

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Issue 7

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PREP FIRE

“Happy Birthday to me. Happy Birthday to me. Happy Birthday *View From The Trenches*. Happy Birthday to me.”

Yes, *VFTT* is now a year old, and to celebrate it has a new, improved look. The slightly reduced text allows me to get more stuff in each issue, and there is also some art throughout the issue to break up the text. There would also have been a new logo, but Klaus Fischer, who has offered to produce a new logo, was involved in a car crash and ended up in hospital for the best part of a month. Luckily, he's back on the road to recovery, and is already back at work.

This issue is the second *VFTT* to feature scenarios, and this should be a regular occurrence for the next few issues. I have also been given permission by Kurt Martin, editor of the now defunct US 'zine *Rout Report* to print the six scenarios in its last issue, which was only available to InterNet users.

Those of you who were at Intensive Fire '95 will remember that we were all given AREA ratings, and I hope to have these in future issues. AREA is basically a system whereby each player is rated for his ability, and Neil Stevens (Intensive Fire's organiser) and I are trying to establish a UK AREA chart to bring us into line with other ASLers around the world. Expect to see more information next issue.

Neil is also toying with the idea of establishing an UK ASL Players Association. Among the ideas being suggested as benefits for joining are *View from the Trenches*, opponent lists, the UK AREA Rating System, possible discounts on ASL products brought through the association, easy access to European and US ASL 'amateur' products (EG *Critical Hit!*, *Time on Target*, *ASL News*), and Intensive Fire '96. The idea is that with the association would be able to provide a co-ordinated ASL focus in the UK. As I said, this is all just an idea at the moment, but we would like to hear your views on the idea.

As part of that idea, Neil started to distribute *Time On Target* over here. I had hoped to include a review of issue 2 this issue, but lack of space means that will see print next issue. *ToT* is well worth buying, and to whet your appetites, I have enclosed a copy of the teaser scenario they have issued. If anyone wants a copy of

ToT, send £15 to Neil Stevens, 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8AE. He also has a couple of copies of issue 1 available for £9.

And now, some errata for issue six :- (On page six, in the “THE RESULTS” section, change “Derek Tocher (England)” to “Derek Tocher (Scotland)”. Sorry about that Derek, your beating me at Intensive Fire '95 had nothing to do with it :-).

Finally, those of you who have access to the InterNet may be interested to know that *VFTT* now has its own page on the World Wide Web. It's nothing fancy at the moment, just a compilation of material from previous issues of *VFTT*, but with time I hope to change that. Check it out at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Pete_Phillipps and let me know what you think.

Until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

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EMOTICONS

EMOTICON (noun): a figure created with keyboard characters and read with the head tilted to the left. They are used to convey the spirit in which a line of text is typed.

Some of the most common emoticons are:

:-) humour or smiley

:-(sad

:-o writer is shocked or surprised

<g> grin

As an Internet user I use emoticons on a regular basis, and find they are very useful. Expect to see them in *View From The Trenches*.

D U T C H TRUCKS

Dutch trucks. Among online ASL gamers, the term has become something of an unofficial rallying cry for those wanting to see Avalon Hill complete the ASL system. With no minor vehicle module forthcoming in the immediate future, I have compiled my own series of Chapter H notes on the minor nation vehicles, and present it here for your perusal.

Most of the minor nations possessed a number of fighting vehicles, although in some cases their numbers were few (the extreme case is probably Norway, with just one working tankette in 1940). Only Poland and Czechoslovakia were major producers of fighting vehicles, the latter in particular also being a major exporter. After the outbreak of the Russo-German conflict, many of the Axis Minor nations eventually received a variety of AFVs from Germany. Following the Italian surrender to the Allies, Germany acquired many Italian AFVs, and some of these were handed over to her Balkan allies.

Many of the vehicles used by the minor nations, such as the PzKpfw 35(t) and 38(t) (German Vehicle Notes 6 and 7) and the French FT-17 (French Vehicle Note 1), have already been included in ASL, while the Squad Leader gamette *Crescendo of Doom* included details on Polish and Belgian vehicles, which made it easy to determine ASL statistics on these.

I have not included the Finns in this article, and anyone interested in them should check out *Jatkosota*, the new Finn module produced by the *Critical Hit!* people.

POLAND

Poland possessed one of the largest armies in the world in 1939, and was equipped with approximately 1,000 AFVs, although only about 800 were serviceable. However the majority of Polish AFVs were tankettes, adequate only for scouting rather than offensive operations. To make matters worse, only command tanks were radio equipped.

