players to predict next turn's order of play.

2. At the start of each turn (before revealing actions), each player draws a result card. The one who draws the highest ID number is the first player that turn, the player to his left is second, and so on. The players should number seven chits, giving each player the chit showing his current position in the order of play. Under this rule the order of play is not predictable, but keeping track of the order can be confusing and slow play.

CONTEST 109

You are the Kid on Turn 6 of SHOWDOWN 4, *Thieves Fall Out,* in the illustration below. Only you and the Gun Artist remain. Your only weapon is a C45 in BOTH HANDS (you played LOAD last turn so it is fully loaded); and his only weapon is a fully loaded W44 in BOTH HANDS. Neither of you suffer from any wounds or delay. The Gun Artist is currently two victory points ahead of you, so you must either drive him off the map or put him out of action to win. You dare not try for the money bags or other abandoned guns lest he pick you off with his W44.

To win, specify the actions you will play on Turn 6 to give you the best chance to win. Specify each action by its card (for example, use "1" to specify the ADVANCE on the front of Card 1, "(1)" to specify the BACK UP on the back of Card 1, etc.). Leave unused spaces blank. [To avoid ambiguity in tracing line of sight, the trough does *not* block the LOS from J10 to F10 and does *not* block the LOS from I11 to H11; it *does* block the LOS from I11 to F11, if the character in I11 is down, and from I11 to J10.] To break any ties, also plan your actions for Turn 7 in response to each of the following situations:

a) Assume that on Turn 6 the Gun Artist does nothing.
b) Assume that on Turn 6 the Gun Artist puts his head out, shoots and misses.
c) Assume that on Turn 6 the Gun Artist puts his head out and aims.
d) Assume that on Turn 6 the Gun Artist gets up, shoots and misses.
e) Assume that on Turn 6 the Gun Artist gets up and aims.
f) Assume that on Turn 6 the Gun Artist moves to Hex J10.

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found in the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive AH merchandise credit vouchers. To be valid, an entry must be received prior to the mailing of the next issue and include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole, as well as listing the three best articles. The solution to Contest #109 will appear in Vol. 19, No. 4 and the winners in Vol. 19, No. 5 of The *GENERAL*.
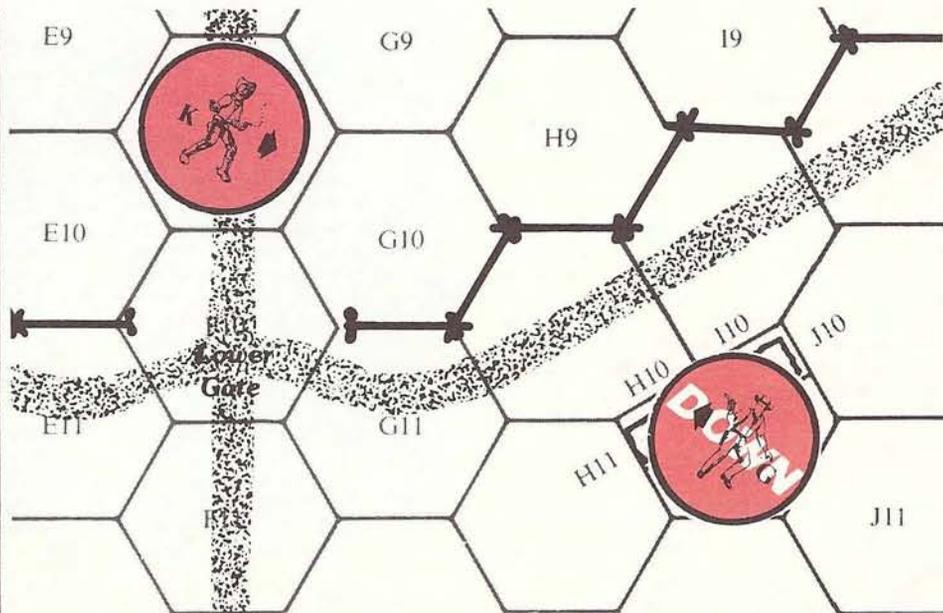
CRITTERS

Guns Versus Fang and Claw

Early versions of *GUNSLINGER* included battles between gunfighters and wild animals that were left out of the final game as being inappropriate in a game about gunfight duels. (I tried to do away with horses as well, but I couldn't get away with it.) This is unfortunate because the Buffalo, Longhorn, Grizzly Bear, rattlesnake and Puma figure prominently in the history and legends of the West. This variant provides the counters and rules to bring these "critters" back into the game as player-controlled characters.

1. This issue's insert contains two-hex counters representing Buffalo, Longhorns and Grizzly Bears, and one-hex counters for Pumas and rattlesnakes. The horse counters in the game can also be used to represent wild horses or "Mustangs".

2. A player who controls a critter plays and does actions each turn just as if he were controlling a human character. Critters can do only the ADVANCE, BACK UP, TURN, SPIN AROUND, GET UP/DOWN, STRENGTH and attack and defense actions; they can play other actions, but they do nothing when the actions are executed. Pumas are the only critters that can RUN and horses and Pumas are the only critters that can LEAP/DROP. Each critter gets one B1 and one B9 bonus card. *Exception:* Rattlesnakes get the B4 and B6 bonus cards and do not get the 11, 12, B1 or B9 bonus cards. They also cannot use STRENGTH.

3. A two-hex critter moves like a horse as explained in Optional Rule 3 in the rulebook, except it uses foot actions to move instead of COCK/AIM/SHOOT and it has a maximum *speed* (the number of times it must "gallop" each segment) of two. A critter's speed automatically decreases by one at the end of each turn. *Exceptions:* Pumas have a maximum speed of one, and rattlesnakes have a maximum speed of zero.

3.1 Actions are done *before* galloping each segment. When a two-hex critter does ADVANCE it can either change its speed by one (up or down) or advance as pictured on page 18 of the rulebook. When it does SPIN AROUND it must "sidle" as pictured on page 18, and when it does TURN or BACK UP it must turn or back up as pictured. Unlike horses, critters can back up and sidle when their speed is above zero, they do not draw delay cards for doing foot actions and they do not draw fatigue cards for reaching maximum speed. The player must state exactly how he is moving when he reveals the action.

3.2 Critters can get DOWN only when they DROP, STAGGER or are killed. Each critter can use its GET UP/DOWN action only to get up after it has fallen involuntarily.

3.3 Each time any part of a critter moves onto an obstacle or crosses a bank, slope or fence, the critter's speed decreases by one and the critter draws one delay card. A critter cannot enter hexes containing buildings, treetrunks or critters; if it tries to its speed is set to zero and it draws two delay cards. These penalties occur at the end of the segment (so a critter can draw four cards for galloping into the same wall twice in the same segment). DOWN critters (except rattlesnakes) are treated as obstacles.

3.4 When a horse does LEAP/DROP it jumps as explained in Optional Rule *3.26*; as it gallops that segment, it passes over lower obstacles without penalty. The critter does draw a fatigue card for jumping. *Special:* A jumping critter moves one extra hex straight ahead (so a horse can jump three hexes, and a Puma can jump two).

3.5 Pumas and rattlers are controlled like two-hex critters but move and turn like one-hex human counters. Rattlers do not have a B1 card—they cannot RUN, LEAP/DROP or GET UP/DOWN and they cannot gallop (for reasons that should be obvious). Pumas can RUN and LEAP/DROP (to jump), and their maximum speed is one. *Special:* When a leaping Puma enters an upright human's hex, the Puma stops in that hex.

4. To fight, critters play attacks, draw result cards and consult the STRIKING TABLE to find the damage they inflict. All attacks have an aim time of 5, but the type of critter defines the row of the STRIKING TABLE that is used.

4.1 Bears, Buffalo, Longhorns and Pumas attack with JAB, SWING and BELT (think of them as "CLAW", "BITE", "GORE", etc.) plus STRENGTH, and defend with DUCK, BLOCK and GUARD. Bears and Pumas use the AXE row of the STRIKING TABLE; Bears add 2 to all penalties and Pumas add 1. Longhorns, Buffalo and horses use the PF (Pitchfork) row; Longhorns add 2 to all penalties, Buffalo add 1 and horses subtract 1.

4.2 Rattlesnakes attack with JAB, HOOK and CHOP (without STRENGTH) and defend with DUCK, SIDESTEP and COVERUP; they use the "C41" row of the IMPACT TABLE when they hit.

4.3 Each time part of a two-hex critter enters a human's hex the critter gets the penalty indicated in Optional Rule *3.24*. If the human is upright, he gets STUN 2 and STAGGERS; and if he is DOWN, he gets STUN 6 and SERIOUS 1. When a one-hex critter enters a human's hex both the human and critter draw two delay cards normally. *Exceptions:* If a leaping Puma lands in a human's hex, the Puma is treated as a two-hex critter. If a leaping Puma passes through a hex containing a DOWN human, neither the human nor the Puma get a penalty.

5. All critters start with 40 endurance.

5.1 When firing at a two-hex critter, divide the range by 3 to reflect the size of the target. A two-hex critter has *Move* Target Status when its speed is 1, *Run* Status if its speed is more. One-hex critters define Target Status the same way humans do. Rattlesnakes always have *Down* Target Status.

5.2 Subtract 3 from all combat penalties inflicted on a Buffalo, subtract 2 from all combat penalties inflicted on a Longhorn, Bear or horse, and subtract 1 from all combat penalties inflicted on a Puma. Add 1 to all combat penalties inflicted on a rattlesnake. If a hit is reduced so the critter draws no result cards at all, cancel any DROP or STAGGER penalties associated with that hit.

6. SUGGESTED SHOWDOWNS: Critters should always start with a speed of zero. *Bears or Pumas:* Use two critters as side A in showdowns 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 22 or 24, or as side B in showdown 5. *Note:* Use the *Darkness* Optional Rule when Pumas are used.

Buffalo, Longhorns, horses: Use about eight critters, divided into two equal herds. Play one set of actions for each herd: all of the animals in that herd do that set of actions simultaneously. Critters that run into blocking terrain just stop until an action occurs they can do. Put RUN markers on each critter to show its speed, and put each critter's delay next to it on the board. The herds can be redivided every five turns. Use side A in showdown 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, or 22, or as side C in showdown 24.

Rattlesnakes: Add to any showdown that includes rockpiles. Whenever a character moves next to or onto a rockpile he draws one Result card for each rockpile he is next to or on. If he draws a MALFUNCTION a rattlesnake appears in that rockpile. The rattlesnake is controlled by the next enemy after the victim in the order of play (after the seventh character the order loops back to the first character). ☆

GUNSMITH'S SHOP

3.2 *Example:* A W44 with an aim of 8 fires a trajectory shot at a target 29 hexes away. The range bonus (D4) and trajectory bonus (D4) reduce the range to 1, which reduces the aim time to 7. The shooter uses an aim time of 7 and a range of zero on his first draw, and an aim time of 7 and a range of 3 on his second draw.

4. This rule modifies how players lose aim (see rule *12*). Losses in terms of markers are rounded up: half of three AIM markers is two markers, leaving one marker worth 2 points.

4.1 A character loses only half of his AIM markers when he reveals ADVANCE, BACK UP or GET UP/DOWN. He still loses all of his aim when he reveals RUN, SPIN AROUND, LEAP/DROP, etc.

4.2 He loses only one AIM marker when he cocks his gun.

4.3 He loses some aim when he transfers his aim to a target in a different hex. The number of hexes to his new target defines how many AIM markers he loses for each hex his aim moves. He keeps all his aim only if his old and new target are in the same hex.

Hexes to new target	AIM markers lost for each hex the aim moves
10+ hexes	lose 1 AIM marker per hex
4-9 hexes	lose 2 AIM markers per hex
1-3	lose 3 AIM markers per hex
0 hexes	cannot transfer into hex

5. RECOIL: When a character fires a gun, the amount of aim he loses depends how much his gun recoils or "kicks." The gun's Impact on the new weapon list defines its recoil.

Gun's Impact:	Effect on shooter:
A or B (and all shotguns)	lose all AIM markers and draw one delay card
C	lose all AIM markers
D	lose one AIM marker
E	keep all AIM markers

6. BRACING: Characters can "brace" guns to reduce recoil and increase accuracy. A carbine or handgun in BOTH HANDS is braced if its owner has an aim time of 9 (including skills). Any gun with an aim time of 7 is braced if its owner either is DOWN or has a head counter on an obstacle or through a door or window. Bracing divides the range by two (round down) in addition to any other range effects, so a braced W44 divides the range by 8 (D4 for range bonus, D2 for bracing). Bracing also reduces the recoil (see rule 5, above) by one level: a braced A or B gun recoils like a C gun. Shotguns cannot be braced.

7. When a character suffers a WILD SHOT, all his fully loaded handguns fire one shot. If a holstered gun fires, its owner gets LEG 1 and LIGHT 1 penalties (for shooting himself in the foot). Characters can choose to set up with one empty chamber in each gun.

8. When a gun explodes, its owner gets LIGHT 4 and either GUN ARM 1 (if it was in his GUN HAND or BOTH HANDS) or OTHER ARM 1 (if it was in his OTHER HAND).

9. LASSO and WHIP: The lasso and whip each consist of one *end* counter and one *user* counter with cocked and uncocked sides. The whip is WHIP when cocked, HAND when uncocked and its end is TIP; it is one-handed and inflicts damage like a SPD. The rope is LASSO when cocked, ROPE when uncocked side and its end is LOOP; it is two-handed and inflicts damage like a PAIL. Both weapons have a wielding factor of 0 and can attack or be thrown only when they are cocked. They inflict damage only when they attack and can attack up to three hexes away (defenses cancel these attacks normally). They are uncocked when they attack.

9.1 A BE hit means the end counter goes on the target's sheet to show he is caught. While he is caught, the user can attack him (defense actions cancel these attacks normally), but all hits hit the same location as the original BE. The target can attack the attack counter (the user's defenses cancel these attacks normally), hits inflict "bare hands" damage on the user and a BE means the target is freed (and if he was using a knife, sabre or axe the rope or whip is destroyed).

9.2 The distance between user and target cannot increase while the target is caught. If either player tries to move away, the user draws two delay cards and the target draws two fatigue cards. If the players move closer, they cannot move apart again.

9.3 If the target frees himself or the original attack misses or gets a non-BE hit, the attack counter is put in the target's hex. It can be attacked and destroyed as explained in rule *9.1* , but no penalties are inflicted on the user.

9.4 Before he can recock his weapon, the user must LOAD once to return the counter to his hex (not necessary if it is already in his hex), and then LOAD again to put it with the user counter. He can then use a cocking action to recock it.

9.5 The DRIVER gets the whip; he has a special brawling skill (good only with whips) of +5. HAPPY gets the rope; he has a special +5 skill with ropes.

☆

GUNSLINGER SERIES REPLAY

Showdown 4: Thieves Fall Out
The Kid: Tom Murphy
Border Rider: Fredrick Iffert
Gun Artist: Rex A. Martin
Innocente: Craig Ransom
Drifter: Dr. Vinny the Ninny
Neutral Commentator: Richard Hamblen
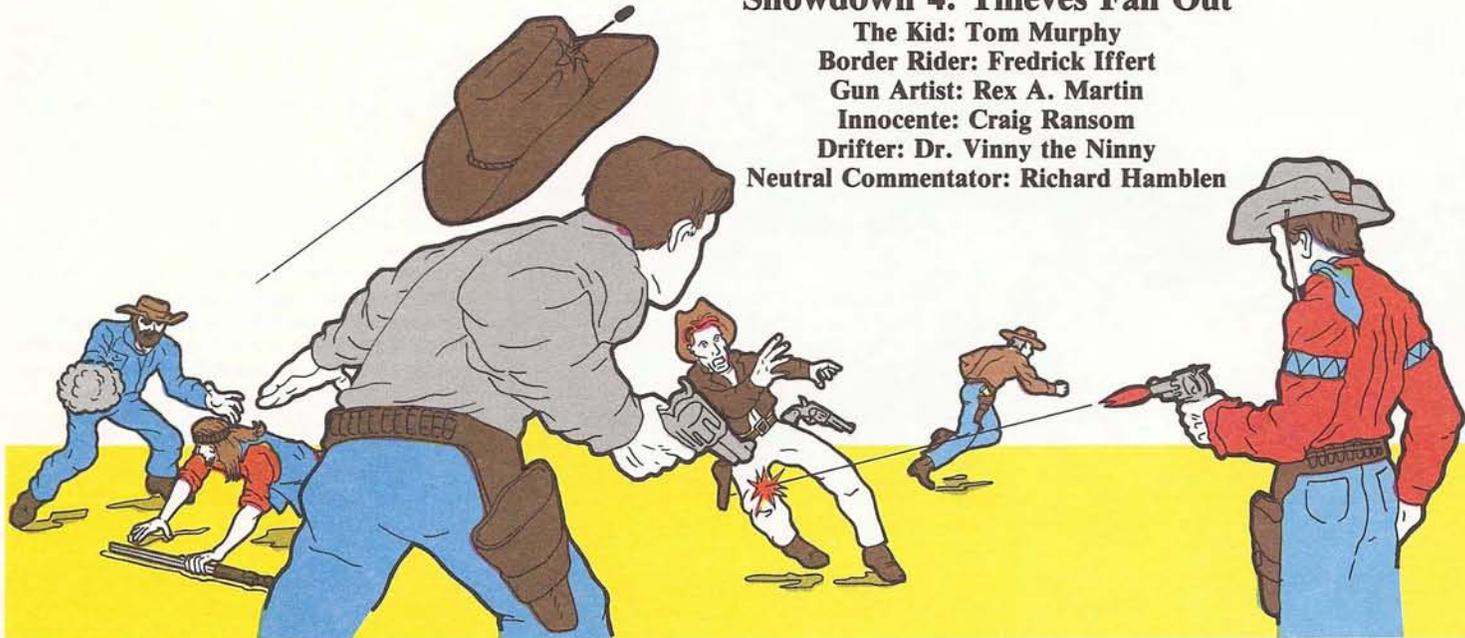
Description *The Badlands, '82*: The members of an outlaw gang celebrate their latest job by swilling cheap whiskey and glaring at each other suspiciously across the pile of loot. Innocente and the Kid are the notorious, grizzled old outlaws of the bunch (Craig and Tom playtested the game for five years), the Gun Artist and the Drifter are more typical criminals (Rex and Vinny have played the game only since it was published), and the Border Rider has just started on the outlaw trail (Frank has played the game only a few times). Avoiding any sudden moves, the outlaws cautiously position themselves as they drink, until someone moves a shade too fast and someone else, startled, reaches for his gun. The gunfight is on.

GUNSLINGER is a game of balance, and the point upon which the balance rests is time. The first effective shot will usually win any one-on-one confrontation, so the players must balance time spent aiming against time spent shooting and time spent maneuvering, in hopes of firing that first effective shot. Calculating this balance is made more difficult because nothing is a sure thing—aiming longer does not guarantee a hit; any shot can misfire and the fastest maneuvers can lead to a time-wasting stumble or fall. The optimum balance varies from showdown to showdown and usually depends on the range and the amount of cover available.

"Thieves Fall Out" is a showdown that is right on the borderline. The characters start from two to four hexes away from each other, which is a most unreliable range: it is too far for fanfiring to be reliable, and yet is so close that there is not time to effectively aim a rifle. It is a perfect range for shotguns and aimed handgun shots—assuming that nobody moves. The characters represented include some close-range specialists (notably the Kid) and some long-range specialists (the Gun Artist and Drifter), who however have enough time to get into positions where they can take advantage of their abilities. Of course, there are others who like the range just where it is (Innocente) or who can fight reasonably effective at any range (the Border Rider), who will be counter-maneuvering. And, in the end, there is the

diplomatic aspect—the players are likely to gang up on anyone who manages to establish himself as a major threat, forcing the players to be circumspect in getting into positions of advantage. Specifically, let's look at the characters in this game:

The Kid's +3 handgun skill and lightning draw cards make him the close-range threat nonpareil; his big threat is to close in and fanfire. He has a certain advantage in maneuver because movement does not hurt the accuracy of fanfiring, so he can move as he shoots. His best line of play is to run in and blast away, taking care not to get too close to too many opponents at once, lest they join forces against the common threat. At all costs he must prevent a long-range specialist from setting up with a rifle at a distance.

The Border Rider is the character with a choice. He can fight at either close range or long range, although he is inferior to the specialists at either range. He should gear his play to his opponent of the moment, closing in against the Gun Artist (or Drifter) and backing away from the Kid. As the only character with a rifle in his hands at the start, he opens the game with an important choice to make: whether to cock the rifle and open the range a bit, or draw his handgun and go for a close-range fight. He is the only character who can get a rifle into effective firing position in the early stages of the showdown.

The Gun Artist's lack of a fast-draw card means he wants to fight at medium or long range, preferably using his rifle at long range. He must avoid the close-range fanfiring contest.

Innocente lacks a fast draw for close range and lacks a rifle for long range. Fortunately, his shotgun and one-handed aim bonus are just right for the range at which the game starts. This advantage should prove transitory, however, as his opponents move around, which leads to an odd situation. For the first few turns, Innocente is the deadliest threat, a magnet for unfriendly intentions; but, once the situation starts unraveling, he becomes the least dangerous. His job is to survive the first few turns while keeping about four hexes from his opponents, particularly his opponent of the moment.

The Drifter wants to set up shop somewhere far away, where he can pick off his opponents from a safe distance. His lack of even one-handed shooting skill means he doesn't like even medium range—long range it is for him. As a result, he wants to start running at the bell.

Some final notes on the showdown: the moneybags in the middle are just a trap; anyone who tries to run in and grab them will never make it (he needs three of them to win, after all, so he must spend three turns in the middle of the gunfight to pick them up). In practice, the showdown will be won by whoever holds the field, i.e. the last man on his feet.

The odd number of players should have an interesting effect. If the characters pair off into gunfights, someone will be left over. The odd man out will have a significant advantage in the early stages of the gunfight.

The players will be identified by the letter code of their respective characters (i.e.: Kid—K; Border Rider—B; Gun Artist—G; Innocente—I; Drifter—D). Action Cards, and the results of those actions, will be revealed in the narrative as these occurred in the appropriate segment of each turn. The revealing of actions by the players are set off in the blue-tinted boxes. Neutral commentary is in italics. Illustrations depict the situation at certain critical points in the play.

Opening Setup and Comments:

Kid: Setup in hex F4 facing F5. Armed with a C45, C32 and W44. I can see where everybody else is setup from here. Setting up first and going first can, however, be a distinct disadvantage but I have what is probably the best character for this particular showdown. I've got the initial edge simply because I'm so fast on the draw, a considerable factor when none are alerted.

A normal setup, avoiding the chance that someone can set up adjacent safely. It would be marginally better to set up in hex F8 so that anyone running away from the fight would not head for the cover provided by the trough, but this is minor.
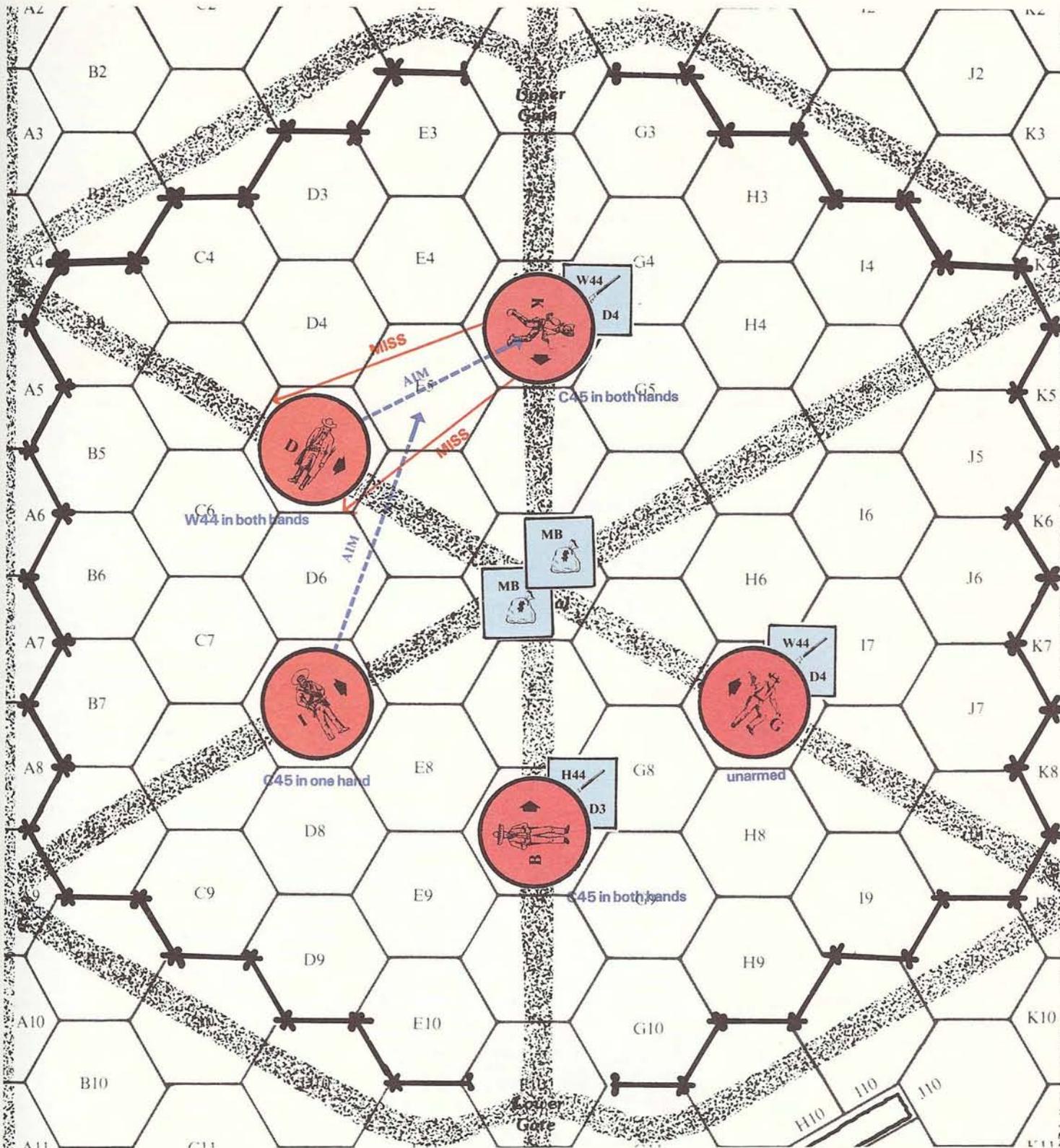
Border Rider: Setup in hex F8 facing F7 simply to be as far as possible from the Kid. Armed with C45, H44 and R41d (which seems pretty useless here). I first mention that I've played the game, *GUN-SLINGER*, two or three times before only. I have never studied the rules in toto. I will therefore freely admit that I did not have a good feel for the game and relied solely on my instincts; my basic instincts are basically conservative. On this occasion, I think I'll hit the deck initially and let the others destroy each other.

Standard, keeping his options open by putting distance between himself and the Kid.

Gun Artist: Setup in hex H7 facing G7; this places me in fair position to finish off my two biggest threats—the Kid and the Border Rider. I expect the Border Rider to turn on me, so I'll drop before anything else. That makes me a moving target for the first turn. I don't expect to get up; I've chosen this spot and plan on staying here till everyone else is *hors de combat*.

What else, with two fanfiring threats at either end of the setup area? Slightly farther away from the most dangerous. It is tempting for the Gun Artist to face at least partly outward, so he could ADVANCE and RUN away without turning first,

Turn 1: WHAT, ME MOVE? Gunfights are not all *that* instantaneous; the characters do have time to maneuver. Instead, the Kid, Gun Artist and Border Rider effectively nail themselves in position by dropping and the Drifter elects to stand and fight. Innocente, of course, just stands there and beams incredulously—everyone is staying right at his favorite range.

but that gives Innocente the ability to set up behind him, which is too great a threat—running away, he would be at Innocente's optimal range just as Innocente was ready to shoot. Better to set up as shown and swallow the need to TURN in the interests of flexibility.

Innocente: Setting up in H5 or D5 would have given me the best chance to get out of the Kid's line of fire. Unfortunately, other considerations enter in. Killed by the Gun Artist means just as dead as killed by the Kid. Oh well, I'll setup in hex D7 facing E7.

Standard, with no opportunities to jump onto.

Drifter: I setup last, which I'm not sure is an advantage or not. Everyone seems to want to form a circle, so I'll oblige. I pick my position to keep the distance equal. Unfortunately, I set up near the Kid, the most deadly character in the showdown. But being the weakest, I figure he'll go after someone else first. So, if I don't make too many loud noises, maybe I'll survive this. Set up in D5 facing D6.

The Drifter faces his normal quandry: he either has to set up closer to the Kid or adjacent to at least one other character. There are lots of considerations, but the bottom line is that he wants to avoid being fanfired by anyone, so the hex he sets up in is all right. However, with all of the other characters on the map, there is no reason for the Drifter to face inwards. He is going to want to run, so he should set up facing outwards to get his best start. He should be facing so he can RUN to C5 immediately; not only does this open the range to the Kid and Innocente, it will get him out of their aim zones unless they have the foresight of TURN. Facing inwards will at least delay the Drifter and may force him to stay and fight: it is the only clear error in anyone's setup.

First Turn:

The unseen hand of diplomacy has a major effect on this turn, as the reader will soon see. Due to table talk, both the Kid and the Drifter are operating under the assumption that the Kid will be everybody's favorite target. So . . . the Kid plays defensively instead of charging and the Drifter stands to fight (alone) instead of running away.

Segment 0

K: Reveal B2—Drop rifle, draw C45 and elect to fanfire at the Drifter

B: Reveal (4)—Drop. Might as well drop rifle while I am at it.

G: Reveal (4)—Drop. Discretion is always the better part of valor. I see the Kid is opening up already. If Innocente and the Drifter can draw his fire, I'll get my chance at him.

I: Reveal 9—Elect to draw and cock C45. Never was one to avoid a fight.

D: Reveal 9—Elect to draw and cock W44. Moving last gives me time to evaluate what the others are doing and to pick my target with care. The rifle gives me an advantage since everyone else is busy with their handguns. And this Winchester is a mean gun.

Segment 1

K: Resolve B2—Aim 3, Range 2—Miss. Bah!

B: Resolve (4)—Amazing, no delay points. However, I didn't realize that hitting the dirt was the common sense thing to do and that everyone else would drop with me or will do so in short order. Now what do I do?

G: Resolve (4)—Garner three delay points. Ughh. Now that I'm winded, I have effectively put myself out of this turn. Since I'm a spectator, I might as well hope someone gets himself killed. With the Border Rider down without delay though, I just hope that it's not me.

K: Reveal (4)—Drop. I'm sorry I played this DROP card now that I see that everyone else has dropped.

B: Reveal 9—Elect to draw and cock C45. I dropped the rifle so I could do just this. I didn't decide on this based on any prior knowledge of the effectiveness of a rifle versus that of a Colt 45 at close range. It just seemed to me that I'd be able to get off more shots with so many people so close.

G: Reveal 9—Elect to draw and cock C45, not that it makes any difference. I drop the rifle. I drew and cocked after I dropped simply to avoid a misfire; I may need all my bullets before this is over and I doubt that anyone's going to have time to reload.

Paranoia causes the Kid, Border Rider and Gun Artist to hit the dirt, sacrificing much-needed mobility. The biggest loser of the three is the Kid, who virtually gives up his fanfiring advantage. The relative gainer is the Border Rider, who just needs to react to the maneuvers of the others—and they are not going anywhere. It is a mistake to panic so early—the gunfight will take a turn to develop, and the characters have not even committed themselves to targets yet.

Segment 2

K: Resolve (4)—Not bad. Get two delay. Everybody seems afraid of this character and out to get me.

K: Reveal 7—Elect to fanfire at the Drifter once again. Vinny's going to catch a bullet eventually.

Segment 3

I: Resolve 9—The question is now as to where the biggest threat lies. The Kid is concentrating on Vinny. I'll keep my options open.

D: Resolve 9—I'm ready. The Kid shoots at me—why me? Misses. I'm lucky.

I: Reveal 6—Elect to aim at hex E5. I'm aiming between the Kid and the Drifter. I can pick my target when I shoot; this should keep both of them guessing.

D: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at the bad 'un—the Kid.

Segment 4

B: Resolve 9—Well, now my Colt is out. Who do I shoot?

B: Reveal nothing. Expecting some delay from my drop, I had no plans for this turn beyond getting my gun out and ready if I could.

