IN THIS ISSUE

INTENSIVE FIRE 2002 - ASLers get together in Bournemouth

GROSS DEUTSCHLAND - scenario analysis

A TALE OF TWO SCENARIOS - the two versions of It’s About Time compared
Welcome to yet another View From The Trenches. I had hoped to have this issue out a week after INTENSIVE FIRE but real life intervened and left me too busy to work on VFTT :-(). Hopefully I should get back on to schedule with the next issue, although I still have about half a dozen blank pages to fill right now!

Which means that I’m still looking for articles from you lot. They don’t have to be big in-depth analysis’ on scenario packs or rules sections; small one and two page articles on a scenario or rules such as prisoners are fine.

Have a good Christmas and roll low if you get to play ASL!

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps
**INCOMING**

**JOURNAL 4 RELEASED**

ASL Journal 4 has been released by MMP, priced $20.00. Within its 48 pages are 12 scenarios and a veerable sheet of hedge overlays. Among the articles are an Ian Daglish article on British carriers to accompany some of the scenarios in the issue, an article on Ambush and a look at ‘JZ4 Smashing The Third’. There is also a SASL mission set on Omaha Beach. Future issues will continue to range between $20 to $30 and contain the occasional mapsheet, counter sheet, or overlay sheet, but in order to increase its frequency of appearance, most of them are likely to be similar to ASL Journal 4.

**Operation Veritable**

The historical study covering the Commonwealth offensive along the German-Dutch border in February 1945 has reached its pre-order number and is now being printed. It is expected that it will be ready for shipping in a couple of weeks, priced $42.00. Also being printed is For King and Country, the new module containing the British OB, which will cost $85.00.

Close to reaching it pre-order number is Out Of The Attic 1, the first of a periodic magazine reprinting out of print articles and scenarios. The first issue will contain 16 scenarios (including the dozen from In Contact) and numerous articles such as J.R. VanMechelen’s night tutorial “Bring On The Night” and the accompanying Series Replay for the DASL scenario ‘Sicilian Midnight’. The retail price will be $16.00.

**FANATICS RELEASED**

Fanatic Enterprises has released Fanatic Pack 1. Among the dozen scenarios are several desert actions, some PTO and the usual East Front stuff. There is also a 1920 action on the Russian invasion of Poland. It is available for $12.00 (plus $2.00 shipping and handling: international orders will be charged actual shipping costs) from Fanatic Enterprises, Paul Kenny, PO Box 644, Haddonfield, NJ 08033.

**ASL FOR SALE**

I have the following stuff for sale. Please free to contact me with any queries rather than be in doubt. Ian Kenney, 53 Withdean Crescint, Brighton, BN1 6WG (email ikenney@bop.org.uk).

- Squad Leader – set 1 box good, boards all in very good condition, some fading and shelf wear on the box. I believe all the counters are present.
- Squad Leader – set 2 box very tatty. Boards all very good. I believe all the counters are present.
- Beyond Valor. Counters of each nationality in separate plastic multi-compartment boxes. I believe them to be complete but haven’t counted! Condition all first class. Hardly any shelf wear.
- Paratrooper. All complete. Box shows some minor shelf wear.
- Tanks. Chapter E Missing.
- West of Amsterdam. All infantry in separate plastic multi-compartment box. Only a few Info and Armour units punched out. I believe all the ½ inch counters are present but I’m not going to count them! Condition is all perfect.
- The Last Hurrah. Punched but all complete and – as new – condition. Box has only minor shelf wear.
- Code of Bushido. All perfect and unused.
- Croix de Guerre. All unpunched. Chapter N divider – Advanced Sequence of play missing.
- Kampfgruppe Peiper 1. Unpunched although a few strips of minefield counters have – detached - included in a separate bag. All complete and perfect.
- Pegasus Bridge. All unpunched. All unused and perfect.
- ASL Solitaire Module. All complete and perfect.
- ASL Action Pack 1. All unused and perfect.
- Separate boards: 5 (From Cross of Iron) – very good condition. 6 and 7 (From Crossroads of Doorn) – good Condition. 8 (From G.E. Anvil of Victory) – very good condition. 12 – new condition. 13 – good condition, some wear.

**CH RELEASE MAP AND HERO PAX**

Map PAX is a new module series featuring brand new historical maps, scenarios, play aids and historical notes, while Hero PAX is a new scenario series in which every scenario features a hero. The emphasis in both packs will be on tournament and medium-sized scenarios. The maps in Map PAX will feature new terrain art and be printed on the same heavyweight stock as used in recent CH maps such as those in Dien Bien Phu.

MapPAX1: BLOOD & IRON features 10 new scenarios depicting actions of the 27th Infantry Division in the Iepron Pocket on Okinawa in the face of fanatical Japanese defenders. HeroPAX features eight new scenarios depicting west front actions from Fall 1944 to the Battle of Hürtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge.

**THIRD PARTY PRODUCERS UK AVAILABILITY**

As well as editing VFIT I also help to distribute those third party products not generally available in the shops over here.

The prices are as follows, and are effective until the next issue of VFIT:

- Leibstandarte Pack 1 – £9.00
- Leibstandarte Pack 2 – £9.00
- Leibstandarte Pack 3 – £9.00
- Wacht Am Rhein – £14.00
- Canadians In Italy 1 – £9.00
- WinPak 1 – O/S
- Canada At War 1 – £6.00
- Canada At War 2 – £6.00
- Gross Deutschland Pack 1 – £9.00
- Schwerpunkt 8 – £12.00
- Fanatic Pack 1 – £8.00
- O/S - Out of stock temporarily

Add 50p per item for postage and send your payment made out to PETE PHILLIPPS to 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, England, LE4 OGB.

For the latest on stock availability telephone me (as usual evenings when Man United are not playing are your best bet!), or email me at pete@vfitt.co.uk.

**UK RETAILER STOCKISTS OF THIRD PARTY PRODUCTS**

To purchase other third party products such as Critical Hit, Schwerpunkt or Heat of Battle contact any of the following shops.

- LEISURE GAMES, 91 Ballards Lane, Finchley, London, N3 1XY. Telephone (020) 8346 2327 or e-mail them at shop@leisuregames.com.
- SECOND CHANCE GAMES, 182 Borough Road, Seacombe, The Wirral, L44 6NJ. Telephone (0151) 638 3353 or e-mail them at 2ndcgames@currantbun.com.
- PLAN 9, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen, AB25 1NE. Telephone (01224) 624 467 or e-mail them at PLAN9@IFB.CO.UK.

If you know of other shops stocking third party ASL products let me know so I can include them here in future issues.
## Intensive Fire 2002

### Fire Team Placings

#### Elite Division

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>POS</th>
<th>TEAM</th>
<th>PLAYER</th>
<th>PTS</th>
<th>OPP TEAM</th>
<th>OPP PTS</th>
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The **OPPO** value is the total value of the Crusader ladder points of the opponents beaten by that fire team.

#### First Division

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### Player Results

Here are the individual win/loss records.

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### The Scenarios

Here is the table of Scenario Win/Loss records - remember draws are used in the tournament rules:

#### Scenarios

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| TOTALS | 106 | 46 | 60 | 0 |

**View From**
There have now been 1679 games played at the Intensive Fire and Berserk tournaments over the last eight years. There are now 54 players who played 20+ games, 30 who have played 40+, and 10 who have played 60+ games. The largest number of games recorded is 86, by Dave Schofield, followed by Brian Hooper with 84. Interestingly those players having played most games are generally found clustered round the top and foot of the table. The top 10% of players have ratings of 3280+ while the bottom 10% of participants are rated 2665 or less. These numbers have remained essentially invariant over the last four years and the distribution of results is essentially Gaussian about 3000.

Perhaps the two most significant games of the weekend were played at the very beginning and end of the tournament and both involved Dave Schofield. Dave played Toby Pilling in the first round of the ‘flamethrower’ mini-tournament defeating him in a game of ‘Fire and Rain’. That loss caused Toby to drop sufficient points to displace him from the top of the ladder for the first time in a couple of years, despite the fact Toby went on to win all his remaining games. On the Sunday afternoon Dave, who was 6-0 at the time, lost in a game of ‘High Danger’ with Russell Gough which had to be concluded rather unsatisfactorily due to running over time. That defeat robbed Dave of the overall Intensive Fire Championship and gave the Elite Division Fireteam Prize to Russell’s team. Nevertheless Dave did accumulated 400 ladder points over the weekend putting him back into a top ten position (5th) after disappointing performances at Intensive Fire 01 and Berserk! 02. With Toby dropping 65 points over the weekend Steve Thomas finds himself on the top of the ladder despite missing the last two tournaments.

Unusually there were relatively few large swings in places over the weekend. Notable performances were the aforementioned Russell Gough (4-0 and +260 pts) who finds himself in lucky 13th place and Graeme Smith (also 4-0 and +335 pts) who moves from perilously close to the bottom of the table to mid-table obscurity. Biggest loser of the weekend was Chris Netherton (-305 pts). Chris had played in the Newbie tournament at Berserk! 02 and done exceedingly well however that performance put him in the elite division for the Intensive Fire Fireteam competition and he clearly suffered as a consequence. The other big loser of the weekend was Brian Hooper who played the largest number of games but went 2-7 and lost 270 points leaving him in 198th place.

Without further ado here is the ladder as of 9 November 2002.