Each cavalry brigade possessed an armoured troop equipped with 13 TK3 or TKS tankettes and 8 wz. 34 armoured cars, while each infantry division possessed an independent scout tank company equipped with 13 TK3 or TKS tankettes. The only armoured formations were the 10th Mechanised Cavalry Brigade and the Warsaw Mechanised Brigade. The former possessed two independent scout tank companies (one equipped with 13 TK3s, the other

with TKS'), three light tank battalions (two equipped with 49 7TP tanks, the other with 45 R35s), and four light tank companies (three equipped with 15 FT-17s, and the fourth with 17 Vickers 6-Ton Mk E's). The Warsaw Mechanised Brigade consisted of two independent scout tank companies (each equipped with 13 TKS') and a light tank company (equipped with 17 Vickers 6-Ton Mk E's).

FT-17(f): Although designed in 1917 and used during World War One, many nations still used this French AFV (see French Vehicle Note 1) at the outbreak of World War Two, with the Polish Army possessing 67 vehicles.

Minimum road-MP cost is one MP; ie, no FT-17 may use the 1/2-MP road rate even if CE - as signified by "Road Rate NA" on the counter.

TK3: The Poles developed the TK1 and then the TK2 from a Carden Lloyd Mk VI tankette purchased from Britain in 1928. Further work led to the TK3, which had an enclosed superstructure and slightly heavier armour. A total of 300 TK3's were built. A four wheeled trailer which the TK3 could mount for road travel was developed in 1931, the combination being driven by the TK3 and steered by the tank driver. In 1939 a few were upgunned with a Polish designed 20mm cannon (MA is T20L, ROF is 2, IFE is 4).

TKS: Further work on TK3 led to the TKS in 1933. 390 were produced, making it the most prevalent Polish armoured vehicle. As with the TK3, a few were modified to mount a 20mm cannon in 1939 (MA is T20L, ROF is 2, IFE is 4). Attempts to modernise the TK3 led to the development of a fully turreted version and another equipped with a 37mm AT gun but neither progressed beyond the prototype stage.

Vickers 6-Ton Mk E(b): Designed by Vicker-Armstrong and widely exported, although not adopted by the British Army. Poland purchased 50 vehicles.

7TPdw: The 7TPdw was based on the design of the twin turret version of the Vickers 6-Ton Mk E. It was the world's first production tank fitted with a diesel power plant.

7TPjw: This was essentially the 7TPdw with a single turret carrying a 37mm gun and a co-axial 7.92mm MG. A total of 169 7TPs saw service.

R35(f): This French designed AFV (see French Vehicle Note 4) was exported to a number of countries, including Poland, who purchased 53 examples. They saw little or no action in the Polish campaign; indeed the unit was evacuated to Romania, and 34 of the vehicles eventually saw service in the Romanian army.

wz34: Just 86 of these armoured cars were produced.

A number of wz 34 were armed with a 4 FP CMG instead (26BPV, 1.5 RF).

HOLLAND

The Dutch had only a nominal armoured force, consisting of just three armoured car squadrons. The 1st Panserwagen Squadron, based in the Noord-Brabant province, was equipped with 12 M36 armoured cars, while the 2nd, based in the Utrecht province, was equipped with 12 M38 armoured cars, and the 3rd, based in The Hague, was equipped with 12 M39 armoured cars. The Dutch also acquired two FT-17s from France and five Carden-Lloyd Mark VIs from Britain, but these were used mainly for trial purposes.

The Dutch East Indies were in a slightly better position, having 24 Carden-Lloyd M1936 light tanks.

FT-17C(f): Although designed in 1917 and used during World War One, the Dutch acquired two examples of this French AFV (see French Vehicle Note 1) for trials purposes.

Minimum road-MP cost is one MP; ie, no FT-17 may use the 1/2-MP road rate even if CE - as signified by "Road Rate NA" on the counter.

V-CL Mk VI(b): first produced in 1927, the Carden Lloyd Tankette Mk VI (see Chinese Vehicle Note 13) inspired comparable developments in Czechoslovakia (the MU4), France (the EU), Italy (the CV33 and CV35), Poland (the TK3), and Russia (the T27). Five were purchased by the Dutch, with each one being named: Poema, Jaguar, Panter, Luipaard, and Lynx.

The V-CL Mk VI(b) is considered a Carrier (D6.8) [EXC: it has a Passenger capacity of one PP for ammunition (C10.13) or one SMC or one 1PP SW, but may not carry a Rider(s); it contains an Inherent crew even if unarmed, and that original crew always takes counter form as a 2-2-7 infantry-crew.

The MF expenditures given in C10.11 and C10.12 for (un)hooking a Gun apply unchanged if the MMC performing that action is simultaneously (un)loading from/into this Carrier.

If Stunned the vehicle may not fire and is Recalled as per D5.341; this is signified by "Stun=Recall &FP NA" on the counter.

M39 Panserwagen: This was an indigenous Dutch armoured car designed and manufactured by DAF. The M39 saw no action during the invasion of Holland, but was subsequently used by the Germans for internal security.

Light Tank M1936(b): This was a light

Continued on page 4

tank developed by Vickers for export. It was similar to the Light Tank Mk IV. There were three models, the Model 1933 (sold to Finland, Lithuania and Latvia), the Model 1934 (sold to Argentina and Belgium, where it was known as the T15) and the Model 1936 (sold to China and Holland). All are identical in game terms.