Innocente, the Drifter, the Border Rider and the Gun Artist have made interesting choices of weapons. The Drifter is, of course, right to rely on his rifle, given his skills. The Border Rider and Gun Artist choose to use handguns, which are marginally better as long as the fight stays at medium-to-short range; but, once the closer opponents have been dispatched, the handguns will be at a severe disadvantage in dealing with opponents who are farther away. In effect, they have sacrificed their late-game prospects to gain a slight advantage in the early game. Innocente's choice is more subtly excellent; by foregoing the shotgun he avoids making himself the center of attention (and aim) early in the game, and at the same time ensures that he will have a fully-loaded shotgun late in the game, a time when Innocente is usually shot down as he tries to reload. Good play, Craig.

Segment 5

K: Resolve 7—Aim 3, Range 2—I miss again! And no one else shot this turn? I may have a problem with ammunition here.

I: Resolve 6—Place two aim points on hex E5. Not a bad position. The droppers—notably the Kid and the Gun Artist—got delay points. I've still my freedom of movement and a good shot at someone. I think at the moment the advantage is mine.

D: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on the Kid. Take that! And that!

The lines of confrontation have not yet been fully defined, so Innocente's decision to deal himself into the Kid-Drifter fight is once more subtle and excellent; aiming towards the Gun Artist and Border Rider would draw both of their attention. As it is, Innocente catches the attention of the Drifter and Kid, but the Drifter is the only one who is even remotely in fanfiring range. Two hexes is really too far for fanfiring, however, so the Kid is just wasting bullets—which often turns out to be an important consideration. The big question now is, what will the Gun Artist and Border Rider do?

Second Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal (3)—Elect to turn ahead right. I am moving because of Vinny's aim on me. He has been lucky so far—I've expended two shots and not hit him—and I don't want to risk that luck cropping up when he fires at me. Better a moving target. And the delay that I carried over will make little difference to my planned movement this turn.

B: Reveal (3)—Elect to turn ahead right. I have turned to face the Gun Artist, since he has no threat on his right. I'll try to eliminate him on this turn.

G: Reveal 9—Elect to draw and cock C45. Finally, even with the delay left, I'll at least get into this fight on this turn.

I: Reveal 6—Elect to increase aim on hex E5. This should worry them. If the Drifter shoots the Kid, I drill the Drifter. If, as is more likely, the Kid drops the Drifter, I'll have one good shot at the Kid.

D: Reveal (4)—Elect to drop. With everyone else going into the dirt, I guess I should do likewise.

Segment 1

B: Resolve (3)—No problem here. Now I'm set since his delay gives me a slight edge.

D: Resolve (4)—Lose my aim but at least my gun didn't go off and shoot me in the foot. Got one delay point from landing on my big fancy buckle.

B: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Gun Artist, of course.

D: Reveal 7—Elect to shoot at Innocente. What the hell. Bang!

Intimidated by Innocente's growing aim, the Kid and the Drifter go into evasive maneuvers. The Kid does his well, maneuvering out of the Drifter's aim zone and gaining the status of a moving target. But the Drifter should simply run away (or shoot and then run). By just dropping, he freezes himself in position between the two antagonists—and what he really wants to do is get off to a safe distance and use his rifle! The Drifter has not exactly sealed his fate, but he has dug himself a large hole.

Segment 2

K: Resolve (3)—Simple. I only moved because I was afraid of Vinny's aim on me. Now that he didn't shoot, I wish I could take it back.

I: Resolve 6—Place four aim points on hex E5.

K: Reveal 2—Elect to "run" ahead right. I've an Advance card selected for later even though the delay will not allow me to play it, so everything's legal.

I: Reveal 7—Elect to shoot . . . the Kid! Decided to quit dithering and go for the obvious. This should be a good shot with an aggregate seven aim points.

Segment 3

K: Resolve 2—Take my two delay points, which effectively ends my turn.

B: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Gun Artist.

I: Resolve 7—Aim 7, Range 5—Miss due to down status; caramba!! And that's not a bad shot either. Sheer luck seems to be sustaining the Kid.

D: Resolve 7—Aim 2, Range 2—Miss. Ratboogers! The Ninny strikes again.

K: Reveal nothing, having chosen no further action since I knew exactly what would transpire with my delay situation.

B: Reveal 7—Shoot at Gun Artist. Let's get this over as quickly as possible.

I: Reveal 5—Elect to cock C45. Am still burned by the missed shot on Murph.

D: Reveal 5—Elect to cock W44. This time I'll wait for a better shot.

Now is the moment for deciding whether to shoot or aim some more . . . and Innocente, the Drifter and the Border Rider all choose to shoot too fast. The Drifter's shot is just grasping at straws—aiming would at least create a decent threat for next turn. Admittedly Innocente did not know how the turn was going when he played his SHOOT second, but with no threat transpiring, he could have cancelled it and used the COCK/AIM/SHOOT to fire at the end of the turn, thus gaining an aim point. When firing at a down, moving target at a range of five, every aim point helps. The Border Rider made his mistake at the start of the turn, by playing SHOOT instead of COCK/AIM/SHOOT as his third action of the turn. The Gun Artist could manage no better than an aim time of 4 until the second segment of turn 3 because of his DELAY, so the Border Rider could have afforded using COCK/AIM/SHOOT to fire with an extra aim point. Even better, he could have aimed again during turn 2 and started turn 3 with a SHOOT, giving the Gun Artist the unpleasant choice of firing with an aim time of 4 or ducking a wild shot with an aim time of 8. The Gun Artist's delay is the Border Rider's only advantage, and he should use it to make his first shot count. Trading shots early puts them back on even ground time-wise, where the Gun Artist's superior skill will give him the advantage.

Segment 4

B: Resolve 7—Aim 5, Range 2—Miss!! As the others pointed out, I should have placed an additional aim point on the Gun Artist through the use of the other Cock/Aim/Shoot card. This would indeed have made a difference. I would still have gotten off the first shot or at least matched his shot. This should have been obvious, but my impatience and unfamiliarity with the subtleties of play led me to err.

G: Resolve 9—Somebody up there loves me as bullet whizzes by. Looks like Murph is drawing lots of attention; I'll concentrate on the Border Rider since he's proved himself the most proximate threat.

B: Reveal nothing; since I've not time to recock my gun, I'll just diddle along.

G: Reveal 7—Elect to shoot at Border Rider. With luck I can take him out with a snap shot; my gun hand expertise gives me just enough of an edge to make this a good possibility—say around 40%.

Segment 5

G: Resolve 7—Aim 4, Range 2—Miss. Hell—the side hit was negated by his down status. Would have been nice to have taken him out. Now I face an exchange of fire with him. The only bright spot is that my expertise allows me to fire as well as he, but at a slightly faster rate since I need not depend on as much aim time for an equivalent shot. And I'll be free of any delay points at the end of this turn.

I: Resolve 5—No problem. Now I've got to do it all again.

D: Resolve 5—Got the rifle ready again.

The Gun Artist returns the Border Rider's favor by firing too fast. What's the hurry? The Border Rider will not be able to cock his gun until the second segment of next turn, so the Gun Artist could at least wait and use those two segments to aim. As it is, all of the hasty shots get their just reward; at least Innocente and the Drifter have their guns cocked as turn 3 starts.

Third Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal B2—Elect to cock C45. Fanfiring is wasting too many bullets. I may pay for that later.

B: Reveal 5—Elect to cock C45. I'd like to get a good shot at the Gun Artist. Everyone else seems too busy to pay attention to him.

G: Reveal 6—Elect to cock C45. Interesting. The sounds of clicks fill the air. Looks like everyone is getting ready to fire; this turn should see blood. Only Murph has delay points left; only Craig is still standing. This could well be over in the next two turns.

I: Reveal (1)—Elect to back up to hex C8. I think it to be prudent to lengthen the distance between me and the others. But I can't take my eyes off them by spending the time turning, advancing, turning back, and so forth. I would probably get shot in the back somewhere in the process.

D: Reveal 5—Elect to shoot at Innocente. I'm going to get him before he can weasel out of this.

Segment 1

Segment 2

K: Resolve B2—These bonus cards have several uses.

B: Resolve 5—No problem here. Now to garner some aim points to make sure of a telling hit. I refuse to make the same mistake as the last time. Patience will be rewarded.

G: Resolve 6—I feel so much more comfortable with a loaded and cocked gun, even if I am groveling around in the dirt.

D: Resolve 5—Aim 2, Range 2—Misfire. Oh no. I'd planned on moving anyway, but now I've nothing to show for staying here the extra few moments.

K: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Drifter. This time I'll make sure.

B: Reveal 6—Elect to aim at Gun Artist.

G: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Fred. It's time I got this irritant out of my life so I can turn on the Kid.

D: Reveal (1)—Elect to crawl back to C6. My move is to prevent Innocente from laying aim points between me and the Kid, allowing Craig to transfer them back and forth until he gets the perfect shot. My delay wouldn't make all that much difference during the next turn.

Innocente's retreat will put him out of the Drifter's aim zone, so the Drifter is forced to hurry his shot—which makes no difference since it misfires. The Drifter's position is now totally untenable, which he alertly corrects by backing up. He is now in the best position he has had all game. If he can only stay alive to develop it. In the other battle, the Border Rider faces an uphill battle—the Gun Artist's skill means that he will be able to get an equivalent shot sooner, so the Border Rider cannot win an aiming race. He must now rely on his fanfiring ability and hope for a lucky hit. His decision to cock his gun and start aiming is a potentially fatal mistake.

Segment 3

I: Resolve (1)—Backing up gets me out of LOS of the Drifter—a *good* idea at this point. The Kid's good shooting makes him my target, especially so taking in his familiarity with the game. I'll have to "walk" the aim over to him though—a lengthy process but not important given the fact that I *must* build up my aim to have any chance to hit.

I: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Drifter. This just might throw Murph off track and buy me the time I need to shift the aim to the Kid.

Segment 4

K: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Vinny. Eventually I'll get him, but I may well have other worries by then.

B: Resolve 6—Place two aim points on Gun Artist.

G: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Border Rider. Looks like we will both fire on each other at the same instance. We'll hope my better gun handling makes the difference since my percentages increase with the extra aim point bonus.

K: Reveal 7—Elect to shoot the Drifter. With an aim of 6, hopefully I'll at least get a hit somehow.

B: Reveal nothing; since I need some more aim, I'm holding my fire till next turn.

G: Reveal 7—Elect to shoot the Border Rider. I can't believe it. He must be waiting for a sure shot. If I miss here, I could have a problem; he will be able to accumulate a few aim points before I can recock my gun, aim and fire. However, if I hit, I'm a hero as there will be little he can do to retaliate.

Segment 5

K: Resolve 7—Aim 6, Range 2—Hit, a GUN hit with a C45. It looks bad for Dr. Vinny. A Holiday he ain't.

[D: Ouch! Ouch, ouch!]

G: Resolve 7—Aim 6, Range 2—Hit, a BODY hit with a C45. A good one. He ends up with a substantial delay, his gun goes off in a wild shot (thus losing that pesky aim marker on me), and he lies bleeding heavily in the sand. Now I'm left with two distinct threats. Vinny's loss of ability (since he has no other hand ability) effectively removes him from my consideration. I would be surprised if he lasts another turn; I expect either Innocente or the Kid to finish him off.

I: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on the Drifter. This seems rather ludicrous, but it serves the purpose. Luckily, Vinny is still breathing; he may yet play a role by drawing some of Murph's fire.

D: Resolve (1)—The Kid gets me. The best I can hope is to recover enough to get one shot off before I die. The misfire speaks for itself—Innocente is lucky, I am not. I've a −4 on my gun hand, and twelve delay points and one critical. I think I'll bleed for a while.

The threat facing the Kid is that both Innocente and the Drifter will gang up on him, since he has a good chance against either of them alone. Therefore, he wisely decides to take out the Drifter, even though Innocente is the more immediate threat. This time he hits, although it is only a gun arm wound; this will slow the Drifter down considerably, but he is not out of things yet. In the other battle, the Gun Artist predictably gets up a decent aim time first and promptly puts the Border Rider down for the count. Suddenly the Gun Artist is the odd man out—a powerful advantage.

Fourth Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal B2—Elect to cock C45. My targets are farther away now, so I'll need the extra aim. Three is a significantly "odder" number than five. With Craig aiming "at" me, Rex is in good shape.

B: Reveal 6—However, drawing three delays due to my wound, in addition to the three delay points I'd had left from last turn, negates my whole turn. And, of course, I lose three more endurance points as I lay here—a sitting duck for anyone. I strongly suspect that everything goes downhill from here.

G: Reveal 6—Elect to cock C45. Got to watch my ammunition supply; this is turning out to be a long gunfight.

I: Reveal 5—Elect to increase aim and shift it to D5. Time to declare myself and go for the Kid.

D: Bleed. Bleed some more. I end with seven delay points. No action possible.

Segment 1

K: Resolve B2—Now what? There are still an odd number of people. And now Innocente is aiming at me. Think I'll return the compliment. I won't worry about Vinny until he's a lot closer to having no delay.

K: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Innocente. Guess I'll hazard a long shot at Craig. He still seems to be concentrating on me, despite his aim being at Vinny. He can shift it to me quickly enough.

Segment 2

G: Resolve 6—Good. Since I've eliminated the most proximate threat, and since Craig and Murph are busy with each other, and since I might as well see if I can't make a difference or distract one of them, I'll add my fire to the free-for-all and hope someone will go down.

I: Resolve 5—Place four aim points on hex D5. This ought to worry him a bit.

G: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Innocente. He is still the best target. Too, I've played Murph many times in this and know how he thinks; that could give me an advantage at a crucial moment. Since both he and I are aiming at Innocente, I would lay odds that Craig's days are numbered.

I: Reveal 6—Increase aim and shift it to D4. Do I see sweat break out on Murph's forehead? However, Rex is beginning to distract me.

Now the race is on. Innocente has to walk his aim over to the Kid before the Kid can get an effective shot back; for those two the turn is simply an aiming contest. The Gun Artist has an interesting choice to make. With the other two characters committed to each other, it will be almost two turns before either can concentrate on him. This would be a perfect time for him to do all those little things he has been putting off—such as picking up his rifle, getting up and running back behind the trough. Or, he could just cock his gun, aim between his opponents and then shoot the eventual winner. Instead, he makes a capital error: he starts aiming at Innocente. If nothing else, this is guranteed to get everybody's attention—which is not what he wants.

Segment 3

K: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Innocente. I need at least some aim at this distance.

K: Reveal 6—Elect to shoot at Craig. I am shooting now only because Craig will probably shoot at me with a very good shot!

Segment 4

G: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Innocente.

I: Resolve 6—Place six aim points on D4.

G: Reveal 7—Elect to shoot at Innocente. With Innocente out of action, I'll need to move on Murph. I've two choices: either use my skill with a two-handed gun or move to cover and wait for a good shot.

I: Reveal 7—Elect to fire at the Kid. I can't get any better. Goodbye Kid.

Segment 5

K: Resolve 6—Aim 7, Range 4—Miss. Ah well, maybe Rex'll get him. Best pray now that Craig misses me.

G: Resolve 7—Aim 6, Range 5—Miss. Damn. Well, maybe he'll get the Kid and something will be gained out of all this after all.

I: Resolve 7—Aim 9, Range 5—Miss!?! Madre de Dios! I can't hit the broad side of a barn! Cannot believe that no one was hit when all three of us fired at the same time! These are *not* bad shots!

A very tense segment, with three well-aimed (well, reasonably aimed) shots going off. Actually, there is no reason for the Gun Artist to fire at all; he should just move his aim one hex towards the Kid and wait to see who wins. But he fires, and all the

shots miss! Innocente has a legitimate gripe about missing, but he was lucky that both of the shots at him missed.

Fifth Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal (3)—Elect to turn ahead left. I need to shift to cover Rex.

B: Reveal 5—A desperate chance, but not to be. I take another two delay points and my endurance drops to eight. I'd like to get off one shot more before I expire. One last hurrah.

G: Reveal 6—Elect to cock C45. The Border Rider could recover and potshot me—a risk I'd rather not run. I'll let Innocente and the Kid keep each other busy and attend to Fred this turn.

I: Reveal (5)—Elect to get down. I think that the time has come to cower. The Gun Artist has suddenly become the greatest threat. I will get down, cock my 45, and wait fot the next turn.

D: Bleed. "As I walked out in the streets . . . " My endurance is down to seven. My intention is to stagger over to the money and bleed all over it so they can't spend it.

Segment 1

K: Resolve (3)—Now I'm in a fair position to cover both opponents.

K: Reveal 5—Elect to cock C45. I screwed up. I should have played a B2 to cock my gun and gain some advantage over Craig and Rex.

Segment 2

G: Resolve 6—OK. Now to rake in a few victory points.

G: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Border Rider. Protests of kicking a man while he's down. But the "Code of the West" overrules any humanitarian twinges I may have. Fred's got to go.

Segment 3

K: Resolve 5—I can't bother going for my rifle after this—at least not yet. That would be time-consuming.

I: Resolve (5)—Whew. No one seems to interested in me at the moment and I've drawn no aim points.

K: Reveal 6—Elect to aim at hex F7. Craig is trying to rationalize who I should aim at. The Gun Artist is a bigger threat, but I'll keep my options open.

Turn 2: TWO GUNFIGHTS. The Gun Artist and Border Rider square off as Innocente's involvement in the Kid-Drifter fight causes the Kid and Drifter to take evasive action. Innocente holds the advantage here—he still has his mobility, the fight is taking place at a range he likes, and to a certain extent he is the odd man out of the fights. The first exchange of shots is too hasty, and all the bullets miss.
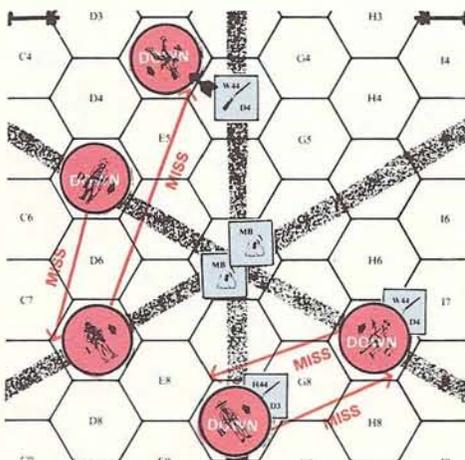
Turn 3: TWO GO DOWN. Caught between two antagonists and without the power of maneuver, the Drifter tries a desperate shot at Innocente and then scrambles backwards in the hopes of confusing the situation. The Kid, however, puts a stop to all this by wounding the Drifter in the arm—a substantial wound from a .45. Innocente just opens the range and starts laying his plans for a decisive shot at the Kid. In the other battle, the Border Rider aims a little too long and takes a BODY hit from a .45, effectively putting him out of the fight.
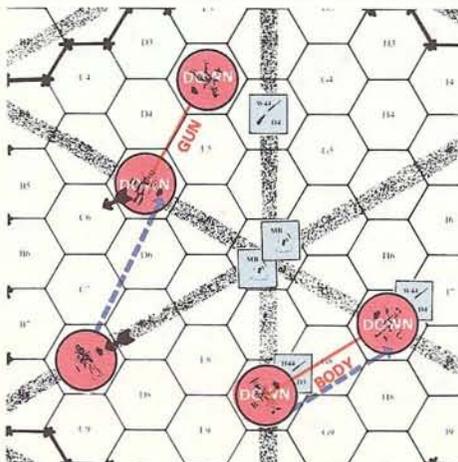
Turn 4: THE RACE. With all of the functional characters five hexes apart, every aim point counts, so this turn becomes a race to see who can get the most aim the fastest. Innocente starts with his gun cocked and two aim points down, an advantage that is negated because it causes the Gun Artist to concentrate on him. The crisis on turn 5 is anticlimactic—all three shots miss.
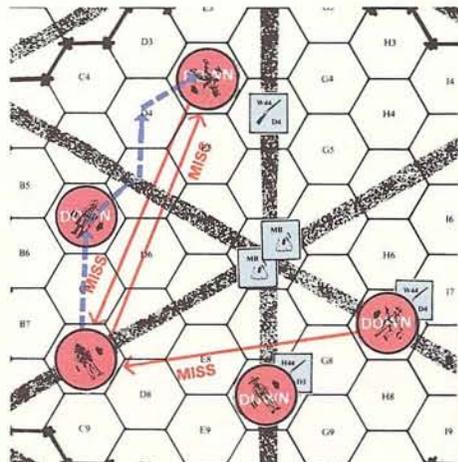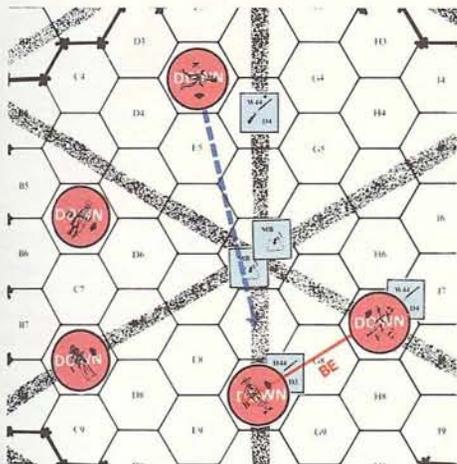
Turn 5: MANEUVERS. There is a pause in the action as the characters prepare for the end game. How well the players use this time may determine the game. Innocente, intimidated by his status as a favorite target, gets down and cocks his gun. The Kid starts aiming at a central point, able to react to any threat that manifests itself. The Gun Artist wastes his time by blowing away the remains of the Border Rider.

Turn 6: THE GUN ARTIST'S TURN. At last the Gun Artist starts to move, but this arouses the Kid's fears of rifle fire. The Gun Artist manages to get up just in time to be blown away by the Kid, with Innocente building up aim in the wings in case the Kid misses.

Turns 7 to 9: INNOCENTE'S CHARGE. Innocente charges for the moneybags as the Kid fires his last shell and misses. The Kid must now either come after Innocente, go for a gun under Innocente's nose, or dispatch Innocente with the .32 popgun he is packing. The popgun works, and the Kid wins.

I: Reveal 6—Elect to cock C45. Just following the game plan. And Rex seems bent on vindictiveness, killing the Border Rider for the mere victory points it brings.

Segment 4

G: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Border Rider. Murph worries me. He is aiming so that he can rapidly shift his aim to either of us. Craig is shouting across the sand at the Kid—some prattle about me being a threat and a better shot for one with the Kid's abilities.

G: Reveal 7—Elect to put the Border Rider out of his misery. I hate to see a wounded animal suffer.

Segment 5

K: Resolve 6—Place two aim points on F7. This seems like very unimaginative play by most of us so far. Very little mobility has been displayed.

G: Resolve 7—Aim 6, Range 2—Hit, a perfect BE. Now, perhaps, I can use his body to hide behind. And there's a nearly loaded C45 just waiting to be picked up. However, I've a slight problem with the other two.

[B: I am dead. Sing no sad tales; I died with my boots on.]

I: Resolve 6—Now to turn on Rex.

This is practically the start of a brand new showdown, only this time with three players. Not much can happen this turn, so the characters must use this time to prepare for the final gunfights. How well they prepare will determine the outcome. The Kid does the best, aiming at a central location and waiting to see what transpires. Innocente makes the mistake of getting down, although it is easy to see why he did so, given the nerve-wracking finale of the last turn. The Gun Artist, however, makes a fatal mistake—he uses the turn to blow away the Border Rider, who is no real threat. The Gun Artist started the last two turns as the odd man out, with two turns to use as he pleased. He has now used them up and gained nothing, and the other characters, freed of their preoccupation with each other, now recognize him as the greatest potential threat. Turn 6 is the Gun Artist's time, which has come.

Sixth Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal (3)—Elect to turn straight ahead. This
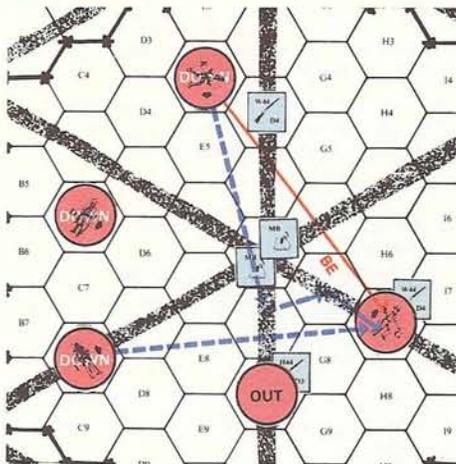
may seem foolish . . . but this is to waste a phase so I can see what the others are doing. It also gives me movement status in case a shot is loosed at me. At this point, with only the best gunslingers left, a player needs every edge he can think of—no matter how slight.

G: Reveal 6—Elect to cock C45. Even though I plan not to fire this turn, I go nowhere in this game without a cocked gun. I run a slight risk of a misfire if I fall, but the advantage is worth it. It looks like Vinny may yet recover; good, he'll draw some fire that way.

I: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at Gun Artist. Since Rex must cock his gun, I might get a shot off before he can. Surely my aim will draw his. I don't know what Murph is doing. Suddenly I don't like the odds here.

D: Reveal (4)—Elect to leap. They can see me gathering myself to leap (?) up. No telling what these merciless b......s will do next. Probably all transfer their aim to me as I make a valiant effort to rise where I've fallen. The three delay points I have will certainly give them plenty of time.

Segment 1

K: Resolve (3)—No big deal, but now I know what I'm going to do.

K: Reveal 5—Elect to shift aim to G8. Craig's reasoning is fairly good. Rex is the more potent threat.

Segment 2

G: Resolve 6—Now to get the hell out of here. I'm drawing too much attention.

I: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Rex. If he gets that rifle, with the advantage he has with a two-handed gun, I could well be seriously dead.

G: Reveal (4)—Elect to leap up. This is a gutsy play, but if I survive, the game could be mine. The advantage in movement over the others is worth the risk; and I feel like a sitting duck here. And too, both are running short of ammunition and will be uncocked after they fire at me. Murph's shot is the tough one. If I can get up without too many delay points, I'll move to put some space between us. So I'll probably go for Innocente.

I: Reveal 6—Elect to increase aim on Gun Artist. Must make this a telling shot. If we miss, Rex will have this game firmly in his vest pocket.

Segment 3

K: Resolve 5—Place a total of four aim points in
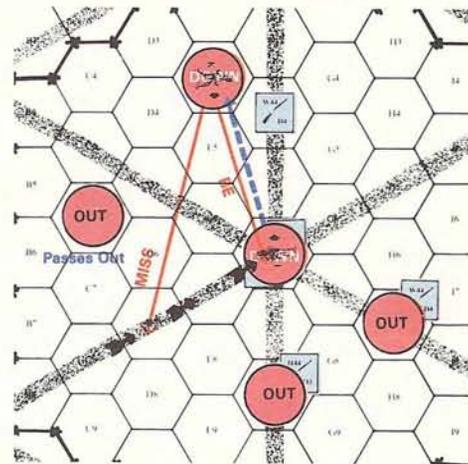
hex G8. I may have severe problems with ammo soon and don't really want to pause to reload.

G: Resolve (4)—Am up, but I garner one delay point. God help me now.

K: Reveal 6—Elect to shoot at Rex. This will be the best, maybe only, shot I can get with a pistol. If he escapes this, I may have to get my rifle, which I left behind. I could well be dead before that happens.

G: Reveal 1—Had wanted to advance ahead left but the delay point negates this. That's too bad, for I wanted to sprint next turn. As for all the bullets, at least I'm a moving target.

Segment 4

I: Resolve 6—Increase aim on Rex to four points. There's little for me to do now but see if Murph can get him this turn. Otherwise, I'll shoot at him the first thing next turn.

D: Resolve (4)—Leap—fall down. The delay card I had to draw was a DROP! My feeble efforts to sully the money have been foiled. I fear the Drifter will now drift into the sunset.

I: Reveal 7—Cancel shoot. There is little reason for me to fire yet but this had been played just to cover all my bets.

Segment 5

K: Resolve 6—Aim 9, Range 5—Hit!!! A BE no less. Great. Now its just Craig and I. Unfortunately, I'm almost out of ammunition for my C45.

[G: Arghhhhh. Murph got me clean. Even if I had stayed down he would have drilled me. There's no justice.]

With two characters aiming at him, the Gun Artist had only a slim chance of survival. He would have probably done better to risk a quick shot at the Kid, the main threat. But he chooses to run, and justice prevails. At the same time, the Drifter puts himself out of things by jumping up, an action which causes him to drop again. The net result is enough delay to put him out for good. The Drifter actually had a chance to play a role in things . . . and even win. But a seriously wounded character has to be very cautious about gaining extra delay. He would have done better to just lie there and cock his gun in hopes of eventually recovering enough to shoot. Turn 7 looms with only two characters left, and a flaw in the Kid's play is suddenly very apparent. He has left his rifle behind and has only one shot left in his .45. By using turn 5 to prepare the Gun Artist's doom, he neglected to prepare himself for the final confrontation.

Seventh Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal B2—Elect to chamber my last bullet in the C45. I'm not sure what I'll do if I miss the shot on Craig this turn. I can only hope I hit with my last shell. My C32 is really not a very good gun.

I: Reveal (5)—Elect to get up. I'm going to rush the Kid and hope he fires wide with his last shot. Let's see what Murph does now.

D: Bleeding continues. This is the first turn with more delay (five) than endurance.

Segment 1

K: Resolve B2—Now to make this last bullet count. It has Innocente's name on it.

K: Reveal 6—Elect to aim at Innocente. Of course. Looks like the final moments are fast arriving.

Segment 2

Segment 3

K: Resolve 6—Place two aim points on Craig. I've no idea what Craig is doing.

I: Resolve (5)—I knew the Kid was going to concentrate on me. Now if Lady Luck will just shine on me.

K: Reveal 5—Elect to increase aim on Craig. (I hope this does it.) And Dr. Vinny's out of action.

I: Reveal 1—Elect to advance ahead to hex D7. I can now scoop up the money and run or try to brazen it out and take on the Kid at close range.

Once more there is a break in the action for the characters to use in preparation. Here is where Innocente pays for getting down so cravenly on turn 5. He uses most of the turn just to get up, as the Kid spends his time carefully aiming his last shell.

Segment 4

Segment 5

K: Resolve 5—Place four aim points on Innocente. Patience does pay . . . if I repeat this enough I may believe it.

I: Resolve 1—Now I'm the one who sweats.

Innocente starts a very strange move, charging towards the Kid and the moneybags; at this last crisis of the game, he is using his time very poorly. He would do far better to unlimber his shotgun: a double charge of buckshot would hit something with little aiming, and any wound at all would slow the Kid down enough to be fatal. Alternately, Innocente could run for a rifle and go after the Kid from long range; Innocente has no rifle bonus, but the Kid has no rifle at all. Innocente could even stay where he is and just get into a handgun duel with the Kid, relying on the fact that his handgun is already cocked. Instead, Innocente is doing the best thing possible for the Kid—he is closing the range. Admittedly, the Kid has only one shell left in the .45, but he has a C32 and a fast draw to bring it into play quickly. This strange move may save the Kid's bacon. At this point the Kid should be thinking about getting to another gun, particularly a rifle, or at least loading the one he has. Instead he is going for the quick kill. He had exactly this same opportunity on turn 5, and he went for the quick kill then. The problem is that this time he has only one shell left; if the quick kill does not work, then he could be in serious trouble. Innocente started this turn with an advantage, but he ends it at a disadvantage. If he continues to charge, the disadvantage will only get worse.

Eighth Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal 5—Elect to shoot Innocente. If I miss, I'll either have to go for my rifle or pull out that C32.

I: Reveal (3)—Elect to turn to face D6. It's now or never for me. If Murph misses, I then have many possibilities as he scrambles around trying to reload.

D: This is my second turn in this state, so I pass out. Ah, the visions that pass through the head of a dying man. All of them X-rated.

Segment 1

I: Resolve (3)—Now to show him what happens if he does miss.

I: Reveal 2—Elect to run to hex E7. I'll reach the money bags and then make the Kid come to me if he wants to win.

Segment 2

K: Resolve 5—Aim 9, Range 4—Miss? Rats!! This is a better shot than the one on Rex. Now I have a problem.

I: Resolve 2—This puts me one step closer.

K: Reveal B2—Elect to draw and cock the C32. Transfer the C45 to my other hand in case I need it later. Craig has a better gun than I, but I've the drop on him. This is going to be too close run for my taste.

I: Reveal 1—Elect to advance to F6. Must play this to square myself with the run I elected to play this turn. The delay demanded by this card dictated that I play it after the run.

Segment 3

K: Resolve B2—He may laugh, but at least it is loaded.

K: Reveal 6—Elect to aim at Craig.

Segment 4

I: Resolve 1—*Valgame Dios!* I forgot he packs a C32 too.

I: Reveal (4)—Elect to drop. Let's hope the delay doesn't prove my undoing after all the nerve I showed in this turn.