### The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

**INTENSIVE FIRE 2002 Update**

**Derek Tocher**

---

**Rank** | **Player** | **Played** | **W—D—L** | **Points**
---|---|---|---|---
1 | Steve Thomas | 42 | 32—1—9 | 3755
2 | Derek Tocher | 82 | 61—1—20 | 3745
3 | Toby Pilling | 50 | 44—1—5 | 3725
4 | Mike Rudd | 38 | 32—1—5 | 3660
5 | Dave Schofield | 86 | 58—0—28 | 3655
6 | Bjarne Hansen | 31 | 23—0—8 | 3630
7 | Michael Hastrup—Leth | 45 | 31—1—13 | 3630
8 | Aaron Cleavin | 6 | 6—0—0 | 3565
9 | Peter Bennett | 14 | 12—1—1 | 3560
10 | Carl Sizmur | 16 | 11—0—5 | 3515
11 | Simon Strevens | 67 | 43—1—23 | 3500
12 | Fermin Retamero | 8 | 7—0—1 | 3480
13 | Russell Gough | 45 | 26—3—16 | 3450
14 | Ran Shiloah | 11 | 7—0—4 | 3365
15 | Jes Touvdal | 20 | 13—0—7 | 3360
16 | Bernt Ribom | 5 | 5—0—0 | 3350
17 | Joe Arthur | 21 | 13—0—8 | 3305
17= | Dominic Mcgrath | 79 | 41—1—37 | 3305
19 | Frank Tinschert | 15 | 10—0—5 | 3295
20 | Trevor Edwards | 71 | 36—1—34 | 3285
20= | Philippe Leonard | 9 | 7—1—1 | 3285
20= | Steve Linton | 11 | 8—0—3 | 3285
23= | Will Fleming | 3 | 3—0—0 | 3280
23= | Ralf Krasus | 6 | 5—0—1 | 3280
23= | Alan Snee | 4 | 4—0—0 | 3280
26= | Dave Booth | 7 | 5—0—2 | 3270
26= | Luis Calaca | 39 | 20—1—18 | 3270
26= | Phil Draper | 9 | 6—1—2 | 3265
29 | Steve Crowley | 44 | 20—1—23 | 3260
30 | Stephen Burleigh | 9 | 5—0—4 | 3255
31= | Keith Bristow | 37 | 22—1—14 | 3245
31= | Daniel Kalman | 11 | 8—0—3 | 3245
33= | Daniel Batey | 4 | 4—0—0 | 3235
33= | Paul Saunders | 19 | 10—0—9 | 3230
35 | Ray Woloszyn | 31 | 18—1—12 | 3225
36 | Christain Koppmeyer | 15 | 8—0—7 | 3220

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**Rank** | **Player** | **Played** | **W—D—L** | **Points**
---|---|---|---|---
37= | Tom Slizewski | 5 | 4—0—1 | 3215
38= | Klaus Malmstrom | 4 | 3—1—0 | 3210
38= | Nils—Gunner Nilsson | 5 | 4—0—1 | 3210
38= | Yves Tielemans | 3 | 3—0—0 | 3210
41 | Francois Boudrenghien | 3 | 3—0—0 | 3205
42 | Aaron Sibley | 43 | 26—0—17 | 3195
43 | Jean Devaux | 3 | 3—0—0 | 3190
44 | Armin Deppe | 13 | 7—1—5 | 3185
45= | Bill Durrant | 5 | 4—0—1 | 3180
45= | Lars Klysnar | 6 | 4—0—2 | 3180
47 | Jonathan Pickles | 8 | 5—0—3 | 3175
48= | Grant Pettit | 7 | 4—1—2 | 3170
48= | Bruno Tielemans | 3 | 3—0—0 | 3170
50= | Rodney Callen | 6 | 4—0—2 | 3160
50= | Mel Falk | 9 | 5—0—4 | 3160
52 | Jeremy Copley | 9 | 6—0—3 | 3150
53 | Nick Edelsten | 22 | 14—1—7 | 3145
54= | Paul O’donald | 72 | 44—1—27 | 3135
54= | Frenk Van Der Mey | 4 | 3—0—1 | 3135
56= | Chris Courtier | 13 | 7—2—4 | 3130
56= | Bob Earburn | 44 | 26—0—18 | 3130
58 | Paul Sanderson | 41 | 21—0—20 | 3125
59= | Lee Brimmicombe—Wood | 12 | 8—0—4 | 3120
59= | Paul Ryde—Woller | 10 | 5—1—4 | 3120
61= | Stewart Thain | 10 | 6—0—4 | 3115
61= | Mark Walley | 4 | 3—0—1 | 3115
63= | Luc Schonkerren | 5 | 3—0—2 | 3110
64= | Andrew Dando | 44 | 23—2—19 | 3105
64= | Paul Haesler | 6 | 3—0—3 | 3105
64= | Simon Morris | 11 | 6—0—5 | 3105
64= | Nils—Gunner Nilsson | 5 | 4—0—1 | 3100
68= | Michel Baudet | 82 | 61—1—20 | 3095
68= | Kevin Beard | 13 | 9—0—3 | 3090
70= | Iain Mackay | 43 | 22—0—21 | 3090
70= | Peter Michaels | 3 | 2—0—1 | 3090

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**GD5 MACHORKA**

In the Russian Army Ivan Frontovich spent a deal of time discussing the quantity and quality of Russian units exiting off the South edge between R0 and R7. Additionally you earn 1.5 times normal VP for German units North of the Stream.

It is possible to win by controlling the Southern bank of the Stream, cracking up CVP by eliminating Russkies at a faster rate than your own troops are killed. Preventing or limiting the exit of Russian units is important in close fought games, less important after a veritable massacre. This is a very simple defence requiring the least movement and time to set up. Start by deploying a couple of squads to act as Mortar crews and flanking units. Organise your squads into small platoons of three or four squads, a Leader, and two or three MGs and/or Mortars. On turn one move to take up position in the following areas.

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- A strong force is needed around R7, S7 and S8 to secure the Eastern flank., A Squad in S10 would help but will likely be needed elsewhere. This force should get a mortar, MMG and a decent leader. Another group begins in R3, R4, R5, and R6, this includes the 50mm Anti tank gun, in R4 or R5. Two other groups are centred around S2/ T2 and U1/U2. Admittedly this is a very linear defence, liable defeat in detail at either end of the line or at key points. On the plus side the position makes good use of the Stream as a defended obstacle, has good cover, offers interior lines and very good positions for Mortars. The defence should be strengthened by digging in. There should be a turn or two before any attack develops so make the most of the time available. Against a broad attack by hordes of Russians across the whole width of the board this defence is very strong. As mentioned earlier it will be weaker against flanking attacks or carefully positioned thrusts. Against a determined thrust of four or five

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**GD5 German Opening Moves**

You win by equalling the Russians victory point total. Points are awarded for Casualties (CVP), and for Russian units exiting off the South edge between R0 and R7. Additionally you earn 1.5 times normal VP for German units North of the Stream.

One idea I’m not too keen on is attacking the Russians! Using the R6 road you can reach the DD hexrow on turn two. Most opponents would be surprised or at least puzzled by such an aggressive move. A brisk firefight followed by a couple of rounds of hand to hand combat should see the Russians Victorious leaving enough time for a rematch.

Another slightly less dubious opening starts with a defensive hedgehog formed within two or three hexes of X5. By stacking two or three squads per hex and entrenching a strong defence is forged. If the position is bypassed the Russians can just manage a win, provided he can exit his entire OB and you do not launch a massive counter attack when he is starting to move off the board. The Reds can approach with concealed squads intending to ambush and kill in Hand to Hand combat.

Other ideas to be briefly considered are a forwards defence of the U and V hexrows North or South of the stream, which has some of the advantages and disadvantages of both the South bank and forwards defences. Setting up in two or three strong positions is feasible, for example a defence could be organised around U2 and S8 helped by a small screen in between of mortars and half squads, plays pretty similar to the South bank defence. You can even pick sites North of the Stream. These amount to much the same as more linear defences, with perhaps a small gain due to concentration of force.

In some games I would go for the forwards defence, falling back towards the stream under pressure. There can be no guarantee this will win, nor could I even prove it is the best overall strategy. The defence appeals because it suits my style of play, I’d feel comfortable winning, and would no doubt learn something from a loss.

When considering your options do not underestimate the Russkies. Their initial forces are huge, outnumbering you two to one, stealth, and the mobility cloaking provides makes them a serious attacking force. The good news includes low ELR and limited support weapons. The really good news is the lack of sufficient leadership. With only two leaders attacking options are limited. Self rally ability is limited making broken Russian squads effectively a combat loss. Even if the 8-0 leader is exchanged for a commissar rallying ability is limited. The short story is attacks will be limited to one or at most two sectors of the front at a time unless the Russians risk their forces becoming a mass of broken squads. If you can kill a leader you improve your chances, kill both and you should go on to win. Returning to bad news you are vulnerable to being overwhelmed in hand to hand combat. A strong attack will be disrupted by firepower, leaving some Russkie squads broken, some dead and some adjacent keen to advance into Melee. Breaking before this happens is an option for a forwards defence, try to fall back and create a new defence line or two or three hexes back. Or fight it out with an equal chance of success you may hold the
position and even be able to infiltrate after ambushing your opponent. Anti tank rifles are included in your OB. they can be used for long range interdiction, used to make concealed stakes higher, or given to Heroes generated by Heat of Battle rolls. Another possibility is to add 1 FP to IFT attacks taking a LMG to a 41FT, a MMG to 61FT. Not a game winner in itself but worth considering.

The AT gun is much more useful. With a rate of fire of three, a basic 61FT attack, and a realistic chance of a critical hit it is a valuable unit. Moving it North of the Stream earns you six VPs, enough to win a close game.

Mortars are great in woods, with ROF of three expect a lot of hits, and a few morale checks or rare KIA. In close terrain line of sight can be restricted, use adjacent troops as spotters to extend the mortars field of view. Remember spotters can be designated at the start of the prep fire or defensive fire phases, also note spotting counts as use of a support weapons. If you do forget a wily opponent will remind you just after you have challenged an attack with your Anti tank rifle! Spotting can also work to allow shooting from behind the front line at targets adjacent to the front line, for example a mortar in W4, with a spotter in X4 could fire at Y4. Do not go out of your way to create opportunities to use spotters but use it if it arises.

As usual there is considerable scope for setting up and playing differently. If you have any strong preferences that you are convinced will lead to Victory or even more importantly an enjoyable game follow your instincts.

Expect a really tough fight. The first two turns are all about gaining the best position for defence. Turns three and four are all about the Russians probing for weaknesses. The last two turns will be Bedlam, trying to win small firefightsin, back out of bad situations and making snap decisions when opportunities for close combat arise. Enjoy playing, the result should be very close.

GD5 Russian Opening Moves

The Germans can win by moving onto the map and crossing the stream and keeping the overall number of casualties down. As the Ruskis' you must do rather more, to earn exit Victory points you must breach the German defences and exit the map off the Southern edge.

With twenty five squads you start with a massive force that outnumbers the Germans roughly two to one. In a melee or hand to hand combat your forces will prevail by sheer weight of numbers. To position yourself to attack in close combat is tricky requiring some planning and an acceptance of some casualties during the approach. The terrain helps a lot, played on board four the Grossdeutschland Infantry would mow down Russian attackers, woods greatly restrict line of sight and cover your attack. In a straight firefight at close quarters our troops have an advantage in raw firepower 210IFT at point blank range, the Germans have around the 170 mark.

Other factors come into play. Leadership, rate of fire, three 50mm Mortars (less the firepower lost by crewing them), and the 50mm Anti tank gun all help the defenders. My own view is you will do better in close combat than a shooting match unless you are able to manoeuvre to earn local superiority. There is some more baddish news, a low ELR (2), will result in slow moving conscripts who are slow moving, weak in fire combat, are lax and tend to break things...assuming of course you can rally them. The absolute worst news is Soviet leadership, it is good enough in terms of quality but two Leaders and five squads is a headache. One compromise is to use what Leaders you have for rallying troops, do not use them to direct fire or to assist movement.