BELGIUM

The Belgian Army had approximately 200 AFVs on 10th May 1940; but they were assigned in piecemeal strength to the various infantry and cavalry divisions for use as support weapons. The Belgians generally looked upon their AFVs as defensive weapons. While there was little in the way of tank duels, Belgian armoured crews proved quite successful in an infantry support role.

FT-17C(f): Although designed in 1917 and used during World War One, 75 of this French AFV (see French Vehicle Note 1) remained in service with the Belgian army in 1939.

Minimum road-MP cost is one MP; ie, no FT-17 may use the 1/2-MP road rate even if CE - as signified by "Road Rate NA" on the counter.

T-13 I: Only 58 produced, and most of those served with the 1st Chasseurs Ardennais Division. The T-13 had a limited traverse turret which faced towards the rear of the vehicle.

The TCA may not have the same facing as the VCA. If no turret counter is placed on the vehicle the TCA is assumed to be the same as the rear VCA, as signified by "TCA=Rear VCA" on the counter.

T-13 II: This was an improved version of the T-13 I, with a revised superstructure mounting a fully traversable turret. Nearly 100 were produced, with each Belgian infantry division having a company equipped with 12 vehicles.

T-15: This was the Carden-Lloyd M1934 armed with a Belgian MG. 42 vehicles were purchased, with 6 being assigned to each of the three regiments of the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Divisions. A further three vehicles were assigned to each of the Chasseurs Ardennais divisions.

AGC I(f): This was the Renault AMC 35R fitted with a Belgian designed turret. 12 were produced but only 8 saw action.

Renault UE: Known as the chenillette (small tracked vehicle), this was a French vehicle (see French Vehicle Note 28) used in large numbers as a utility tractor by Belgian infantry divisions.

Each Passenger SMC counts as one Passenger PP, and is considered always CE (as if in a Carrier; D6.84) even if the vehicle's Inherent crew (if any) is BU.

If armed, this vehicle has an Inherent crew and thus a CS# instead of a cs#.

This vehicle may retain any unpossessed SW aboard it.

YUGOSLAVIA

Like many nations, Yugoslavia possessed a number of FT-17s and R35s acquired from France.

FT-17C(f): Although designed in 1917 and used during World War One, this French AFV (see French Vehicle Note 1) was still in Yugoslavian service during World War Two.

Minimum road-MP cost is one MP; ie, no FT-17 may use the 1/2-MP road rate even if CE - as signified by "Road Rate NA" on the counter.

Char NC1(f): French development

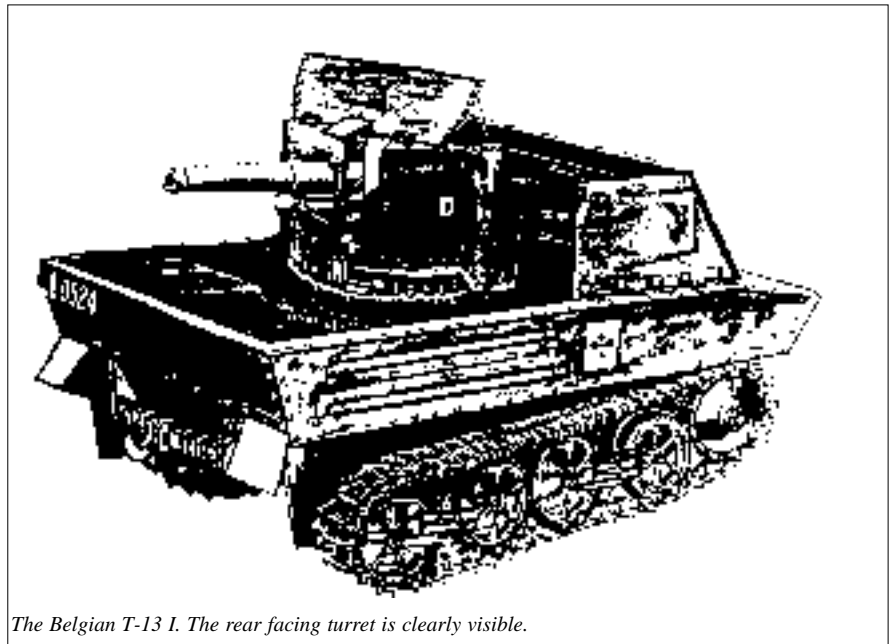
1917 and used during World War One, this French AFV (see French Vehicle Note 1) was still in service with the Greek army in World War Two.

Minimum road-MP cost is one MP; ie, no FT-17 may use the 1/2-MP road rate even if CE - as signified by "Road Rate NA" on the counter.

Char NC2(f): Also known as the Char NC31, this was a development, via the NC1, of the FT-17. It was used in small numbers by Greece.