Segment 5

K: Resolve 6—Place two aim points on Innocente.

I: Resolve (4)—Am down with only one delay point, which I will soon lose. Luck still shines on me.

Innocente's objective is now clear. He is heading for the moneybags, where he drops. This is a very subtle ploy, based on the fact that if both characters survive the showdown, possession of the moneybags will determine the winner. This point is insignificant compared with the risks involved, however. Innocente has traded tactical and strategic advantages for a minor advantage that might bear fruit 12 turns from now. The only advantage he has left is that he has a .45 while the Kid is using a .32, which is offset by the fact that the Kid is ahead in the aiming race.

Ninth Turn:

Segment 0

K: Reveal 5—Elect to increase the aim on Craig. I need to hit Craig in a vital spot with this small gun for it to have any effect.

I: Reveal 5—Elect to aim at the Kid. Now to see who shoots who, bandit!

D: Bleeding continues apace.

Segment 1

Segment 2

K: Resolve 5—Place four aim points on Innocente. This is it.

I: Resolve 5—Place two aim points on Murph. Now to get in one telling shot. It's a matter of nerves; who will fire first?

K: Reveal 6—Elect to shoot at Innocente, the greedy villain. I'll be surprised if he doesn't shoot also.

I: Reveal 6—Elect to increase aim on the Kid. Ah ha! So at last it comes.

Segment 3

Segment 4

K: Resolve 6—Aim 9, Range 3—Hit, a near perfect shot with a BE result. Craig knew I had a very good shot; why didn't he shoot me and possibly end the game with all dead or dying?

[I: Aarrgh! Thud!]

K: Reveal B2—Elect to cock C32. A casual stroll over to put a bullet in the Drifter's head is all I could possibly do now. And I win.

Innocente held his fire; a mutual kill will not help him, so he is gambling that the Kid will miss. The Kid gets what he needs using a C32—a bullseye—and so the Kid wins the showdown.

Segment 5

K: Resolve B2—All about me lay the dead. The game is up. The luckiest man wins!

End of Game Comments:

Kid: I played this one close. But then . . . most of the *GUNSLINGER* scenarios I have played are close. I attribute the win in good part to luck. I don't feel I played well by just dropping and blazing away. Should I play again as the Kid, I'll try not to let pre-game chatter influence my play. Leaving my rifle behind was a rookie's mistake, especially so since I did not close the range; as it turned out, it didn't affect the play—but it could have. Of course, my extravagance with bullets didn't help my situation either. I think Craig played a much better game until his suicidal charge at the end. The only part of my play I feel good about was my expert use of the Kid's bonus cards.

Border Rider: I definitely made a couple of serious mistakes. My planned shots at Rex were not well thought out; consequently I was out of action early. I want to play this again, now that I've acquired some hard-won experience. Without a doubt, there's more to this game than meets the eye.

Gun Artist: I don't think I would have done much differently. Perhaps I should have used my rifle instead of my C45. But that is mere conjecture. At this range, the C45 is just as potent. The crisis for me came on the fourth turn when faced with the decision as to what to do next. I realize now I should have taken my rifle and crawled backward to position myself to pick off the survivor of the Innocente-Kid duel. But at the time I feared drawing attention to myself by being the only one to unlimber a rifle and did not want to accumulate the delay that crawling back would have brought. Instead I decided to get to my feet and see if I couldn't win with my C45. Given that I had survived the leap and movement of the sixth turn, I would have moved to kill Innocente. The singlemindedness of these players is amazing; no one killed Vinny for the victory points, even though he could have been a factor late in the game. Next time I'm setting up next to the Kid and blowing his brains out on the first turn.

Innocente: My play, until near the end, was fairly good. I forgot the Kid had the C32 though—a *bad* thing to do. I guess I should have gone for the Border Rider's rifle on turn eight and put distance between me and the Kid. Murph would have had to back up to retrieve the one he dropped. Also, he

would have lost the +1 advantage he enjoyed by switching to a two-handed gun. When I saw how things were shaping up between the Drifter and the Kid, and between the Border Rider and the Gun Artist, I should have backed southward, lined up the Border Rider and the Gun Artist, then used the R10 to blow them away. I could have had the Border Rider's H44 even earlier then and dictated the course of the game. I could, at the very least, have used it on the Kid before charging him.

Drifter: Not much to say. Luck went against me. With as much delay as I then had, I should have tried to keep it down by picking only cards that would give me no chance of delay. Maybe I could have gotten a final shot off and killed the last man standing. I may not have won, but at least I lived. A small consolation that.

As is usually the case in GUNSLINGER, all of the players made errors and luck played a significant part; but in the end the most consistently good play won.

The Border Rider played a sound game strategically, but he was done in by his lack of tactical expertise in the game. In particular, firing too hastily on turn 2 cost him his advantage over the Gun Artist, and aiming too long put him out for good on turn 3.

The Drifter set up poorly and made several strategic errors on turns 1 and 2, mostly in neglecting to get out of everyone's way. But he was starting to wriggle out of them skillfully when he caught a bullet on turn 3. Unfortunately, he apparently did not realize that he was still a force to be reckoned with even after he was wounded. Rather than conserve his strength, he tried strenuous play that put him out of the game for good.

The Gun Artist made one mistake by dropping early, but thereafter played well until the Border Rider was dispatched on turn 3. Thereafter, he wasted turns 4 and 5, and GUNSLINGER is not a game in which you can waste time. By turn 6, he was in trouble again, and it probably made no difference that he tried to escape then.

Innocente played excellently until he got down on turn 5, and even that was not a bad mistake. Innocente's fatal errors started on turn 7, when he wasted time and then commenced to rush the close-range specialist.

The Kid made a number of minor errors, but avoiding the big error that puts one out of the game. Dropping on turn 1 cost him his fanfiring advantage, and leaving his rifle on turn 2 could have been fatal if any of the long-range specialists had gotten into action. Most importantly, in turns 5 and 7 he had the chance to load, get up or move back to where his rifle was. He knew that a crisis was coming up, and yet he gambled on staying where he was. When the final showdown came he was at a severe disadvantage. In the end, all that saved him was Innocente's wild run for the money.

☆

BLANK COUNTERS

Avalon Hill now sells blank, half inch counters pre-printed with standard unit notations in an assortment of six colors. Each counter sheet contains approximately 190 counters. The larger 5/8'' counters are not available in different colors or with pre-printed unit notations. When ordering choose from the following colors: white, beige, blue, yellow, gray, or mint green. Blank counter sheets are available for $2.00 each, or six for $7.50, or twelve for $14.00. Add 10% for postage and handling (20% for Canadian customers, 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

The Compleat Diplomat

c. kibler
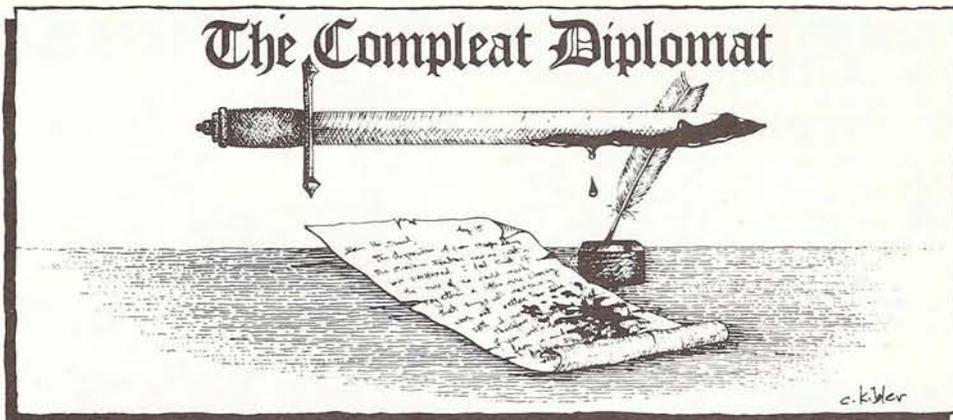
DIPLOMACY: A QUARTER-CENTURY

By Rod Walker

We must admit that there are other games besides *DIPLOMACY*. Grudgingly . . . but we must admit it. These games are of three types: Outdated Predecessors, Inept Imitations, and Cumbersome Complexities. After twenty-five years of sales, *DIPLOMACY* has True Believers numbering in the thousands and scattered throughout North America, Europe, South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Hong Kong, Japan and New Guinea. [*New Guinea*!!! They play a rough game down there—losers get eaten.]

If you are a True Believer, you may find this series useful in taking the Word to the Heathen. If you are not a True Believer, by all means read on . . . after all, you have nothing to lose but your dice, your fifty-page rulebooks (with attendant amendments, attachments, charts, tables, modules, errata ad infinitum), and your stacks and stacks of little cardboard squares.

Most people, even Non-Believers, know what *DIPLOMACY* is; but let's use this first column as a review. *DIPLOMACY* is a game for seven (or fewer) players, beginning in 1901, set during the last grand gasp of Imperial Europe when Kings, Kaisers, Tsars and Sultans still ruled. Unlike most "wargames", it is not merely a military exercise; the *real* game is how the players relate to each other: the negotiations, the alliances, the double-crosses, the charades and pretensions, the spying, the pleas for survival.

DIPLOMACY is one of the world's few "classic" games (along with Monopoly, chess and bridge among others). If nothing else, it has stood the test of time and boasts a long-term enthusiast following. The game gains new admirers every year. There has been an annual national *DIPLOMACY* convention for the last fifteen years. The game has been played by post for two decades; in excess 2000 people are engaged, world-wide, in this aspect at the moment. Several dozen publications, devoted exclusively or largely to *DIPLOMACY*, appear regularly in the United States and Canada (not to mention others in England, Ireland, Western Europe, Scandinavia and Australia).

Why is *DIPLOMACY* "classic"? There are three ready reasons: 1) it is externally simple and easy to play; 2) it is internally complex and interesting; 3) it is original and unique.

Simplicity. The rules of *DIPLOMACY* consist of only nine small pages in fairly large print. There are only two kinds of pieces (as opposed to, say, six in chess) and only 34 of these can be in play at any one time (chess starts with 32). The pieces maneuver through 75 spaces (there are 64 squares on a chessboard). This is an *easy* game to learn.

Complexity. Easy to learn, yes; but *DIPLOMACY* is not easy to play well. It offers continuous and endless challenges. There are not two sides engaged, but seven. *DIPLOMACY* combines the tactical complexity of a seven-player chess game with the psychological and emotional complexities of international politics. Expertise in this game is no guarantee of victory; the greatest tactician can still get blown away because he fails to relate to his opponents in negotiations. This is a *difficult* game to master.

Originality. *DIPLOMACY* was the first game in which players acted simultaneously, rather than in turn. This important concept has since been carried over into other games (sometimes with less than satisfactory results), but *DIPLOMACY*'s system was the first and still is the most effective. Classic simplicity.

DIPLOMACY was the first game to combine deliberately the tactical aspects of chess with the psycological aspects of poker. The interplay of the players is the key ingredient in the final outcome of any game of *DIPLOMACY*, not the mere shifting of little wooden blocks on the map. Mastery of the game demands the utmost of a player's emotions and intellect. Classic complexity.

Finally, *DIPLOMACY* turned out to be the world's first and finest role-playing game. The negotiations required by the game encourage players to assume the roles of actual national rulers; players soon adopt the national characteristics of their shadow-state. In postal play, a whole literature of role-playing sprang up and, literally, set the stage for the role-playing games which came later. It is fair to say that these games (the dungeons, tunnels, magic kingdoms, and what-all) were not only foreshadowed by *DIPLOMACY*, but actually made possible by the acceptance *DIPLOMACY* enjoyed. In fact, I have never understood people who would rather fool around in a ghoul-haunted castle in preference to a deceit-riddled continent. After all, what could pop out from under a damp flagstone that would be more horrible than your believed ally zapping two of your home supply centers in a single season?

The big complaint about *DIPLOMACY*—from Unbelievers of course—is two-fold. First, that it takes a long time to play; second that it's hard to round up the six other people needed to play it. Neither is any real problem.

The first never was. Because *DIPLOMACY* is physically simple, it's easy to make a record of positions and centers controlled, and to fold up the game for continuation later. It is not a complicated

RICKENBACKER'S WAR

Historical Scenarios for AH's Aerial War Game

By Rex A. Martin

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy near Billy, France, September 25, 1918. While on a voluntary patrol over the lines, the then Lieutenant Rickenbacker attacked seven enemy planes (five type Fokker protecting two type Halberstadt). Disregarding the odds against him, he dived on them and shot down one of the Fokkers out of control. He then attacked one of the Halberstadts and sent it down in also.

With these words, on 6 November 1930, President Herbert Hoover presented the Congressional Medal of Honor to Captain Edward Rickenbacker at Bolling Field, Washington D.C. Thus was America's finest fighting ace finally rewarded for his contribution to the Allied victory in World War I. During a brief seven months at the front in 1918, Rickenbacker was credited with twenty-six confirmed "kills"; of this seven months, two were spent in a French hospital following a mastoid operation. As one British historian pointed out, Rickenbacker's score is a remarkable record for the limited time he spent in action—one never equalled by any other aviator in either the First or Second World Wars.

By the time Rickenbacker came to the air war, the days of the "lone wolf" were numbered. Rickenbacker, in command of the famed 94th "Hat-in-the-Ring" Pursuit Squadron, proved himself as able an administrator as aviator. And, with Billy Mitchell, was a proponent of the strategic uses of aircraft. Not given to solo flights, Rickenbacker was a thoughtful and observant leader of the massed flights that finally defeated the Imperial Air Service flights over the trenches. His formation was credited with the greatest number of victories scored by any American squadron—69. It was the first American unit to carry the air war over the enemy lines, and totaled more hours of flying time over enemy territory than any other in the United States Air Service.

A recognized hero in the fledgling sport of motor racing, Rickenbacker came to aviation by way of Pershing's motor pool. In January 1918, he

was commissioned upon graduation from Issoudun, the first U.S. pilot training center set up in France. Early in March 1918, the slim man from Columbus Ohio was posted to the nucleus of the 94th Pursuit Squadron—then based at Villeneuve. When Rickenbacker joined the newly-formed squadron, it had lots of pilots—but no airplanes. In fact, another month would pass before a few secondhand French Nieuports could be obtained. But once sufficient aircraft were on hand, the American command felt justified in moving the "Hat-in-the-Ring" Squadron into the Toul sector. There the Americans, and Rickenbacker, threw themselves into the grim and exhilarating business of war among the clouds.

Rickenbacker shot down his first enemy plane on 25 April 1918. It was about as exciting as a public execution—and as professional. By 1 June, he was a recognized ace. He flew a plain grey Nieuport (later a Spad) bearing only the 94th's symbol; there were no bright colors or personal insignia in his squadron. There was no flamboyance to the man. Many said there was little personality. He was not a popular commander, but he forged the concept of fighting as a unit. As a result, the 94th was the best of America's fighter squadrons.

A young 94th pilot named Meissner once flew home with his top wing gone. Just as a Fokker had shot his Spad's wing wires away, Rickenbacker drove him off. More noteworthy, Rickenbacker did not go after the damaged German to increase his personal score, but instead escorted his man to friendly lines. He insisted his men do the same. He admired the German use of the parachute and disdained the scoring rivalries of the earlier aces. Richenbacker's boys were not colorful, but they were the first *modern* fighter pilots. From the moment "Captain Eddie" took it over, the "Hat-in-the-Ring" Squadron was run as a business. For that was what the "art" Roland Garros had started three long years before had now become. Not a blood sport for young gentlemen—but a hard, tough profession for hard, tough professionals.

The days of the Richthofens were over; the days of Rickenbackers had dawned.

THE FIRST KILL

On the afternoon of 29 April 1918, Rickenbacker, in company with Captain James Hall (his commanding officer), "scrambled" in response to a call from a French headquarters that an enemy two-seater had passed overhead. Near Pont-a-Mousson the two Nieuports located and attacked the enemy aeroplane as it was making for German lines. While Hall bore in for his attack, Rickenbacker placed himself in position to cut it off from safety. As the Albatros fled from Hall, Rickenbacker fired into it from a range of 150 yards, sending it into a dive from which the German pilot never recovered.

RICKENBACKER'S WAR

Scenario #1

ADVANCED LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: two Nieuport 28
Starting Positions: enter EAST edge of mapboard south of hex row AA at 2500 m. altitude.

French Player
Aircraft: two Spad 13
Starting Positions: enter WEST edge of mapboard south of hex row H at 4000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Albatros C7; three Pfalz D3a
Starting Positions: Albatros in hex C33 facing west at 1500 m. altitude; Pfalz enter on NORTH edge of mapboard at 2500 m. altitude.

Note: French and American aircraft *must* be played by separate players. These players may not communicate during the game in any manner; nor may their craft fire on those of their ally.

Turn Order:
German player moves FIRST; American player moves SECOND; French player moves THIRD.

Game Length & Victory Conditions: *See Below*

BASIC LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: two Nieuport 28
Starting Positions: enter EAST edge of mapboard south of hex row AA at 2500 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Albatros C7
Starting Position: hex C33 facing west at 1500 m. altitude

Turn Order:
German player moves FIRST.

Victory Conditions:
For American Player: destroy enemy aircraft before it exits mapboard.
For German Player: exit NORTH edge of mapboard anywhere.

Game Length:
Game ends when all German aircraft are destroyed or have moved off of mapboard. German aircraft may not exit mapboard south of hex row AA; should they do so, consider them destroyed by French player.

Victory Conditions:
Player who accumulates the most points at end of game is determined to be the winner. Players receive points for the following:
a) 5 points for each enemy aircraft destroyed.
b) 8 Points for German player should Albatros exit mapboard NORTH of hex row AA.

RICKENBACKER'S WAR

Scenario #2

HALL'S LAST FLIGHT

On a routine patrol with Hall and Green on 7 May, Rickenbacker spotted an enemy plane near Beaumont which was directing artillery fire upon the American lines. Pursuing the fleeing Albatros into enemy territory, the three Americans suddenly found themselves cut off by a flight of four enemy scouts. In the ensuing dogfight, Rickenbacker and Green each claimed an enemy Pfalz, but lost sight of Hall. Returning to their aerodrome at Rembercourt, they waited in vain for Jimmy Hall to arrive. Next day it was confirmed; Hall had been shot down behind enemy lines.

BASIC LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: three Nieuport 28
Starting Positions: enter WEST edge of mapboard south of hex row H at 3000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Albatros C7; two Pfalz D3a
Starting Positions: Albatros in hex I25 facing southeast at 1500 m. altitude; Pfalz enter EAST edge of mapboard at 3000 m. altitude.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Victory Conditions:
For American Player: destroy enemy Albatros before it exits mapboard.
For German Player: exit Albatros off NORTH edge of mapboard anywhere *and* destroy any one American aircraft.
Any other result is considered a draw.

ADVANCED LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: three Nieuport 28
Starting Positions: enter WEST edge of mapboard south of hex row H at 3000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Albatros C7; four Pfalz D3a
Starting Positions: Albatros in hex I25 facing southeast at 1500 m. altitude; Pfalz enter on WEST edge north of hex row P on *third game turn* at 3000 m. altitude.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Game Length & Victory Conditions: *See Below*

Game Length:
Game ends when all aircraft of either side are destroyed or have moved off of mapboard. German Albatros may not exit mapboard south of hex row AA; should it do so, consider it destroyed by American player.

Victory Conditions:
Player who accumulates the most points at end of game is determined to be the winner. Players receive points for the following:
a) 8 points for American player should Albatros be destroyed.
b) 8 points for German player should Albatros exit mapboard NORTH of hex row AA.
c) 5 points for each enemy scout destroyed.

RICKENBACKER'S WAR
Scenario #3

RUMPLER #16

Even the best of pilots had their nemesis. For Rickenbacker, now an ace, it was a Rumpler carrying out photo-recon missions near Toul. On 4 June, Rickenbacker pounced on an aged two-seater emblazoned with the numerals ''16''; he was frustrated when outflown by the enemy pilot and his own guns jammed. The next day, after a night spent checking his weaponry, a flight he was leading met the same craft being escorted by two German fighters. Leaving the Fokkers to his wingman, Rickenbacker attacked the Rumpler, only to have his guns jam after the first pass! In chagrin, the American ace turned from the laughing German, swearing to get him someday. He never saw Rumpler #16 again.

BASIC LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: one Nieuport 28
Starting Position: enter SOUTH edge of mapboard at 3000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Rumpler C5
Starting Position: hex F34 facing west at 4300 m. altitude.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Victory Conditions:
For American Player: destroy enemy aircraft before it exits mapboard.
For German Player: exit NORTH edge of mapboard anywhere.

ADVANCED LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: two Nieuport 28: designate one aircraft as being flown by an ACE (Rickenbacker).

Starting Position: enter ANY one edge of mapboard south of hex row H at 3000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Rumpler C5; two Fokker D7
Starting Positions: Rumpler in hex F34 facing west at 4000 m. altitude; Fokkers within three hexes and 500 m. of Rumpler.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Game Length & Victory Conditions: *See Below*

Game Length:
Game ends when all aircraft of either side are destroyed or have moved off mapboard. Aircraft may not exit mapboard over enemy territory (i.e.: north of trenches for American; south for German); should any do so, consider them destroyed.

Victory Conditions:
Player who accumulates most points at end of game is determined to be the winner. Players receive points for the following:
a) 8 points for each enemy ACE destroyed.
b) 5 points for each enemy aircraft destroyed.

HUN IN THE SUN

At last the 94th had been equipped with the long-awaited Spads. Now the squadron was assigned more arduous tasks. On 8 August, while escorting two French craft on a photo-recon mission over German territory, Rickenbacker's flight was embroiled in their hottest air battle yet.

BASIC LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: one DeHavilland DH4; two Spad 13
Starting Positions: DeHavilland in hex S31 facing northeast at 3500 m. altitude; Spads within three hexes of DeHavilland at 3500 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: two Fokker D7
Starting Positions: enter on NORTH edge of mapboard anywhere, any altitude.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Victory Conditions:
For American Player: DeHavilland must overfly hex II13 at an altitude greater than 2500 m. *and* exit SOUTH edge of mapboard.
For German Player: avoid American victory conditions.

RICKENBACKER'S WAR
Scenario #4

ADVANCED LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: two DeHavilland DH4; four Spad 13: designate one Spad as being flown by an ACE (Rickenbacker)
Starting Positions: all enter SOUTH edge of mapboard, any altitude.

German Players
Aircraft: six Fokker D7, in two flights of three
Starting Positions: three Fokkers enter WEST edge of mapboard north of hex row P at 3000 m. altitude; on the fourth game turn, three enter EAST edge of mapboard north of hex row P at 3000 m. altitude.

Note: the two German flights *must* be played by separate players. These players may not communicate during the game in any manner; nor may their craft fire on those of their ally.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST; German players move simultaneously.

Game Length & Victory Conditions: *See Below*

Game Length:
Game ends when all aircraft of either side are destroyed or have moved off of mapboard. DeHavillands may not exit mapboard north of hex row H; should they do so, consider them destroyed by German player.

Victory Conditions:
Player who accumulates the most points at end of game is determined to be the winner. Players receive points for the following:
a) 10 points for American player should either DeHavilland overfly hex II13 at an altitude greater than 2500 m. *and* exit mapboard SOUTH of hex row H.
b) 8 points for each enemy ACE destroyed.
c) 5 points for each enemy aircraft destroyed.

MEDAL OF HONOR

A rare exuberance for Rickenbacker, to celebrate his promotion to command of the 94th Squadron, he decided on a solo flight over German lines. Over Etain, he chanced upon two German Halberstadts escorted by five fighters. Never lacking in courage, Rickenbacker threw his craft at the enemy. Shooting down one Fokker and scattering the others in his headlong dive, the American attacked the photo-recon planes. Even as the escort regrouped, he shot down a Halberstadt. Rickenbacker, beset by four planes, prudently withdrew. Years later, he would be awarded a belated Congressional Medal of Honor for this exploit.

RICKENBACKER'S WAR
Scenario #5

BASIC LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: one Spad 13
Starting Position: enter ANY edge of mapboard at any altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Halberstadt CL2; two Fokker D7
Starting Position: all aircraft within four hexes of R28 at 3000 m. altitude.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Victory Conditions:
For American Player: destroy any *two* enemy aircraft.
For German Player: avoid American victory conditions.

ADVANCED LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: one Spad 13: designate as being flown by an ACE (Rickenbacker)
Starting Position: ANY hex north of hex row Y at any altitude.

German Players
Aircraft: two Halberstadt CL2; five Fokker D7
Starting Positions: Halberstadt in any hex south of hex row M at 3000 m. altitude; Fokkers within five hexes of either Halberstadt at any altitude.

Note: German two-seaters and German single-seaters *must* be played by separate players. These players may not communicate during the game in any manner; nor may their craft fire on those of their ally.

Note: German players *must* position their aircraft first.

Turn Order:
German *two-seater* player moves FIRST; American player moves SECOND; German *single-seater* player moves THIRD.

Game Length & Victory Conditions: *See Below*

Game Length:
Game ends when American aircraft is destroyed or has moved off of mapboard. German aircraft may not exit mapboard south of hex row AA; should they do so, consider them destroyed by American player.

Victory Conditions:
Player who accumulates the most points at end of game is determined to be the winner. Players receive points for the following:
a) 8 points for each enemy ACE destroyed.
b) 5 points for each enemy aircraft destroyed.

RICKENBACKER'S WAR
Scenario #6

CAT IN THE HAT

On 10 October 1918, the 94th Squadron received orders to down two very bothersome enemy balloons near Dun-sur-Meuse. Leading 29 aircraft from three squadrons, Rickenbacker crossed the lines in the face of the entire No. 3 Jagdstaffel which rose to meet the threat. Leaving many small dogfights in their wake, the diminished flotilla reached the objective and split to attack both balloons simultaneously. Rickenbacker, with his flight, was jumped as the designated "balloon-buster" made his approach. The balloon was destroyed and Rickenbacker shot down one Fokker. The final tally: both balloons and six Fokkers for the loss of one American.

BASIC LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: two Spad 13
Starting Positions: enter SOUTH edge of mapbaord at 2000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: one Fokker D7; one balloon, PLUS 4 AA counters, 4 MG counters and 6 Dummy counters.
Starting Positions: balloon in hex V23 at 1200 m. altitude with ground counters per rules; Fokker enter NORTH edge of mapboard at 2000 m. altitude.

Turn Order:
American player moves FIRST.

Victory Conditions:
For American Player: destroy enemy balloon before it reaches zero m. altitude.
For German Player: avoid American victory conditions.

ADVANCED LEVEL

American Player
Aircraft: five Spad 13: designate one as being flown by an ACE (Rickenbacker).
Starting Positions: enter SOUTH edge of mapbaord, one aircraft at 2000 m. altitude and four at 3000 m. altitude.

German Player
Aircraft: three Fokker D7; one balloon, PLUS 4 AA counters, 4 MG counters and 6 Dummy counters.
Starting Positions: balloon in hex V23 at 1200 m. altitude with ground counters per rules; Fokkers enter NORTH edge of mapboard at any altitude.

Turn Record:
American player moves FIRST.

Game Length & Victory Conditions: *See Below*

Game Length:
Game ends when all aircraft of either side are destroyed or have moved off of mapboard.

Victory Conditions:
Player who accumulates the most points at end of game is determined to be the winner. Players receive points for the following:
a) 10 points for American player should balloon be destroyed before it reaches zero m. altitude.
b) 8 points for each enemy ACE destroyed.
c) 5 points for each enemy aircraft destroyed.

THEY SHALL BE PLAYTESTERS

By Mark C. Nixon

ON THE BRINK

One of those dingy grey, midwest winter evenings was encroaching upon the village of Perrysburg, namesake of the famous American naval hero, Commodore Oliver Harmless Burg, as the Wargamer kicked snow from his boots, slid the key into an ice-encrusted lock and opened his door to an evenings' delights of food and family. Home from the day's labors. Home from freeway driving. Home from petulant others of a demanding world. Home for the weekend.

"You have a letter from 'That Place'," came a feeble response from the bedroom to his greeting.

Of course. The empty ice bag box; the half-empty ice tray in the sink, several cubes lying in growing puddles around the kitchen in no certain pattern; the baby screaming in his crib; the sensation of impending doom in the air; perhaps these should have indicated something big was in the offing. And yet all were pushed into the dark recesses of his mind, banished beyond recall by the realization of what 'That Place' meant. He had almost given up hope during the past few months.

His hands even trembled slightly as they tore open the legal-sized envelope with familiar hexagonal pattern in its return address. Desperate now, he whipped out the contents and read from the cover letter:

Dear Squad Leader Enthusiast;
It has been a long time since I last corresponded with you in reference to your interest in participating in the GI playtest.

The long wait was over. The playtest had begun!

But wait. What did he read in the third paragraph? Three months to test 45 scenarios, handwritten rules, scenario cards in Sanskrit, information for the new counters to be found in the Library of Congress? How could they do this to him? Not that these posed any insurmountable problems in and of themselves; but, how best to present this to the wife?

How could he tell her she wouldn't be seeing him for the next three months, except for occasional meals and the inevitable morning struggle to wake up from two hours of a restless, revised rule infested sleep to shower, shave and do all the other regrettably necessary things required by an 8 to 5 job which he conceded would have to be kept despite the inconvenience.

Or, worse yet, suppose she jumps for joy at the possibility of three glorious months of continuously knowing exactly where he would be, and her resultant freedom to do as she pleased. She might actually grow accustomed to that and expect it to continue beyond the playtest. Yes, he would have to take a serious look at the long-range implications of this whole undertaking.

TAKING THE PLUNGE

After lengthy consideration (about ten minutes was all he could handle with *GI* hanging in the balance), he opted for the only responsible solution available. He would enlist the aide of his local cronies and ruin their marriages as well! Then, when the test was completed, they could wargame every night instead of this once a week hooey. No more shopping trips and playing handyman around the house. No more dirty diapers and washing dishes. They would all eat out every day on the money saved from not buying all those useless homeowner knick-knacks and kitchen gadgets, diapers and expensive 'cultural' outings (such as seeing every Alan Alda movie which crawled along), not to mention the savings from not remodeling some part of the house every year.

But slowly, fears of alimony, eating stomach-defying fast foods and, worst of all, moving into an apartment and once again fequenting laundromats crept into his thoughts and demanded the battle plan be revised. Arranging a three month binge of wargaming without offending everyone within a hundred mile radius would require utilizing his most persuasive diplomatic skills. He would lie!

There was already one strike against him, the headache he could actually feel pounding in a wife's inner anti-wargame cranium, which had been brought on by the mere sight of those little hexagons in the return address of 'That Place'. She remembered the end of the last playtest, when instead of his practiced, soothing voice walking her through a Lamaze delivery of their first-born she was treated to a recitation of why British and French armor cannot breakthrough and exploit in conjuncture in 1939. He should have realized that breakthrough and exploitation were not exactly the subjects she wanted to discuss at that sensitive time. But his own senses were still reeling from the labor room where she had floored him by speculating that inclusion of the new Intelligence

Rule might lead George Carlin to revise his 'Mutually Exclusive' routine from Military Intelligence to Wargame Intelligence.

Later, in the recovery room, she claimed the excitement in his voice hadn't really upset her that much. But he remembered the scene in the delivery room, how she had almost become hysterical when he had pulled out a black magic marker, drawn a hex pattern on her exposed abdomen, and begun moving those yellow and blue armored units around to illustrate the point. His excitement had been quenched only when the big nurse, they called her 'Bomba', heisted the unsterilized objects, never to return them. The lesson continued to be driven home every time the unfortunate wargamer played *THIRD REICH* with homemade British and French armor counters.

With a second child on the way it was not difficult to imagine the nature of thoughts which had generated today's headache. Nevertheless, this thing had to be nipped in the bud; he ventured a few opening remarks.

"Sheesh, you can't imagine how much work this playtest will be."

"I can imagine, I can imagine."

"I don't see any way it can be done, what with periodic trips to the Library of Congress to check armor listings."

"So don't do it."

Obviously, this was not the correct approach.

"I wonder who will be willing to help? I can probably get Pat, Tim, Russ and Ken at least." ("And drag them down with me!")

"What about your cousin Chuck in Cincinnati? Why don't you just send the whole mess to him?"

"But he's in law school. I doubt he'd have enough time."

"Why not? You're always saying that all the world needs is more rules lawyers."

It was one thing when she outmaneuvered him. Being outwitted literally drove him berserk. Heavy artillery time!

"Okay, if you really don't want me to do this; if you want me to spend the next three months in agony knowing someone else is using what should have been our playtest materials; if you want everyone else to hate me for working them up with all the big talk of a playtest and then finking out at the last minute; if you want me to hold this over your head for the rest of what will become your unnatural life, I won't do the playtest."