So how to begin. Some planning depends on the terrain and the Germans opening moves. I'll try an cover the expected Jerry openings, but during play you will have a reasonable idea of what he is about and can plan accordingly. In all cases cocking and concealment make it harder to gauge how strongly different sectors of the line are held. Knowing where the defensive line is important, exactly what is there cannot be certain but doesn’t matter too much. Most likely the defences will be strong in some areas slightly weaker in others. Given your attack is on a broad front this is not too important. Most likely the Germans will advance across a broad front. Either they will take up positions south of the Stream or move further North to the U/V or X hexrow. Extremely aggressive players will come straight for you down the R6 road. Very occasionally you might see a hedgehog defence of the bridge, the road junction at W5 or a couple of strong flanking positions. Every single opening has a counter, not necessarily guaranteeing a win, but good enough to keep you in the game with a good chance.

If the Jerry’s opt for a point defence, you have at least two options. One idea is to carefully bypass the position, heading South off the board. Watch out for opponents who let you bypass then erupt in a ferocious counter attack. The second option is to surround and assault the Germans. Mortars and MGs make this difficult. For best results carefully encircle then rush in from all sides or from at least two or three directions. If you can get all your troops off board you will scrape a win by 53VPs to 51. Not terribly exciting but probably a better chance of survival. Survive and be enough time to play again as nothing will have gone back in the box!

An attack by the Germans charging up the road is startling. A simple idea is to meet the attack head on. Rather better might be flanking the opponent and attempting either infiltration or even encirclement. German chances of a win are not great, and it is unlikely you will encounter this opening move. Keep a careful watch on the time, fighting around the DD hexrow leaves you little time to get off the board.

In most games you will likely encounter a defensive screen, a thin line behind the stream or a forward line across the U/V or X hexrows. Both defences are viable, they are not weak but can be countered. The first problem is approaching the enemy. Cloaking really does help, lightening the burden of the Maxim, and giving all your troops 6MF. If you really are in a hurry, some six squads can CX with a leader, and ten or twenty five move 1FT to follow. Survive and be enough time to play again as nothing will have gone back in the box!

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and start panicking on turn five when you really must move!

Pick up any light support weapons you can, even the ATRs can be useful. The mortars are a bit bulky so take the odd shot then destroy them or at least discard them.

The lack of leaders makes this a challenging scenario, hordes of infantry will help you win provided you keep up the pace of your attack. On occasions you will enjoy some superlative luck, a cowearing enemy defensive fire attack or a lucky close combat Ambush roll, the Anti tank gun malfunctioning and becoming disabled. These and other random events are part of your overall attack plan; a big force can soak up more bad luck than a smaller fragile opponent. In close combat the Fourth Army’s squads are equal to the elite Grossdeutschland Regiment, and you have an awful lot of them.

**GD5 Conclusion**

Even with 37 squads this can be a very fast playing game, it should be possible to play both sides in an evening and enjoyable to do so. The limited leadership on the Russian side gives a first rate example of the importance of leaders in ASL. This is a very well thought out scenario, a very simple idea but challenging and a bit different. It’s gone straight onto my favourite list.

**GD6 GREAT ELAN**

Great Elan features a large Russian force dug in to conduct a deliberate defence against a well supported German attack. Fortifications and concealment strengthen the Soviet game, well equipped Sturm Pioneers with flame throwers and demolition charges backed up by StuGs, flak wagons and 81mm OBA give the Germans winning chances.

Both players need to take a long hard look at the map boards before play. A huge swathe of woods runs from 17A4 to 17CC10 with a few gaps influencing vehicular movement. Spend some time checking lines of sight as the Soviets to determine killing zones or as the Jerries to help avoid them!

**GD6 Russian Set-Up**

Your objectives are either to control one building in the Village within three hexes of 17R4 or inflict over 45 CVP on the attacking GrossDeutschlanders. Your own casualties are of no consequence, you can win with a Conscript half squad or a wounded leader as long as you satisfy the victory conditions.

Enemy forces are very strong. Elite, well led infantry with high ELR, plenty of support weapons, flak wagons, StuGs, 150mm Infantry Guns, near certain OBA, and a couple of platoons of Sturm Pioneers. Fortunately to reach the village they must cross board 4, which will take time and will cost CVP.

Russian forces are impressive, a gaggle of guns and mortars, and a huge infantry force. Leadership is not too high, ELR is low, but you will receive a reasonable allocation of support weapons, concealment and hidden status for a significant part of your forces. A mass of fortifications, wire, mines, bunkers, fortified buildings, trenches and even foxholes greatly increase the effectiveness of your defence.

Mines can be exchanges for either booby traps (B28.9) or Anti tank mines (B28.5) depending on your preferences. Despite the choices available AP mines are probably the most effective. Even 6FP will hurt German Infantry, soft skin vehicles and can immobilise a StuG if you are lucky, or should that be very lucky?. There is not much to choose between 6, 8 and 12 FP mines, personal preference goes for 6 factor fields as you get more of them. If your set up needs to only cover a limited number of hexes higher factors make sense. A valid tactic that might not be unexpected is a small mine field in a building hex. If you enter from an adjacent building hex or tunnel you will not be attacked, advancing German units will. If you break the attacker he receive another attack if routing out of the building. The weakness of this ploy is vulnerability to OBA and area fire attacks.

Wire not only delays infantry it can slow vehicles, creating rate of fire opportunities or improving the chances of a hit. Placing it above trenches or bunkers complicates attacks making close combat very risky.

Fortified buildings are as good as or better bunkers, resistant to artillery attack direct fire, with capacity for three squads and both your leaders. Late in the game they are hard to attack as they cannot be entered in the Advance Phase whilst a Good Order squad/equivalent is present. Not something to build your whole game around but nice when it happens. At the risk of antagonising some excellent players check out B 8.6, which allows you to exchange one or more fortified buildings for tunnels. Using a tunnel to connect a village building with a woods hex containing a Commissar or even some reserves could make for an interesting end game. Having hidden units ready to slide down tunnels on turn seven might rank as gamesmanship to some, a legitimate Ruse De Guerre to others. Not something I’d attempt against a friend, but if on the receiving end I’d kick myself for not anticipating the tactic. Do it if you must but keep in view the entrance could be found by searching and destroyed before you attempt your finale. Back to the plan, it is hard to resist fortifying stone buildings 17S6 and perhaps 17P2, and using the third location for a tunnel.

There is scope for a great deal of creativity in how you use fortifications. By all means set up gun and/or mortar positions. It is usually better to delay your approach not all of it. The HMGs can go for a front line positions in the centre or even on the flanks or how about the upper level of a board 17 building. Bore sight anything you can more in hope than in expectation. Use concealment counters to make the flanks look stronger, hidden status to protect leaders, set traps or create the impression of weakness in the central core, the areas you want the attack to go. Apologies for not listing specific hexes, this would take up a lot more space, and would not exactly be interesting.

Variation on this could be using wire on the flanks, weakening the centre for a more balanced strength across the board or making the killing ground on either flank rather than in the centre.

Now this is not a perfect defence there are many counters to it. One of the most obvious is one or two attempts to turn your flanks. If this happens thin out the centre to support the areas under attack, attempt to draw off the flanks to the village to go for a control win. This is not ideal, as your fortification will be out of position, on the up side your opponent will have lost two or more turns of movement due to the extra distance he now needs to cover to get to the village.

Ideally you will be subjected to a direct frontal attack. Go for the Flak wagons if you can.

**The Trenches**
they are worth a lot of points. Destroying one will make the others more cautious allowing you to
kill infantry. Be aggressive, keep shooting at broken units to kill them or slow their rallying.
Kill leaders, anyone with a flame-thrower or demolition charge, then go for pioneers and finally
squads. When the Guns arrive, need it be written, take a shot, the easiest way to kill a Gun, crew
towing vehicle is to catch it limbered for a quick SCVP. Use captured weapons, particularly
flame-throwers and demolition charges as soon as you can.

Expect a tough fight, aim to win on CVP but accept a Control win if the attack avoids your
killing zones.

Another way to play is to aim for Control of one or more buildings at the game end, most of the
fortifications will be close to the 17R4 village. There are countless ways to do this. Anyone with
strong personal views should stick to their own ideas. Others might like to consider some of the
following. The basic idea is to delay German advance sufficiently so that you just hold on to the
last building in the last turn, your opponent should feel one more turn would bring victory and
evulnerable he will be right! You need to delay the advance across board four. Options include
starting some dummy counters and/or real troops on board four, MG positions in the first levels of
buildings 17R1 and Q4, spotted mortar fire from similar spots, and the forwards deployment of one
or more guns. Expect even small forces, say five or six squads, to slow the Germans down, for one
or two turns. This should hold the advance across board four for three turns. As the Germans reach
the edge of board 17 try to oppose movement into buildings W1, R1, and P2. Small garrisons will
not hold out for long, but one or two turns is just about possible. Wire in front of some or all of these
buildings present an obstacle that is most easily cleared by tanks. As the StuGs do not arrive before
turn five and will not reach the village for nearly two turns Jerry has a problem. OBA can open
gaps in wire, or it can be skirted round. Both solutions delay the German attack. In the case of
German movement is a bit obvious, hiding one or both of these stacks can surprise a stack moving
towards you from return fire. For the guns long range fire support will work. Look at the grainfields around
17X7, U7, or most woods hexes on the northern edges of the board. Remember you have a pair of
bunkers. Worth considering the 17C8 woods hex boresighted to 17T3 or U2 is a decent spot for an
Infantry Gun, probably works best as a bunker due to the threat of artillery fire. Similarly there is
woods hex 17R4 sighted on 17R3, might just catch a StuG edging forwards. Hold your fire if you
can, blaze way when the guns are threatened with destruction.

Hidden units can play hide and seek with the Germans. Bad spots are anywhere OBA or
fire attacks are expected. Better spots are outside the village, best of all anywhere your opponent is
not expecting them but intends to move. Against a really good sport he might tell you, against a
regular opponent you might almost know, in most other circumstance you will have to guess.

When the Guns arrive, need it be written, the bulk of the Germans are needed on or close to board 17. One or
two in the village is not a good idea. Mortars are long range units. Many good spots exist, do not
be put off by hindrances an extra plus one or two is not a great inconvenience and in turn protects
you from return fire. For the guns long range fire support will work. Look at the grainfields around
17X7, U7, or most woods hexes on the northern edges of the board. Remember you have a pair of
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can, blaze way when the guns are threatened with destruction.