Vickers 6-Ton Mk E(b): Designed by Vicker-Armstrong and widely exported, although not adopted by the British Army. Greece possessed just 2 vehicles at the start of World War Two.

SLOVAKIA



The Belgian T-13 I. The rear facing turret is clearly visible.

work on FT-17 during the 1920s resulted in the Char NC1 (also known as the Char NC27). Although not adopted by the French army, it was used in small numbers by Japan and Yugoslavia.

S-Id(t): A Czech designed AFV which entered production in 1938 for Yugoslavia. Some later used by Romania.

R35(f): This French designed AFV (see French Vehicle Note 4) was exported to a number of countries, including Yugoslavia, who purchased 50 vehicles.

GREECE

Greece possessed a number of AFVs, including FT-17s purchased from France and the Vickers 6-Ton Mark E from Britain. During the war against Italy, a number of captured Italian AFVs were also used against their former owners.

FT-17C(f): Although designed in

Following the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, the newly created Slovakia army retained 79 of the 298 LT vz 35s which had been in Czech service, organised into a single tank battalion. In August 1941 a Mobile Division was formed, by which time the tank battalion had been re-equipped with 69 LT vz 38s. The division fought at Lemberg and Kiev in 1941, and took part in the capture of Rostov in 1942. While helping cover the retreat from the Caucasus after the battle of Stalingrad it was nearly cut off at Krasnodar but was airlifted out, losing its heavy equipment in the process. In 1943 the unit was reorganised as the 1st Infantry Division and subsequently relegated to coastal defence duties.

T-33(t): A Czech built tankette, the design was influenced by the Carden-Lloyd Mark VI tankette, 70 were used by the Czechs.

LT-34(t): The LT-34 (also known as the CKD AH-IV) was the first Czech tank produced in quantity, with 50 examples being ordered for the Czech army. The vehicle also enjoyed considerable success in the export market, the basic design often being scaled up or down to suit the customer's requirements. Foreign users included Romania (35 R-1), Sweden (50 AH-IV-Sv and an undetermined number of TNH-Sv), Iran (50 Ah-IV and 50 TNH), Switzerland (24 LTH), Peru (24 LTP) and Latvia (21 LTL).

LT vz 35: Czechoslovakia built 298 LT vz 35 from 1936 - 39 as their main battle tank. Following the German occupation, most were taken into German service (see German Vehicle Note 6), but 79 were kept by the newly created Slovakian army.

PzKpfw 38(t)A: Although adopted for service on 1st July 1938 as a replacement for the LT vz 35, the LT vz 38 had not entered production when the Germans occupied Czechoslovakia in 1939. However, the Germans were impressed by its features, and ordered it into production as the PzKpfw 38(t)A (see German Vehicle Note 7).

PzKpfw 38(t)E: This is an up-armoured version of the PzKpfw 38(t)A (see German Vehicle Note 8). 69 PzKpfw 38(t)s (both types) were used by the Slovakian army.

HUNGARY

In 1939, the two motorised units of the Hungarian Mobile Corps were equipped with a total of 65 CV-33s and 95 38M Toldi light tanks, and a number of Csaba armoured cars. The Corps performed well in the opening stages of the war against Russia, reaching the Donets in October, but by the end of 1941 most of the vehicles had been destroyed. In Spring 1942 the Corps was reorganised as the 1st Armoured Division and equipped with a total of 83 PzKpfw 38(t)s, 22 PzKpfw Is, 2 Toldis, and a handful of PzKpfw IIIs, PzKpfw IVs and Csaba armoured cars. In mid-1943, having been almost destroyed in January by a Soviet offensive along the Don, it was rebuilt and it, along with the newly raised 2nd Armour Division was equipped with a mixture of Turan I and IIs. At the same time eight assault artillery battalions were raised, two being equipped with the Zrinyi assault gun, the rest with StuG IIIs.

38M Toldi: This was a Hungarian version of the Swedish Strv m/33 (also known as the Strv L60) built by the Weiss Company of Budapest. 95 had been produced by the start of the war. Most of these were lost in the early months of the war against Russia.

Ansaldo(i): The Ansaldo was the Italian CV-33 (see Italian Vehicle Note 2), the

name being taken from its Italian manufacturer. 65 were exported to Hungary between 1934 and 1938.

PzKpfw IB(g): A German tankette (see German Vehicle Note 1) which was first built in 1934. In the spring of 1942, Germany supplied 22 of these to Hungary, for use in the 1st Armoured Division.

PzKpfw 38(t)E: This is an up-armoured version of the PzKpfw 38(t)A (see German Vehicle Note 8), with 83 being supplied to Hungary.

Turan I(t): A Hungarian development of the Czech LT vz 35.

Turan II(t): The Turan I fitted with a modified turret carrying a 75mm gun.

StuG III G(g): A German assault gun (see German Vehicle Note 34) supplied to both Hungary and Finland.