Had he gone too far? That last bit was perhaps too much, but he was on a roll and couldn't stop.

"Alright, have it your way. I didn't want to stop you, and probably couldn't anyway. But how about if this time we don't play the game in the delivery room?"

He had won! The playtest would go on.

"Certainly. I won't do that again. That was only because it was my first playtest and time was running out. There will be no time crunch with this one because I'll have lots of people helping me."

To himself, he began calculating what kind of monster paperwork would be required to get his playtest team into the labor room. Would a typewriter exceed hospital noise limits?

WHO ARE THESE CRAZIES?

"Hello, Pat?"

"Yeah."

"Are you ready to start the playtest?"

"Sure. Did you get the stuff?"

"Yes and no. I got 45 scenarios and handwritten rules."

"What about the counters?"

"Pat, how soon can you pack for a few days in Washington?"

"Washington? What do you mean?"

"That's where the Library of Congress is. I know. I looked up their street address for you. Your flight leaves Toledo Express Airport at five o'clock."

"Hello, Russ?"

"Oh no! What do you want?"

"It's time for the *GI* playtest."

"But I just finished two weeks of vacation. Why didn't you call me then?"

"Well, I didn't have the materials until today. Anyway, how did you spend your vacation?"

"Oh, mostly playing golf and pondering the existence of the universe."

"What about your Sanskrit? Surely you spent a great deal of time brushing up on your Sanskrit."

"What in hell are you babbling about?"

"Hello, Ken?"

"Yes?"

"Are you ready to start the playtest?"

"You have got to be kidding! I've been laid off for eight months."

"So?"

"So yesterday I found a new job. Where have you been for eight months?"

"Well, it's not entirely my fault. We can pin some of the blame on the postal department and our friends in the Ivory Tower in Baltimore, and a great deal on all the Squad Leader fans who haven't written abusive letters to the editor in the past two years. After all, they are the ones who didn't put enough pressure on Baltimore to move faster."

"No, it's easier to just blame you."

"Thanks."

"Hello, Tim?"

"Hi Mark.. What's up?"

"I have the materials for *GI*. Are you ready to start?"

"Sure. How about Wednesday?"

"Great, but everybody else wants you to promise you'll lose a few games."

"Ah, come on!"

"I'm serious. How will it look if one member of our group wins every game he plays? The rest of us will look like ninnies. We'll be submitting analysis such as 'Tim played the Allies in scenario 48, so they are favored to win 95% of the time'. I'm talking either throw a few games or you're out."

"Well, it goes against my ethics, but I'll do you this favor and lose a game."

"Only one?"

"Well, after all, with only three months I'll probably only get to play about 50 games at the most."

"Heaven help us!"

GEARING UP

Five. That made five dedicated players. It was the perfect number. Four at home constantly playing and one in Washington researching Armor Listings. There would have to be a shuttle arrangement to and from Washington to prevent any one tester from contracting researchaphobia due to the torrid pace of information requests, microscopic typeface of the *United Counter and Armor Listings for Wargames Compendium* which contained most of the information used to make all wargames, and the guaranteed hassles with representatives from other playtest groups who would be there researching the same data. The shuttle could fly at night, permitting sleep during flight to maximize time. He could anticipate the accusation this would draw from his wife that he was running a 'fly-by-night' outfit. But it didn't bother him. He deplored the obvious.

The Sanskrit dilemma might have been a very large problem. In fact, since Russ had wasted his vacation chasing golf balls in the rough and doing a 'Carl Sagan' with his psyche (Russ had billions and billions of mind-blowing ideas), there was danger the translation would have to be jobbed out to the university and actually paid for! But Russ booked through and declined offers from a summer bowling league and two golf leagues so he could catch up on his Sanskrit between 7:00 Thursday night softball and 9:00 euchre. It was often difficult to ascertain whether Russ was coming or going.

SCENARIO #33

FRANCE: "Where do You Go When You're Already in Paris?"

"Your turn to move, Mark."

"I'm thinking."

"We're doomed!"

"No, really, I can't decide whether to roll for entrenchments or wait to try setting some fires, whether to Prep Fire, charge your positions, or run away, or maybe everybody should just sit and gain concealment."

"You really have a problem."

"Yes, these all seem like good options."

"No, I mean a mental problem. And I have a time problem. Are you going to move or stake a homesteading claim? I have to get up at 6:00 AM to got to work."

"Well, that's only four hours away, so why don't you just stick around? I'll concede this game; we can switch sides and play it again."

"I'll meet you halfway. You concede and I'll go home."

"Alright. I'll roll for entrenchments. Where are those TI counters?"

"You're using them for Concealment counters for your troops on board 3."

"Oh. So then I'll Prep Fire."

"No. Here, you can switch these CE's for the TI's and roll for your entrenchments."

"Why do you want me to roll for entrenchments?"

"You wanted to. I'm just trying to help out. You obviously need help."

"Now you've done it. I'm sending my boys over the top. They'll probably sweep you right out of that chateau. Where are those CE counters?"

"You just exchanged them for the TI's on board 3. I can't take any more of this! You win. I'm going home."

"HA! And I thought I had lost. But now I see the strength of my position. Yes, I'll have to revise my analysis of this scenario to consider the implications of the TI-CE Counter Offensive."

It would not be until much later, after this analysis had been consumed at the Ivory Tower and the new game released with additional TI and CE counters specifically to preclude the Counter Offensive, that he would conclude the whole thing had only been counter-productive.

SCENARIO #34

NORTH AFRICA: "Battle Beneath the Dust"

"Whose turn is it?"

"I can't remember, and the turn marker is buried in dust."

"In that case you have to roll a 4 or less with two dice in order to move next."

"You mean . . . ?"

"Yes, rule 634.9285 on page 473."

"What are the modifiers?"

"You get a −1 because the dust is blowing from the East and you're using Muslim troops, a −2 since your 10-3 leader has successfully emplaced his handkerchief (it would have been a −4 without the handkerchief because then everybody within 5 hexes would have known he was a 10-3 and not just a common 9-1 or 10-2, but of course he would have had to pass a CDC [Choke Determination Check] every turn), a +1 because you used the last of your water counters on turn 4, and a +1 for moving with open umbrellas in a crosswind, and a +1 because you rolled a '12' on your last Well Digging attempt and malfunctioned your shovels. But . . ."

"But?"

"But first you have to roll four dice and apply the cumulative difference between the white and red ones and the red and blue ones as a negative number to your PDQ (Pre-Dust Quality) roll, using any available leader modifier as a positive number on the index chart on the back of the PDQ marker, provided it is not also buried in dust. And don't forget . . ."

"Oh no!"

"The green die has to be higher."

"AAAAAAAAAARRRRGGGGHHHH!!!!!"

LAYING THE BIG ONE ON THEM

With two scenarios completed, the Wargamer compiled a 49-page typed report, single-spaced, and sent these first playtest results to the Ivory Tower in Baltimore. Let them chew on that, he thought. Now they'll see how *SL* is really supposed to be played, how it's played in the Midwest!

His excitement only increased when he arrived home that evening to find a package from the Ivory Tower itself waiting for his eager hands to rip open. Probably an offer to fly in and assume control of the company, his rather large head surmised.

But it wasn't. It was something called 'ERRATA #1', several pages containing new and revised items and rules to be put into immediate effect. Well, that should be no problem. He would use red ink to note all the changes in the rulebook, run copies of the ERRATA for everyone else to do the same, and they'd be in business again.

But what are these changes? There will no longer be a −1 for Muslim troops attacking from the East? The new umbrella section has been dropped completely? And even more changes! How can this be? He just sent in 49 pages of analysis based on everything this ERRATA #1 monstrosity has changed. Forty-nine pages wasted! All this ERRATA to go into immediate effect!

"GAK!" He realized his only chance for redemption was to waylay the UPS overnight van carrying his 49 pages of garbage somewhere along the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Who could he drag out of bed for a midnight raid across the state line?

Russ was at some pea-picking softball tournament or geek show somewhere, Pat was with every other fireman in Toledo fighting a nuclear power plant blaze which had been touched off by excessive Bic flicking, and Tim was in Georgia of all places. Where was Ken? Of course! Ken at the Library of Congress. No problem for him to be at the Ivory Tower in the morning, knock the UPS man senseless, and the 49 pages would be brought back and revised before anyone read them.

Revised? Wait a minute. Let's not be hasty here. His index fingers were already out of action from typing the 49 pages. A revision typed with middle fingers and thumbs would take a fortnight (whatever that was, but it sounded good). There had to be a quick and dirty way out of this predicament.

When pressured he usually came up with something and this was no exception. The ERRATA list itself provided the ammunition he required. If they could spew forth this sort of affront from the Ivory Tower, he'd spew some back. Thus was born the ERRATA of ERRATA #1.

It was the perfect retort. Fight fire with fire. Should they attempt an ERRATA of the ERRATA of ERRATA #1 he would counter likewise. Should they elect to sneak an ERRATA #2 in on its belly, the ERRATA of ERRATA #2 would be shot back at them.

"MESS WITH MY 49 PAGES WILL THEY!?," he actually screamed aloud to the basement walls.

Realizing his grasp on reality was ebbing precariously near low tide, he grabbed the last can of the twelve-pack and staggered toward the telephone. Some poor UPS man would be laying his life on the line in a few hours if Ken wasn't stopped in time.

"Hello, Ken?"
"Ungh."
"Ken, wake up. This is Mark. Don't do it!"
"Wha?"
"Don't go to Baltimore."
"Don't go to Baltimore. Right. Why would I go to Baltimore? Why would anyone go to Baltimore?"
"To get the 49 pages from the UPS man."
"Okay. Why would I do that? What 49 pages? What UPS man?"
"The one who's trying to ruin our credibility as playtesters."
"He is? Why would he do that? Where is he? LET ME AT HIM!"
"No, it's okay now. We're taking care of it at this end."
"Oh yeah? Well I'm sure glad you woke me up to tell me not to do something I wasn't going to do in the first place."
"Weren't going to do? You mean you were going to let us down?"
"How should I know? I don't have any idea what you're talking about and, by the slur in your speech, I doubt that you do either."
"Well, that's okay. Actually we're lucky you don't remember. That UPS man can rest easy now. You must have been drunk when I called ealier."
"DRUNK? You're out of your mind! You're the one who drunk. You never called ear . . ."
CLICK!

SCENARIO #45

ARNHEM: "Who has the Rubber Bands for the PIATS?"

"Are you sure you want to move those squads into the building?"
"Sure, why not?"

"Well, you'll probably leave a lot of equipment behind."
"What equipment?"
"The MMG, LMG and two PIATS."
"No, they go with the squads."
"Not anymore. Didn't you read the new rules for this scenario? They have to pick up the equipment before they can carry it."
"I read the rules. Those weapons are in possession so there's no problem."
"Then you must have missed the changes in ERRATA #18."
"On come on now!"
"Yes, you have to roll for dropping, tripping, slipping and falling."
"Where did you find that?"
"Revised section 998, 'Klutz Generation'."
"Okay. Here, I'm rolling, I'm rolling."
"Great. You dropped the LMG and tripped the geek carrying one of the PIATS. Where are those Klutz counters?"

SCENARIO #74

NORMANDY: "Row Your Boats Ashore"

"Engine failure?"
"Sure, you better break out the oars and stroke it into shore."
"But you'll chew me to pieces at that pace."
"Naw, my boys will have sighting problems because of rule 872.34, 'Hysterical Laughter'."
"Sure, so then I'll lose a morale level due to 872.498, 'Embarrassment'."
"Tough."
"Well, I'm not putting up with it. We're going into the water."
"In the Channel? 800 yards out?"
"We'll swim."
"Please don't do this. We'll have to look up rules for Swimming, Tides, Exposure, Surf, Equipment Loss, Undercurrents, Drift and god knows what else. We'll never finish the game."
"Tough. I'll wear you down before I'll let you win."
"Okay, call out for pizza and get ready to roll dice!"

Twelve hours later, with the GI's still in the water, the assault is at full tide. That is . . . the attack is breaking upon the shore. Er . . . that offensive is cresting? Well, you get the picture.

"Uh, did you roll for squad D to drop their LMG?"
"I'm so exhausted I don't remember. Uh, wait a minute. Yeah, I think so. Aren't they the ones who dropped it but rolled snake-eyes twice in a row to catch it with their feet as it sank? Yeah, I'm sure they are. There should be Foundering counter on them."
"Let me see now. I don't think there are any more. I'm sure we can only use the eight counters that came with the game. I know I read that somewhere. You aren't allowed any more than eight, so squad D is eliminated."
"Not this again! Why would it be eliminated just because there are only eight Foundering counters provided in the game?"
"Well, maybe we better call Tim. What time is it in Washington now?"
"9:00 AM."
"Great, he should be at the library. I hope none of those other goons are using the telephone."
Ring . . . Ring . . . Ring . . .
"Hello, I must be going."
"Cut the comedy, Tim. We have a serious question. Can we use more than eight Foundering counters at once?"
"As luck would have it, I just ran across that yesterday in the *Encyclopedia of Allied European Amphibious Landings in 1944 for Months Beginning with the Letter 'J', volume II*."
"You must be joking."
"No, it's an 1800 page monster. Volume I is 1500 pages. It has a lot of information you can't find elsewhere."
"I guess it would. How about an answer?"
"The answer is yes, provided the sum of the squares of the two sides is equal to the square of the third."
"What?"
"Well, I saw this great movie here yesterday, and have been dying to try out some of the lines."
"Oh no! Was the first part in black and white, and were there a lot of winged monkeys flying around near the end?"
"Yes, how did you know?"
"Never mind that. Just get on the next flight out of Washington. You've been on the East coast too long. You're beginning to talk like an inhabitant."

SCENARIO #77

GERMANY: "Atta-Boy George"

"Holy cow! How many Shermans do you get in this scenario?"
"Let's see. Counting the six with front mounted potato-peelers and the four with trash-mashers, I make out a grand total of thirteen."
"And I start with only one immobilized Tiger and a handful of PFs?"
"That's right. But look at what a PF can do to a Sherman. Why, in just a few turns we'll have punctured potato-peelers and smashed mashers all over the board."
"Great. So your troops who aren't committed to taking out the garbage will keel over due to a potato deficient diet. I am not impressed."
"Well, you're not looking at this in the proper perspective. You have to realize that in WWII the entire US economy was geared toward producing Sherman tanks, which it did very well. Consequently, other items such as potato-peelers were in short supply. As the war progressed these deficiencies became so pronounced that substitutes had to be jerryrigged in the field. To fill this need, the army turned to the most common denominator, the one item they had in surplus, the Sherman tank. Of course the potato-peelers and trash-mashers of this scenario are only two examples. There were also tank-mounted barber shops, dry cleaners, brothels, porta-johns, APOs; in fact, almost everything the army needed was eventually mounted on Sherman tanks. So the fact that these potato-peelers are tank-mounted is only coincidental. Those 75MM guns are actually no more than obstructions to efficient potato peeling; and you should think of the vehicles as part of the Commissary, not as AFV's."
"Oh, I'm glad you cleared that up. History never was my forte. So I'll just start moving these squads up next to this potato-peeler."
"SPLOOSH! Ha! You've just been peeled like a potato!"
"What!?"
"Your troops were skinned alive."
"No, quit it!'"
Yes, they cashed in their chips."
"No, I mean cut the rotten potato jokes."
"Just because you got a few of your boys fried?"
"Why am I punished so?"

THE WRAP-UP

The playtest was complete. They had played 285 games of the 45 scenarios in 82 days. Tim had honored his promise and posted a 57-1 record. The loss had been to Pat and his incredible Scouts who carried the day, and were usually enough on their own to win any scenario.

It was almost as though Pat knew something about the game none of the others knew. In fact,

he probably knew a great deal about many things the rest of them knew absolutely nothing about at all. But, of course, almost everybody knew much more about almost everything then all of them put together. But they knew one thing nobody else knew. They knew 285 games was their limit. They were ready to play *VITP* and *WAS*, anything which didn't require as much dice rolling as *GI*.

They had recorded 570,928 dice rolls which averaged out to 4.2389 per roll. They had heard reports of a great mathematician in Detroit who postulated an hypothesis that two dice rolled 'x' number of times should yield an average roll of 7, with a general tendency to be more accurate as 'x' increased. Based on this revolutionary proposition, they immediately realized that the 4.2389 average meant their level of play was light years ahead of everyone else!

Probably a great many uninformed players (mostly in California which was usually about two or three years behind the majority of innovations), had not yet even heard of this incredible breakthrough in gaming theory and consequently were unaware of how poorly they measured up to those who could roll 4 and 5 averages on demand (or 9 and 10 averages when playing *RAIL BARON*).

Well, let them enjoy their innocence. Let them attempt to compensate for their inadequacies by memorizing rules, playing constantly, pouring hours upon hours into situation analysis and continuously seeking improvements in overall strategy. If they were inept at rolling dice, not much could be done for them anyway.

The last of 1,392 pages of anlaysis had been UPS'd in the general direction of Baltimore, where unemployment had completely disappeared due to the logistics of handling such reports from the 293 groups involved in the playtest. Unemployed postal workers, UPS people, air express, sanitation (for controlling discarded submittals), and other service personnel flocked to the area from all over the country. Extended to a comprehensive impact for the entire area, one can imagine the ramifications this influx had on all other facets of life. Baltimore, for the first time in its dismal existence, had become the place to 'be'. It had become 'in' to fly off for a weekend in Baltimore. Celebrities from all walks of life could be seen there and talk was of a revival all along the culturally bankrupt East Coast, centered on this Baltimore activity. Few would ever realize, and even fewer acknowledge, the Founding Fathers of this wonderful rebirth of an old city.

HELLO NIRVANA

But, at least for some, such recognition is not necessary because they have what they desire. For in a small hospital somewhere near Toledo, a birth of a different sort is occurring. A birth the like of which very few people will ever see. For in the delivery room, as the situation draws to its inevitable conclusion, a demented and severly mind-warped father-to-be suddenly whips out a black magic marker and exclaims, "No, see, I'll draw a hex pattern. Now, with a 9-1 and a 7-4-7 adjacent to the building, what should the GI do?"

Behind him, four masked figures clad in hospital green rise as one to examine the situation.

"Roll to dig a swimming pool," says Russ.

"Roll to weed the garden," declares Ken.

"Roll to paint the house," Tim shouts.

"Roll for a scout." Pat, of course.

The others stand back in awe. A scout. Of course, always roll for a scout. Then get him to help paint the house.

At least for some, the playtest will never truly end.

★

A REVIEW OF ROMMEL'S DUNGEON

by Alan R. Moon

ROMMEL'S DUNGEON
Nazis & Newts, 1981
Brown Box
Skokie, Illinois
Designer: Frank N. Stein
$9.99

Last month while reading *Orc And Beans,* one of my favorite magazines, I saw an ad for a new game entitled *ROMMEL'S DUNGEON*. Being a sucker for anything out of the ordinary, I immediately ordered it. This review is to try to convince you not to make the same mistake.

It was obvious that the company, **Nazis & Newts,** was small because they used the new inexpensive package delivery service; Paratrooper Parcels. While I received the game in less than two weeks, it was only by pure luck that the box landed in a soft bush.

Designed by Frank N. Stein, the game is a monster in more ways than one.

The first thing I noticed was that the game hadn't been playtested. I mean, the counters weren't even punched out! And nowhere in the rulebook does it explain what the numbers on the counters mean.

The map bears absolutely no relation to reality. Hex A3 should be where hex Y18 is. Hex DD23 is really off-map. There is no hex X14. And the fountain in hex D24 was really an immobile anti-tank gun.

The rulebook is actually one large piece of paper that folds out into a six foot square. Half the instructions are on how to refold it. The pages are unnumbered and many rules sections refer to other rules on certain pages. The rules themselves are hand written and many words have been obliterated by coffee stains, ink splotches, and lipstick silhouettes. Obviously, the designer had more fun with the rulebook than I did. The most puzzling part of the rulebook, however, is one page which contains some sort of matrix that is just a huge grid of lines.

The historical accuracy of the game is also very suspect. For instance, Rommel's 3rd Division, which was held in reserve above ground throughout the campaign against the Dungeon, appears on the third level. And Balkowski, one of the German leader counters in the game, was really the King of the Goblins.

There are three historical scenarios covering the beginning, the end, and the entire campaign. There are also several hypothetical scenarios, one of which gives the German player naval units like the *BISMARCK* and *GRAF ZEPPELIN*.

To be fair though, this game helps prove my theory that no game is ever completely bad. The game does have several innovative concepts. The scratch and sniff counters are superb and allow players to vividly experience the feel (and smell) of the dungeon. The invisible dice work extremely well with the invisible CRT. But the most innovative concept in the game is Mr. Stein's ROOC (Room Out Of Control) rules which recreate the blitzkrieg tactics of The Dungeon Korps and highlight the tactical brilliance of its hump-backed commander.

I for one hope this game does not typify the direction of the hobby. F. N. S. Stein's main motivation for designing this game seems to be his acute fear of the female organs. He has neutered all the characters and continually refers to everything and everybody in the game with "his" or "he". Where are the amazons? Where are the mommy elves? Where are the witches?

To sum it all up, the game is a failure for many reasons. Perhaps most importantly, the game fails as a simulation because combat is resolved by rolling dice and battles are never resolved like this in real life. Somehow the abbreviation of the title, "R&D", seems like the final joke within a joke. Don't buy it.

★
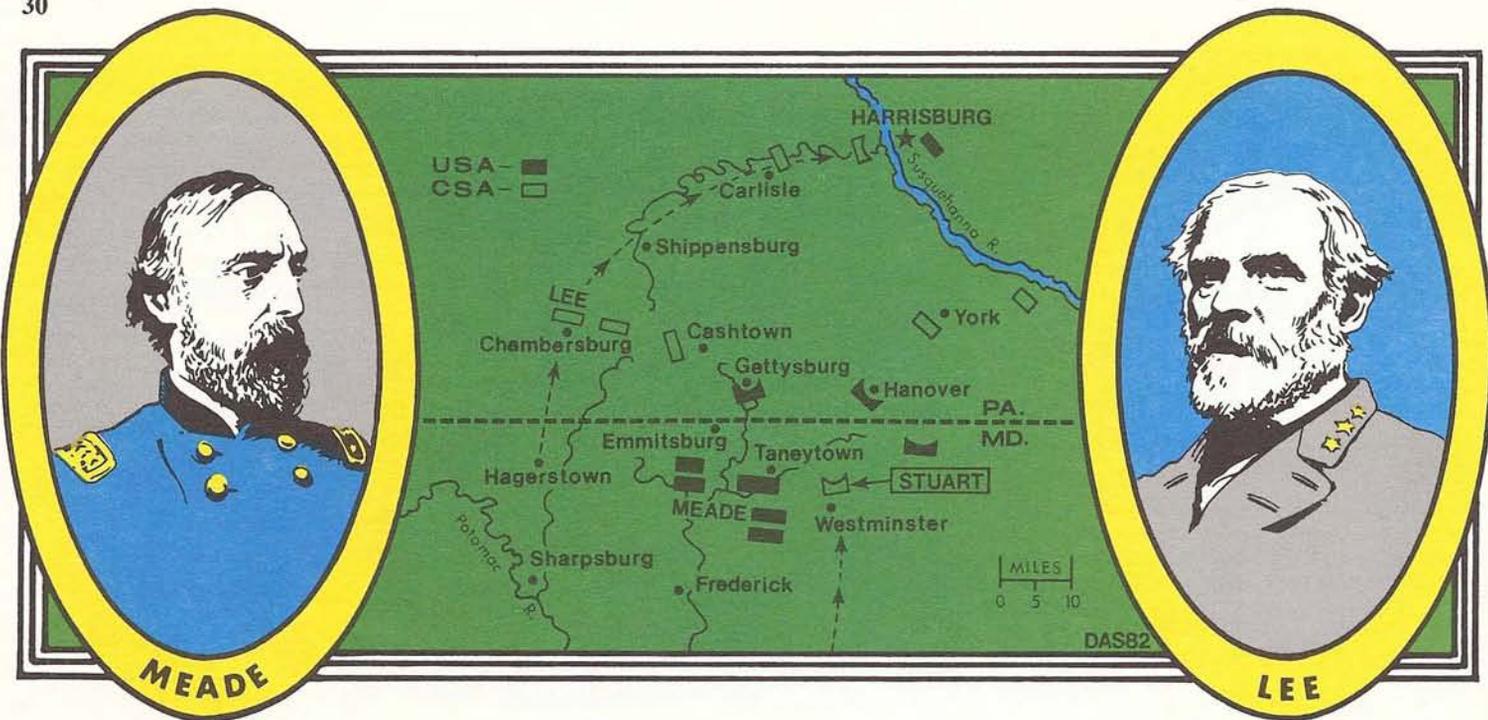
THE GETTYSBURG COMPROMISE

Formations in Intermediate Gettysburg

By Rick Mathews

Advanced *GETTYSBURG* '77 is an extremely accurate portrayal of the historical battle, and is remarkably playable considering the complexity of the subject. It gives the players a real appreciation of the difficulty faced by Civil War commanders in co-ordinating and controlling thousands of men in battle formations. There is only one problem with Advanced *GETTYSBURG:* the playing time. Most of us, I expect, simply do not have the long hours necessary to complete a reenactment of the entire battle. It certainly cannot be done in an afternoon session of gaming. Consequently, I for one found myself returning to the Intermediate game, which is fast-moving, playable, and can be completed in a single sitting. Whenever I played the Intermediate game, however, I almost felt guilty because I was ignoring all those beautiful formation markers included for the Advanced game; likewise, I was missing the realism afforded by them. After all, I paid good money for those markers, so I ought to use them!

The following, therefore, is an attempt to incorporate the formation markers of the Advanced game into the framework of the Intermediate game. The object is to give the player at least a bit of the "feel" of Civil War combat by compelling him not only to move units and fight with them, but to pay attention to how those units are actually formed for battle. Basically, this is done by placing formation markers directly on top of infantry and cavalry units. I realize that this will not be as realistic as the Advanced game—but it is not meant to be. It is, as the title of this article indicates, a "compromise". All rules of the Intermediate game apply except as amended below.

The attacker's strength is doubled when attacking from shaded (flank) hexes.

RULES OF PLAY

1. Formations: Advanced game battleline and column markers are now placed directly on top of every infantry and cavalry unit in play. Only shat-tered units, artillery units, and headquarters units do not utilize such markers. Every other unit on the board will have some type of formation marker on it at all times. "Groups" use one formation marker for the entire group—not one for each unit in the group.

It is important to note the facing of each formation marker and the corresponding front, flank, and rear hexes of each type. (For those of you without the errata published in Vol. 15, No. 1 of the *GENERAL,* the front and flank hexes of column formations are the reverse of those pictured on page 12 of the rulebook.) The function of these facings will be covered in the combat section of these rules.

2. Stacking: The stacking limits are changed to one infantry or cavalry unit or *group* per hex. An artillery unit may still be added to each hex; headquarters may stack freely with any unit.

3. Movement: Only column formations may use strategic movement. The only type of battleline formation which may move at all is the straight battleline. Straight battleline formations may move their full movement allowance (five for infantry, eight for cavalry). These may move in any direction without restrictions; exception: they may not move such that an enemy unit would occupy a flank hex.

It costs nothing to change from battleline to column formation; but it costs two movement points to change from column to battleline. There is no cost for changing the type of battleline formation; but no unit may change its formation while adjacent to an enemy unit. No unit may change its formation during the other player's turn. Within the above restrictions, a unit may change its formation at any time in the player's turn—not just in the movement phase.

4. Combat: Only straight battleline formations may attack, or voluntarily move adjacent to an enemy unit. They may only apply their strength for attack through their front hexes (i.e.: the unit they are attacking must occupy one of their front-facing hexes). Artillery may attack exactly as stated in the Intermediate rules.

Should a non-straight battleline formation find itself adjacent to an enemy unit at the beginning of a turn and choose not to retreat, it still may not attack. Straight battleline formations and artillery units in such a position have the option to attack —but are not required to do so. If such a unit does choose to attack during its turn, it must attack every unit to which it is adjacent.

The formation and facing of the defending unit now becomes important. As the accompanying diagram shows, for each hex adjacent to a defending unit there is a corresponding number which the attacker may subtract from his combat die roll if he attacks from that hex. If more than one attacking unit is involved against one defender, the attacker receives only the best modification, not all of them added together (for example, if the attacker occupies two hexes calling for -1 and -2 modifiers respectively, he receives -2, not -3). All modifiers allowed by the regular rules still apply. These *are* added to the modifier described above.
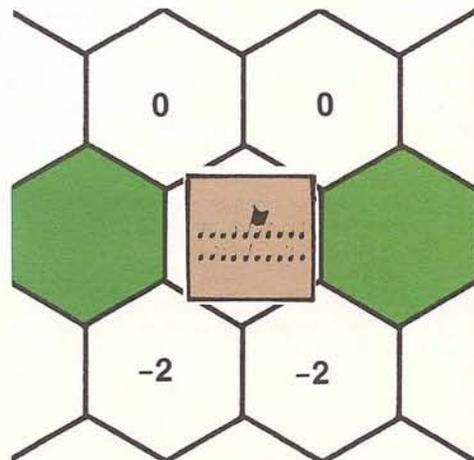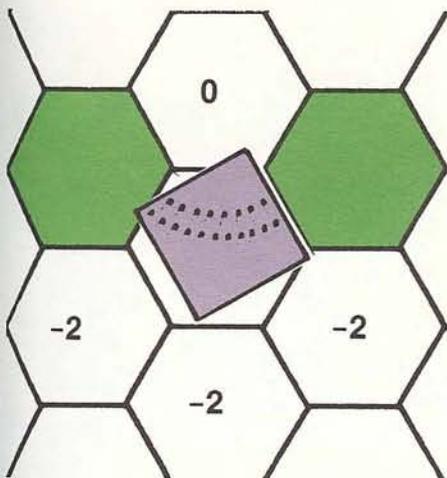
Note that any attacking unit occupying a flank hex of a defending formation has its attack strength doubled. Any other modifiers caused by its own position or the position of other attacking units still apply. An artillery unit defending with an infantry or cavalry unit assumes the same formation as the other unit for purposes of this flanking rule. If it defends on its own, then there is no flanking bonus for any attacker in the defensive field of the artillery unit. Notice that only shattered units and artillery units are now restricted to a "two-hex field of defense". All other units have an effective defensive field of the six adjacent hexes.

5. Advance: Only straight battleline formations or artillery units may advance. If, by advancing, a unit would end its advance with an enemy unit occupying one of its flank hexes, it may not advance. Advancing units may not turn during their advance.

6. Retreat: A unit which retreats may assume any formation *if* it ends its retreat out of enemy zones of control. This is the only exception to the rule which prohibits changing formation in the other player's turn. During retreat, all units are considered to be in straight battleline formation (unless shattered). As such, the unit must face the attacking unit which forced the retreat throughout the retreat.

7. Shatter and Disorganization: Organized battleline formations use the darker-shaded battleline markers. Disorganized battleline formations use the lighter-shaded markers. For column formations, these colors are reversed (this is virtually necessitated by the counter-mix). The "disorganized 1" and "shattered" markers are only used for artillery units. All other units should be readily discernible by their different-shade markers in the case of disorganization, or lack of any formation marker in the case of shatter.
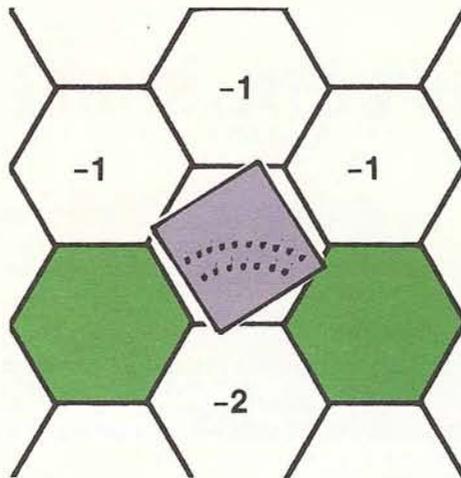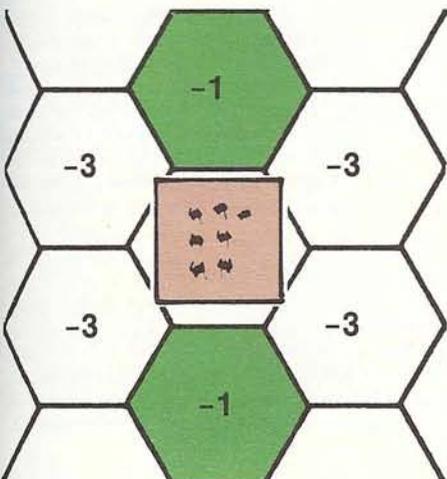
The effects of disorganization are the same as in the Intermediate game. The effects of shatter are changed somewhat, however. If a shattered unit is attacked in a "two-direction" attack (as defined in the game rules), then the attacker's strength is doubled for that attack. The −1 modifier of the regular game still applies. If a shattered artillery unit defends with a non-shattered unit, it is exempt from doubled attacks unless the other unit is subject to doubling. If it chooses to defend on its own, it is subject to doubling. Shattered units may not use strategic movement.