Use concealed units to confuse the enemy, draw sniper shots away from real units and to
skulking through minefields. The latter will upset any
opponent who has been carefully noting the movement of your units to locate mines.
Set up is only part of the game plan. You must carefully judge when to hide and when to
fire, carefully pick your targets, relocate troops to frustrate enemy moves and generally do a lot of
clever stuff to win. This is required because the German attack will be very strong, excellent OBA
will almost certainly land some missions over the course of an eight turn game because it is using
NOBA access. Sorry the maths (or Math for our American readers) is beyond me. Sturm-Pioneers
will bring smoke, demolition charges and flame-throwers, the latter two highly effective against
infantry in buildings. If a substantial force of Pioneers reach the village and are used effectively
the whole place could be cleared out in three turns unless you act decisively.

Occasionally a defence of the village will push the Krauts towards the CVP cap, a few
burning StuGs or flak wagons could help, steady fire and attrition will do the rest. When you
can close your options. Stick with a plan to control if it is
working, go for the kill if that is a better

There are other ways to plan your defence, placing greater or lesser emphasis on forwards
defence, deeper defence of the village, even an attempt to counter attack from the flanks. Make sure you choose the tactics that will work for you, take your time this is a complicated scenario.

Whatever plans you start with, however the battle goes it should be hard not to enjoy this one.
The lack of leaders is inconvenient but you have lots of crews that perform reasonably well on their
own, self rally ability for one squad per turn and eighteen squads to fight with. Keep a check on
your own morale, your strong force will take a
damage, lose a lot of terrain and be dogged by bad luck during fire combat and minefield
attacks. On turn seven you can make rush to reclaim a building or two or consolidate what you
still hold. Set up is complicated, requiring a deal of
thought and some frettng about German
approaches and tactics, after a couple of turns you
should feel more settled and start to feel a win is
attainable. In some games you will lose, not because
your set is fundamentally flawed but because the German has anticipated your
positions and subsequent movements. In most
games you will win provided you can maintain
sufficient doubt as to your plans and back this up with
sound tactics. Above all do not give up, you can take a tremendous kicking, inflict few
casualties on the Germans but win because you hold a single building.

**GD6 German Attack**

The mission is simple enough, Control all the
buildings within three hexes of 17R4 without
losing more than 45 CVP. Have a good look at
the Control conditions outlined in A26. These are
interesting as you could win without firing a shot
if pyromaniac Soviets kindle all the buildings or
lose if you deliberately start a single flame leading
to a blaze. Accidental fires caused by OBA or
flame-throwers are slightly different in that the
side that Control the majority of hexes adjacent to
the building controls it. Read these rules before
play starts and discuss any contentious or
confusing rules with the Russkies.

**Enemy forces are reasonably strong.**

Hordes of Russian infantry, respectable Anti Tank
capability, masses of fortifications, a pair of
mortars and three 76* Infantry guns. Fortunately
the defenders have some weaknesses. Their
squad ELSR is two, the infantry force is first line,
ELRing to Conscription. Both types of Russian
infantry suffer from short range, important for
controlling open ground on board four. Leadership
is limited to a 9-1 and 8-0 or Commissar for
eighteen squads. The guns are a mixed bag, some
are deadly against armour, all are effective against
infantry and soft skinned vehicles. The two
biggest problems you face are concealment and
fortifications.

**Mines, wire, trenches, foxholes, employment for guns, fortified buildings and**
maybe a tunnel or two make you assault harder
than a simple fight against an Infantry and Gun
armed force. Obstacles like wire and mines create
delay slowing or stopping movement, and create
killing zones were your attacking forces will be
broken reduced or killed if you are not careful.
The Trenches

Have a quick read of the Russian set up described above to appreciate some of the ideas the Reds may use. Initially you will have no idea what fortifications are, one way or another you will find out.

There are tactics to use against each type of fortification and the composition of the direction of your attack. Fortified buildings are not a massive problem. In most games they will be stone buildings, occasionally one or two wooden ones might be fortified. Finding them should not be difficult, it is unlikely you will need to search or be compromised trying to advance into a suddenly revealed fortified building. With OBA, flame throwers, and demolition charges you have ways to attack any strong points you find. If time is pressing driving a StuG into a fortified building for an overrun with the risk of bog and vulnerability to attack. Not the first thing to try but worth considering if hard pressed to gain Control on turn seven or eight. Making a breach to gain access can work but probably will not be necessary. Fortified building hexes can be exchanged for Tunnels. Subterranean movement allows the defenders to move into buildings even after yours have thrust through them. Destroy any tunnels you discover, you cannot use them, even a chance you opponent will.

Minefields start play hidden, attack without warning, and attack again when you try to move off them. A rather nice way to find them involves routing enemy Infantry being broken or reduced and triggering a SAN attack. Keep a careful eye on Russian movement and routing as it may give clues as to areas free of wire and probably mines. Searching will find them, always attempt this when you have spare movement factors. 36 factors might sound a lot, but this is only six 6FP fields or a maximum of twelve 1 factor AT fields. It is not often you will clear mines by lifting them. Often they are best avoided. When this is not possible first choice should be using OBA to blast a path through. Driving a StuG onto an AP field results in infrastructures revitalisation and creates a trail break that reduces infantry's vulnerability to mines. If no other means is available the most ruthless counter to mines is to run through them for a couple of 6.8 or 12 IFT attacks. With high morale and ELR you have a good chance of survival. Mines are a real problem but keep them in perspective, they will only hurt you if you step on them, in reality they add up to a series of extra IFT attacks. Becoming excessively cautious about mines will delay your attack and could reduce your chances of a win. Watch out for mines in buildings, hopefully you will not find too many of these on turns seven or eight. Half expect them in 17P2 or 17R1

Not as nasty as mines but still unpleasant is the most positive thing you can say about the kilometres of wire in the Russian defences. Wire is a hindrance to movement, difficult to clear. The best counters are driving a fully tracked vehicle onto or OBA that has a chance of clearing it. Moving around it work, so too does moving through if you do not have an alternative.

Attacking bunkers or Pillboxes is always challenging. Often the only way of achieving this is close combat. Here you have the choice of using Flame-throwers, demolition charges and possibly OBA. In ASL German Anti tank rifles are not powerful enough to attack to attack Pillboxes. The StuGs can attack using HE, or even AP through the non covered arc. AP increases the chance of a hit, HE the effectiveness of any hits. Remember the StuGs have limited supplies of armour piercing ammunition. Area fire or direct fire from the 150* Infantry guns will work, so too will hit attacks by the Flak Wagons choose between HE, AP and IFT attacks. Finding them is your first problem. Usually this dilemma will be solved by a burst of hostile fire, otherwise by movement or searching. Avoid gun lights between StuGs and bunkers, it is better to move out of their covered arcs then plan an attack. If you are lucky the bunkers will be poorly sighted, unable to fire on you and eventually abandoned by their occupants, they might even have to leave behind a gun.

Ushchely Trenches are not much different from foxholes. Here they can be used for gun positions, tunnel entrances or as an obstacle to movement. There are not really any special tactics to use against these features. Just keep them in view in your planning.

Your own troops range from good to excellent, have high ELR, plenty of support, good weapons and armor, and artillery support. The Flak Wagons are better than they first appear. True they are soft skin vehicles, but they have a high rate of fire gun with a long range. They can support the village attack from 16 hexes away with 8IFT attacks and rate of two. As long as you can find the right spot for them they will be of great use. The 150* Infantry guns are good when they get going but difficult to site in this scenario. Aim to prepare a route for them to move on board, if you cannot find a good spot for them or any other unit, keep them out of harms way to avoid unnecessary casualties. Not too much needs saying about the infantry and Pioneers. Lead the attack with elite squads and half squads, save the pioneers for blasting or burning out the villages defenders or odd strong points you meet along the way. In the village the best planned attacks will feature Prep Fire followed by smoke, assault movement with fire and charges, flamethrowing and advance into close combat. Some attacks will not be so well planned instead being a quick rush when necessary.

Unexpected help comes from the terrain on board four. The big danger in attacks from off-board is that of being broken in the open with nowhere to route. In these cases you fall off the edge of the world and die. Not a good way to lose eight morale units that would have a better than 50% chance of rallying in the next couple of turns. Fortunately there are many covered approaches to use on turn one. There are only two wooden multi-storey buildings on board 17, and their lines of sight are limited. Using fortifications the Russians could even get a Gun up onto the first floor, with less cunning a HMG nest or mortar spotter matched up with bore sighted locations is enough to worry about. On the eastern flank a pair of low hedges allow you to move quickly to the beach to 28 to 32 hexrows. The cover is patched but still available. To be honest you could attack almost anywhere along the southern edge.

Begin by looking at the Russians set up. On turn one very little will be visible. Expect the Guns and mortars, fortifications and three squads to be hidden, everything else concealed. Count the cash counters and look for big stacks. I would half expect to see HMG nests in the upper stories of the multi-hex buildings on board 17, and a smattering of concealment counters on board four. Much of what you can deduce of Russian dispositions will be guess work, aim to be as accurate as you can. Next decide how you will conserve your initial force. Ignoring most troops into four platoons of three or four squads, a leader and couple of MGs. The three mortars can be manned as separate units, but the anti tank rifles can simply be added to the platoon to help MG attacks or for interdiction. If you find a gun shooting at this with an ATR is well worth a try and historically accurate. The pioneers can be split between the platoons or form an assault platoon of their own.

Probably an attack down the eastern flank then sweeping to the village makes the best sense. On turn one you can reach the Zs-FF5 road, set up a fire base then prepare to move north west towards the village. If Russian resistance is light sending your entire force this way is most effective. If the Russkies have anticipated your attack and are very strong slow down, hit them with OBA and try to wear them down. You will need to work some troops towards the Village, keep moving forwards in the advance phase and turning the Russians flank. Although meeting virtually the whole Soviet force on turns one or two will seem a nightmare you might still salvage the situation.

There could be a case for sending a platoon through the 4E6 grainfield as part of your initial plan or if you are stymied at the hedge. Another platoon further west, sweeping through woods and grain may help pin the attacks down on that flank making your advance easier elsewhere.

There are other opening you could use, spreading your forces across the board, attacking on both flanks or a direct frontal attack up the O to S hexrows. How effective each option will be depends on Russian set up. To win you need to exploit any good fortune, and recover from any nasty surprises. This may sound difficult, and it is. To make your decisions easier devise two directions your attack will take, move your forces on board and then assess the situation at the end of each turn. This is more of a reconnaissance in force than a deliberate attack despite the strength and composition of your command. As you find enemy troops your choices become clearer. Quickly kill any gun crews that emerge, kill both Soviet Leaders, but settle for breaking squads. Take prisoners to ease your end game.

During the advance make use of cover, concealment, smoke, supporting fire and OBA. Keep the flak wagons a bit back out of range of streams, out of sight of guns and mortars if you can.

If resistance is heavy hit hard with the OBA in the area in front of your attack. This will cause casualties, and may reveal hidden units or fortifications. If few known or suspected units oppose your advance, start hammering the Village.