Zrinyi: A Hungarian designed assault gun.

JgdPz 38(t): A German tank destroyer (see German Vehicle Note 50), 100 were supplied to Hungary between October 1944 and January 1945.

The AAMG is remotely controlled; it cannot be used by a Rider, and may never fire at an aerial target.

ROMANIA

At the outbreak of World War Two Romanian armour was concentrated in the 1st Armoured Regiment, which was equipped with the R-2, and the 2nd Armoured Regiment, which was equipped with the R-35. In 1940 the 1st was combined with the four motorised battalions of the 3rd and 4th Rifles and the 1st Motorised Artillery Regiment to form the 1st Armoured Division. Following the capture of Odessa, the 2nd Armoured Regiment was relegated to a training role, while the 1st Armoured Division was refitted, returning to the front line in August 1942. To support the obsolete R-2s, the Germans supplied a few PzKpfw IIIs and IVs in October, but even with these the division was almost wiped out around Stalingrad in November 1942, losing most of its equipment. The division was rebuilt afterwards and returned to action in the summer of 1944, equipped with German supplied PzKpfw IVs, StuG IIIs, assorted Tacams (tanks converted to tank destroyers) and SdKfz 222s. One of its motorised battalions was equipped with SdKfz 250 and SdKfz 251 half tracks. In August 1944 the 8th Motorised Division was converted to an armoured division (and known variously as either the 8th or 2nd Armoured Division) and equipped with 60 AFVs of assorted types.

FT-17C(f): Although designed in 1917 and used during World War One, 70 of these French AFV (see French Vehicle Note 1) was still in service with the Romanian

Army during the war, although prior to 1944 they were mainly used for training purposes.

Minimum road-MP cost is one MP; ie, no FT-17 may use the 1/2-MP road rate even if CE - as signified by "Road Rate NA" on the counter.

R-1(t): A scaled down version of the Czech LT-34, with 35 being purchased. These vehicles equipped the recon squadrons of the cavalry brigades until 1943.

The game piece also represents the 50 Czech LT-34s which were handed over by the Germans following their occupation of Czechoslovakia.

R-2: During the late 30s Czechoslovakia exported 126 LT vz 35s to Romania, where they were known as the R-2.

R35(f): 41 examples of this French designed AFV (see French Vehicle Note 4) were exported to Romania. Following the German occupation of Poland, 34 Polish copies were received, bringing the total to 75.

R35(L)(f): In 1943 the remaining R35s were up-gunned by fitting Soviet 45mm tank guns.

PzKpfw 38(t)E: This is an up-armoured version of the PzKpfw 38(t)A (see German Vehicle Note 8), with 50 being supplied to Romania.

PzKpfw III N(g): The Germans supplied ten of these (see German Vehicle Note 16) to supplement the R-2s of the 1st Armoured Division in October 1942. Most were lost at Stalingrad.

PzKpfw IV F1(g): The Germans supplied ten of these (see German Vehicle Note 22) to supplement the R-2s of the 1st Armoured Division in October 1942. Most were lost at Stalingrad.

PzKpfw IV H(g): The Germans supplied 90 of these (see German Vehicle Note 24) to equip the 1st Armoured Division in 1943.

StuG III G(g): A German assault gun (see German Vehicle Note 34) supplied to Romania.

Tacam T-60(r): At least 30 captured Soviet T-60s were modified in 1943 by fitting the Soviet 76.2mm AT Gun.

Tacam R-2(t): In 1943, at least 20 remaining R-2s were fitted with the Soviet 76.2mm AT Gun for use as tank destroyers.

PSW 222(g): A German armoured car (see German Vehicle Note 70) used in limited numbers by the Romanians.

MA and CMG have AA capability - signified by "MA:AA" being printed on the counter.

Reverse movement costs this vehicle three times its normal hex entry cost - as signified by "REVx3" on the counter.

SPW 250/1(g): A number of these were supplied by the Germans in 1943, al-

lowing the Romanians to convert one motorised infantry battalion of the 1st Armoured Division into a Panzer Grenadier battalion.

SPW 251/1(g): A number of these were supplied by the Germans in 1943, allowing the Romanians to convert one motorised infantry battalion of the 1st Armoured Division into a Panzer Grenadier battalion.

BULGARIA

At the start of the war Bulgaria possessed few tanks (some Mk VIBs were on order from Britain, but it is unclear as to whether they were ever delivered). As the war progressed, she received limited supplies from Germany.

Vickers 6-Ton Mk E(b): Designed by Vicker-Armstrong and widely exported, although not adopted by the British Army. Bulgaria possessed 8 vehicles at the start of the war.

PzKpfw 38(t)E: This is an up-armoured version of the PzKpfw 38(t)A (see German Vehicle Note 8). 10 were supplied to Bulgaria.

PzKpfw IVC(g): The PzKpfw IV (see German Vehicle Note 19) formed the mainstay of the Panzer divisions in World War Two. The Germans supplied a few of these Panzers to Bulgaria in 1943.