8. Order of Battle: Artillery units may now stack with infantry and cavalry units on the turn of entry.

9. Night: During night turns, formation markers are placed on previously shattered units, and light-shaded battleline markers are replaced with dark-shaded markers (vice-versa for column markers).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

These rules, at first glance, may seem to give the attacker an undue advantage. The apparent advantage lessens, however, when one realizes some of the limitations placed on the attacker by the system. For instance, an attacking unit can no longer advance simply by blasting a hole in the defending line, due to the danger of exposing his flanks. A player must now force a general retreat along the entire length of a defending line in order to exploit any local superiority gained in fire combat. Too, in order to safely attack at all, he must at least match the length of the defending line in order to minimize the risk of being outflanked by a counterattack. Due to the new stacking limits, it becomes virtually impossible to attack in a second combat round if an "AR" result is suffered in the first round. The
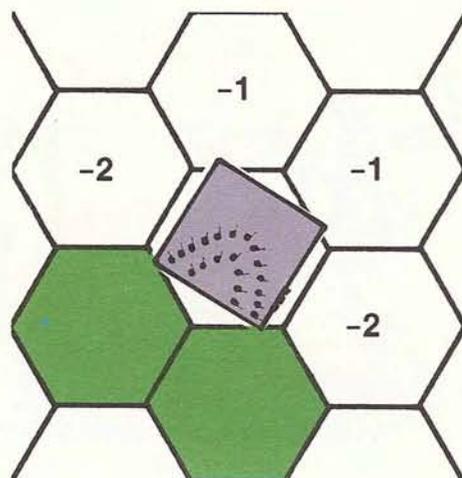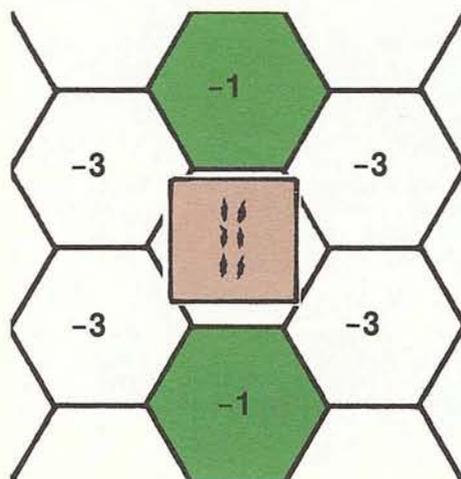
defender need no longer counterattack adjacent attacking units at unfavorable odds. And, of course, the attacker's mobility is reduced by the cost of changing from column to battleline. All in all, these limitations tend to balance the advantages given the attacker in certain situations by die roll modifiers and doubling.

It is my hope that these rules will allow *GETTYSBURG* players with limited playing time to experience a bit of the "feel" of co-ordinating massive formations of fighting men on a Civil War battlefield.

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OFF THE SHELF

MAN O' WAR:
THE FIGHTING SHIP IN HISTORY
by Richard Hough.
Charles Schribner's Sons, 239 pp., maps, illustrations; 1979; hardbound; $14.95.

Mr. Hough is eminently qualified to present a composite picture of the great warships of the last 500 years. His extensive studies in the area of naval history have resulted in sixteen books on the subject ranging from a study of the world's greatest admirals to the battle of Midway during the Second World War. In this, his latest book, the author provides an examination of fifteen of the most significant and interesting men o' war, from Lord Howard of Effingham's *Ark Royal* which held the Spanish Armada at bay to the American battleship *New Jersey* which took part in three wars and today remains on call for duty. He has woven these examples into a highly readable account of the progress of the warship, from the galleon to the super-dreadnought.

Although this is a book on the evolution of the warship, the reader will be happy to discover that technical jargon and tedious accounts of ship design are held to a minimum. Instead, we have an easy-to-read narrative of the life and death of fighting ships that are representative of the vessels that fought for the seas in the last five centuries. The ships that are discussed in detail, in what is essentially a survey of naval warfare, are British, German, American, Japanese, Dutch—the greatest of the naval powers. The actions described range from the battle between the gallant British fleet and the Spanish Armada to the conflagration at Jutland and on to the decisive carrier battles of the last World War. As good as the descriptions of the particular ships and their actions are, the reader will find even more enjoyable the stories of the men who commanded them and will soon come to realize that the line between genius and lunacy is sometimes indistinguishable. In short, Mr. Hough's latest book is a potpourri of naval history, with something for every reader—be they casual or expert.

Arnold Blumberg

TIN CANS:
THE TRUE STORY OF THE FIGHTING DESTROYERS OF WORLD WAR II
by Theodore Roscoe.
Bantam Books Inc., 437 pp., illustrations, diagrams, charts; 1979; paperbound, $3.50.

PIG BOATS:
THE TRUE STORY OF THE FIGHTING SUBMARINES OF WORLD WAR II
by Theodore Roscoe. Bantam Books Inc., 458 pp., illustrations, diagrams, charts; 1982; paperbound, $3.50.

Under these, as well as their original titles *United States Destroyer Operations in World War II* and *United States Submarine Operations in World War II*, both books have enjoyed lively printing histories. It is not difficult to understand why. The author, Theodore Roscoe, has a talent for combining after-action reports, fleet operation histories and overall strategic histories into vivid, authoritative accounts. These books will appeal not only to the casual reader, but also to those who have a special passion for naval warfare in the twentieth century. Anyone seeking readable complete histories of the major naval operations in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters *and* recountings of exciting individual ship accounts as well will not be disappointed. In addition to the text, each book contains many maps, charts and illustrations to bring home the naval war in the small boats even more graphically.

Tin Cans covers the remarkable record of the Destroyer Service during the war. A comprehensive history of United States destroyer operations, the book contains especially vivid combat accounts drawn from ship diaries and war records. Called "small boys" and the "work horses" of the Navy, these jack-of-all-trade DDs and DEs handled such diverse roles as scouts, convoy escorts, sub-chasers, rescue vessels, transport and supply ships, blockade runners and radar pickets. And Mr. Roscoe pays tribute to their service in each role. The book is divided in format into sections which cover specific theaters for each year; each section ends with a summary of the operations and events which occurred —a boon to those naval gamers on the lookout for new scenarios for old games.

Pig Boats can be considered the companion volume to *Tin Cans*. A detailed history of United States submarine operations, the book is arranged in the same format, with the same attention to detail as that found in the former. Providing much the same coverage of submarine operations, mixed with lively combat accounts, Mr. Roscoe covers both theaters with thorough documentation and attention to detail. United States submarines not only destroyed the Japanese merchant marine, but also undertook less glamorous tasks: photo-recon missions, weather reporting, the installation and supply of coast watchers and commandos. It is the author's recounting of these operations that is a strong point of this work.

All in all, both books are a valuable addition to the library of the naval historian or wargamer. A great value for the price.

Dale Sheaffer

REGIMENTAL STRENGTHS AT GETTYSBURG
by John W. Busey and David G. Martin.
Gateway Press Inc., 258 pp., tables; 1982; hardbound; $15.00.

Anyone who has ever attempted to design a wargame must eventually confront the challenge of first finding and then evaluating the hard data needed to create the orders of battle and appearance. Most find it an exciting but frustrating challenge as they root out little known sources for the facts and figures they need. Eventually, the question is asked, "Why hasn't this information already been organized in a book?" The answer is pretty straightforward, "History is a research and analysis of the human condition." Numbers and hard data are usually relegated to the footnotes and appendices. Thats what makes this book, *Regimental Strengths at Gettysburg*, perhaps unique. This *is* a book of numbers—and just numbers. The participants and their stories must be found elsewhere.

In the one hundred and nineteen years since the battle of Gettysburg, it is safe to say that millions of words have been written about it. Yet even now no one is really sure exactly how many soldiers were there. The problem lies in the original muster rolls. Through the years many have been lost or accidentally destroyed (especially those of the Confederate forces) and are unavailable to the historian. The authors, Mr. Busey and Dr. Martin, have combined six years of intensive research to come up with as authoritative an analysis of the troop strengths and artillery compositions at Gettysburg as can be found anywhere. The actual number (or best estimate) of every officer and soldier is presented here regiment by regiment. Accompanying these figures is extensive notation detailing the sources and methods used to arrive at the results. They have used every known primary source and some heretofore unknown muster rolls, an impressive scholarly achievement.

Regimental Strengths at Gettysburg is highly recommended as a valuable addition to the library of every Civil War buff and a must to any game designer wishing to recreate this significant battle. You must hurry though. This book was privately printed and less than half of the original 1000 copies remain. These are available for the above cost (plus $1.00 postage and handling) from Dr. Martin, P.O. Box 1102, Hightstown, NJ, 08520.

Mick Uhl

THE YOM-KIPPUR WAR:
THE POLITICS, TACTICS AND INDIVIDUAL
ACTIONS BY WHICH ISRAEL REPELLED
THE ARAB INVASIONS OF 1973
by Peter Allen. Charles Schribner's Sons,
310 pp., maps, illustrations; 1982;
hardbound, $17.95.

Mr. Allen (economist and author of *One More River: The Rhine Crossings of 1945*) in his most recent book presents the reader with a thorough and up-to-date popular account of the Arab-Israel war of 1973—a war that still affects the world almost ten years after the event. Dispelling a number of myths (such as that the attack came as a complete surprise to the Jewish state and that the Bar Lev Line was meant to be Israel's equivalent to the Maginot), the author puts the conflict in its proper strategic perspective. On the tactical level, Allen's work captures the intensity of the actual fighting as he describes numerous accounts of heroism, fear and tragedy. This work includes five area battle maps which are adequate if the reader wishes to follow the actions described.

Although this book is first and foremost a military account, Mr. Allen is careful not to leave out the machinations of the superpowers that did so much to bring on the war and even more to bring it to a halt before those two nations became actively engaged on the battlefield in support of their respective client-states. Simply put, the book is exactly what it purports to be, a straightforward account of the war with just enough of the attendant diplomatic maneuvering present to bear out the truism that wars are conceived in the breakdown of diplomacy and end with the rebirth of same. For those who desire a quick and very readable history of the war, presented like an on-the-spot newscast, this book is highly recommended.

Arnold Blumberg

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Books Received

MILITARY SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES, General Brent Scowcroft (Editor). Prentice-Hall Inc., 226 pp., tables, charts; 1982; hardbound, $7.95.

WORLD MILITARY AIRCRAFT SINCE 1945 by Robert Jackson. Charles Schribner's Sons, 160 pp., photographs, tables; 1980; hardbound, $10.95.

INTRODUZIONE AI GIOCHI DI GUERRA by Giovanni Saladino. U. Mursia editore, 175 pp., tables, charts; 1979; paperbound.

FIFTH ARMY AT WAR by George Forty. Charles Schribner's Sons, 144 pp., photographs, maps; 1980; hardbound, $17.50.

B-57 CANBERRA AT WAR: 1964—1972 by Robert C. Mikesh. Charles Schribner's Sons, 160 pp., photographs, charts; 1981; hardbound, $17.95.

A-20 HAVOC AT WAR by William N. Hess. Charles Scribner's Sons, 128 pp., photographs, diagrams; 1980; hardbound, $17.50.

U.S. BOMBERS, 1928-1980 by Lloyd S. Jones. Aero Publishing Inc., 271 pp., photographs, diagrams; 1980; hardbound.

GEPARD, THE HISTORY OF GERMAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT TANKS by Walter Spielberger. Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 255 pp., photographs, diagrams; 1982; hardbound, $39.95.

FROM HALF-TRACK TO LEOPARD 2 by Walter Spielberger. Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 316 pp., photographs, diagrams; 1979; hardbound, $39.95.

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much flavor as one might think, and should be sure to appeal to all fans of that game, and then some. With quality artwork and playing cards, *UP FRONT* may well turn into a major publishing event.

Don Greenwood

RENAISSANCE

Multi-player military/diplomatic game of European power struggles during the Reformation. Three to six players control coalitions of two or more countries. The map covers an area stretching from England to Russia, Sweden to the Barbary States. Area movement system, not hexes. Units include infantry, cavalry, elephants, siege artillery, fleets and leaders. Four two month turns and an "End of Year" sequence for the winter complete each year of play.

The game is won when one player accumulates 25 Victory Points. Cities may be captured (for the Victory Points) or sacked (for the loot—virtually everything a player wants to do in this game costs and a large treasury is a definite asset). Nations can be conquered, in which case control passes to the conquering player. Leaders too are worth Victory Points if killed. Conversely, there are a number of ways in which players can lose Victory Points (for example: by breaking an alliance). Players must be aggressive to win, but a sound strategy is demanded.

Inevitably, religion plays an important part in any game dealing with this period. Most countries start as Catholic dominated. But the Reformation has dawned and nations may convert (involuntarily) and become Protestant. Several intriguing and simple rules spell out the limitations placed upon the different faiths (Muslim, Catholic, Protestant). Indeed, the player who controls the Papacy—which may change hands several times during a game—has special powers over and limited to, of course, the Catholic nations.

The unique and simple combat system is based on morale. A crummy unit is as likely to surrender as do damage to an enemy. Turns each die roll into an exciting event. Other rules introduce storms at sea, Swiss mercenaries, special unit functions, plague and rebels.

Among my other projects: A second edition of *FOREIGN EXCHANGE* with simplified rules in development—reduces the bookkeeping and number of logs necessary for play. Likewise the second edition rules for *STARSHIP TROOPERS* is in development. Thanks to all who wrote offering to playtest. Don't give up hope; some of you should be getting a copy of the playtest rules soon. My fantasy design, *LAND OF THE GIANTS,* has been turned over to Richard Snyder for development. Again, thanks to all who wrote in offering to playtest; have passed your names on to Richard.

Alan R. Moon

BATTLE OF FIRST BULL RUN (ex-*Gleam of Bayonets*) is in initial playtest with the new map and the second wave of playtest kits will go out soon. Fine tuning the balance is turning out to be tricky due to the delicacy of the historical situation: the opposing armies were about equal and both sides wanted to attack! The basic game system works extremely well. In addition to being very accurate, the new map opens up avenues of attack for both sides. The game is turning out to be simple, subtle and historically sound, and an attempt is being made to playtest and balance it for all levels of expertise from novice to expert.

Creation of the *MAGIC REALM* revision playtest kits is hanging fire due to the press of other projects around here. The kits will be ready as soon as the resources to create them become available. No major problems are anticipated once we reach playtest, since the revisions have been analyzed and talked to death (but then, you never know . . .).

Design playtesting of *WESTERN CAMPAIGN* should start within the next month, and the real playtest should start in January. Once more, the availability of production resources may temporarily delay this. Target Date: ORIGINS '83.

Richard Hamblen

LITTLE ROUND TOP (ex-"20th Maine") and *THE LEGEND OF ROBIN HOOD* were released in July at ORIGINS '82. The next three OSG games scheduled to be republished will probably be *Arcola, Battles of the Hundred Days* and *Panzerkrieg.* I do not anticipate any substantial changes being made to any of these. Sometime early next year I hope to complete *Devil's Den.* There is a strong possibility that *Air Cobra* and *Napoleon at Bay* will be redeveloped. Other OSG games may also be republished, notably *Napoleon at Leipzig,* but not in the immediate future.

I want to thank all of the people who have written to me concerning the OSG line. Your letters have been very helpful, and I'm sorry that I haven't had time to respond to most of them. I welcome any further comments and/or suggestions that you might have, especially concerning the games mentioned above. I am interested in the following information:

1) general impressions of the game (fun? play-balance? historicity?)
2) the game's strong and weak points
3) rules problems, especially omissions and obfuscations.

In closing, it should be noted that a number of people were interested in playtesting these games. At this time I do not anticipate doing any out-of-house playtesting, but I appreciate your offers.

Bruce Shelley

A second edition for *MACHIAVELLI* is finally being readied for print. Because of the success of the current game, no major changes have been planned for the game system. However, most of the physical components won't be lucky. The counters will not be touched. The remaining parts will be given a new look to varying degrees. The most significant change will be with the mapboard, which will remove the national colors from the provinces themselves and relegate these to colored borders. Land areas will be a universal green. The rules will remain unaltered except for a few minor but necessary corrections. This development phase will be completed by the end of September. Exactly when this second edition will be available for purchase is another matter entirely—depending upon a host of factors beyond my control. When it does become available for sale though, you'll see it first in the *GENERAL.*

Mick Uhl

While kicking around the idea of redesigning *JUTLAND,* it came to me that this old classic was finely tuned enough to stand on its own two feet for the foreseeable future. What I really felt was needed, however, was a grand strategic simulation of the Great War at sea, specifically the critical situation in the North sea from 1914 through 1918 between the British grand Fleet and the German High seas Fleet. Some historians have called the British "distant" blockade of Imperial Germany the most vital factor in her defeat. This game has by no means taken shape as of this writing (in fact it may never see the light of day); I have simply been considering various design alternatives and doing a bit of research.

Joseph Balkoski

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LINCOLN'S SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

By Jim Lawler

The British had decided by the end of 1778 that the war should be expanded to the southern colonies. The war in the north had reached a stalemate. There was strong loyalist sentiment in all the southern colonies and the British felt that this expansion of the war effort would stretch the thin American resources to the breaking point and offer the best chance for rapid victory.

General Clinton dispatched a force of about 3500 men southward by ship under the command of Colonel Archibald Campbell. Campbell landed his forces on December 23rd at the mouth of the Savannah River. On December 29th he totally defeated an American force of about 1000 troops under Major General Robert Howe, leaving eastern Georgia under British control. Meanwhile, Major General Augustine Prevost had moved overland from his base in Saint Augustine, Florida, to take over command of all the British forces in Georgia. Colonel Campbell then marched up the Savannah River and captured Augusta on January 29th. In February 1779, an American force of about 1500 men under General Andrew Williamson attempted to recapture Augusta. They were defeated by a force of 1500 British troops led by Colonel Mark Prevost, brother of General Prevost. By March of 1779, the British felt they were ready to march on the Carolinas.

The Americans in the south were commanded by Major General Benjamin Lincoln, who was appointed Commander of the Southern Department. In September 1778—at the time of his appointment at the recommendation of George Washington—his army was based on a force of 1000 Continentals augmented with varying strengths of militia. By March 1779 Lincoln had a force of approximately 5000 men, less than half of which were regulars.

In March, Lincoln led a force of about 4000 men into Georgia, leaving General Moultrie with 1000 men to defend South Carolina. General Prevost

countered by crossing the Savannah River and marching on Charleston. General Moultrie, being greatly outnumbered, used delaying tactics to slow Prevost's advance. Prevost reached Charleston in early May only to find fortifications erected by the people and slaves of Charleston. Now Prevost found himself in a difficult position: a fortified city in front of him and the army of General Lincoln advancing on his rear. Prevost extracted himself by retreating south through the swamps, fighting several sharp skirmishes, and withdrawing into Savannah.

The remainder of the hot summer was uneventful in the South. The Americans were quiet; Lincoln was ill most of the time. The British occupation of Georgia remained unchallenged. At the same time, the British commanders felt they were too weak to consider any further action against the 7000 or more men now under arms with Lincoln in South Carolina.

The American chance for a major victory occurred in the fall of 1779 when the French Admiral Comte D'Estaing arrived with a fleet from the West Indies at the request of South Carolina's Governor Rutledge and General Moultrie, who had acted on their own initiative in inviting the French admiral to come to their aid. The arrival of Admiral D'Estaing with a fleet of 22 ships of the line and 5000 troops on September 8th gave the French temporary control of the sea in this area. By mid-September, the combined Franco-American force of over 10,000 men invested the British in Savannah. They faced General Prevost and 3500 troops behind newly-made earthworks.

Admiral D'Estaing, worried about the hurricane season and the possible arrival of a British fleet, ordered an attack on October 9th. The British were forewarned by an American deserter; the attack failed. (It was here that the brilliant Colonel Pulaski, an expatriot Polish volunteer who commanded the American cavalry, was killed.)

Frustrated, D'Estaing raised the siege on October 18th and sailed away, leaving Georgia securely in British hands.

This scenario recreates the struggle in the south from March to October 1779.

The Indians in the scenario represent the Cherokees. Encouraged by the British invasion of Georgia, they renewed hostile activity on the western frontiers of the Carolinas. This forced the Americans to commit valuable militia on punitive missions against them.

The COMMERCE counters represent small settlements on the Carolina-Kentucky frontier. The reason for the harsh victory condition if the COMMERCE counters are all destroyed is simple. If the Americans had left their frontier defenseless, the settlers would have been massacred. The American player is, as the American command was, honor bound to defend the settlers.

The following should be considered as a optional rule for those players wishing to introduce more units into the play of the scenario.

In May of 1779, General Clinton sent a force of 2000 men under Major General Edward Mathew to raid the rich tidal region around Portsmouth, Virginia. This raid, which lasted for three weeks, caused total damage that exceeded $10,000,000. For the sake of adding more men to the scenario, the British player may land 4BR at any controlled port in the south at the beginning of the May turn. The American player counters by adding 2CA and 3RM at the Virginia-North Carolina border, at the beginning of the June turn. These men represent the response Washington would have had to make to the British sending such substantial reinforcements to the South.

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LINCOLN'S SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN—1779

AT START MARCH, 1779

BRITISH
7/BR, 1/TM, 1/TMD, 1/A, 2/S, 1/F: Savannah
2/BR, 1/TM, 1/TMD, 1/S: Augusta
1/BR, 1/TM, 1/TMD: Wilmington
1/I: R9
1/I: J5

AMERICAN
4/CA, 3/RM, 1/RMD, 1/S, 1/F: Charleston
1/CA, 3/RM, 1/S: Ninety-Six
1/CA, 2/RM, 1/RMD: Hillsboro
1/RM: D5
1/RM: N8
4/COM: one each at U13, P11, N8 and I6

REINFORCEMENT/TIME RECORD TRACK

BRITISH move first

(1) MARCH 1779	(2) APRIL	(3) MAY	(4) JUNE	(5) JULY	(6) AUG	(7) SEPT	(8) OCT
AMERICAN						7/FR, 1/S: Any port or coastal hex	

VICTORY CONDITIONS

1. The British player will win if he fulfills *both* of the following conditions:

a. Must control Savannah and Augusta.

b. Must control either Charleston or two of the following: Ninety-Six, Camden, Hillsboro.

2. The American player will win if he fulfills *both* of the following conditions:

a. Avoid the British Victory Conditions.

b. Control either Savannah or Augusta.

3. Any other result is a draw.

SPECIAL RULES

1. During the March turn, Winter Restrictions are in effect.

2. Savannah must have a garrison of at least 3BR at all times.

3. The forts at Savannah and Charleston cannot be destroyed.

4. Special British Reinforcements:

a. 3TM appear on the first turn that at least 3BR begin a turn in South Carolina. They appear in the hex occupied by the 3BR.

b. 2TM appear on the first turn that at least 3BR begin a turn in North Carolina. They appear in the hex occupied by the 3BR.

5. Special American Reinforcements:

a. 2RM appear on the first turn that at least 2CA begin a turn in Georgia. They appear in the hex occupied by the 2CA.

b. 2RM appear the turn following the appearance of the Special British Reinforcements in South Carolina *if* at least 1CA is present in South Carolina. They appear in the hex with the 1CA. If there is no 1CA in South Carolina, these reinforcements are lost and may not be brought on later in the game.

AREA OF PLAY

SOUTH section of mapboard is used in its entirety.

SUGGESTED OPTIONAL RULES

Forced March: both sides may use the Forced March Optional Rules.

c. 2RM appear the turn following the appearance of the Special British Reinforcements in North Carolina *if* at least 1CA is present in North Carolina. They appear in the hex with the 1CA. If there is no 1CA in North Carolina, these reinforcements are lost and may not be brought on later in the game.

6. Indians:

a. The Indian units may not be attacked until activated.

b. The Indian unit at hex R9 is activated as soon as one major Carolina city is British controlled. The Indian unit at hex J5 is activated as soon as two major Carolina cities are British controlled. Major Carolina cities are Ninety-Six, Camden, Charleston and Hillsboro.

c. Indian units may never enter the forts at Charleston or Savannah.

d. Only Indian units can destroy COMMERCE counters. A COMMERCE counter is destroyed if an Indian unit begins a turn in the same hex providing no American units are in the hex.

e. If all four COMMERCE counters are destroyed, the Victory Conditions are changed as follows: the American player must control Ninety-Six, Camden, Charleston, Hillsboro, and either Savannah or Augusta; the game is a British victory otherwise.

7. Entrenchments: All units of both sides begin the game entrenched.

INTRODUCTORY LITTLE ROUND TOP

A Simple Variant for AH's Newest Civil War Game
By David G. Martin

Dr. Martin originally drafted this piece with the intention of it being printed in OSG's now defunct gaming magazine. As an introduction to the LRT system, it serves admirably to bring novice gamers quickly to a competent level of play. Dr. Martin's credentials for such are impeccable— being one of the designers of LITTLE ROUND TOP and co-author of the recently released Regimental Strengths at Gettysburg.

"Introductory Little Round Top" (ILRT) serves as an introduction to Avalon Hill's *LITTLE ROUND TOP* by presenting the basic concepts of the game's command system in a short, enjoyable format. This scenario uses fewer rules, pieces and turns than the full game, and can be played in less than an hour. Once players become familiar with the scenario's basic system, it is an easy step to add the more detailed command rules along with the rules for fatigue, ammunition, bayonets, flags and volley fire which make *LRT* such a rich recreation of the crucial moments of the battle.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

CONFEDERATE PLAYER TURN (Note that in ILRT the Confederate player moves first, while in *LRT* the Union player moves first.)

A. Command Phase

1. Rally. Each disorganized unit may rally on a die roll of "6" (see *LRT 12.2*).

2. Replacement of Officer Casualties (see *LRT 4.5*).

3. Command Radius Check. Check to see that all units are within the required command radius of their officers (note *LRT 4.12*: the command radius is the number in the lower right corner of the officer counter). Mark "out-of-command" units with a chit for reference during the Movement Phase.

B. Movement Phase

Note that all activities in this phase (rally, movement, initiation of melee) require the expenditure of "command points". The number of command points (CP) available to each officer is printed in the lower left corner of the officer counter. This is the maximum number of points he may expend each turn (there is no command bonus as in *LRT 4.2*). CPs may not be "saved" for use in another turn, nor may any officer give points to units not under his command. See the "ILRT Command Point Cost Chart" for a listing of exact command point expenditures for each activity.

1. Rally. All disorganized units that were not rallied by a die in the Command Phase may now be rallied if they are adjacent to, or stacked with, their commanding officer. The cost is five command points per unit (*LRT 12.21*: this form of rallying occurs during the Command Phase in *LRT*).

2. Movement. Each unit which was determined to be "in command" during the Command Phase, may now move up to a maximum of five hexes. Each hex moved costs that unit's officer a portion of his command points, depending upon the ter-

rain: the usual cost is three CPs per hex, but rocky hexes demand five CPs. It requires an additional one CP per hex to cross a stone wall, rock or fence hexside, or to change levels (two CPs in a rocky hex). Units which plan to *melee* (engage in hand-to-hand combat) must declare their intention to do so (at a cost of four CPs) after they have moved adjacent to an enemy unit (*LRT 11.0*).

Note that, for purposes of this introductory game, all units will be in line formation only. There is no charge for change of facing, moving backwards or change of stacking order. All other basic rules governing movement in *LRT* are still in force: *5.0 Movement, 7.0 Facing, 8.0 Stacking, 9.0 Zone of Control.*

Out-of-command units may move one hex only, and may not initiate combat.

C. Fire Combat Phase

First determine the range to the target; note that units may fire one or two hexes at full strength, three hexes at half-strength (fractions rounded down), with no fire permitted beyond three hexes. Add up the total number of strength points firing at each enemy hex, and consult the proper column of the "Fire Combat Results Table" (*10.4*). Note that the actual column used may change depending on the position of the target hex (see *LRT 10.5*; volley fire is not permitted in ILRT). Each unit may fire only once per player turn, and each target may only be fired on once (with the exception of withdrawal fire, *LRT 9.1*). Unlike *LRT*, there are no restrictions on

combining fire of different units on one target. All firing is done through a unit's three frontal hexsides (*LRT 7.0, 10.0*). *During this phase the defending (non-phasing) player fires all his units first; then the phasing player conducts his fire combat.* This rule realistically gives the tactical advantage to the defender.

D. Melee Phase

All units which declared an intention to melee may now carry out their attack. Put all attacking units (no more than two, plus a leader) on the defending hex, compute the strength of both sides, and consult the "Melee Combat Results Table" (*LRT 11.6*; for full melee rules, see *LRT 11.0*). Out-of-command units may not melee.

UNION PLAYER TURN

When the Confederate player has completed all four phases, it becomes the Union player's part of the turn. The Union player now becomes the phasing player and conducts each phase (as outlined A-D above). When he is finished, the turn is over, and the Confederate player begins a new turn. (NOTE: the Union player is permitted only one phase, *C. Fire Combat Phase*, during his first game turn. This allows the Confederate player one turn to maneuver "in secret" with no Union reaction.)

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The scenario is eight turns long (remember that the Union player has an abbreviated first turn). After the conclusion of the eighth game turn, each player totals the number of victory points he has earned. The Confederate player wins if he has more points than the Union player; the Union player wins if he has an equal or greater number of points than his opponent.

Victory points are awarded as follows:

1 VP for each enemy strengthpoint eliminated

1 VP for each enemy officer casualty

2 VP to the Union player for each victory hex he controls at the end of the game

5 VP to the Confederate player for each victory hex he controls at the end of the game

The four "victory hexes" are each marked with a red Maltese cross, the badge of the division of the Fifth Corps to which the 20th Maine and 83rd Pennsylvania belonged (see *LRT 18.2* for rules governing control of victory hexes).

SETTING UP THE SCENARIO

Union Units	Company	Hex
20th Maine	A	0808
	C	0910
	D	0807
	E	0706
	H	0809
	K	0707
	Chamberlain	0808
Confederate Units	Company	Hex
4th Alabama	A	0208
	B	0209
	C	0210
	Scruggs	0209

Reinforcements

Turn 1, Hex 0816: 15th Alabama, Companies A-B-C-D-E and Oates.

SPECIAL ILRT RULES and LRT RULES NOT IN EFFECT

Since ILRT is designed as an introduction to *LRT*, several of the latter's more complex rules will not be in force. In addition, several *LRT* rules are modified for ease of play. The following is a summary of these.

LRT Rule Change in ILRT

4.2	no command bonus
6.2	no column formation
8.0	no cost to change order of stacking
8.31	both units in a stack may fire freely
10.1	no restrictions on multiple unit fire
10.23	no "carbines" (actually breechleaders) present in ILRT
10.3	no volley fire
11.4	no use of bayonets
15.0	no ammunition rules
16.0	no fatigue rules
17.0	no flags used in ILRT
19.0	the only movement restriction is that the Union player is permitted one phase in his first turn

The following special rules are in effect for "out-of-command" units:

1) may attempt to rally by die roll in the Command Phase

2) may move only one hex per turn

3) may not initiate melee

4) may conduct fire combat normally

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ILRT Command Point Cost Chart
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	Infantry	
Activity	Company	Officer
move one hex	3	1
move one hex and change level	4	1
move into rocky hex	5	2
move into rocky hex and change level	6	2
cross stone wall, rock or fence hexside	+1	+0
initiate melee	4	0
rally	5	n.a.

Those with questions on *LRT* or ILRT are encouraged to contact Dr. David Martin by writing to P.O. Box 1102, Hightstown, NJ 08520. Correspondants are reminded to enclose a SASE if a reply is expected.

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proposal to set up and take down (as opposed to other games we could all name). Furthermore, games are often over by 1910, play of which normally takes five to six hours: not at all impossible on a weekend evening.

Gathering players could present a problem if you live in the Yukon. Elsewhere, so many thousands of people have bought the game that it is increasingly easy to find fellow players (even the closet ones). Local and regional mini-conventions are becoming frequent (recent sites include New York, Chicago, San Diego, Anaheim and St. Louis). This movement toward organized weekend gatherings is expected to spread.