On turn three you will have either two or three rows of cover patches and possibly the Village. On turn five more substantial reinforcements arrive. The StuGs should be fast enough to reach the village in one or two turns.
the infantry will really have to hurry. Aim to have cleared a route for the arriving units to the village clear of wire, mines and hostile fire. As you enter the village the fight becomes a bit easier for you. You should be able to clear the place in three turns with acceptable casualties. Some wire and mines will be present as time is pressing you might have to charge and risk some losses.

Russian fire and fortifications are formidable opponents. The CVP Cap is high and should not be reached as long as your vehicles are not caught by enemy guns. Your real enemy is time. Eight turns is not a lot of time to clear the village given the time delays cause by wire, mines, enemy fire and the caution imposed by a CVP cap. Even if you are caught flat footed by blundering into the strongest part of the Russian defence you can still win if you pace your attack correctly. Conversely you can bypass the strongest defences and waste away time to lose. The key to winning is as the title suggest great Elan, French for Dash and daring, here it implies rapid movement in the face of enemy fire.

**GD6 Conclusion**
A bit of a beast, very large orders of battle, hidden units, concealment and fortifications create a hard fought battle. This is definitely worth playing at least once. Playing several times will take an awful lot of time and some of the excitement will be lost as both players discern each others respective styles of attack. This is not a criticism, the same applies to a lot of scenarios. A lot of thought and hard work must have gone into design and play testing. Using NOBA access rules is a good idea, without some OBA the attack turns are intense expect to see remaining Russian units struggling against a pioneer backed assault. During play. Should take a whole evening to complete with excitement mounting during play. The Reds can even counter by a CVP cap. Even if you are caught flat footed by blundering into the strongest part of the Russian defence you can still win if you pace your attack correctly. Conversely you can bypass the strongest defences and waste away time to lose. The key to winning is as the title suggest great Elan, French for Dash and daring, here it implies rapid movement in the face of enemy fire.

**GD7 German Deployment**
I think the extreme victory conditions are very difficult to achieve without a certain amount of good luck. Although exiting all five T34s will give the Rsukis a win each tank disabled or immobilised requires three and a half squads or their equivalent to exit. After three tanks are destroyed or immobilised winning by exit conditions becomes very difficult, after four are gone barely possible. Despite my reservations there is a very real need to defend against an attempt at an exit win. Control of the buildings is unambiguous, and I think represents a greater threat to your force.

There are several ways to defend the village. The location of drifts has some influence on this; for example a drift in R4/S5 creates a real obstacle to movement through the village and also blocks LOS. With six drifts to place they can vary in the influence they exert. Begin by placing drifts, then begin a careful look at the map. You can set up between rows O and W. If you decide on a forward defence you can line the drifts between O1 to O4, and make use of buildings P4 and O6, with a flankung position in the P6 and O8 woods. This will massacre any troops coming in east of K7 but doesn't do too much against troops west of the K7/M8 hedge. An aggressive Russian might demonstrate a platoon overrun to simplify his attack on turn one. Admittedly this is a big gamble for him, the gain would be a very impressive win. A wild tank charge followed up by an Infantry attack is a realistic counter to a forward defence. The Reds can even counter by a slower build up behind the K7/M8 hedge to develop a firefight they will eventually win.

Setting up further back making use of available cover creates more movement opportunities for the Russians as a trade off for a better position for your troops. How far back to set up is a judgement call. Defending W3 in strength with guns in the woods at W2, and orchard hex W5 or W6 is extremely defensive. With two guns, two squads, a MG and Leader the ability to put up a lot of fire against a lot of units. With delaying positions in front of it this might create enough delay to prevent either exit or building control.

Other defences worth considering are cluster around R5 or P4 each with supporting positions on their flanks; there is an awful lot of scope for variation in this defence. A sample set up could be as follows. Squad and MMG in building O6. Leader, squad and HMG in P4. Squads are used as MG crews as Extreme Winter increases the incidence of breakdown, if the MG goes the squad can still oppose the advance of Russian infantry. A squad and HS set up in woods O8 or O9, and building P9. A squad or HS starts in stone building P2, the remaining units can start either in building S4, way back in W3 or if you are feeling feisty behind the hedge in O1, 2 ,3 or 4. 8-0 leader can start with the MMG, or on either flank. This creates a front that the Russians would have to screen. Given time the Russians will shoot a way through or get close enough to swamp the buildings so the defence must be prepared to fall back. Against tanks the infantry can only use close combat. The building in O6 might be attacked by a pair of tanks moving adjacent to shoot the squad to bits. Clearly this isn't a perfect defence! Fortunately you have three 50mm AT guns to help.

Three guns with a rate of fire of three is a serious threat to the T34s. The frontal hull armour is 11, the turret armour 8. With a basic TK of 13, the 50mm can destroy a tank frontally. With APCR available on a TH roll of six or less basic TK rises to 17; better yet at under six hexes this becomes 18, at two hexes 19, and at one hex 20 which moves us into burning wreck territory. Factor in bore sighting and target acquisition and it is easy to become over confident. The worst bit of all is the increase in numbers, damage and elimination caused by extreme winter conditions. With a B# of 10, any high rolls will not only miss and lose APCR, they will result in a malfunction or elimination, loss of acquisition and boresighting. With time you can repair barring effective enemy action. The guns need to support the defence line. Their prey will be tanks, with some last stand shots against infantry. Fortunately movement is restricted by the woods and pond that cover two or three hexes on the western flank. The pond will be frozen, if the Reds try to cross it, may collapse allowing you to make use of any Broken Ice counters from the SS packs, and write off a tank. I think a DR of 8 or more will do this, a very high risk for little gain. Siting the guns is difficult. The woods in Q8 is an obvious choice, buildings O6 and P4 are possible but would be shared with infantry squads, Buildings S4 or R5 are a shade too far back for choice but good enough. One idea is behind the walls in Q6 or Q7, well worth a look. Admittedly this is not concealment terrain and would be in plain view of the Russians, however knowing where it is doesn't make it very easy to neutralise. Spend a deal of time looking at the gun positions, they are crucial to winning the game. Do not start playing until you are happy. Keep in view guns can...
malfunction or be eliminated by enemy action – when this happens do you still have a credible defence?

Although I’d be happy to build the defence around P4, there are good arguments for setting up further back. Included in this are the delays caused when you advance. If you opt to set up further back some presence in W3, even a HS, makes sense, while the Orchards are credible for guns, as are the many woods hexes. Pick the defence that matches your style of play. In all cases use concealment to disguise your positions, use the extra dummy counters to create dummy stacks or confuse stack counters.

Russian camouflage does help them get onto the board concealed, later in the game it is less useful until a fight in the village might, I repeat might, see the odd squad concealed in a building Assault Moving across the street for an ambush.

There will be an awful lot of luck in this game. Expect some of your guns to malfunction in proportion to the shots you take. Expect APCR to be used up early. Some Russian tanks will bog, some will fail mechanical reliability rolls. The luck should even out over the course of the game. This can be a bit draining, you will do best if you can be positive about adverse luck, compensating by expecting something similar to happen to your opponent. The chances of destroying a tank with one hit are not particularly high so keep firing.

As play progress you will need to fall back, most likely you will need to abandon the guns, use the crews to man MGs or just generally get in to hit the infantry. If you haven’t and are going for building control – not only does it give some protection against bog due to deep snow is split between five tanks and when you encounter AT guns their fire will not work too well if your tanks start bogging, immobilisation, bog or mechanical failure without deployment. There is also the possibility of a malfunction, loss of APCR, or even immediate gun destruction.

One idea is a simple charge moving on K1 and K6. You can lead with the infantry moving the one squad at a time. By declaring double time you can reach the O1 to O4 hedge and be well placed for an attack on the village. Leaders and a second wave of infantry can Assault Move later in the turn or if met with a hail of fire enter in the APh. Do not give up concealment unless you have to, not only does it give some protection against fire but it also helps to assault buildings. The tanks move late in the turn. The broad idea of this attack is to clear ground with the infantry to discover and neutralise AT guns set up in forward positions. In subsequent turns this leap frog attack will be repeated, with some planned assaults on known enemy positions. Unless you also commit some forces to an attack on the western flank you can only win by achieving the exit objective. Three or four squads without a leader in the east could be worthwhile. Aside from threatening to control buildings they can also flush out gun positions or draw fire away from your main attack. This approach will work fairly well if the Germans have set up back from the front line. It will not do well if the Jerries are lining the hedge with boresighted machine guns. Take careful note of what you can guess of the Germans dispositions before you commit to an infantry charge.

GD7 Russian Attack

I think this is a very tough scenario for the Russians, even without any opposition you could fail to win on the exit Victory Conditions if subject to excessive bog and immobilisation!

Begin by a long hard look at the board, and your opponents dispositions. The most important units are the 50mm guns but unfortunately these are almost certain to be hidden. As for the infantry, well six concealment counters isn’t enough to create much fog of war so you should have a reasonable idea were the enemy infantry is and as importantly where he isn’t. The Gross Deutschland infantry force is small, reasonably well led and has both a MMG and HMG which can be devastating or can malfunction on the first shot! This knowledge will help you plan your attack, factor in any knowledge of your opponent from previous games but accept you can have no real idea where the all important guns are. The 50mm Guns are a real threat, APCR to kill numbers start at 17, rising to 20 for a point blank shot, with a high kill probability. Even basic infantry armed with an SMG has a good chance to trash a T34 on a turret hit. Part of your attack plan is accepting every time the German shoots he has a very real chance of a malfunction, loss of APCR, or even immediate gun destruction.

There are a bewildering number of attack options, some of which are fairly outrageous gambles. Overall strategy reduces to three plans, to win on exit conditions, building control, or the third both? A fourth option is better than it sounds; determine your objectives after your opponents dispositions become clearer. Usually the fourth plan would rate as no plan at all but in difficult circumstances it might just be appropriate. In all cases lady luck will play a significant role, more than is usually the case due to the extreme weather conditions.

One idea is a simple charge moving on K1 and K6. You can lead with the infantry moving the one squad at a time. By declaring double time you can reach the O1 to O4 hedge and be well placed for an attack on the village. Leaders and a second wave of infantry can Assault Move later in the turn or if met with a hail of fire enter in the APh. Do not give up concealment unless you have to, not only does it give some protection against fire but it also helps to assault buildings. The tanks move late in the turn. The broad idea of this attack is to clear ground with the infantry to discover and neutralise AT guns set up in forward positions. In subsequent turns this leap frog attack will be repeated, with some planned assaults on known enemy positions. Unless you also commit some forces to an attack on the western flank you can only win by achieving the exit objective. Three or four squads without a leader in the east could be worthwhile. Aside from threatening to control buildings they can also flush out gun positions or draw fire away from your main attack. This approach will work fairly well if the Germans have set up back from the front line. It will not do well if the Jerries are lining the hedge with boresighted machine guns. Take careful note of what you can guess of the Germans dispositions before you commit to an infantry charge.