MISCELLANEOUS

Light Truck, Medium Truck & Heavy Truck: A diverse type of trucks were used by the various minor nations, and for this reason the game pieces represent generic versions of each type. However, the minor nations still relied on horse-drawn transport.

MINOR NATION MULTI-APPLICABLE VEHICLE NOTES

A The CMG may be repositioned as a 2-FP AAMG. This can only be done by placing an AA counter on the AFV at the end of any friendly fire phase (not MPh) in which its Inherent crew is CE and could have fired the MG (even if malfunctioned) but did not. This AAMG may fire only at a target that lies within the AFV's TCA - as signified by "AAMG: TCA only" on the counter. The AAMG may be repositioned as the CMG by using the same principles to remove the AA counter.

ERRATA: Any functioning MG that may be repositioned as an AAMG may be Scrounged, regardless of the vehicle/wreck's nationality.

C The CE DRM is +1 vs Indirect Fire, as well as vs Direct Fire that emanates from within the turret's rear Target Facing - as signified by "CE: +1 RT" on the counter.

E When using the AP To Kill Table, make two To Kill DR on the MG column. Only one DR (firer's choice) is used. This is indicated by "2 TK DR (MG)" on the counter.

F The 4-FP BMG may be Scrounged as one or two LMG (as per D10.5); however, it is considered one MG for malfunctions, repair and disablement purposes. The BMG may fire while the vehicle is HD - as signified by "BMG HD FP ok" on the counter.

G If Stunned this vehicle may not regain CE status, may not fire any weapons, and is Recalled as per D5.341; these are signified by "Stun=Recall &CE/FP NA" on the counter.

H When this vehicle is Bugged, one (only) CX squad (even a Prisoner, but not a guard) on foot expending \geq four MF in the vehicle's Location (and declaring itself to be assisting its unbogging) thereby allows the owning player to subtract two (one per crew or HS) from the coloured dr of its immediately subsequent Unbogging DR.

P The AAMG may not fire outside of the VCA - as signified by "MG VCA only" being printed on the counter.

S This AFV can have Schuerzen (D11.2).

Z The "(a)"/"(b)"/"(f)"/"(g)"/"(i)"/"(r)"/"(t)" in the piece name indicates that the vehicle uses the appropriate American/British/French/German/Italian/Russian/Czech Nationality DRM when risking ESB (D2.5), Hammada Immobilisation (F3.31), Sand Bog (F7.31), etc.

Ω

INCOMING

Kampfgruppe Peiper II should be out in America as I write, so expect to see it in this country within a month or so. It contains three new full size maps depicting the villages of La Gleize, Cheneux and Borgoumont, two and a half counter sheets, seven scenarios and two campaign scenarios, and new Chapter P pages with revamped CG material. The expected US price tag is \$40, so expect to pay about that in real money....

Also out about now should be *The General* volume 30 number 4, with an *ASL* article and two scenarios. Stuart Tucker, the new editor, is confident that he will be able to sustain this level of *ASL* material for the future, so it may be time to re-subscribe....

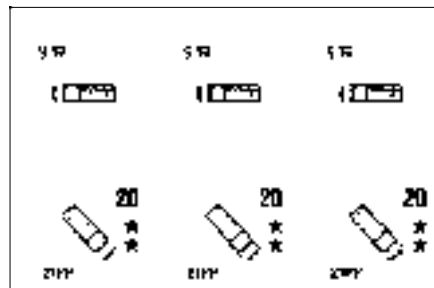
The annual (only one again this year, I'm afraid) is apparently complete, and ready for production, and if all goes as planned should ship around June or July. Among the features lined up are a look at gliders, a piece on the implications of Double Timing, the usual scenarios, and probably a correct comprehensive Q&A. A revised index has also been mentioned for consideration. More news next time hopefully.

Avalon Hill also hope to have a historical module based on the action at Pegasus Bridge out before the end of the year. This is intended to be a mini-campaign game along the lines of the Gavutu-Tanambogo campaign game from the '93*b Annual*. It will have half a dozen scenarios, a campaign game, and possibly some new counters. The mapsheet (although yet to be coloured, and roughly the size of the *RB* or *KGP* mapsheets) is apparently excellent.

Critical Hit!, Inc have been pretty busy recently, with both *Critical Hit! 4* and *Jatkosota* out now. *CH!4* features the usual mix of articles and scenarios, while *Jatkosota* is a module about the Continuation War (the Finnish struggle against the Soviets from 1941-44) and comes complete with a 12 page historical fact sheet, 8 scenarios, and 35 unmounted counters. They have also released a scenario pack featuring ten (revised) scenarios taken from the defunct 'zine *Rout Report*. Check your local stockist for these products, and look for full reviews next issue.