Another help in finding fellow players are the player directories. Last year saw the revival of the national *Diplomacy Hobby Census* and the publication of the *California Black and Blue Book*. We are hoping to see other state and regional player directories. Likely areas to publish these in the near future will be the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest. If you are interested in this whole matter of regional directories, write to Larry Peery (P.O. Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102). Mr. Peery spearheaded the production of the *Black and Blue Book* in California and is now laboring to coordinate similar efforts nationwide. If you reside in Canada, contact the Canadian Diplomacy Organization (c/o Ron Brown, RR 1, Low, Quebec J0X 2C0).

Finally, *the* way to play the international game of intrigue is by mail. Hundreds across the globe do. There are numerous small publications devoted to this aspect; pick one up and browse through its pages. If you are interested in getting involved in postal *DIPLOMACY* and are not sure where to begin, try *Diplomacy World*, one of the oldest and most established, full of information for the expert and casual player, as well as news of the hobby worldwide.

This, briefly, is the state of *DIPLOMACY* twenty-five years after the game was first marketed. As the game heads into its second quarter-century, thousands of dedicated fans stand ready to stab each other at the first opportunity. A large body of literature exists and is constantly expanding. New opportunities are being created for people to meet and play the game. Hundreds of amateur "variant" versions of the game exist. In short, *DIPLOMACY* is not just a game, but the foundation of a healthy hobby. There are perhaps only a dozen truly great games; *DIPLOMACY* is one of them. Try it; if you don't like it, we can always send you to New Guinea.

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Rod Walker is the editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD and author of Avalon Hill's THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY. DIPLOMACY WORLD is a quarterly publication featuring articles on the game, hobby news, ratings, a demonstration game and numerous other tidbits. It has been the central DIPLOMACY hobby publication since its founding in 1974. Subscriptions are $6.00 per year; a sample issue, $2.00. Order by contacting Mr. Walker, 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024. Rod also edits a monthly publication, PONTEVEDRIA, which lists postal Gamemasters who have openings for play-by-mail DIPLOMACY. To obtain a copy at any time, merely dispatch a request to Mr. Walker along with a self-addressed and stamped envelope. THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY is available for $4.50 plus usual handling fees from the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214.

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Squad Leader Clinic

A QUIZ ON BASIC INFANTRY TACTICS
ANSWERS AND DISCUSSION, PART I

By Bill Nightingale

There were 98 responses to the *SQUAD LEADER* quiz (Vol. 18, No. 1). Not everyone answered all the questions posed, but a substantial majority of the people responding provided comments and extensive analyses of the situations. Not all of their excellent commentary could be used: partly because these would have been repetitive, but primarily due to space considerations. In this issue we will examine the scoring and commentary on Questions 1-5, and postpone discussion of the remainder until the next issue.

I appreciate the response the quiz generated. In selecting comments to include, I strived to bring forth the differing points of view on each situation. Panelist commentary is shown in quotes; their name and hometown in italics. In some cases, I've taken the liberty of editing and paraphrasing their words.

1. THE FORCE AT I7 "Do you agree that the units at I7 (less one LMG) should Prep Fire as a group?" (See Diagram 1.)

ANSWERS	SCORE	VOTES
Yes—Target Hex H3	100	64
Yes—Target Hex M5	80	23
No	60	8
Yes—Target Hex J2	40	1

There were two responses to this question indicating a target in G4 which were not included in the above because of blocked LOS. This question was taken from a Series Replay that appeared in the *GENERAL* (Vol. 15, No. 1). On turn 1, the German player elected to prep fire at M5 while the Neutral Commentator argued for H3. With better than 60% of the votes favoring such, H3 is the clear winner. There arose, in the commentary, some criticism regarding the initial German setup. *Scott Zahm, Bethlehem PA*, in voting for M5, asked why the third LMG was not used and questioned the placement of building F5 units in two stacks rather than all in F6. Discussing these points in more detail were several others.

Dave Quigley, Rolla MO: "The Russian opening moves and setup are fairly cut and dried. The German setup is what bothers me. Placing German forces in G6 is a waste of manpower because the odds heavily favor their breaking or elimination. Any units placed in this hex will suffer 16 firepower factors (FPF) at a +1 terrain modifier from G4. This will cause a morale check 83% of the time with a 72% chance of a -1 MC or worse. Subsequent fire from F3 gives another 28% chance for a morale check. In the diagram shown [Figure 1], the German player needlessly lost the firepower of two LMGs for not noting this. Furthermore, I don't

understand the placement of a squad in K4. Its placement there doesn't cover any approaches and only allows itself to be shot at more often. A better setup would include three 4-6-7s, two LMGs and a 9-1 leader in F6. The same setup would be in J4, except the 8-0 leader should be in J5. The rest of the setup should be as shown in the diagrams, assuming the broken squad and 8-1 leader in building M7 originally started off in L6. The defensive fire should include I7 shooting at J2 along with J4 (16 FPF at +1 DRM followed by 16 FPF at +3 DRM). This will tend to neutralize the MMG. Hexes L6, M7 and M9 should all fire at H5 to get as many double broken squads as possible."

C.D. Reeve of Tewautin Australia wrote "The key to the German position is also their weakest and most exposed one, building J4, which is underled and exposed to fire from three sides. It is also needed to keep the Guards at bay by enfilading the D5-H4 street, as the Germans in F6 cannot afford to expose themselves to the withering firepower of the Guards and *must* stay in F6." After stating the reasons for firing at H3, he went on to say that he would consider advancing the I7 group to H6 so they could then move into building F5 and "save the LMGs in G6 (where they shouldn't have been sited originally—too exposed to the Guards) and cover G6 and H5 if the Russians make a dash across the street."

There were other comments about those two machine guns, being needlessly lost; however, most of the panelists either agreed with the placement or decided not to comment on it. I will agree with Dave on one point: if you are going to hide the German units in F6, then you had best put all three squads and the LMGs in J4 and pray for lousy Russian dice rolls. In my opinion, the F6 placement puts too much pressure on the units in building K5. The Series Replay had a squad and LMGs in H5 which I moved closer in for this question. My own preference would be to place a squad and LMG in both G6 and H5, but I can hear the screams now about that idiotic German who risks losing so many units to the Guards. But think about it. With all of the German units in F6, the Russian player can concentrate his attacks on J4 in order to open up the street for his advance. Granted that his first turn fire is at long range; but, after that, the pressure will mount. With the G6/H5 placement however, he can only fire Berki and squads at one of the hexes and get the 8 column (+3 DRM) on the other. Hopefully this will buy a turn (which is very important in Scenario 1).

Regarding the question of adding that third LMG to I7's fire, what is the point? Even if it is included, you will still fire on the 16 column, and if a 12 is thrown you have three malfunctioning MGs instead of two. Attempting to make use of all 18 FPF is *Craig Roth of Hanover Park IL*: "Most efficient use of strength and the Infantry Fire Table indicates splitting this group into two parts. First a six factor attack on H3, then a twelve factor attack on M5 (with leader modifier)." Likewise *Fred Ornstein, Boca Raton FL*: "I believe I would get more mileage by splitting fire. (A) 3 squads plus 9-2 vs H3, 12/0; (B) 3 LMGs vs J2, 6/+3. The difference between the 12 and 16 columns is only an added 3/36 or 8%. Gain is 6/36 or 17% chance of hitting J2." In theory, both of these panelists are right; by splitting the fire of the I7 group, they have a greater probability of at least causing a morale check on one of the two hexes. On the other side of the ledger, there is a reduced chance of getting a KIA result and eliminating the whole stack, with the six FPF attack having no chance whatsoever. In practice, I would prefer to fire at one target since, if I am lucky enough to cause a morale check on the small attack, that same result would be excellent on a 16 FPF attack. The other players who answered "No" are more concerned about reinforcing building F5.

Tim Brown of Dallastown PA: "I disagree with this plan of action because during the first German move, I feel there should be two objectives: establishing a firebase and reinforcing building F5. The reasoning for the first is that, when the terrain effects modifier is zero or positive, a single large attack is more effective than several smaller attacks. A single attack of 24 factors with a +3 modifier is 27% more effective than three separate attacks of eight factors each with a +3 modifier, and just as effective as three separate attacks of 12 factors with +3 modifier! To accomplish this, a location must be chosen. I tend to use building I7 for this purpose. It has the best German leader, is easily strengthened by moving the HMG and a squad from building M9, already has a good number of LMGs, and is centrally located within LOS of every major stone building on the mapboard. The second objective is needed to slow the Guards advance. Every turn the Guards spend in F5 is one less turn they can spend taking new buildings. The second objective is accomplished by removing the extra squad (because of the transferred HMG and squad) from I7 and sending it across at G7. The MGs should not be taken, since these would eventually be captured by the Guards. The purpose of reinforcing is to slow—not stop—the Guards, unless a full commitment—such as the entire I7 garrison—is to be

risked. Relating this to the question, only as many units in I7 as are needed to pin the units in M5 should prep fire so that the rest can cross at G7 to reinforce building F5."

Giving battle to slow the Guards' takeover of F5 is a worthwhile objective, but it might be better to use the entire I7 force to pin M5 and then advance into the street. Going further than the others in this reinforcement effort is *Robert Moesinger of Ogden UT* who wrote "the forces in I7 should move immediately to reinforce F5. Specifically, one squad from F6 should go to G6 to make room for one squad and two LMGs from I7 moving through H7 into G7 and advancing into F6. The remainder of the forces in I7 should be moving to G6. This eventually gives you 34 factors, ten penetrating and all at normal range, supported by two leaders against 72 factors (none penetrating), and 36 at long range supported by one leader. This may seem to be an advantage for the Russians, but they will have considerable difficulty rallying squads while yours should rally on the second Rally Phase after breaking. This, coupled with supporting fire from J4, will more often than not hold back the Guards long enough for a German victory."

I assume that the units moving from I7 to G6 would also go through H7, but even then the Russian squads in M5 will have a 6(-2) FPF shot at all three squads as they cross the street at G7. This has a 30/36 chance of causing a morale check, but of greater concern is the 10/36 probability of a KIA and there goes the ballgame. Even bolder is *Tim Garafola of Hammond LA* who suggests moving two squads, two LMGs and the leader through H6 to H5. I have a sneaking admiration for this but don't think I would have the guts to face the 12(-2) attack from M5/N5. Incidentally, even though this attack is almost certain to cause a MC, the chance of a KIA result is no greater than a six FPF attack on the IFT.

Felix D'Albor III of Plaquemine LA did a fine job of summarizing the situation and makes a point regarding that lonely squad in K4: "The answer is yes; the reason is simple: by prep firing as a group, they get all the benefit of the German's most effective counter on the board, the 9-2 leader. Directing fire, it is almost as effective as having eight additional firepower factors. Quite a dude these 9-2

leaders. The German player should prep fire as many units as possible to try and eliminate or at least break Russian units before they can weaken German positions with their own fire in preparation for the inevitable assault. As to what hex to fire at: the choice is limited to three, namely H3, J2 and M5. Whenever given a choice of target hexes, I always ask myself the question of which group threatens my position the most. The answer is H3. These Soviet units not only threaten an assault on building F5, they can DF at full strength on the Germans in J4. This is the only position protecting the street between the Russians and building F5, and must be protected to delay the fall of not only that building but to hold their own position. It could be said the Russians in M5 are a large threat too. These threaten assault on the building K5 and can DF at the German firebase in I7. Loss of the units in I7 would mean loss of the game. However, by utilizing the Germans in L6, M7 and, if you want assurance, K4 the German player can probably neutralize M5. Actually, the lone squad in K4 could be used in a number of ways. Besides the before mentioned, it could bolster the fire from J4 at the MMG in J2 an extra column or fire at the broken squad in N4. There is small chance of success here, but such fire would keep them under the effects of desperation morale."

The choice of H3 as the target hex was based on one or more of three considerations: 1) protecting the J4 position; 2) diverting Col. Berki to rallying squads rather than directing the attack; 3) the +2 DRM for the wooden building as opposed to the +3 for the stone ones. The second choice of the panel was to prep fire at M5. These players were evidently willing to accept the added DRM for what they believed to be more important factors:

Larry Shelton, Holloman NM: "Yes—against target hex M5. (Would anyone seriously consider breaking up the only decent fire group the Germans have?) The I7 boys have only three targets: H3, J2 and M5. Hex H3 is the obvious choice due to the lesser building modifier and the psychological threat of the three Guards. Hex J2 lacks an assault force and is therefore a nuisance rather than a threat. Which brings us to M5. Since German casualties are lighter than I would expect (K5 still intact), the German has the luxury of diverting the

I7 bunch away from their typical tasks against the Guards. Favorable results against M5 will significantly reduce harassment on the German flank. The possibility of a second favorable result by K7 could open up the building for a German assault. I believe this is the only realistic assault possibility for the German anyway. Finally, if there were no favorable results, would it make any difference which of the three hexes was fired on? Certainly not for H3 or J2 as the Russian player is unlikely to cease the activity of his Guards or their supporting fire. But the attack on M5 has the possibility of threat to multiple Russian stacks there as long as I7 remains intact. If the Russian is Guards oriented, he will reduce the exposure of M5 units and thereby his return fire.''

This is an excellent analysis and a strong case made for firing on M5; but does the German player have the luxury of diverting fire away from the Guards? Once they are into H5 or J5, the I7 force is in normal range and will probably fall soon thereafter. Some players thought that the biggest threat was to building M7 and, as a result, used the I7 force to help in the defense of that position. *Carl McGlone of Grayson KY* wrote: "I favor firing at M5 based not on numbers alone, but on winning. I feel that for the Germans to win, they must take a building, not just hold. Their best chance is M5. By firing at M5 from I7 and firegrouping L6 and M7 at N5, an assault may be mounted this turn or next. I also favor not firing M9 and moving them up to M7 as soon as possible. At M9 they have only one hex—N5—on the board that they can fire at. Remember, the victory conditions say occupy two more stone buildings than they [the Russians] lose of their own. In this scenario, F5 will fall, and probably J4 and I7 as well. But if N4 is taken by the Germans, M2 can also be taken—thus giving the Germans a victory.''

The major problem with this strategy of trading buildings with the Russians is the possibility of heavy casualties. Remember, your opponent can also win by having a favorable 3:1 ratio of unbroken squads. This is not an easy scenario for the German player to win; to increase casualties by going over onto the offensive is playing into the enemy's hands. *Timothy Gist, USAF, Augsburg Germany* pointed out the numerical and morale inferority of the M5 units as compared to Berki's Guards as the prime reason for selecting M5 as a target hex. He continued, "in a way this is an offensive action on the German right, while holding a static front on the left." But, with I7 diverted, how static is the left going to remain?

Only one player selected J2 as his target, but made no comment. I have promoted this answer considerably: first, because it is in line with the general concensus of the panel to fire all 16 factors at one target hex; and secondly, it has some merits on its own. Hex J2 contains the second best Russian leader and their only MG. If the leader and squad can be eliminated, or at least neutralized, the German player will have greater flexibility on subsequent turns and a threat to J4 is removed. I think this answer should have received more consideration than it did.

2. A QUESTION OF TIMING "Do you agree with the decision not to Prep Fire any of the Russian units in the buildings R1 and Q3?" (Diagram 2.)

ANSWERS	SCORE	VOTES
Yes	100	55
No—Prep Fire R1* only; or Q3/Q4 only	80	3
No—Prep Fire R1*, Q3/Q4	70	14
No—Prep Fire R1/S1, Q3/Q4	60	9
No—Prep Fire R1*, S1, Q3/Q4	60	8
No—All Other Fire Groups	50	7

I hope that the above scoring is understandable. The R1* designation means a fire group with all three squads, the 9-1 leader and two LMGs; Q3/Q4

is a fire group comprising all six squads in both hexes. There are a couple of exceptions to this: included in the "R1*, S1, Q3/Q4" tally were two votes for firing only two squads in S1; in "R1/S1, Q3/Q4" there was a vote for firing only two squads in S1 in the fire group. The "All Other Fire Groups" category had one or two votes for each possible combination of fire groups; these were combined for simplicity. The question also requested target hexes, but that would have complicated the scoring beyond belief. The targets favored, primarily T2 and U2, will be obvious from the following discussion.

A majority of the panelists voted to hold their fire, with the rest disagreeing to varying degrees. Obviously, the views on Question 2 and Question 3 were linked in the minds of the panel; in my opinion however, the decision as to whether to fire in the prep or advancing phase is independent of the squad movement. Let us assume that all Russian units fire in one phase or the other and that dice rolls would be the same for either. If the result has no effect, the only difference is that your opponent has a choice if you have prep fired. He can uncover and get two shots off before you have a chance to fire again. If the result is to eliminate or break all the enemy units, this too makes no difference. But if the result is to remove the concealment counters and the German units pass their morale checks, your opponent will now be able to fire twice if you prep fired but only once if you had waited. By holding off, you virtually force your opponent to waste his Defensive Fire Phase. *W.J. Bird of Winnipeg Manitoba*: "I generally like to prep fire big fat stacks in situations like this to expose and/or break as many concealed units as possible, with an eye toward reinforcement of the Factory. (Pessimistic perhaps, but often necessary.) This move does force a decision on the German's part—and forcing your opponent to do things sometime reaps benefits.''

The other possibility is to prep fire some units and wait with others. Some of the panelists had this in mind, allowing for the possibility of firing after the German Defensive Fire Phase at any positions that are opened up, assuming the non-fired units last that long. However, the situation statement did indicate that the Russian player intended to move the three squads out into the streets and many of the players based their answer on that. In my opinion, that movement is an even stronger reason not to prep fire.

Louis Ransdell, Indianapolis IN: "Prep Fire R1* at U2 and fire Q3/Q4 at U3. Holding your fire until the Advancing Fire Phase is a desirable tactic when dealing with concealment, but to do so in this situation is ill-advised. To begin with, the move into the street is not wise and, even if it worked, it would leave such a small garrison in S1 that their fire into U2 at 16 (+2 DRM) would be tolerable. Note R1 and S1 are fired separately (R1 first) so as not to waste the leader modifier.'' Prep fire at 8(+2) is even more tolerable, but I agree that R1 and S1 should be fired separately. If these are combined into a single fire group, you not only lose the leader modifier but also any help from the LMGs, though they could be fired separately, with the leader benefit.

Tom Vallejos of San Leandro CA writes, "Prep Fire S1/R1 at U2 and Q3/Q4 at T2. My general policy is *never* pass up a Prep Fire Phase, particularly when you have to move through a concealed unit's LOS. Any success in the Prep Fire Phase could be capitalized on by units that didn't fire at this point (i.e.: units in P3).'' Tom is probably right in not firing the MGs, because against concealed units, even with the leader benefit, there is only a 3/36 chance of causing a morale check against a 6/36 possibility of having the MGs malfunction. If they were to be used, the target

would have to be T2 since the squads firing are shooting at U2. Of course, if the fire from Q3/Q4 is able to remove the concealment counter at T2, then the LMGs with the leader would have a 6/36 chance of causing a morale check, but their fire must be pre-designated.

The question of how much time the Russian player has to break through the German screen was debated by our panel, with *Doug Long of Lewisburg PA* advising us to "Prep Fire Q3/Q4 at T2, S1/R1 at U2. The Russians have a lot of time to reach the Tractor Works (the sooner the better, but better late than never), so why not soften up the German defenses a bit before jumping into the open.'' On the other side were many who stated or implied an urgency to reinforce the Tractor Works. Several players elected to prep fire all units except those in S1 and voiced objections to the diagramed squad movement. *Mark Springer of Cedar Rapids IA* wrote "there is substantial firepower available even with area fire to chance breaking the German squads in T2 and U2 to allow the squads in S1 to close combat or to add to the fire after seeing the results of the previous fire. I don't think three squads for bait just to remove enemy units from concealment is a very good idea.'' *Mark Bakke of McVille ND* was more colorful in expressing his views: " . . . piles of Russian bodies may provide ideal cover for the Advancing Phase movement, but point blank fire and a –2 DRM without even mussing the German's hair''; " . . . the commander who ordered this should be strapped to the treads of a T-34.''

For those players who elected to prep fire, the issue was what fire groups to form and which targets to fire at. Every player who responded had his own views, and each made a strong case for his.

Jim Doran of Virginia Beach VA: "R1/S1 at T2; Q3 at U3. By attempting to break all targeted units, I'm anticipating some fluid movement by my rear squads. If the MCs fall as hoped for, I'd advance the three squads from Q4 into S4 via T3; the squads from P5 into Q7. The only defensive fire directed at my advancing units would be from T4 and, depending on the German fire results (and the previous MCs), I'd hope to use the Advance Phase to enter T4 and R7.'' Jim also listed Prep Fire for Q6 at S5 and P7/P8 at R7.

David DePaw, Magnolia NJ: "Q3/Q4 at S5. By doing this, the Russian player does obtain certain positive things: First, if he is able to obtain a morale check, albeit only a 42% chance, by this attack, in the Advancing Fire Phase he will be able to bring 18 firepower factors to bear on the same hex from Q5 and Q6. Second, there is a pressing need to determine the location and strength of the German deployment in buildings U3, T4, R7 and T7. Although the argument would be presented that the odds are not sufficient and the mass of fire that could be brought to bear is greater if the Russian waited until the Advancing Fire Phase, I am persuaded that the essential need is to break the German ring around the Tractor Works and reinforce that key building before the engineer units get going. Finally, if the attack fails, I think little would be lost (except time). The full brunt of the Russian attack will soon be felt in the Defensive Fire Phase of the German turn, and it is unlikely the German will drop his concealment status to try a very questionable attack against Russian units in stone buildings.''

To wind this discussion up, let us hear from the few who voted to hold their fire:

Brian Swisher—Burbank CA: "At first glance I felt the answer should be a decisive NO! On further reflection however, I realized that any Russian prep fire would be halved due to area fire on concealed units, and might even be wasted on dummies. Sending the suicide squads out puts the Germans in a double bind. If he defensive fires on them (probably

wiping them out), he reveals his position. If he leaves them alone, Russians peek through the windows and start counting Germans."

Ray Settle, Fallston MD wrote, "Yes, the sacrifice of three squads to break the concealment of U2 and T2 is worth it in order to mass the firepower necessary to weaken T2, the crucial hex here—a true Russian tactic. Pecking away with area fire attacks would be safe but unproductive. It took me several playings with this scenario before these tactics became apparent; before that, those units just sat there bouncing bullets off the stone walls. If U2 and T2 are neutralized, the Russian has a clear corridor of advance into building U3, and from there into the Tractor Factory."

Carl McGlone wrote, "I agree. Concealment counters are removed at the end of any Defensive Fire or Advance Phase, so the Germans will be forced to reveal any units in U2 and T2 by firing. If there are units in T2, they will face a 24 (+3) attack from Q3/Q4, and a 16 (+2) from R1. Units in U2 would face the 16 (+2) attack. German units would also face advancing fire and CC from the squads which survive. I would go so far as to move one squad from Q3 to S4 and one from Q4 to R4, revealing units in T4 and S5. These are both safe from the HMG in Y7. The units in P3 could go one each to Q3, Q4 and Q5. This would still leave 20 FPF in Q3/Q4. Time is of the essence in this scenario. The Tractor Works must be reached with no time lost; if it costs some squads, so be it. I often put Maj. Kirkov, the HMG and a couple of squads in W4 to unconceal on the first turn and open fire. The German engineers cannot be kept out and swift reinforcement is the only hope."

As Carl pointed out, there are other movements that can be made to open up the German positions. Indeed, most of the panelists were more concerned about the squad movement. So, let's get on to that subject.

3. BREAKING CONCEALMENT "Do you agree with the movement made by the S1 squads?" (Diagram 2)

ANSWERS	SCORE	VOTES
Yes	100	45
No, but with 3 squads moving	90	12
No, 2 squads moving	80	16
No, 1 squad into street	70	10
No, all hold in S1	60	7
No, 1 squad to T0	60	6

Even though the votes in favor of the movement as shown in the diagram did not quite represent the majority opinion, that answer should receive the top score. If the responses favoring a different movement of the squads are added to it, then the majority wanted to risk all three S1 squads in order to break concealment. Because of the wide variety of answers from those moving one or more squads to the street (a total of fifteen different actions), I have summarized them. The most frequent movement by those who disagreed but sent out three squads was to S2, T1 and V1. For panelists moving but two out: S2 and U1. Players wanting to risk only one squad were unanimous in picking T1. The two answers chosen by conservative players are shown in the scoring; I couldn't decide which should get the higher score, so I compromised by giving them both 60.

In this scenario, the Russian player's tactics must be directed towards breaking through the German screen in order to reinforce the Tractor Works. How much risk should he take considering the time available? If the results of this question are any indication, SL players are willing to risk quite a bit. The shortest route is the north road and this is also the only way that is not interdicted by the LOF of the HMG in Y7. The key hex here is U2, with T2 being a close second. In this connection, the following commentary is instructive.

Neil Bonner Jr. of Coral Gables FL: "One squad to T1. This is where decisions get tricky. If one squad moves from S1 to T1, the only possible German squads that can fire on it would be the ones in T2 and U2. If they choose not to fire (extremely foolish), they would both lose concealment status at the end of their DFP. The Germans' best bet would then be to fire from hex U2, thereby killing or breaking the T1 squad. During the Advance Phase, the Russian player can then shift a squad from S1 to either S2 or T1, thereby forcing the removal of the concealment status of hex S2. The table below is a comparison of the most likely forces to be found under the concealment counter in hex U2 and their chances in percent of eliminating or breaking the squads in S2 and T1. (If you do not like the idea of the Russian squad in U1 running free, the squad in V2 could take a crack at it.)

PROBABLE FORCES IN HEX U2

Target Hex	(2) 4-4-7 MMG	(2) 4-4-7 LMG	9-2 4-4-7 MMG	9-2 4-4-7 LMG	8-1 4-4-7 MMG	8-1 4-4-7 LMG
T1	68	68	93	87	89	83
S2	68	60	72	61	60	51
T1 & S2	46	41	67	53	53	42

What this table attempts to prove is that, taken together, there is a better than even chance that both squads fired upon will be either eliminated or broken. Which means, for an investment of two squads (possibly three), there is no guarantee that the concealment counters will be removed from hex T2. Further, when you consider that the squads (?) in T4 could also fire on S2, the chances that the squad in S2 will be around at the end of the DFP is minimal. So, in the final comparison, the one squad to T1 achieves the same result—most of the time—as moving the S1 squads to S2, T1 and U1. The move presented in the problem proves to be a high risk, little gain move."

I think it is almost certain that either T2 or U2 will contain three unit counters, but I doubt whether both will as this would concentrate 40% of the German screen in two hexes. I haven't fully checked out the percentages in Mr. Bonner's table, but they appear reasonable and emphasize the risk

taken by the Russian player in moving his squads out. Addressing the possibility of fire being directed at S2 from T4 and at U1 from V2, most discarded that threat from their considerations. *Gary Hartman, Wilmington DE* wrote, "Yes, the movement was good. Aside from the German units at T2 and U2, the only other units able to take shots at the charging Russians are those in T4 and V2. If the German were to fire these, he would open himself up to possible fire from the Factory itself, and this would effectively cut the back out of his already desperate position."

Using concealment counters in the initial setup creates a game of bluff and counter-bluff. For those who studied the diagram carefully, there are nine of these counters showing out of a total of twelve. Where are the other three? From what is known, certain deductions can be made—as is pointed out by one of our conservative panelists: *Louis Ransdell.* "No. Move one squad to T0 which can then advance into U1 as developments dictate. To move as indicated is extremely reckless. The intent of the move is to expose the units in T2 and U2 to fire in the Advancing Fire Phase which is not halved due to concealment and/or engage those units in close combat. There are numerous faults to this tactic: . . . there must be at least three real pieces in those hexes which means a minimum 12 (-3) FP with penetration for an adjacent hex. The likely result of this move is three KIAs with only U2 revealed and too little force left in R1 to reduce the U2 garrison, much less assault the building. Thus ends the assault on the northern flank where the Russians have their best chance." I agree there will be three or more real pieces in T2 and U2, probably four or five. There were a number of players who argued that U2 would most likely be the only hex revealed, but disagreed on how many squads should move into the street.

Many panelists, given the above considerations, felt two units would serve as well as three. *Larry Shelton* wrote, "One squad remains at S1, other squads move to S2 and T1. I assume the player I relieved was trying to expose T2 and U2 to unhalved fire by sacrificing three units to the German fire.

Only two units need be. The astute German player will fire U2 on S2 and T1 to protect T2. This means that the German would ignore U1, as U2 is already revealed by defensive fire. The German is very likely to be successful in defending the concealment status of T2, thereby forcing Q3 and Q4 to fire anyway. Why expose three squads when two will do? (Yes, I know T4 can fire at S2 but I doubt it would happen—that's a longer story)." One that I would like to hear some future day.

Still in all, many of the panelists charged in with all three squads. *Tony Notaro of Los Angeles CA*, "this is the only way of lifting the concealment counters of T2 and U2 before the Advancing Fire Phase." *Jeff Cebula, Downers Grove IL*, "Even if all three squads are eliminated, the German will have revealed himself and will be subject to massive advancing fire, not only from the units in R1, but from the fire group Q3/Q4/Q5/Q6." Considering whether to send out two or three squads is *J.M. Collier of Lexington KY*: "One might make do with just two squads at T1 and U1; but with a third squad at S2, the group at T4 will probably have to fire to keep units in T2 free of melee." Making a good point about not stacking the Russian units is *Bob Safin of Greyling MI*, "by dispersing the squads, they are less vulnerable to German defensive fire and will draw fire from more hexes, thus removing concealed status, and will be in a better position to advance into close combat." And for the pessimistic outlook, *Martin Hubley of Halifax, Nova Scotia* wrote, "I agree with the move even though it is a frontal assault which will probably take heavy losses unless the German player is extremely unlucky, because it is imperative to break through these German forces and reach the area of the Tractor Works."

A number of players wanted to go even further and try to expose all of the hexes in building U3, even though they were not very sure of success. *Bob Glenn—Glennwood, IA*: "Destination hexes T1, V1, T3. Although the squads probably will not reach V1 or T3 in good order, if they are successful, building U3 will be completely uncovered—as well as hex T4. Only the unit in T3 would be able to rout safely." Going into this in more detail, *Robert Moesinger* said, "the Russians have minimal concealment breaking opportunities. They could do almost as well leaving two squads in S1 to advance fire. By moving those two squads to U1 and S2, they have tripled their casualties while only marginally increasing the chances of revealing U2 and T2. A much better recon job could be accomplished by moving to V1 and T3 respectively. This gives them the chance to look into V2, U3 and T4 as well. Chances are that they will get blown away by U2 and T2, but if one misses the extra information could be invaluable. And just the chance that he might miss may cause the German player to predesignate an additional fire group to fire on T3, most likely S5 or T4. Furthermore, Advance Phase opportunities are enhanced—V2 and T4!"

Others concentrated the attack against one hex rather than send squads all over the place. *Jay Hatton, White Oak TX* wrote, "Destination hexes T1, U1, V1. The Russian has no idea what he will be coming up against once he enters those building hexes occupied by his German enemies. Therefore, he should concentrate on first getting a strong foothold in the building and use it as a base for further attacks. So, instead of entering the buildings piecemeal at several points, the Russian should send his squads against one hex. From T1, U1 and V1 an assault on U2 could be accomplished without bunching up his forces in the face of heavy defensive fire at point blank range."

As several panelists pointed out, there is another objective. If the moving units survive, they can advance into close combat and possibly tie up the German units so that the building at U3 can be taken or neutralized. Players who wanted to move

3

out two squads suggested a number of possibilities, with the most popular action being to send them to U1 and S2. *Fred Ornstein*: "I believe that moving only two squads would be effective enough to flush out the German position. I would leave one squad in S1 and not move into T1. A MG in U2 could penetrate into T1 and T0 (woods) with same fire. A MG at T2 could penetrate T1 and U1. No reason to give the German this opportunity."

A sizable number of our panelists did elect to move only one squad. *Dave Depew*: "T1 and two remain in S1. The purpose of the move is obviously to force the Germans to break concealment. However, the costs could be tremendous; there is a good chance all three squads could be killed by the defensive fire of the units forced to break concealment. By placing a unit in T1 only, the Russian can almost achieve the same goal. Although only one hex would break concealment with my alternative, the fire that could subsequently be directed at the hex by the Russians has been increased by eight factors. Even with 27 infantry units, the Russian cannot afford to needlessly waste them in this scenario."