Plan B is an armoured assault. Radioless tanks must enter using platoon movement. There is no reason why you cannot form a five tank platoon and enter between K1 and K5. The risk of bog due to deep snow is split between five tanks and when you encounter AT guns their fire opportunities will be reduced. It is hoped the hedge will screen you from antitank fire. The Infantry can enter using armoured assault, as riders or independent on the armour. If there are a small skirmish line of GD squads behind the hedge it is just about possible to conduct a platoon overrun. A bad idea if three 50mm guns are in buildings behind the hedge. I don’t know if they are there elsewhere. I’m not convinced this would work although it could be fun and worth a try if you enjoy a gamble. Leading with the tanks seeks to protect the infantry at the risk of suffering under the guns. This is a bad idea if you aim to win on exit conditions, much more intelligent if you seek to neutralise the building control when the infantry is more useful.

Both of the above attacks can work against a lightly held front line, they will not do as well against a strong frontal defence which is the mostly likely strategy your opponent will adopt. There are alternatives to a frontal attack, they too have advantages and disadvantages.

If the eastern flank where cover is provided by the hedge, but a single unit in the woods in P6 or nearby woods/building hexes keeps much of this area under observation preventing you from retaining concealment unless you Assault Move or neutralise these units. On the western flank there is a covered approach that allows infantry to move onto the board quickly and retain concealment. Moving in a Leader-assisted stack becomes credible and could put you in a strong position for an infantry assault that sweeps through the woods and into the village. Whilst this works a treat for the Infantry it is not too clever for the tanks. If the armoured force is treated as an independent unit it can still enter on the eastern flank, aiming for the hedge line there. Supporting the infantry in the west by moving three tanks behind the K7-M6 hedge before stopping to open fire in the German player turn is a fairly safe move. Expanding FOG and take up position to make your T34s the worst possible target for the guns. It is a trade off of the protection afforded by movement against that of a hedge and the ability to shoot back. The two other tanks can move to replace any that are destroyed, enter further east or have a crack at making a trail break through the M9, M10, N8 and N9 woods. It is just about possible to do move through the woods given enough time. Admittedly this is a surprise tactic and probably not feasible in this scenario. I would try it if the force included some lighter tanks of little combat value or a large tank force. The big gain is being able to skirt the position for an exit win. This particular side-show will not work too well if your tanks start bogging, or a gun in P8 opens up. The basic idea of an attack along the western flank is sound. Later in the game you will need to take some chances to gain the last building, or a gun in P8 opens up. The basic idea of an attack along the western flank is sound. Later in the game you will need to take some chances to gain the last building, or a gun opens up. The basic idea of an attack along the western flank is sound. Later in the game you will need to take some chances to gain the last building, or a gun opens up.

There are other ways of starting, splitting the force in two and attacking down one or both flanks and/or the middle is plausible. Tank riders might work, as could armoured assault. Tank riders make a lot of sense if you are going for an exit win or need to relocate troops in a hurry. Even as an opening move they offer more protection than movement in the open from infantry fire.

Resist the temptation to move onto the pond with tanks, do it if you have to but half expect to go crashing through the ice. Overrunning wooden buildings is a different scenario and may be justified to neutralise a strong position in a hurry. Use tanks aggressively when you know the enemy guns are being used but be careful elsewhere as in the village. I’m not convinced this would work although it could be fun and worth a try if you enjoy a gamble. Leading with the tanks seeks to protect the infantry at the risk of suffering under the guns. This is a bad idea if you aim to win on exit conditions, much more intelligent if you seek to neutralise the building control when the infantry is more useful.
on turn five. Make use of Infantry to kill the guns or rather the crews, use the tanks to kill Infantry, sounds simple but never so easy in practice. Go for close combat when you can particularly against gun crews. Use bailed out tank crews aggressively there is no casualty cap in this scenario. I would exchange the K-1 leaded for a commissar with rational thought. I think it makes sense given the need to rally squads quickly rather than win a protracted firefight.

I would expect this one to start badly losing a tank or two and a couple of squads very early in the game for no discernible gain. As your chosen attack develops the German force will shrink, maybe exchanging a couple of Russian squads for a German defender but you can just about afford those losses. Suddenly you will start winning, be careful, a lot can happen in bad weather. Just moving off the board could be difficult! If you lose blame the dice, if you win it must be down to skill.

**GD7 Conclusion**

Even against an opponent of greater ability you should have quite a few enjoyable moments playing this scenario. On a good day you could dice a win. Playing a regular opponent anything could happen. I guess it must have been difficult to put to test and balance, in my opinion someone has done a rather good job. Do not be put off by the extreme environmental conditions they do add character to the game in some respects they make movement and combat less predictable. I do not think this would be suitable for a tournament but very well suited to friendly competitive play. For some reason I really took a shine to this one, mentally it paints an exciting picture of tanks charging through snow.

**GD8 Russian Set-Up**

There are two ways to win, either inflict over twenty five CVPs on the attackers or have an unbroken MMC in a building hex on board 24 between rows M and V. This offers at least three overall strategies. The simplest is a defensive set up to hold on to one or more buildings till the game end, the second is more aggressive to inflict casualties or the third to decide during play which objective to go for in the last couple of turns.

Without the bombardment and creeping barrage you could turn 24V3 and 24S5 into small fortresses defended by a half company each (5-6 squads), with a few squads in front to delay German movement. Hiding a couple of squads in out of the way places to force the German to search outlying buildings increase the time pressure. This would have a reasonable chance of success given it will take three turns to cross board 13, and the game is seven and a half turns long. Unfortunately the bombardment is fairly destructive, and plasterers a big area. If you do fortify these buildings and occupy them in great strength the Krauts could designate T4 as a pre-registered hex and be absolutely certain of hitting both buildings even with maximum extent of error rolls! After the building takes a morale check, and hopefully passes, any occupants would take a morale check with a minus one modifier regardless of the floor they are on. The more squads in the blast area the more likely MC failures become. If you believe you can survive the bombardment in reasonable shape or convince the German to bombard elsewhere this would be a workable opening.

A modified approach to this is to defend the village by occupying the two large stone buildings with some support nearby. Outside of the buildings an entrenched squad is less likely to be buried in rubble and gets a minus two on morale check rolls as long as the foxhole is intact. The Germans particularly need to watch out as squads spread between the two buildings with a commissar would be difficult to dislodge, even three or four with HMGs is a tough nut to crack. There is no harm in setting up in the top floor as you are only slightly more vulnerable to fire and have considerably better LOS. A couple of MGs would discomfit the Germans if you pass the bombardment MC. By setting up some squads outside of the buildings you can link building with foxholes, and start better protected from fire. As the village cannot be reached by the Germans for three or four turns it is practical to set up some key units in the largest buildings S5 and U4 with others entrenched within reach of the village. The aim is to reduce vulnerability on turn one. Within the bombardments area some units may be killed, or more likely broken, these can be left to self rally, or a scarce Leader can be used to round up survivors. Things could start badly with more squad than you like breaking, with two or even three turns before the Germans can hit the village you can recover using a commissar or other leader to rally the troops. The two HIP squads could take an active part in the defence of be kept back for a quick game of hide and seek in the closing turns. By setting up the hidden squads in buildings S6 and/or U4/V3 you can hide two HMGs, or all three if one squad mans two MGs. This isn’t recommended, the obvious benefit is the doubt it creates in the mind of the attacker as the village can look poorly defended. There are two problems with the hidden units will reveal themselves early in the game, and if the German targets T4 the clever ruse has been ignored. There is a stronger case for hiding a HMG in building 24S1 which may even be fortified, not a bad idea but again vulnerable to be revealed by artillery fire. In my opinion the best place for one or two HMGs is the second level of U4/V3, with another in S6, if one or more survive the bombardment and barrage they have commanding LOS. Think carefully about fortified buildings. I’m rather stuck on defending the two largest stone buildings, there is scope for being more creative. Some of the outlying buildings can be turned into small strongpoints making then harder to capture in the time available. One wild idea is to fortify the whole of U4 or V3 up to the second level. If this survives the bombardment you have a superb strong point. The mortars can be up front to slow the Germans, or even help break the village. It is probable you would secure a win on building control rather than casualties but if you do rack up enough points you can win on CVP. Personally I don’t think this is the best plan to adopt but I could easily be wrong. As always go for the strategy you think will help win you or enjoy the game.

**GD8 BLOOD FLECKED SNOW**

Some of the special rules in play affect both players, specifically Ground Snow, Drifts, Winter Camouflage and Ice and frozen streams. Both players also need to be familiar with the Creeping Barrage and Bombardment rules.

Ground Snow requires Infantry expend an extra MF to change elevation, which in this scenario affects movement into or out of a stream or Gully. All marsh/mudflat hexes on board 13 become Open Ground. Fires are much less likely to spread. Drifts have been mentioned in the analysis of ‘The One Hundred’, with two whole boards in play they are more likely to have a significant impact. The Germans particularly need the extra cover and LOS obstacles they can provide. Winter Camouflage gives the Russians a +1 LV hindrance when fired on beyond eight hexes unless it qualifies for another positive DRM. Camouflage allows Russian Infantry and I think Mortars to set up concealed in Open Ground. Ice transforms the ponds into Open Ground unless or until they are hit by a KIA high explosive attack. Frozen streams are treated as dry, moving along a stream cost you two MF. Knowing this is an advantage for the Russians.

Creeping Barrage is a string nine hexes wide that is corrected by the Germans during turns one to four, unless it is delayed. Chapter E of the ASL Rulebook devotes the best part of two pages to the topic. Very briefly barrages are fairly accurate and can move forwards in each Prep Fire or Prep Fire and Defensive Fire Phases at the attackers option. This can serve to keep the defenders heads down, provides some cover for the attackers and argues against large concentrations of defenders.

Bombardment is nicely handled as a very large single Fire mission up to five hexes from its point of impact. It is accurate on a die roll of four or less and the extent of error is halved if not accurate. All Russians in the impact area are subject to a 2MC, with buildings taking a morale check before any occupants do. Stone buildings have a morale of nine, wooden ones eight, with a +1 for fully fortified buildings. If Tschuchlowo is hit expect to see some rubble, with a small chance of falling rubble and fires!

Almost all of the special rules that apply are fairly easy to understand and apply, and although the creeping barrage rules do go on a bit, basically it’s a nine hex wide FFE that moves forwards once or twice a turn for four turns subject to a few die rolls and card draws!