Europe's top *ASL* slugfest, Intensive Fire, has been confirmed for 15th-17th November 96. The format will follow closely the highly successful format last year including visits to the AFV Wing, the Small Arms Armoury and, as a change this year, the Artillery Sheds. The venue remains the Royal Military College of Science Shrivenham near

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ONLY THE ENEMY IN FRONT

Neil Stevens

I visited Normandy in 1988, along with a wargaming colleague, and we decided to tour around the WW2 beaches and battlefields. Over the course of a wonderful week we covered all of the invasion beaches plus

much more. For me, by far the most poignant, was a visit to the Commonwealth War Cemetery at Bayeux. I knew that a Great Uncle of mine had died during the invasion but it was not until I saw his name, amongst the missing in action list, that the full realisation of his sacrifice began to dawn on me. At the same time I noticed that he had belonged to an organisation that I had not previously heard of - the Reconnaissance Corps.

Years later I became aware of a book titled "Only the Enemy in Front (Every Other Beggar Behind!)" It is a potted history of the Reconnaissance Corps. Naturally I bought it and read it cover to cover. Not only

did I learn a great deal about the circumstances of my Uncles death (he was one of over 180 who died when his troopship tragically struck a mine whilst moving to unload onto the Mulberry Harbours) but I also learned about the activities and the men of the Reconnaissance Corps. This gave me the incentive to put pen to paper and try to design my first ASL scenario.

I wanted to portray some of the peculiarities of the Reconnaissance Corps. Armoured scout vehicles, bren carriers, infantry platoons, anti-tank guns - all are part of a Reconnaissance Regiment's order of battle. I therefore re-read the book and found

A CALL TO ARMS

In response to a number of requests, I am listing the addresses of known ASL players across the country, according to the region they live in. Hopefully it will be of use to some of you.

ENGLAND

N. Quinn, 23 Haywood, Bracknell, Berks., RG12 7WG
Steve Crowley, 58 Portlock Road, Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 6DZ
Dominic McGrath, 59 Upper Village Road, Sunninghill, Berks., SL5 7AJ
Nick Edelsten, 22 Wey Lane, Chesham, Bucks., HP5 1JH
Paul Layzell, 5 Sparsholt Close, Emerson Valley, Milton Keynes, Bucks., MK4 2HJ
Bob Eburne, 33 Whitton Way, Newport Pagnell, Bucks., MK16 0PR
Peter Bennet, 84 Littlebrook Avenue, Burnham, Bucks., SL2 2NN
Chris Foulds, 35 Parkside (upstairs rear), Cambridge, Cambs., CB1 1JB
M. W. Jones, 1 Cheviot View, Front St, Dipton, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 9DQ
Neil Brunger, 72 Penhill Close, Ouston, Chester Le Street, County Durham, DH2 1SG
Neil Stevens, 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8AE
William Roberts, 1 Kiln Close, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 3UR
Roger Cook, Elstree House, 1 Lambridge, Bath, BA1 6BJ
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Adrian Catchpole, 120 Somerset Road, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 2JB
Neil Piggot, 35 Hebron Road, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 3AE
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Martin Johnson, 16 Wick Lane, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3TA
Keith Graves, 51 Humbar Avenue, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5JL
Nick Ranson, 34 Mill Lane, Witham, Essex, CM8 1BP
Paul Rideout, 5 Fisher Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants., PO14 3RA
Chris Riches, 3 Bernwood Grove, Blackfield, Southampton, Hants., SO45 1ZW
Michael Rhodes, 10 Ringdale Place, Baldock, Herts., SG7 6RX
Paul Ryde-Weller, 44 Farm Way, Watford, Herts., WD2 3SY
Joe Arthur, 33 Cedar Close, St Peters, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 3BU
Aaron Sibley, 13 St Paul's Close, Swanscombe, Dartford, Kent
Carl Sizmus, 53 Singlewell Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 7PU
Bill Durrant, 10 Coopers Close, South Darenth, Kent, DA4 9AH
Nick Law, Flat 4, 12 Boyne Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8ET
Jon Williams, 4 Hanbury Drive, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent, TN16 3XN
Andrew Saunders, 22 Douglas Avenue, Layton, Blackpool, Lancs., FY3 7AL
Nigel Brown, 3 Chepstow Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY3 7NN
Charles Markuss, 23 Melrose Road, Littlelever, Bolton, Lancs., BL3 1DX
Shaun Carter, 3 Armside Grove, Breightmeid, Bolton, Lancs., BL2 6PL
Mike Standbridge, 31 Hunstanon Drive, Bury, Lancs., BL8 1EG
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Trevor Edwards, 18 Conway House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YJ
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Mike Kerfoot, Rugby Tavern, Rugby Street, London, WC1
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Gareth Evans, 29 Hillfield Road, Little Sutton, South Wirral, Merseyside, L66 1JA
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If there are any mistakes, please let me know so I can correct them for the next edition, and if you have any suggestions as to layout or format.