And from the real "conservatives": *C.D. Reeve* writes, "I disagree with moving into the open in this fashion . . . There is little chance that the Germans will break cover to fire on a squad in T0, so the same fire will take place as per #2 and the same advance." In answering the second question, Mr. Reeve prep fired all of his units except one squad in S1 and then moved the S1 and T0 squads adjacent to building U3 during the Advance Phase. Also advocating this tactic is *James Barta of Medford OR*. "One squad from S1 to T0. All units (save one) fire at buildings R7, T4 and U3. During the Advance Phase, make a general advance on the enemy with one squad per hex only."

The players who wanted all three squads to remain in S1 evidently believed there to be plenty of time to break through the German screen. They were also consistent, with each having chosen to prep fire these in Question 2 of this quiz. *Robert Kaliski of Green Island NY* acts as spokesman: "Leave them in S1. Throwing the squads at the Germans with doubled firepower and a -2 DRM will simply net casualties with little chance of engaging in close combat. Without information on what is in the buildings, it would be stupid to give up good cover and three squads in order to find out what the Germans have in the building. After prep firing and revealing the counters, the Russian has a better idea of what his chances are in a dash across the street."

I think this question has been instructive and so considerable space has been taken to include a wide range of comments. The Russian player usually has an abundance of squads; but with less range, fewer leaders and a shortage of support weapons, he cannot slug it out with his opponent and must rely on maneuver and aggressive tactics, particularly against concealed enemy positions.

4. MELEE IN THE FACTORY WORKS

"Do you agree that the 8-3-8 squads with their support weapons and the 10-2 leader should advance to X4?" (Diagram 3)

ANSWERS	SCORE	VOTES
Yes, 3:1 and 2:1 (-2) (Note A)	100	32
Yes, 2:1 (-2) (Note B)	90	18
Yes, 3:2 (-2) and 1:1 (Note C)	80	5
No	70	30
Yes, 3:1 (-2) and 2:1 (Note D)	60	3
Yes, 2:1 (-2) and 2:1 (Note E)	50	6
Yes, All Other Attacks (Note F)	30	1

Note A: 8-3-8, two LMGs vs 4-4-7 and 8-3-8 with leader vs 4-4-7
Note B: two 8-3-8s with leader vs two 4-4-7
Note C: 8-3-8, two LMGs with leader vs two 4-4-7s and 8-3-8 vs two 4-4-7s
Note D: 8-3-8, two LMGs with leader vs 4-4-7 and 8-3-8 vs 4-4-7
Note E: 8-3-8 with leader vs 4-4-7 and 8-3-8 vs 4-4-7
Note F: A single attack against one 4-4-7

In a few instances the 10-2 leader was not mentioned in the answer or comments of a panelist. The question probably should have stated the need to assign the leader to one of the attacks and so I have assumed that the leader would be applied to the attack which would give that person the highest score based on the attacks he listed. There were some answers which had the LMGs attacking separate from the squads. This cannot be done and I placed them with the close combat assault which gave the highest score.

The scoring may raise some eyebrows so I had best explain. Even though the votes for not advancing into close combat were almost equal to the top ranked answer, the weight of opinion was to attack—about two-thirds electing to do so. For this reason, I have promoted the high probability attacks over the "No" answer. On the other side of the coin, many who did choose to advance into X4 had doubts about the wisdom of their decision.

Tim Brown: "2 to 1 (-2). This is a difficult choice for the German player. On one side is the extreme danger of the move. The Russians will be able to prep fire with 16 factors and a 9-2 leader. In addition there is the possibility of there being a HMG, LMG and a couple of squads in the adjacent hexes giving another 36 factor attack. The Russian could also win the ensuing close combat, eliminating one or more of the German 8-3-8s. On the other side, if the situation in building U3 is any indication, the German is hard-pressed to take the Factory and reinforce Kampfgruppe Stahler. I would choose to advance into X4. The close combat odds are favorable, needing only a 9 or less. It affords a chance to kill some fanatics where their morale bonus doesn't help them and capture one of the Russians' valuable support weapons."

The reference to the situation in building U3 illuminates one of the problems in posing questions, particularly when one or more turns have preceded the turn in which the question is set. What has gone on before is important in making a determination of the best action to take. Stressing this point is *Brian Swisher*. After explaining his vote to attack at 3:1 and 2:1 (-2), he said, "The main problem with this particular question is that I have not been playing the scenario from the start and so have no idea how many of the Russian squads have been accounted for. I know that there are a minimum of six that have been revealed (three unbroken, one broken and two formerly manning the LMGs), but I could be wrong." If quizzes of this nature are done again, the situation statement will need to be more all encompassing.

Tim Brown went ahead and advanced in spite of the risks involved, but what did those who declined to do so have to say? Essentially they were worried about the firepower that can be massed against X4 if the engineers win the close combat or, if they don't, of being locked in melee.

Rick Pennington of South Zanesville OH: "No. I feel that there are too many things that can go wrong. First, they could become locked in melee (bad), or the Russians could even kill some Ger-

mans in Close Combat (worse). Secondly, they will end up with Russians on three sides firing point blank during the turn after they win the close combat. The Russians might be able to bring 36 (+3) FPF to bear, which could be harmful or even fatal. With proper pressure brought to bear by the Germans against hexes W5, X4 and Y4, these hexes should soon be captured without resorting to such a risky attack. I would leave group C where it is and move two infantry squads from AA4 into Z4. The engineer with the FT can stay in AA4 and cover Y3 and Y4. Group A moves into X5, and B would advance into building X7 to cover W5."

How long can the German wait before starting to clear the hexes by close combat? Many of those answering in the negative believed there is time to stay in the smoke and trade shots with the Russians. *Jeff Cebula* wrote, "The German force in Y5 should stay there under cover of smoke. Advancing into close combat would be risky. Even if they came out of the close combat without a scratch, they'd be sitting adjacent to who knows how many fanatical Russians—at point blank range—and no smoke. If they stayed in Y5, I would reinforce the hex with a squad and HMG from Y6." *Philip Lowmaster of Las Cruces NM* adds, "Sit in the smoke and trade shots until more squads can be brought into the Tractor Works. It's only turn two and, judging by the contents of building U3, Russian reinforcements are not coming for a while. The 8-3-8 in Y6 should advance into Y5. This will reduce the chance of the Germans losing the toehold he has in the Tractor Works. The HMG in the street should be in Y7."

Many panelists mentioned the misplacement of the HMG, and they are correct. In fact, stacks A and B should be switched, but we are not all perfect either in play or in designing questions. Other players wanting to trade shots in the belief there is no hurry to move forward included: *Sal De Rosa of Ocean City MD,* who wrote, "with a 10-2 leader and two 8-3-8s, the German can do more damage just in prep fire and defensive fire"; and *Michael Fullerton of Montpelier VT,* "too soon for close combat—too much Russian prep fire next turn. Save your DC."

How much time is there; a total of eight turns and this is the second. Considering the Factory Works in isolation, there is probably plenty of time to clear it; but what about the reinforcements moving into it? Unfortunately, where they are is not shown. However, the German screen can hold out just so long and there is a high probability that additional Russian squads will soon be entering. Many panelists thought that time was of the essence and were willing to take risks accordingly.

J.M. Collier: "3-1 and 2-1 (−2). Tough choice but this is a difficult and risky scenario. The only other option would be to wait and see if the Russian will counterattack and thus take the greater risk. But in view of the time and victory conditions, a bold advance is probably best. The Russian fire next turn will be fatal for some in any case." This is an excellent comment and in my opinion represents the essence of the game situation; that is, to act and not sit back and wait to see what might happen. When entering into close combat, a player has to decide how his attacks should be allocated.

David DePew: "3 to 1 and 2 to 1 (−2). Although the German is leaping into a veritable cauldron by moving into X4, the problem is inevitable. By so doing—that is advancing—the German preempts some potential damage from point blank fire from X4 in the ensuing Russian Prep Fire Phase. The reason I split my attack up was primarily a personal quirk. I dislike putting everything into one dice roll if the odds are not substantially better. By massing, the best chance the German has is 2 to 1 (−2) which is fine (83%). But by dividing my attacks, I get one roll with 72% odds and a second with the same 83% chance."

The popular answer for this question is to make a pair of attacks, each against one squad. One of the reasons for selecting this attack combination mentioned by *Jim Schneider of Leavenworth KS:* "3:1 and 2:1 (−2). Attacking in one combined attack wastes the LMGs in odds computations." But, by wasting the LMGs with the single 2 to 1, you will have a greater chance of eliminating both enemy squads. One of the advantages to the split attack is the problem you may give to the Russian player if a unit survives. Will he prep fire into X4 and risk eliminating his own squad? There is a way of almost making sure (97%) of getting one enemy squad and leaving the other, and that is by switching the leader to the 3 to 1 attack. *W.R MacArthur, Chatham Ontario* wrote, "3/1 (−2) and 2/1. Attacks listed give best odds of not coming up short (i.e. no Russian units killed). A gambler would attack both units in one shot. In this case, it would help to know how many Russian units have been eliminated already. Also, stack A should move to X5." It is all one big gamble, particularly when there are concealment counters or hidden units involved.

Finally, a comment on the situation itself from *Nayyer Ali of Long Beach CA:* "No. I did not like this question for two reasons. The first is, I felt that the situation you portrayed is highly unlikely and I would rate both the Russian and German players as mediocre at best. The Russian setup is faulty. The key to the Tractor Works is X4; that's where Kirkov should be. In any case, whatever hex Kirkov is in there should also be the 50 Cal. at minimum (another MMG would be nice), plus three squads. Wasting a −2 DRM on only a MMG and two squads is criminal negligence. The German attack is also faulty. When the Germans do make their move into the Tractor Works, Grery should be leading. In addition, at least two, and hopefully three, major hexes in the Works should be attacked. A FT firing from a smoke-filled hex in the Advancing Fire Phase is a most effective weapon. When the Germans attack the Works, they should try to overload the defenders—they should never attack piecemeal. My second reason is that the move in question really boils down to luck. Will the Germans blow their CC dice roll? Will the Russians make theirs? Is there a HMG in W4 or W5? What effect will the Russian prep fire have? What effect will the German defensive fire have? I answered no on this question because I think the Germans can clear out the Tractor Works without gambling on a move like this one."

The only quarrel I have with this critique is the statement that the situation is highly unlikely. Many problems arise in play because a player or his opponent has made a tactical error or luck has entered in to create a less than perfect situation. In my opinion, to be a consistent winner, a player must be able to overcome his own mistakes and take advantage of his opponent's.

5. TURN AROUND "As the German player, designate the target hex or hexes for the Defensive Fire of the 4-6-7 and the HMG at M9." (See Diagram 4.)

ANSWERS	SCORE	VOTES
4-6-7, HMG, 8-1 at O8	100	87
All Other Answers	80	9

This question turned out a dud because of the lop-sided vote and a poorly constructed diagram. There should have been an 8-0 leader in P7 and the red arrows should not have been there. In retrospect, I also think the two LMGs should have been with the squads in P8. Because of these mistakes, I have given a score of 80 to all of the miscellaneous answers that are a legal action. Several players said, and I'm sure many thought, "What's the problem?" *Ken Craig of Santa Ana CA,* "Seems to me the only logical thing to do"; *Craig Budreau, Austin TX,* "Isn't this a little obvious?"; and *Larry Shelton,* "Does the German really have a choice?"

Those who selected O8 as the target hex had little to say. Several justified it as protecting the rally capability in L7. *Frank Weir, Jr. of Kelley IA* said, "Fire on L7 [by the enemy] is undesirable; besides the Russians will stay broken if you do break them." *Joseph Becker—APO NY* commented, "By firing at the fire base in O8, I have a little less than a 50% chance of breaking those squads using the −1 leader benefit on a wooden building. Also, it gives the 8-1 in the building M7 a chance to bring his people back to their senses in time for an assault." In my opinion, protection of L7 as a rally point is the most important reason for selecting O8 as target. Summarizing, *Dana Linfield of Corner Brook, Newfoundland:* "All fire at O8. Protection must be given to rally point L7 or else building M7 will crumble. Also there is no enemy leader to rally broken units from O8 and the best odds are against the wooden building." So firing on O8 is the clear winner. What of other choices?

Neil Bonner, Jr.: "HMG (−1) at target hex O8, 4-6-7 at target hex N5. The three squads and two LMGs in O8 deserve the most attention since they are the largest fire group in the area, and they are the least protected. Since the squads in N5 pose a greater threat to the units in M9 than do those in P5, it would be well to direct some fire at them."

Timothy Gist: "4-6-7 at O8 and HMG (−1) at P8. Building P5 is out of range for the Russian and is less of a threat than N5, O8 and P8; but the German needn't feel outnumbered—L6 can split fire and hope for success in M5 and N5, or concentrate fire on N5. So by using the squad against O8, and the HMG against P8, the German stands the same chance of a break in both places. That's my answer, although I would have to strongly consider concentrating fire on O8."

Robert Kaliski: "HMG (−1) at O8 and 4-6-7 at P8. This question and the diagram with it seem unclear. If the three squads in P8 stay where they are, I would defensive fire the German 4-6-7 at P8 and the HMG with leader modifier at O8. If the squads in P8 have moved out of LOS, then the 4-6-7 fire will be at P5."

Robert hit the nail on the head—the question and diagram are unclear. However, it is the German Defensive Fire Phase and so Russian movement has already occurred. They will be able to move in the Advance Phase of course, but fire can be directed at them in the meantime. So much for a poorly constructed situation. My intent was to offer a choice between splitting or concentrating fire from M9 and, if the latter, to see what target would be selected—O8, P8 or possibly N5 or P5. If the arrows hadn't been there and the LMGs were spotted in P8, that hex might have received more attention.

To be continued in the next issue.

LITTLE ROUND TOP

Errata: 20.2

4th Alabama: all companies and officers of this regiment set up in any hex west of the 0600 hex column and south of the 0800 hex row, exclusive.

GUNSLINGER

Suggestion: The game plays more quickly if the players seat themselves in order (see rule 3.3) and use the TIME TRACK printed on card #1.

Q. If I control several characters, do they all keep their places in the order of play?
A. No. Your lowest-numbered character defines where all of your characters fall in the order of play (see the OPPOSING FORCES section on p. 24 of the rulebook), even after he is killed. *Example:* If you have the first and seventh characters, each is a first character. *Comment:* This rule exists solely to simplify play. Players who are familiar with the game can agree to have the characters keep their places in the order of play.

Q. Exactly what is the sequence of doing an action?
A. On one segment the player reveals the action. After waiting the number of segments indicated by the action's time number, he does the action; at the end of that segment he reveals his next action and states how he will do that one (on some future segment). A player *never* does an action on the same segment he reveals it.

Q. Do I reveal my first action on segment 0 if I have delay points?

THE QUESTION BOX

A. Yes. Opponents see you start the action—the delay just delays when you complete it.

Q. The action cards and SUMMARY OF ACTIONS disagree about some action times. Which is right?
A. The action cards are right.

Q. Does Result card 74 cause a LEG hit or a HEAD hit?
A. A LEG hit. Change the Target Status reference from "HEAD" to "LEG".

Q. When a character passes out or is killed, is his body counter removed?
A. No. It stays on the map and characters draw delay cards for entering its hex.

Q. Can a character hide behind someone else's body counter?
A. No.

Q. Does the Kid really get two B2 cards?
A. Yes.

Q. Does a double-action gun get –1 to aim time when it is cocked?
A. Yes. Double action guns could only half-cock, so trigger pull still affected them.

Q. Can I start or end a jump in a hex that is half on a roof and half empty space?
A. Yes—treat roof half-hexes as full roof hexes.

Q. In hunting mode, do I get *Move* Target Status for turning or putting my head out or back?
A. Yes, since the corresponding action would give you *Move* Target Status.

Q. What is the penalty for falling half an elevation?
A. The penalty for falling is STUN 1 per half-elevation you fall.

Q. Using optional rule 2, I jump from roof to roof. Do I specify my route while in mid-air, as I reveal ADVANCE and RUN?
A. No. When jumping, you should specify your whole route (for the rest of the turn) when you reveal the jump.

Q. In which showdowns are horses set up two hexes from their owners?
A. Showdowns 4, 8 and 18.

Q. Do you draw two delay cards when you move from hex to hex on the same horse?
A. Yes.

Q. How much damage is inflicted by a movable obstacle that falls from a higher elevation?
A. Each half-elevation adds STUN 1 to the penalty it inflicts, if it hits.

Q. Can a body counter be picked up like a movable obstacle and used as a weapon?
A. No.

Q. Can you go *under* a horse, wagon, table, etc.?
A. Yes, if you are DOWN.

Q. How do horses move during hunting play?
A. A mounted character must specify when his horse is moving. Horses can WALK (advance, back up, turn or sidle on segment 3) or TROT (advance on segments 3 and 5). The entire route must be specified when the activity is revealed; horses never use the paths.

Q. Where is the Stagecoach illustration referred to in optional rule 4.5?
A. Oops! Right here!

Corrections to showdowns:
Showdown 9: GAME LENGTH is 30 turns (not 20).
Showdown 12: Board "CC" is "C" in the MAP diagram.
Showdown 22: Ignore SPECIAL RULE 2.

READER BUYER'S GUIDE

TITLE: GUNSLINGER $20.00
SUBJECT: Man-to-Man Combat in the Old West

Reaction to this most detailed boardgame yet published on the topic among purchasers has been extremely favorable—as can be seen by its ranking of sixth on the current RBG Chart. With but a single exception, its ratings in the individual categories were below average, in some instances markedly so. Overall, the buyers view it as a realistic and exciting, quick-playing game whose sole flaw lies in its complex rules.

The Physical Quality (2.25) is readily evident. The colorful and innovative Mapboards (1.71) have drawn much praise; only those of *COD* are rated better on our poll. In comparison with other titles, the Components (2.18) of *GUNSLINGER* are impressively simple, functionally beautiful.

While the Completeness of Rules (2.61) was lauded by those responding, the Ease of Understanding (3.07) rating is not unexpected. Reflecting the general trend toward more complex games of tactical orientation, only two of the top ten games on the RBG Chart have below average ratings in this category. *GUNSLINGER*, in this respect, certainly compares favorably with these. It is not a game for the first-time wargamer. This issue should go far in helping novices grasp some of the fundamentals of play, while bringing ever increasing realism (and hence complexity) for the old hands.

The rating for Play Balance (2.50) is a difficult one to evaluate. Repeated play, a luxury many buyers have yet to experience, highlights the fact that, once the peculiar abilities and particular situations depicted in the scenarios are appreciated, the *Showdowns* are each finely balanced games of skill. Too, it is suspected that few of the respondents have yet to play the *Campaigns*, much less immerse themselves in the joys of the role-playing aspects of *GUNSLINGER*.

The rating for Realism (2.14) but confirms designer Richard Hamblen's mania for authenticity. And, as can be readily expected in a game on such a subject, the Excitement Level (2.03) is always high when the players go—figuratively —for their guns. As readers of the Series Replay soon realize from Mr. Hamblen's and the players' comments, the emotional and mental concentration demanded for fine play is intense. The Overall Value (2.50) is better than the mean—not surprising in light of the above.

Game Length averages, as may be expected in such a fast-paced simulation, a fraction over an hour—66 minutes. This will undoubtedly appeal to those looking for an evening's challenging relaxation. Note that this reflects the ratings for the shortest scenarios; the rating for the longest scenario possible was adjudged to require about three hours. Of course, this does not consider the *Campaign* nor role-playing versions.

COMING UP NEXT TIME

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. CIRCUS MAXIMUS	2.27	2.53	2.13	2.93	2.27	2.33	1.13	1.26	2.14	2.28	11.6
6. GSL	2.33	2.25	1.71	2.18	3.07	2.61	2.50	2.14	2.03	2.50	6.6
7. 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
8. ANZIO	2.36	2.11	1.74	1.94	3.74	2.88	2.62	2.00	2.09	2.15	21.7
9. BISMARCK	2.37	2.16	3.00	1.69	2.97	2.63	2.72	1.84	2.09	2.31	18.8
10. FLAT TOP	2.42	1.74	2.51	2.37	3.85	3.00	2.56	1.81	1.81	2.11	106.9
11. 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
12. FORTRESS EUROPA	2.44	2.21	3.29	2.57	2.50	2.64	2.43	2.35	1.93	2.34	44.1
13. PANZER LEADER	2.50	2.41	2.17	2.34	3.65	2.60	2.67	2.19	2.34	2.20	13.1
14. RICHTHOFEN'S	2.52	2.28	2.62	2.12	2.63	2.94	2.60	2.66	2.39	2.45	6.0
15. BATTLE OF BULGE '81	2.53	2.28	2.10	2.58	2.18	2.70	3.18	2.85	2.35	2.58	21.1
16. CAESAR—ALESIA	2.53	2.92	2.71	2.78	1.71	1.85	3.36	2.64	2.71	2.07	27.9
17. 1776	2.56	2.16	1.76	2.45	3.27	2.62	3.08	2.72	2.63	2.36	33.4
18. PANZERBLITZ	2.58	2.00	3.00	2.03	4.03	3.00	3.06	2.05	2.07	2.05	14.0
19. STORM OVER ARNHEM	2.59	2.51	2.93	2.24	2.59	2.55	2.97	2.93	2.34	2.24	17.9
20. KINGMAKER	2.60	2.26	2.84	2.34	2.83	3.07	1.86	3.65	2.14	2.41	20.2
21. DIPLOMACY	2.60	2.35	2.26	3.13	1.87	2.39	2.09	4.57	2.30	2.43	32.6
22. THIRD REICH '81	2.62	2.31	2.29	2.58	4.27	2.61	2.64	2.81	1.94	2.15	45.9
23. 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
24. SUBMARINE	2.65	2.58	3.48	2.42	2.90	2.87	2.55	2.38	2.22	2.47	12.1
25. STARSHIP TROOPERS	2.67	2.27	3.11	2.07	2.43	2.70	3.57	3.39	2.20	2.32	17.3
26. 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
27. CHANCELLORSVILLE	2.68	2.62	2.57	2.45	2.26	2.52	3.43	3.07	2.55	2.64	18.8
28. VICTORY—PACIFIC	2.70	2.47	2.36	1.85	2.21	2.79	3.38	3.91	1.94	2.53	18.0
29. DUNE	2.76	2.45	2.40	3.00	1.98	2.43	2.75	4.20	2.80	2.83	11.9
30. NAPOLEON	2.77	2.04	2.96	2.03	2.25	2.86	3.25	4.18	2.46	2.99	9.1
31. FRANCE 1940	2.82	1.75	2.05	1.85	3.30	3.25	4.05	3.00	3.40	2.75	16.0
32. The LONGEST DAY	2.83	2.23	2.60	2.40	3.20	3.53	3.30	2.28	2.80	3.15	171.
33. JUTLAND	2.83	2.84	—	2.39	3.27	3.06	3.24	2.53	2.61	2.67	29.7
34. LUFTWAFFE	2.87	2.41	2.91	2.04	2.86	3.02	3.73	3.41	2.82	2.64	24.2
35. MIDWAY	2.88	2.75	3.12	2.56	2.78	2.90	3.66	3.08	2.37	2.73	15.7
36. GLADIATOR	2.88	2.84	4.00	2.47	2.89	2.63	2.79	3.05	2.53	2.74	4.6
37. AFRIKA KORPS	2.90	3.04	3.10	2.92	2.12	2.29	3.39	3.57	2.91	2.77	13.5
38. FURY IN THE WEST	2.91	3.36	4.01	3.00	2.55	2.45	2.99	2.82	2.09	2.91	17.8
39. ALEXANDER	2.93	2.99	3.21	3.19	2.55	2.98	3.43	2.76	2.43	2.86	12.7
40. GUNS OF AUGUST	2.93	2.71	2.94	3.03	2.41	3.15	2.96	2.89	3.38	2.87	27.8
41. 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
42. WIZARD'S QUEST	3.03	2.63	2.21	3.25	2.62	2.60	2.25	5.13	3.42	3.21	13.2
43. CRETE—MALTA	3.04	2.80	3.10	3.00	3.03	3.05	3.43	3.18	2.76	3.05	18.8
44. GETTYSBURG '77	3.04	2.52	2.48	2.50	4.32	3.79	2.87	2.46	3.02	3.21	27.6
45. 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
46. BLITZKRIEG	3.09	3.39	3.28	3.30	3.14	2.89	2.25	3.67	2.81	3.05	24.0
47. TOBRUK	3.10	2.85	4.68	2.13	4.32	2.77	3.06	2.11	3.00	2.96	21.6
48. WATERLOO	3.18	3.29	3.67	3.11	2.01	3.11	3.27	4.32	3.21	3.01	16.2
49. 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
50. AIR FORCE	3.43	3.77	4.94	3.79	3.69	3.29	2.42	2.81	2.77	3.40	9.6
51. STALINGRAD	3.44	3.43	3.74	3.40	2.07	2.52	4.37	5.15	3.28	3.04	20.0
52. TACTICS II	3.51	3.43	4.30	3.59	1.45	2.18	2.32	5.57	4.59	4.20	11.6
53. MAGIC REALM	3.54	2.74	2.81	3.13	5.29	4.42	2.80	4.06	3.39	3.26	19.9
AVERAGE	2.76	2.59	2.84	2.55	2.81	2.74	2.93	3.09	2.57	2.65	21.1

It is difficult to judge whether the relatively good rating for Volume 19, Number 1 is due to its merits or merely reader reaction after the previous issue which so displeased so many. A number of respondents did condemn the amount of space allotted to study of *STORM OVER ARNHEM*, our featured game. Despite this, the top three rated articles all dealt with *SOA* and the issue overall garnered a cumulative rating of 3.19. Indeed, two of the articles dealing with other AH titles placed below even the AH Philosophy, perennial occupant of the bottom of the list. The ratings for the individual articles are as follows:

Jon Mishcon's series of tactical insights—the SQUAD LEADER CLINIC—dominated the polling of readers' favorites of the past volume year. The SL CLINIC, found in the second, third, fourth and fifth issues of Volume 18, has thus won the coveted Editor's Choice Award (and the equally coveted $100 bonus and lifetime subscription to the *GENERAL* the award confers). Closest competitor for the honor was David Hablanian with THE SPANISH GAMBIT (Vol. 18, No. 5). The full list of nominees with their percentage of the final tally appears below.

Playtesters are now being sought for a simple card game simulating infantry combat in WWII. Playing time is roughly one hour to ninety minutes. Playability is emphasized over realism. Testers will be expected to play and report the results of at least ten games in each of a dozen scenarios over a three month period starting in November. Each tester selected must have access to willing opponents and handle all correspondence reports between the group and the game developer. Compensation is in the form of AH merchandise dispensed at the discretion of the developer. Requests for positions should list age, previous experience, time and playing partners available, and should be phrased in such a manner as to foster confidence in the applicant's qualifications. We regret that we can answer only those applicants we select to take part in the playtest.

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Matt Kovachevich, who lost his battle with leukemia in mid-August. Matt was an eager and valuable participant in the *G.I.* playtest and received a dedication in that game in recognition of his attributes as a gamer and uphill struggle with his health. He will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

Infiltrator's Report

The American Wargaming Association (AWA), a non-profit national wargaming club, has embarked upon an ambitious project: compilation of a nationwide directory of wargaming clubs. This directory, upon publication, will be made available for a minimal charge and will list each club in the United States, its membership, interests and activities, as well as mailing address. To commence this AWA Survey, the officers of wargaming clubs across the nation are being asked to submit a report on their respective organizations to Mr. Stuart Smart, AWA Membership Secretary, 8841 Lock Berlin Road, Lyons, NY 14489. Alternately, they could contact the nearest AWA Regional Director:

Bill Salvatore, 2841 Summerfield Road, Falls Church, VA 22042

Robert Goddard, 3350 Peck, Muskegon, MI 49444

Gary Lange, 1026 West 3rd Street, Ottumwa, IA 52501

Rich Buda, 3753 West 80th Place, Chicago, IL 60652

Nick Schuessler, 1002 Warrington Drive, Austin, TX 78753

Kevin Slimak, 2861 West Avenue J-4, Lancaster, CA 93534

Gary DeFoer, Brown Road, Oxford, MA 01540

The editors urge officers of the many clubs devoted to the hobby to aid the AWA in its effort. When the directory appears, it should prove a valuable aid for the many gamers who seek mature, competent opponents as well as proving a boon to the industry as a whole.

We have been informed that the *Second National Boardgame Championship* is commencing. The tournament is co-sponsored by the American Gamers Association and the National Wargamers Association. Spanning a two year period, the tournament consists of two phases: a round robin (approximately 14 months of play) and a final elimination round (of ten months duration). A number of Avalon Hill titles are among those to be played. For those interested in testing their skills against the best in the nation, or those who desire more specific information, it is recommended that they contact either Mr. David C. Hughes at 9500 South Heights #61, Little Rock, AR 72209, or Mr. George Phillies at 1225 Island Drive #204, Ann Arbor, MI 48105.

A personal copy of the new *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* was inadvertently left at Origins '82 in the area of that tournament. In the gamebox was a copy of the Fort Greely, Alaska, "Buffalo" newsletter. While the game can be replaced, it is not. It is asked that the newsletter be returned to the Avalon Hill offices, care of The *GENERAL*, should it be located. The game itself need not be returned.

From the numerous entries, only seven solved Contest #107. The contest was carefully contrived to weed the true aficionados from the novices. These seven winners were: Bruce Degi, Colorado Springs, CO; Ray Freeman, Raleigh, NC; Michael Gibson, Los Angeles, CA; Dennis Goldston, Colorado Springs, CO; Jeffery Rubin, Pawcatuck, CT; Michael Vilbert, Colorado Springs, CO; and Joe Weyeneth, Danbury NE. Since all other entries received contained an error, only these seven will receive AH credit vouchers.

Before the solution to Contest 108 can be discussed, certain minor topographical matters on the small map must be clarified. First: 101/501 is listed at L19, but is shown at I19—the obvious position is I19, since three German units occupy L19. Second: Lehr/902 is listed at P15, but shown in the diagram at P16—it really does not matter whether the unit begins in P15 or P16. Third: Artillery group 333 Final Protective Fire is purposely not indicated—the FPF obviously goes to assist 101/501 on I19. It would be a tactical mistake to assign the FPF to 101/502, on L16, because the German player could easily cancel it by advancing adjacent to 333rd after a high odds attack versus 101/501.

There are four sets of 20PM combat results that will significantly increase the probability that the Germans will exit mechanized units at A21 by the 22AM turn.

SET ONE: Trap 101/502 at L16 and eliminate the two southernmost airborne units at I19 and F22. This will permit the Germans to capture A21 on the 21AM turn, because only the artillery unit will be available for defense near Givet. Lone artillery units attacked at 6-1 odds are automatically eliminated with the attackers advancing four hexes.

SET TWO: Trap 101/502 at L16, eliminate one of the two southernmost airborne units at I19 or F22 and cut the Ciney-09 road with a blitz attack. These results will prevent the Allied armor from moving south and the Allies will be forced to hold Givet or Dinant with the artillery unit.

SET THREE: Advance four in a high odds attack against 82/325 at F22. This will prevent the Allies from holding Givet or C22 on 20PM and the Germans will be attacking A21 on the 21AM turn. The trapping of 101/502 at L16, the elimination of the airborne unit at I19 or the cutting of the Ciney-09 road will weaken the Allied position further.

SET FOUR: Advance three in a high odds attack against 82/325 at F22. This will keep the Allies out of C22, but the retreating airborne unit will be able to fortify Givet. Favorable results will also be needed in the north (i.e.: the trapping of 101/502, the elimination of the airborne at I19 or the cutting of the Ciney-09 road) to give the Germans a reasonable probability of success.

The combination of attacks with the highest probability of success does not include a high odds attack against the unit at F22. Therefore, the correct solution to Contest 108 includes a 4-1 blitzkrieg against 101/327 to cut the Ciney-09 road, a 3-1 surrounded to trap or eliminate 101/502, an 8-1 with −2 DRM to eliminate 101/501 and a 2-1 versus 82/325 hoping for an exchange. The probability of eventual capture and use of exit road A21 with these attacks is 804 successes in 1296 attempts. A 3-1 is not used against 82/325, because the chance of elimination would not increase. Instead, 1-2 attacks are attempted against 3/36 and 101/327 with the idea of tying down those units.

In addition to choosing the correct attacks, the optimum placement of certain units was important. Artillery group 766 fights adjacent the airborne unit at I19 in order to add defense strength to the weak nebelwerfers. Artillery group 406 fights adjacent to the airborne unit at I19 in order to prevent a 1-2 HOLD-AT-ALL-COSTS attack by the Allied artillery unit from the I18 woods hex. At least one artillery group was placed at bridge hex L21, where it could attack I19 and also protect the bridge. Nebelwerfer 8 was moved from M17 to L17 where it could disengage and move west if an Engaged result was rolled against 101/502. The two airborne units, 3/13 and 3/14, move to hex D26: from D26 they can reinforce attacks at Givet or infiltrate through the woods to hex A24 on the 21AM turn. The volksgrenadier moves to K24 to protect the bridge.