The bulk of these rules do favour the Germans but they do need the help.
Included in the arguments for a point

defence of the village is the lack of Russian
leaders. With only two it would be useful to collect
the Russian squads into company sized units using
the leaders to rally squads. If you think the artillery
will be destructive a more dispersed set up that
scatters the units is an option. You will still need to set
some troops up in the village. Aside from a couple of HIP
squad, the second level of
24V3/U4 is an awfully tempting spot for a HMG
or even two. Three or at most four squads is a
strong enough garrison. This is not much weaker
than a point defence! The hidden units could start
in building O10, M6 or in a wide selection of
woods hexes outside the village. Building Y9 is
close to a path and not a bad choice. Half expect
one of the hidden units to be caught in the
bombardment, but if both are then you have put
them too close together. By clever use of concealment counters you might disguise your
strength in the village and draw both the
bombardment and creeping barrage onto some
dummy counters. Outside of the village you need
to slow movement across board 13. A dispersed
set up helps, seek to screen the central part of
board 13, with the flanks with fire. The most
important spots are the crossing over the
stream at and areas at the eastern or Western ends
of the stream. Have several entrenched squads able
to cover these areas with fire. Take note of
obstacles or hindrances to lines of sight and
position yourself to cover as much of the stream
and its crossings as possible. The aim is to inflict
some casualties and more importantly delay the
Germans by forcing them to enter the streams and
climb out of them. If the HMGs are available
tosem the stream crossing is a bit obvious
but still worth doing.

If you are going for a control win seek to
delay the Germans by breaking units and keeping
them under despiration morale. Broken units will
slow the attack down. If the CVP cap is the target
aim for more double break results. In all cases hit
leaders hard when you can.

Very carefully thought is needed gauging
how long to hold each individual post. It’s hard
to get this right every time but plug it out for as
long as you can if going for CVP, fall back sooner
if you are aiming to delay the attack. Skulking
work can very well particularly when you are
concealed. Siting the leaders is difficult, one
should be in the village, the other outside it. I
would probably use a commissar in the village to
reorganise the defence and round up units arriving from outside.

Aside from leadership a big weakness in
your forces is range. Even a couple of LMGs would
help, particularly when opposing troops moving
across board 13. Beyond four hexes your squads
have an IFT attack of two, not very powerful even
against troops moving in the open. Remember to
Winter Camouflage your troops can set up
concealed in the open and in foxholes. A
concealed leader still earns a foxhole and looks
just like the rest of your troops. Two, and doesn’t
increase the height of a stack.

I am not sure if the mortars could set up
hidden in Open Ground and benefit from
emplacement as well as hidden status - in any
event it makes a lot of sense to set up both mortars
in foxholes for protection from OBA. I think they
should be used to cover the stream, opening fire
early in the game. There are reasonable cases for
using spotted fire from the village, or even setting
up on board 24 to help defend the village rather
than opposing movement across board 13. Brush
hexes 13E1, 13V2 and 13L2 look reasonable and
are difficult to bypass, many others are practical.
Just stay out of woods to avoid afloat.

If you can, keep the defenders dispersed
to reduce the effect of artillery and keep them out
of linear formations, this could attract a
bombardment followed by a slowly creeping
barrage. Once the creeping barrage arrives you
can move out of its way leaving an entrenchment
or building to escape a certain 20JFT attack.

One idea I did consider but didn’t like was
a forward defence on board 13, with a company
of seven or eight squads on each half board,
in foxholes with one Leader for each group.
Dummies and the HMGs in the village aim to
draw the bombardment away from the front line.
This strikes me as a gamble hoping for the village
to be hit, but if the bombardment is used against
your line followed by a creeping barrage the
defence becomes much weaker. Definitely a shock
tactic, probably worth using if you know your
opponent very well.

A few loose ends, I’m not sure the
exchange of a leader for a commissar is a good
idea even though I would do it out of habit. After
the initial bombardment there will be a lot of
broken units around but the commissars advantages boil down to a -1 modifier at the risk
of replacement. The 8-0 leader is almost as good
in most circumstances. It is always worth using
self rally ability in the hopes of leader creation,
even a lowly 6-1 would help a lot. Avoid melee
unless you are likely to ambush or face certain
doom anyway, the Germans have a slight
advantage through being elite/steady, and you
are probably not going to have overwhelming
numbers. Make good use of your mobility, as the
defender you can pick some of your fights, pull
out of areas that are not going to be threatened,
and pull out of firefights you are bound to lose.

The flip side to this is if you are
winning, sounds very easy but it isn’t. One
last idea, the leaders can set up on their
own in the open to earn a foxhole and confuse the
Germans as to your dispositions, worth
considering but don’t do it unless it fits in well
with your other plans.

This is a very tough scenario, the German
artillery suggests you disperse a force that is
lacking in leadership making it very vulnerable
to breaking and slower recovery. After the
bombardment has done its worst and the barrage
is located there is scope for running back to the
village to form a strong defence. Site your troops
with cover behind them to make controlled
movement or even routing easier. Most important
in your fight for victory is your own morale. Even
when you win part of the village will be rubbleed,
some squads buried, others broken or killed on
turn one. You must anticipate this and accept it,
then reorganise. You will get your
own back when the Germans try to push across
board 13.

Expect an enjoyable game, even if you are
unlucky on turn one you are still in the game.
Most games will end with some frantic meleees on
turns six and seven. Occasionally you may win
on the casualty cap, though a win through building
control is just as satisfying.

GD8 German Attack Options

Victory is very simple you need to clear
the Russians out of the Village without going over
your casualty cap. To win you will need to cross
open ground in the face of a large defending force
in a hurry, protected by some impressive Artillery
support.

All of the Ruski forces are either concealed
or hidden, some will be in buildings, others will be
entrenched, with some dummy counters thrown in
to increase the fog of war. There is absolutely
no way of knowing how strong the Russian is in
any given sector. Fortunately the area affected by
the initial bombardment is huge allowing you to
pick a general approach route for your attack and
prepare the way using it destructive firepower.
One approach is to guess were the biggest
concentration of troops will be and then hit it,
another is to target the area you either intend to
attack or an area that dominates your chosen lines
of attack. Whichever way I look at it, I end up
targeting 24T4, this hits the large stone buildings
with the best LOS, as well as a decent chunk of
the village. In most circumstances this will work,
unless the Reds have set up in a narrow strip on
board 13. Truth is your chosen target is always
going to be an educated guess, I’d say go with
your hunch and don’t be too hard on yourself if
you get it wrong – the game is not lost. You can’t
go far wrong if you target a large concentration
of concealed units ahead of your planned attack
route.

Before the bombardment lands you need
plan how you will cross board 13, and clear the
village. Look at the terrain and the concealed units
including the dummies, some areas will be out of
line of sight, others subject to hindrance, and most
will be beyond the normal range of Russian troops
on turn one. Spend some time doing this, but don’t
go overboard, five or ten minutes should be
enough. Next start to organise your attack. Deploy
a couple of squads to man your 50mm mortars,
orange someone else into platoons of about three
squads, a couple of machine guns and a leader.
Six leaders, three with a -1 modifier is rather
decent, and enough leadership for your force. It
is possible to use a leader to direct the fire of the
MMGs at long range, or abandon this idea and
use the MMGs dismantled as LMGs for the first
couple of turns. Use the creeping barrage to
provide cover for part of your force. Target an
area in front of your troops to try for casualties,
pin the defender in place and provide some cover
for your attack. Deploying squads helps a bit,
trouble is you need to run across open ground in
the face of fire. This is nothing new, many
scenarios pose this problem. Due to time
constraints I think you need to charge. Attack
across an area 10 or 12 hexes wide, bring the
mortars on first, then HS, squads, low ranking
leaders, working up to the 9-1. Losing equipment
at this stage is not as important as squads or
leaders. Try to keep out of boresighted Locations,
reduce fire, or areas with large amounts of
machine guns. Break all the rules when you need to!
With luck you foes will cower, machine guns
break and your artillery will have started the job
for you, other times you will have some casualties,
potentially a lot if the MGs are rolling low. Very
bad news would be a delayed creeping barrage.

THE TRENCHEES
you really need this to arrive on time otherwise it will get in the way of your attack when time is at a premium.

In the AFPh, aim to be grouped together in credible firegroups. Target one or both of the Ruski leaders, the HMG and mortar crews or the best placed enemy squads. Expect to do some damage, even a broken Russian squad may never rally given the lack of Russian leaders which helps you next turn when you need to move. Shoot again in the DFPH, assess the damage you cause then plan turn two in greater detail. Again you need to gain ground, reaching the stream and entering it in the advance phase is good enough, getting across the stream this turn even better. There is no harm in using double time if the Russians have been plastered by the guns, and your fire attacks, this makes less sense if you have been shot to pieces. If you are already in dire straits and cannot move forwards easily, try using prep fire to create a gap, if this isn’t working, use some assault movement and advance in the APh, not ideal but acceptable if you do not have a choice. Next turn push forwards again, by turn four be in or close to the village.

Once in the village, concentrate part of your force to deal with any strongpoints, use some of the rest to take lesser areas of resistance, and to search for any hidden units. Start to form half squads into squads, drop any mortars you may still be using and keep moving forwards.

I think targeting 13L2 with the barrage should work fairly well with a bit push entering between G10 and Q10, using what cover is available. An attack across a broader front or elsewhere will work provided you push hard and apologies for repeating myself MOVE FORWARD. I’ve a deal of sympathy for anyone who is cut to ribbons on board 13, rather less for anyone who dawdles and runs out of time clearing the village.

Your own morale is crucial in this scenario, just as the Russians must accept the damage your artillery does, you need to accept any reasonable losses incurred crossing board 13. Avoid sulking if the Russians first self rally roll generates an 8-1 leader, a Hero and battle hardens a squad, if your artillery does little to help you or Ivan’s dice are melting the blood flecked snow. Avoid gloating if you rubble a small fortress with your bombardment, kill a leader early on or a HMG malfunctions on its first shot.

In brief the plan is pick a route to the village, prepare the way by fire then charge across board 13 as quickly as you can.

GD8 Conclusion

This is a pretty good scenario. The bombardment is very easy to handle and both players should have a rough idea of how destructive it is and were it will land. The creeping barrage rules are not much more complex than the rest of the rules for OBA, take them in stages, the ASL Rulebook gives a lot of examples and not all circumstances will apply.