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a good first hand description of a small action. In this case it was the 61st Recce Regt involved an action in Belgium in September 1944. The next step was to translate the account of the battle into ASL terms. First I decided the situation; the British would be defending a bridge over a canal. I played around with OOBs for each side for a while trying to capture the feel of the action. The armoured vehicles were easy because they were all mentioned in the narrative, along with the 6-Pounder ATG. The British I then decided should have 6 squads and the Germans should have 10 squads. The British I made First Line reflecting the training of the Recce troops and the Germans I also gave First Line status with a lower ELR and SAN which seemed appropriate. I then added leaders and SWs to each side. Remember at this stage a good feel for the quantities of these weapons can be gained from the Chapter H (DYO) rules.

The final act was to construct the SSRs. I felt I had to add MIST to the battlefield because, again, this was specifically mentioned in the account of the battle. I then decided to include an SSR to allow one of the British leaders to direct the fire of the ATG as this reflects what actually happened and adds a certain colour to the scenario; as well as being unusual. Finally I added the rule about bringing the game to an early conclusion. This is my attempt to actually model what happened during the battle but will also serve to act as a deterrent for a German "banzai" type charge.

Next the terrain. I felt I had to use the canal board (23), with an SSR stipulating that only one bridge across the canal existed to give a good focus to the engagement. I then wanted a board of fairly open country with grainfields and not too much wooded area so I looked through the topographic list in the latest annual, chose a couple of descriptions I liked and eventually decided board 33 fitted the bill nicely.

I felt victory had to be based on terrain objectives for the German player. He basically had to capture the bridge so the best way to write this into victory conditions I felt was to set him the objective of controlling the vital ground in the vicinity of the bridge; the occupation of which would ensure that the bridge hex itself was controlled. So the victory conditions were decided. The last act was to write the scenario description and the aftermath.

You should then try and get a few people to look at your scenario. There may be something obvious that you have missed or an SSR that is not clear. A new, critical examination will probably reveal flaws in your design. At this stage it is all too easy to throw your hands in the air and to go away

and sob to yourself in a corner. You must persevere. What we all want are historical, balanced and playable scenarios. This does not happen easily. It takes work and commitment and you should carefully consider all good and bad comments about your scenario.

Usually after some alterations the next step is to play test the baby - no doubt this is how you view the scenario by now. For this you need a couple of friends with as much dedication to ASL as yourself. You are going to ask them to play a game that is, in all likelihood; unbalanced, untidy and certainly untested. A result will probably not be forthcoming and it may very well not look or feel right. It is only at this stage that you realise what a dog you may have created! It is now time to adjust the scenario from your play test experiences and play it again and again. Play it with and without the balances and try and get as many people as you can to play it for you and give you their comments. Someone might just discover that subtle game tactic that makes victory impossible for one side.

So. What next? Well do feel free to send it to Avalon Hill or one of the fanzine publishers. They are always delighted to receive extra material and even if it is not published you will usually get a thank you letter and a few useful criticisms. If they like your ideas they might take your scenario and develop it into a printable version and your name will go up in lights!

In my case, I feel I have the sound basis of a scenario. There are still some holes though and so I ask for your comments. I need to do some more research on the German units that were occupying this area at the time of the battle, and if any of you can help in this area I would be interested in hearing from you. I am also still concerned with; the number of squads per side, how the leader directed ATG will work, how achievable the victory conditions are and whether I have allowed the correct number of turns for the game. My plan is to throw it open to the readers of VFTT and invite feedback and comments. Please feel free to contact me at 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8AE or telephone me on 01258 459851. I do not guarantee that every suggestion will be incorporated but I will certainly listen to what anybody has to say. I plan to use this scenario at INTENSIVE FIRE 96 so potentially your hard work could prove to be very useful!

Finally, if this journey into scenario design serves to encourage you to consider designing your own then it will have proven to be an even more valuable exercise. It is great fun and adds a new dimension to this wonderful hobby of ours.

And my next scenario? I am now toying with two further scenarios; one that shows how the British stopped the German offensive in the Bulge in 1944 (this one should certainly interest our American cousins) and another one portraying an armoured action in the area of Caen. Until then I suppose its back to trimming my counters!

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Continued from page 6

Swindon, and full accommodation in the Officers' Mess is available. More details to follow in due course.

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FINAL FIRE

That's all for this issue. Hope you enjoyed it. All comments are welcome. Even better, contribute. Write an article. Design a scenario. Share your ASL experiences with others. *VFTT* allows you to communicate with other ASLers. Don't be a silent voice.

Expect to see issue 8 in early May.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is the bi-monthly newsletter of the British ASL community. It costs £1 per issue, with a year's subscription costing £5 - make all payments out to PETE PHILLIPPS. Overseas readers are welcome, and should send three International Reply Coupons for each issue they wish to receive. Readers are reminded to check their address label to see how many more issues they are due.

Copies of previous issues are not available at the moment, although material from them is available at the VFTT Web Site.

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