READER BUYER'S GUIDE

STRUGGLE OF NATIONS $20
Sophisticated Simulation of the 1813
Napoleonic Campaign

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate all categories by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate spaces to the right (1 equating excellent; 5-average; and 9-terrible). EXCEPTION: Rate item No. 10 in terms of minutes necessary to play game as recorded in 10-minute increments. EXAMPLE: If you've found that it takes two and a half hours to play FRANCE 1940, you would give it a GAME LENGTH rating of "15." For games with more than one version give two game length ratings; one for the shortest scenario and another following a slash mark "/" for the longest scenario or Campaign Game.

Participate in these reviews only if you are familiar with the game in question.

1. Physical Quality ____
2. Mapboard ____
3. Components ____
4. Ease of Understanding ____
5. Completeness of Rules ____
6. Play Balance ____
7. Realism ____
8. Excitement Level ____
9. Overall Value ____
10. Game Length ____/____

The review sheet may be cut out, photocopied, or merely drawn on a separate sheet of paper. Mail it to our 4517 Harford Road address with your contest entry or opponents wanted ad. Mark such correspondence to the attention of the R & D Department.

$1.00

Good for Postage Charges Only on Complete Game Purchases

This coupon is valid only for mail order purchases of complete games direct from Avalon Hill. Each postage coupon entitles the sender to deduct up to $1.00 from the postage charge for that order. Coupons are not usable for parts, magazines, or pbm kit orders.

Shipping charges are 10% of the dollar amount of your order if sent to a USA address. Shipping costs to Canada and Mexico are 20% of the order; overseas orders must add 30%. Any past GENERAL postage coupons previously offering different values may be used as the equal of this coupon.

Example: Customer A lives in the USA and orders a $15 game. His postage charge is $1.50 which he may pay by sending in 2 postage coupons and $15, or 1 postage coupon and $15.50. Customer B lives in Canada and orders the same game. He must pay $15 in USA funds plus 3 postage coupons or $15 plus $1 for each postage coupon less than 3 which he sends.

$1.00

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are seemingly always in vogue these days. Whether the subject is books on the Best Seller List, television's Nielsen ratings, or even games, the public never seems to tire of seeing how their individual favorites stack up numerically against the competition. Our preoccupation with this national pastime is almost akin to routing the home team on to victory every Sunday. So to further cater to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity) we unveil *THE GENERAL's* version of the gamer's TOP TEN.

We won't ask you to objectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or less) games which you've spent the most time with *since* you received your last issue of *THE GENERAL*. With this we can generate a consensus list of what's being *played* . . . not just what is being bought. The degree of correlation between the Best Selling Lists and the Most Played List should prove interesting.

Feel free to list any game regardless of manufacturer. There will be a built-in Avalon Hill bias to the survey because you all play Avalon Hill games to some extent but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other magazines with a special interest-based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's discretion.

The games I've spent the most time playing during the past two months are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Opponent Wanted   50¢

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

NAME_____ PHONE_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE____ ZIP_____

CONTEST 109

List the actions you will play for Turn 6, in the order you will play them.

1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

List the actions you will play for Turn 7, in the order you will play them for the various situations outlined on page 11 of this issue.

a) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

b) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

c) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

d) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

e) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

f) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

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

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TWO-HANDED WEAPONS
Wielding = 2, Trajectory = D4, Bracing = D2

Year	Code	Description	Impact		Loading	Cost
1800	BOW	Short bow	–	E	1 Side	12[1]
1816	K45c	Kentucky Rifle	45cb	B +	1 Muzz[2]	36
1822	U69c	U.S. Musket[3]	69cb	A	1 Muzz	24
1830	H50c	"Plains" (Hawken)	50cb	A	1 Muzz	36
1839	P36s	Paterson carbine	52cb	B	6 C&B	27
1846	SD58	Mississippi Rifle	58cb	A	1 Muzz	24
1855	SH50	Sharps rifle[4]	52	A	1 Side	32
	S52s	Sharps carbine[4]	52	B	1 Side	24
1856	P36s	Revolving carbine	44cb	C	10 C&B	36
1857	SD58	U.S. Rifled Musket	58cb	A	1 Muzz	20
1860	H44	Henry Rifle	44r	C	15 Tube	32
1863	SR56	Spencer carbine	56	B	7 Tube	24
1866	W44	Winchester '66[5]	44r	C	16 Side	32
	W44	'66 carbine[5]	44r	D	12 Side	24
	SD58	Trapdoor conversion	58	A	1 Side	20
1871	SH50	Sharps Big 50	50	A +	1 Side	40
1873	W44	Winchester '73[5]	44w	B	16 Side	36
	W44s	'73 carbine[5]	44w	C	12 Side	27
1876	W45	Winchester '76	45w	A +	16 Side	40
	TGT	Competition rifle[3]	44h	B	1	60[1]
1877	E44	Evans lever action	44	C	28 Side	36
1894	W30	Winchester '94	30h	D	16 Side	36
	W30	'94 carbine	30h	C	16 Side	27

Notes:
1. Cost remains the same regardless of time.
2. Also available in flintlock at half the price.
3. This gun has a bracing bonus of D3 (instead of D2).
4. These guns also represent the Remington rolling block rifle (1867) and carbine (1864).
5. When using the "W44" or "W44s" counters note whether the gun is a Winchester '66 or a Winchester '73 (the '73 has higher impact).

HANDGUNS
Wielding = 4, Trajectory = D3, Bracing = D2

Year	Code	Description	Impact		Loading	Cost
1816	M54c	Belt pistol	54cb	B +	1 Muzz	12 H
1825	D41d	Philadelphia derr.[1]	41	C	1 C&B	12 L
1836	P28c	Baby Paterson	28cb	E	5 C&B	8 L
	P31c	Paterson	31cb	E	5 C&B	12 M
1837	A36c	"Dragoon" pepperbox[1]	36cb	D	6 C&B	12 H
	A28c	"Dainty" pepperbox[1]	31cb	E	6 C&B	12 L
1838	P36c	Texas Paterson	36cb	D	5 C&B	14 M
1847	C45c	Dragoon	45cb	B +	6 C&B	16 H
1851	C36c	Navy	36cb	D	6 C&B	12 M
1856	L42c	Le Mat[2]	42cb	C	9 C&B	16 H
1860	S44c	Starr[3]	44cb	C	6 C&B	20 M
1861	SW32	"1½"	32s	E-	5 Open	10 L
1863	R22d	Pepperbox derringer[1]	22r	E-	4 Open	8 L
1866	R41d	Double derringer[1]	41	E	2[4] Open	8 L
1867	–	C&B conversions[5]	–	–	– Side	4 –
1870	SW44	"American"	44s	D	6 Open	12 H
1871	C41d	Clover Leaf[1]	41r	D	4 Side	8 L
1872	RU44	S&W "Russian"[6]	44u	C	6 Open	16 H
1873	C45	Peacemaker[7]	45	B	6 Side	16 H
	C44	Peacemaker[7]	44w	C	6 Side	14 M
	C41	Thunderer[8]	41	D	6 Side	10 M
	C38	Lightning[8]	38w	B	6 Side	10 M
	C32	Frontier[7]	32w	E	5 Side	8 L
1875	SW45	"Schofield"	45s	C	6 Open	16 H
1876	SW38	"Baby Russian"[9]	38s	E	5 Open	10 L
1881	MH44	Merwin/Hurlbert[1]	44w	C	6 Side	12 L

Notes:
1. This gun was very inaccurate, so double the final range when it fires. Also, the gun gains no benefit from being braced—the bracing rules do not apply to it.
2. In addition to its 9 ball cylinders, the Le Mat had a separate one-shot 20g shotgun barrel. When its owner announces he is shooting, he must specify if he is firing the shotgun. The shotgun fires a B5 pattern with a shotgun bonus of +3 (instead of +1 for a 10g shotgun). The shotgun loads and misfires like a cap and ball gun.
3. Double-action. This counter can also be used to represent the 1860 single-action Colt "Army", which is identical except it costs 4 Money less.
4. Double-barrelled: both shots can be fired together.
5. It costs 4 Money to convert any C&B handgun to "Side" loading (this money does *not* add to the gun's value if it is sold). The converted gun uses only handloaded or storebought shells, but it still uses the "Cap and Ball" line on MALFUNCTION cards.
6. Double-action available in 1882 (costs an extra 4 Money).
7. Double-action available in 1878 (costs an extra 4 Money).
8. Double-action available in 1877 (costs an extra 4 Money). The name listed properly belongs to the double-action model; the single-action model was simply the "Frontier".
9. Double-action available in 1880 (costs an extra 4 Money).

GUNSMITH'S TABLES

10-GAUGE SHOTGUNS
Wielding = 2, no bonus for trajectory or bracing

Year	Code	Description	Loading	Cost
1816	BL10	Blunderbuss	1 Flint	16
1816	R10	Percussion shotgun[1]	2[2] Muzz[3]	24
1867	Wh10	Whitney "Phoenix"[1]	1 Side	24
1874	R10	Remington[1]	2[2] Open	24
1887	W10	Lever-action[4]	5 Side	40

Notes:
1. This shotgun normally fires a B7 pattern. It costs 4 Money to saw off the barrel to convert it to a "sawed-off" shotgun with a B5 pattern and +1 to the shotgun bonus.
2. Double-barrelled: both shots can be fired together.
3. Also available in flintlock at half the price.
4. This shotgun has a "choke" that allows it to fire either a B7 pattern or a B5 pattern with +1 to the shotgun bonus). The owner notes which way the choke is currently set; it can start either way, and it takes one LOAD action to reset the choke during play.

KEY:

Year: The first year the weapon is available. If no year is listed, use the year listed on the previous line of the chart.

Code: The identifying code on the weapon counter. To reduce the counters needed, some counters represent a variety of different weapons. The players should note exactly which weapon each counter represents before the start of play.

Description: The name or description of the gun.

Impact: The IMPACT TABLE line that the gun uses, and the calibre of shell that fits it.

1. The capital letter identifies the IMPACT TABLE line that the gun uses: "A" is the SD58 (top) line of the IMPACT TABLE, "B" is the W44 line; "C" is the W44s line, "D" is the C41 line and "E" is the C32 line. A " + " beside the letter means that all permanent wounds on that line are increased by one; a "–" means all permanent wounds are decreased by one.

Example: When a C45c (Impact = B +) gets a GUN hit the SERIOUS and GUN ARM wounds listed in row B are increased to SERIOUS 2 and GUN ARM 5. Other penalties are not affected.

2. A shell can be loaded into a gun only if it exactly matches the gun's caliber: a 44W gun can hold only 44w shells, for example (not 44, 44cb, etc.). The small letter shows the shell model: "cb" for cap and ball, "w" for Winchester shells (.45-70, .44-40, etc.); "r" for rimfire; "s" for short (weak) Smith and Wesson shells; "u" for unusual Smith and Wesson "Russian" shells; "h" for special high-powered shells.

Loading: The number of shells the gun holds and its method of loading. The various methods of loading are summarized below:

C&B (cap and ball): LOAD three times to load one shell: one LOAD for the powder, one for the ball and one for the percussion cap. The gun must be in BOTH HANDS to load.

Muzz (muzzleloader): Like *C&B*, except the gun must be in OTHER HAND to load.

Flint (flintlock): Like *Muzz*, except a final fourth LOAD must be done with the gun in BOTH HANDS (to prime the lock).

Side (sidegate loader): One LOAD loads one shell.

Open (breakopen): One LOAD to open the gun and one to close it. While it is open, each LOAD loads up to five shells. The gun must be in BOTH HANDS to load.

Tube (tube magazine): Like *Open*, except once the gun is open one LOAD fully loads the gun (by inserting a tube magazine). The gun must be in BOTH HANDS to load.

Cost: The original cost of the gun and, for handguns, the weight of the handgun.

1. The number shows the Money cost of the gun when it first becomes available. This cost goes down after a certain number of years (except as noted on the chart).

a. Starting from its date of availability, a handgun spends ten years at its listed price, followed by twenty years at 75% of the listed price. Thirty years after its date of availability it drops to 50% of its listed price, where it stays.

b. Starting from its date of availability, a two-handed gun spends fifteen years at the listed price, followed by thirty years at 75% of the listed price. Forty-five years after its date of availability it drops to 50% of its listed price, where it stays.

2. On the HANDGUNS chart, the letter identifies the gun's weight for role-playing purposes: "H" = heavy, "M" = medium and "L" = light.

GUNSLINGER

Additional Counters

Front

Run 1	Run 1	Run 1	Run 1	Run 1
Run 1	Run 1	Run 1	Run 1	Run 1
TAC A	TAC A	TAC A	TAC A	TAC A
TAC C	TAC C	TAC C	TAC C	TAC C

BOW	BOW	BOW	BOW	L42c	WHIP	ROPE
W45 D4	W45 D4	E44 D3	W30 D5	W30s D3	WHIP TIP	LOOP
H50c D4	H50c D4	U69c D2	K45c D4	A28c	A28c	A36c
TOT D3	S52s D2	S52s D2	SR56 D2	M54c	M54c	W10 B7
Wh10 B7	BL10 B5	P31c	P36c	P36c	P36s D2	P28c
SW32	S44c	S44c	SW44	SW44	RU44	RU44
MH44	C38	C38	D41d	D41d	R22d	C41d
LANC	LANC					

GUNSLINGER

Additional Counters

Back

Run 2	Run 2	Run 2	Run 2	Run 2
Run 2	Run 2	Run 2	Run 2	Run 2
TAC B	TAC B	TAC B	TAC B	TAC B
TAC D	TAC D	TAC D	TAC D	TAC D

LASSO	HAND	L42c A	BOW D	BOW C	BOW B	BOW A
		W30s A	W30 A	E44 A	W45 B	W45 A
A36c A	A28c B	A28c A	K45c A	U69c A	H50c B	H50c A
W10 A	M54c B	M54c A	SR36 A	S52c B	S52s A	TOT A
P28c A	P36s A	P36c B	P36c A	P31c A	BL10 A	Wh10 A
RU44 B	RU44 A	SW44 B	SW44 A	S44c B	S44c A	SW32 A
C41d A	R22d A	D41d B	D41d A	C38 B	C38 A	MH44 A

microcomputer games®

Dear Microcomputer Games Enthusiast:

Here's your new Microcomputer Games Newsletter, so new in fact we suggest you wave it in front of your eyes a few times to make sure it actually has arrived and also that the ink has dried.

This will mark the last time we send one to you free of charge; all subsequent issues will cost you $1.25 each or an annual subscription will cost you a paltry $4.00 per year for this quarterly publication.

It has been "life in the fast lane" here ever since our first releases in June of 1980 and now that we have a line of 32 titles strong, we intend to slow down a bit and concentrate more on taking advantage of the unique capabilities of each individual microcomputer system we support.

July 26 was a big date for us because it signaled the beginning of the wargaming event of the year, ORIGINS '82. ORIGINS is actually the name for the national "adventure gaming" convention which was held this year at the University of Maryland in Baltimore County, next year's show will be held at Cobo Hall in Detroit. Although founded as a convention for board wargaming, the computer gaming part has grown substantially and surely will continue. We released our six new software games; ANDROMEDA CONQUEST, V.C., G.F.S. SORCERESS, MOON PATROL, TELENGARD and LEGIONNAIRE. There is more information about these games within this mailing.

Without further adieu, please read on and find out what our staff has in store for you.

Ogie Pincikowski
Editor

Two ARCADE PAK games for the VIC-20

SHOOTOUT AT THE O.K. GALAXY and TANK ARCADE in cassette form are now ready for the Commodore VIC-20 personal computer. These two games require 8K and 5K respectively. These are hand-eye coordination games and a departure from our strategy oriented releases. Still, they provide hours of enjoyment and challenge.

Chris Crawford's Newest Masterpiece

The man who makes the Atari personal computer sing, Chris Crawford has completed his newest wargame, *LEGIONNAIRE*. It is available only from Avalon Hill and is appearing now at leading computer stores everywhere.

LEGIONNAIRE is a real time wargame simulation of tactical combat in Ancient Caesar's time. You as Caesar command up to ten legions against up to sixteen barbarian hordes, 8 fighting as infantry and 8 as cavalry. There is nearly 25 square feet of full color mapboard stored within the computer's memory that scrolls (ala Crawford) with complete animation. The computer controls the barbarians in this solitaire contest where factors of shock effects, fatigue, morale and even slope effects have been programmed into this elegant game design.

If your favorite computer game dealer fails to have *LEGIONNAIRE* . . . ask him why not! You can order direct from Avalon Hill using our toll-free number (1/800/638-9292, ask for Operator P). This number is for credit card ordering only. You can order by mail by sending your check or money order. The 16K Atari cassette is available for $35.00, the 32K Atari 800 diskette is yours for $40.00. *Be sure to include an additional 10% for postage and handling whenever ordering direct from us.*

The Apple II 48K diskette version will be available before Christmas for $40.00. This Apple version will utilize a revolutionary scrolling technique created by Avalon Hill's Apple II designer and programmer, David Kuijt.

Math for Space War Games

by Winchell Chung

Many budding young programmers are daunted by the seeming complexity of trigonometry, cartesian co-ordinates, rectangular to polar conversion, and other fun stuff. Unfortunately, any halfway decent space-war game demands such mathematical monsters. But all is not lost. As it turns out, the actual equations are not that bad. As long as you don't care **how** it works, you too can use the methods of higher math.

If it helps, the following formulas may be visualized as "black boxes". That is, as long as you know what to shovel in, and as long as the right answer comes out, one could care less about what's inside. Many of these very same formulas are used in some Avalon Hill computer games.

All games need maps. The most common way of stashing a map in the computer's memory is in a two-dimensional array. This is how the original "Star Trek" program laid out its quadrants and sectors. Simply define a character array in two dimensions (like: G$(100,100)). The first number is the column,

the second is the row (In technical jargon, the column is called the "X co-ordinate" and the row is the "Y co-ordinate"). Randomly insert a few asterisks for stars, and voila! Instant galaxy.

Ships and other objects are other characters. To move them, print a blank in the array where they currently are, and print their symbol where they moved to.

Aha! First problem: how far is far? Say your dreadnaut is at 34,81; do you have enough energy to jump to 77,19? You have to know how far it is from one point to the next.

Put the ship's starting column in x1 and destination column in x2. Put the starting row in y1 and destination row in y2. The distance "D" is:

$$D = SQR((X1 - X2) \wedge 2 + (Y1 - Y2) \wedge 2)$$

That was painless, wasn't it? If you're getting fancy, and using three dimensions; put starting height in z1 and destination height in z2. Then:

$$D = SQR((X1 - X2) \wedge 2 + (Y1 - Y2) \wedge 2 + (Z1 - Z2) \wedge 2)$$

If you are going completely crazy, you are not limited to a mere three dimensions. Just slap on as many $+(a1 - a2) \wedge 2$ as you need. Hyperspace, anyone?

Uh-oh, a dreaded Blortch crusier just showed up on the scanner. Let's blow him away!

Most beam weaponry (at least in the real world) obeys an obnoxious rule known as the "inverse square law". It says that if you double the range, your beam strength is now 1/4th what it was. In practice, this makes for absurdly short range battles. But if you want to use it, put the beam's full strength in B, and the range (from the above formula) in D:

$$B = B/(D \wedge 2)$$

I usually just leave out the $\wedge 2$. It makes for longer ranged battles.

Let's be nasty to the players, and make them have to put everything in by Range and Bearing! The way we've done it up to now is like telling the computer to move our ship to a certain numbered hex. The more realistic way is to tell it to go northeast for 300 feet. This is the infamous "Rectangular to Polar" conversion.

First, decide how far it is from one square to the next (call it a Light-year for now). For authenticity, let them input bearing by degrees (there ain't no north in space). To make it easier on me, 0 degrees is east, 90 degrees is north, 180 degrees is west, and 270 degrees is south. Have the player input range in R, bearing in B. Have his ship's row in Y1 and column in X1. His future position is:

$$X2 = INT((COS(B*0.01745)*R) + X1)$$
$$Y2 = INT((SIN(B*0.01745)*R) + Y1)$$

The *0.01745 is because most computers use radians instead of degrees. If yours uses degrees, leave it out.

This should be enough to get you started. For more, hook a good calculus student. Get him to write the equations, label the variables, and you are ready to rid the universe of the Blortch Empire!

ADVANCED TACTICS IN VC or HOW TO WIN AT LEVEL 4

by David Kuijt
VC IS AVALON HILL'S TRADEMARK NAME FOR ITS COMPUTER GAME OF OPERATIONAL COMBAT IN VIET NAM

VC (Viet Cong) seems at first glance to be a game of guesswork. At the lowest level of difficulty the game can be won by moving the airborne battalion around until the VC are spotted. To win at the higher levels, however, the U.S. commander must have a detailed campaign plan from move one, as well as a knowledge of the peculiarities of all the units in the game, and how they can best be used or fought. This article will give some hints to those who have mastered the basic tactics of **VC**, but still have trouble winning at the tough levels of difficulty.

U1: The U.S. Airborne unit is easily the most powerful and mobile unit on the map, and therein lies an insidious trap. Many beginners will hop the Airborne battalion around like a flea on a frying pan, hoping to eliminate the VC with U1 virtually alone. This tactic will probably succeed at level one (as will almost any tactic), may succeed at level two, but at level three or four you will be signing your own death warrant.

There are three major faults with this singlehanded airborne assault. First, you can only jump in where there are no civilian populations. This means that the only way you can fight dense VC populations is by picking at the edges. Since solid blocks of civilians are the best breeding ground for VC, you will be allowing the VC in dense areas to convert civilians while picking up easy kills on isolated VC that have far less recruitment potential and are less crucial.

Second, you will never be sure, after you leave an area, that the civilians you left there have not been converted to VC since you left. This will mean that if you guess wrong once, you will have to search the whole map again to find the sneaky VC recruiting among your allies, giving him even more time to do his dirty work. You cannot afford to guess.

Finally, U1 is simply not strong enough to take on the whole province. As the level of difficulty increases, the number of VC and (shudder!) NVA (North Vietnam Army) increases also. At level four you may face six or more NVA and at least that many VC. U1 will be eliminated quickly facing that many enemies alone, and without U1 you will be giving away the outside of the map without a fight.

U1 is essential to victory, but you should be chary of sending it into hotbeds of VC just for the fun of slaughter. U1 should be used to check the spread of VC in areas that ARVNs (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) would take too long to reach. Its mobility makes it ideal for this task. Above all, never send it to a battle that an ARVN could reach as well. It is a very, very rare commander that can win with U1 eliminated.

U2: The artillery firebase is the keystone of a successful campaign at the higher levels of difficulty. It can attack units without fear of being damaged, even though it will not always destroy what it hits. A good rule of thumb for the artillery is NEVER FIRE AT UNIDENTIFIED CIVILIANS. Even if you suspect them to be VC, you cannot afford to be wrong. If you are sure, go ahead, but bombarding civilians is like cutting your own throat.

To use the artillery effectively, it is good to keep as many of the enemy spotted as possible, and to keep a rigid system of target priorities: fire first at NVA or VC that are in or adjacent to large groups of neutral or friendly civilians. Fire at NVA by preference, as they are much more likely to do nasty things to your troops in a combat than VC are, and the artillery is just as likely to damage either target. Remember, though, that you must damage an NVA unit twice to eliminate it, where a VC will be destroyed as soon as it takes any damage. Your last fire priority should be bombardment of NVA or VC that are away from civilians. They have no opportunity to recruit, so are relatively harmless. If you have no other targets, fine.

ARVN's: These troops, being your most numerous, will form the backbone of your campaign. They are slow, not very powerful, and fairly easy to eliminate. They can, however, identify adjacent friendly civilians. This makes them invaluable. As you move out your ARVNs they will leave a path of identified friendly civilians. The most important thing about ARVNs is that it is necessary to get them out of their square formation as fast as possible. Start by moving the corner ones (R0, R3, R6, R9) diagonally outwards from the center. Whenever possible, move ARVNs diagonally rather than orthogonally, as they will meet (and identify) more unidentified units that way. Avoid moving ARVNs adjacent to one another, for the same reason. Be ready to use your artillery support to swat anything the ARVN meets that gives it any trouble. You cannot afford to let your ARVNs get into tight spots unless you like to have them destroyed. Try to surround pockets of resistance rather than leaping in without knowing how many VC are in there. Avoid NVA like the plague, as you cannot afford to take equal casualties. If you find NVA, flatten them with artillery or pop the airmobile over to them (if necessary).

Civilians: A common mistake among beginners is to think of civilians as being sort of superfluous, merely providing an environment for the battle to be fought in. The sign of a good commander is the information he gleans from the movement of civilians, especially friendly civilians. This is where the main use of ARVNs comes to the fore. Friendly civilians act as a sort of intelligence gathering method. If you see a Friendly civilian move into a group of neutral (unidentified) civilians and stay friendly, you know that there are no VC or NVA among those civilians. Conversely, if an unidentified civilian moves adjacent to a group of friendly civilians and they are neutralized or eliminated, it is pretty obvious that the moving unit is a VC or NVA. It is possible to know the general locations of all the major pockets of VC by the eighth or ninth turn by careful interpretation of the results of the movements of your friendly civilians.

The Enemy: NVA are the big danger. They will cause you an immense amount of grief, as they are tough and cannot be easily killed. With a little bad luck U1 can die very quickly fighting a few NVA battalions. If you simply attack them by sending your ARVN's, you can figure on losing one ARVN for each NVA you attack. These casualties are not acceptable. To take NVA on you must use your artillery as much as possible. Note that the delay caused by this can often make a commander lose a game by spending too much time on a few NVA.

VC are weak, disorganized, paper tigers in a stand up battle. Do not let this fool you, however, as they will soon defeat the commander who keeps searching for a stand up battle. One of the best tactics to use in **VC** is to only fight the VC's on the edges of an 'infestation', and to leave the center until after there is no threat of it spreading. This, however, can take a lot of time.

As a final bit of advice, use your S2 intelligence report carefully. Your battalion intelligence is not always accurate, but it will give you a fair approximation of the forces opposing you. Take it with a grain of salt, however, as many commanders have been fooled into overconfidence or despair by the intelligence report, when they still had a good chance of winning. Take care, and don't let the enemy get you down.

IN THE WORKS

Avalon Hill's newest Atari programmer on board is Winchell Chung. He is currently putting finishing touches on a monster Napoleonics game entitled *PARIS IN DANGER.*

Initially available for the Atari 800 (disk only) *PARIS IN DANGER* has a unique morale system encompassing both strategic and tactical elements of play. This wargame will focus on Napoleon's 1814 campaign.

David Kuijt is finishing up his incredible adaptation of *LEGIONNAIRE* for the Apple II. Simultaneously, he has been using the same scrolling technique for a sophisticated arcade-strategy type game tentively titled *AIR CALVARY.* He won't say much at this point except that it takes place in the future on a distant planet and that it combines elements of three of his favorite coin-op machine games!

COMPUTER FACTS IN FIVE will be available for the beer and pretzel gamers shortly after New Years. This is a computerization of Avalon Hill's best selling "Leisure Time" game. It is a unique game of knowledge and excellent for solitaire, doubles, or even party mode. Available for IBM P.C., Apple and Atari.

FREDERICKSBURG — computer and board game combination of tactical battle during the American Civil War. Available only for the TRS-80 Models I & III, Fredericksburg is a two player game where each player will take the role of Confederate General Robert E. Lee or Union General Ambrose E. Burnside in this historical simulation which was a debacle for the Union in their march onto Richmond.

GYPSY — Reinhard Mirkovich has created a most loveable moth, if only the ants and bumble bees in pursuit felt the same way! Available for the Atari 4/800 by Xmas, a TI 99/4A version is expected shortly after New Years.

B-1 NUCLEAR BOMBER — If you saw the original . . . you won't recognize Ron Sutherland's enhanced version for the IBM P.C. B-1 is also planned to be released before Xmas for TI 99/4A and Sinclair Timex ZX81.

SUBMITTING COMPUTER GAMES FOR EVALUATION

by Michael G. Cullum

While Microcomputer Games has an outstanding staff of programmers devoted to the creation and development of new microcomputer games, we are always willing to evaluate programs submitted to us by outside programmers. We firmly believe that in order to keep our computer game line fresh and original a very liberal program submission policy is necessary.

Unlike most other computer software companies, Microcomputer Games does not have extensive submittal procedures. In fact, many programmers have sent games to us for evaluation without any prior contact whatsoever. While we would prefer some prior contact, either by phone or letter, submitting a program to us cold does not affect our evaluation of it. It is best to contact us first, this way we can prepare an appropriate playtest group and tell you right off a number of specifics such as; whether the configuration of your program is compatible with our computer system or even if we already have a similar program in the works.

Currently we support the Apple II, Atari 400/800, IBM P.C., Commodore '64 and PET, TRS-80 Models I and III, TRS-80 Color, and VIC-20. We also plan to support in the near future the TI 99/4A and Sinclair Timex ZX81. To support all of the above computers is a big job that requires both a lot of effort and cost on our part. Hence we must be very selective as to what programs are marketed.

Computer games submitted to Microcomputer Games are evaluated by an in-house staff of playtesters consisting of game designers, developers, programmers and computer game enthusiasts. One of the first things our evaluators look for when they playtest a game are loading and playing instructions. You would be surprised by how many programmers submit games to us with no loading or playing instructions. It is very difficult to evaluate a game if you cannot load it or figure out how to play it.

Also, a lack of loading and playing instructions is usually a good indication as to what we can expect in the way of program documentation if we do elect to market the game. Because we convert most of our programs to play on more than one computer, documentation is very important. So when a computer game arrives without loading and playing instructions, it already has one strike against it.

Next we check to see if the program is a complete game. Many of the programs submitted to us are only boardgame player assist aids. So far, we have not found a market for game assist programs. When a consumer purchases a computer game, he does not want to have to buy a boardgame in order to play it, or does he? Occasionally a listing and commentary of a boardgame computer assist program is printed in one of our magazines, but these should be submitted as magazine articles to The Avalon Hill editorial staff.

Once the program has been loaded, the playing instructions digested and it has been determined that it is a complete game, the real evaluation begins. Generally we look for smoothness of game flow, realism where applicable, presentation of information, ease of learning, difficulty to win, sound and GRAPHICS DISPLAY. Because of the current "state of the art" of microcomputer games, one of the greatest determinant factors in selecting a computer game for marketing is its graphic displays. No matter how good the game may be, unless it has some sort of graphic display, perferably Hi-Res, it too has a strike against it. The only exception to this is the computer/boardgame combination game which has done very well. Following closely behind the graphic display in importance are the sound effects in the game. Though this is not as important on some computers (TRS-80) as on others (Atari).

We also try to make a determination as to the level of interest, challenge and enjoyment the average consumer would get from the program. Finally we determine if the game is original and not just a take off or copy of some other computer game, and if it is based upon a boardgame, that it does not infringe upon another company's copyrights. As a rule, programs borrowing conceptively upon another company's game will not be marketed by us.

After all of the playtesters have evaluated the program, a decision is made to either send a contract or a reject letter to the programmer. Rejected games are maintained in our files for one year and then destroyed. Programmers that want their game submission returned should enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope with their submission. If you would like to submit a program to Microcomputer Games for evaluation contact either Jack Dott or Mike Cullum at Microcomputer Games, Inc., A Division of The Avalon Hill Game Co., 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214.

The End

★★★★★★ OVERMIND ★★★★★★
★★★★★ UNDERMINED ★★★★★

It has now been confirmed that the once impregnable evil master of the Red and Blue Planets has been liquidated! The gallant adventurer responsible for ridding the two worlds of the technological tyrant is Richard M. Sigler, shown below holding "Betsy," his trusty Xenon pistol. Sigler persevered, destroying skeletons, moving crocodiles, man-eating cactus, and several data disks; ignoring the pain of the mind-whip, the deprevation of the deserts, and the length of his lawn to finally discover the secret nesting place of the evil sphere. But even then, the battle was not over. Coming face-to-face with quintessential evil, the epitome of bad guys, Sigler fell again and again, only to rise with expletives deleted to continue the fight.

And when it seemed that the final victory would forever successfully evade his weary grasp, inspiration blossomed in his fogged brain like Alka Seltzer on raw meatloaf, and he closed in for the kill!!!

So, with the sweet champagne of victory sending bubbles up his nose, Mr. Sigler paused when asked to comment on his unprecedented conquest, and remarked, "Shucks, twern't nothin'."

His mother-in-law agreed.

When not liberating planets, Richard Sigler sleeps, eats, and writes a book about investments.