In brief the bad news (and it is not all that bad) for the Russians is the German artillery and their own lack of leadership, the Germans must struggle to cross open ground in a hurry. Both sides have winning chances, but will need to work

A Tale of Two Scenarios

Toby Pilling

It’s about time I looked at the peculiarities in playing ‘It’s About Time’. This scenario is the only one I know of that has two very different versions. For those not familiar with it, the scenario is set on the Pegasus Bridge map and the first version is PB6. It is the largest scenario on that map board and features the relief of the 6 Airborne Division elements by the reinforcing British infantry and armour from the beaches. The second version, PB6a, is the historical variant, which Curt Schilling introduced in ASL Journal 2. As he fully outlines the reasons for the update in that publication, I shall not waste time repeating it here. Suffice to say that our very own Shaun Carter came up with historical data to invalidate the OOB of the original scenario. The fact was that I had already played it against Peter Bennett. When the new variant came out, I spent a weekend playing it with Mike Rudd up in Northumberland. The experiences and insights I gained from those playings I shall hereby recount.

The change is all about the British armour assets available. Basically, in the first they have eight tanks: Three Stuarts and five Churchill VIIIs. In the second, though they have more tanks they are on the whole less formidable: Seven Duplex Drive Shermans and three Churchill AVREs. Other than that, the scenarios are exactly the same.

It is amazing though what differences these seemingly innocuous changes can entail in the game.

The loss of the Stuarts is not too significant. Their main advantages are their speed and size: These vehicles are virtually built for bounding first fire. Though they can’t easily take out Panzer IVs, except through side or rear shots, they are more than a match for the converted French AFVs the Germans have. They can also bother German infantry, nipping around the flanks and evading panzerfaust shots their larger cousins would be hard pressed to avoid.

The main difference is the move from Churchill VIIIs to Shermans and AVREs. The latter certainly have their advantages – 200mm guns are not to be sniffed at – but they have weaker turret armour and crucially a very limited range. This makes them very vulnerable to the German panzers. As for the Shermans, whilst they move at almost twice the speed of the lumbering Churchill VIIIs and share the same 75mm gun, their frontal armour is only factor 8 compared to 14. Previously, discounting limited APCR shots from the Germans, a 75L penetration value of 17 would leave most Churchill VIIIs happily shrugged off rounds as they range in on the Mark IVs. This forces immense caution on the German tankers, encouraging them to avoid direct duels.

With the arrival of the Shermans, the advantage is now with the Germans if they can get the first shot in. It is the British who have to sneak about.

The other major factor is the loss of the Churchill VIIIs prodigious SMOKE generating capability, especially the blessing of smoke mortars. Combined with the mild breeze, the old lumbering giants could easily reduce German squads to choking impotence beyond panzerfaust range as they nonchalantly screen their advancing infantry. Shermans only have smoke dischargers, and not great ones at that. Still useful, but not a patch on the mortars as they can only be used in the hex the tank is currently sitting in.

The Official Version

What I originally liked about this scenario was that each side had an opportunity to attack and defend. The Germans are hanging on grimly in Le Port, trying vainly to delay the reinforcing British, whilst in Benouville they are able to counterattack, at least initially. All too soon tough the juggernaut will descend on them, quite literally in the case of the Churchills.

I decided I wanted to play the Germans, so set up a defence against Peter.

I can’t exactly remember my deployments. Around Le Port I think I had men on the first floor of JJ11 and KK13 who’d be able to fire on the road around KK18. I also think I had the two worst AFVs on this flank, the pair of SPW S307’s. One was in MM13 and one in LL14. I think I dummied another around KK9. My reasoning was that I wouldn’t waste anything good in a lost cause. If these converted half-tracks could merely slow down Peter I’d be happy. The rest of the men here were simply going to try and eke out an existence for as long as possible, which I knew wasn’t going to be prolonged.

Benouville was where I was hoping to have some fun. In fact I had one or two
tricks up my sleeve…

I don’t know if it is blindingly obvious, but there are lots of lovely LOSSs from the walled enclosure around the Chateau right up the road to TT17. The slopes provide the height advantage to see over most of the orchard road obstructions, and the wall itself offers hull-down. Here then I had the Marder: Open topped, with little armour and limited HE; it really is only any good firing at vehicles, even the Churchills. If I lost it in a duel with one - so what? That is its function in this scenario.

The GSW 39H I placed in I15, giving it a LOS over the valley into northern Benouville where the paratroopers may be hiding. As for the PzIvs, my main striking force, I can only remember setting them up to swing in around the west of the town to outflank the British there.

Infantry wise I was poised for attack, but with the HMG set up at Level 2 in the Chateau, hoping to interdict the Ox and Bucks trying to cross the bridge. My plan on this flank was to attack whilst I had the advantage. I knew I’d never retake the bridge but I wanted to go straight up the middle, aiming for the School House and Town Hall, doing as much damage as possible. Make hay while the sun shines...

As concerns Le Port then, sadly my delaying force was crushed in fairly short order. Depressingly predictable. The Churchill smoke generating machines did their jobs well and my squads were simply blasted into impotence.

Regarding Benouville, at least here I exacted a bit of revenge. Peter had decided to defend fairly forward, trying to delay me a bit himself. By the time my Le Port defenders were extinguished, I’d managed to surround and knock out virtually all Peter’s, admittedly largely wounded, Paratroops. In fact, I took about three squads prisoner and for the first time ever in a scenario was able to send a guarding half squad off the table with the valuable POWs. Little did I realise that lucky half squad were to be my only survivors as the game began in earnest.

My Marder had been pinging shots off the Churchills until it was finally recalled through a sniper. After that, with the collapse and mopping up of Le Port underway, Peter was able to rush forwards his mass of reinforcements and then proceed at quite a leisurely rate to smoke out then overwhelm my defensive positions one by one. The virtual invulnerability of the Churchills was very galling – my only success was a fluky critical hit from a Panzer IV.

In short I felt as if I was being dissected, coldly and methodically. In the end, with a few turns to go I surrendered. The impotence in the face of the Churchills was stressing me out too much.

Whilst I had enjoyed the first half of the scenario, the second half had been too lop sided for my liking. Eking out a miserable existence with a surrounded conscript half squad, blinking through swirling smoke to get a shot off at some elite paratroopers is not my idea of fun. I was disappointed in how the scenario had degenerated after a period into this, so was happy when I had a chance to play the updated version.

**New Improved Scenario**

I was heading up to see Mike for the weekend in his Northumberland hillside villa. I’d decided it was the perfect opportunity to play the variant, and again fancied having a crack at being the Germans. My plan was broadly similar, though this time my Panzer IVs could be a lot more aggressive. I also tweaked my positions somewhat, having planned a lovely little ambush for the paratroopers in Le Port...

What I had noticed was that I could encircle HH11, where the British were almost certain to have a number of men. With a concealed squad in KK1 and one in the open at FF9, Mike might not realise that the hex was a death trap. All I then needed was a unit to escape being broken adjacent to that hex, and I would be able to capture paratroops if they broke. I stacked both levels of HH10 with my best men.

The other minor change I deliberated over for ages (far too long for any possible benefits) was deciding the vehicle-covered arc of my crumby SPW S307 in MM13. Knowing how aggressive Mike is with his AFVs, I had worked out that he could run a carrier into the hex via TT17, thus pinning my vehicle with TPBF restrictions. I made a calculated risk, and had the VCA covering MM14 instead of the usual TT12 road.

Time would tell if my nasty surprises would bear fruit.

Sometimes I can be too cunning for my own good. The net result of my misspent VCA plotting saw the hapless halftrack blasted into oblivion by tanks rumbling down the road from TT12. It didn’t even get a shot off. On the positive side though the encirclement worked like a dream and netted me a couple of bewildered prisoner squads. Hurrah!

After such mixed fortunes, the rest of the game progressed along astonishingly similar lines as the previous. In Le Port my rapidly dwindling force held out a little longer this time. MacBeth like, they grimly battled on in the knowledge of certain defeat, victims of a doomed script at the hand of fate. Fate in this case being a certain Mr Schilling.

At least this sector had the fortune(!) of seeing a critical hit delivered by one of Mike’s AVRees. Resolving a hit on the 36 table of the IFT with a –7 modifier is an experience I hope not to undergo again soon. Never mind leaving a smoking boot behind – the boot had been vapourised.

Once again my main enjoyment was to be had in marshalling a counterattack on the Benouville area. This I achieved with similar rapidity, though also faltered before reaching the schoolhouse itself. Here the British reinforcements stemmed the tide and I had to fall back and consolidate my gains.

We ended up abandoning the scenario before the end game, with Mike’s forces gathered around the KK hexrow. I had a force in the chateau and another around the building in J2, poised to sell their cardboard lives dearly. I’d also, much more encouragingly this time, managed to destroy all Mike’s Shermans. His AVRees were creeping forwards at full steam but I still had a MarkIV around to make life difficult. Basically, the fun part was over and we couldn’t be bothered for the grind.

**It’s About Time to Conclude**

Not only is the historical variant more accurate in terms of the British forces available, it is also much more enjoyable and balanced. I have to say that the original version favours the British due to the relative invulnerability and SMOKE generating of the Churchills. The downgrading to Shermans gives the German player more options with his tanks and means the Brits have to use theirs more constructively than mobile pillboxes.

It’s certainly worth playing the historical variant. Is it worth playing to the end though?

I cannot help thinking that the fact I have abandoned the game both times points to a weakness in this scenario. It is just not much fun to play as the Germans after a certain point. It can easily end up with one player handling a couple of squads whilst the other has a couple of companies. Unless you are a true fanatic, keen to play “to the last man”, you will probably end up behaving much like the historical German defenders - wearily surrendering in the face of horrifically superior firepower.
This is the latest edition of the overseas (IE non Britain or North American) ASL Players Directory.
It is broken down by country. Within the countries, players are listed according to their Zip/Postal Code.

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In addition to those listed above, some of the players have listed their country of residence, but it is not clear what their position is in relation to that country. Therefore, for the purposes of this directory, their country of residence will be listed as their country of residence, even if it is not their country of origin.

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If there are any mistakes, please let me know so that we can correct them for the next edition.

Ω
There are more and more ASL tournaments cropping up all over the world. In fact, it is possible to be involved in an ASL tournament at least once a month, often more, if you were so inclined (and had the financial means to live such a life - I wish!). If you plan on holding an ASL tournament, please let me know and I'll include the details here, space permitting.

If you contact anyone regarding these tournaments, please tell them that I sent you!

### 2003

#### JANUARY

**WINTER OFFENSIVE**

**When**: 16 – 19 January.

**Where**: The Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD 20718. Tel 301-464-0089. Double rooms are $85.50 plus tax per day; mention Winter Offensive for the special room rate.

**Fee**: $20.00 pre-registered by 31 December, $25.00 thereafter. One day registration is $8.00 by 31 December or $10.00 thereafter.

**Format**: Unstructured format, mutually agreeable scenarios. Special mini-tournaments start Thursday morning. The main event free for all starts Friday morning.

**Notes**: T-shirts are $12.00 (XXL $14.00). As in the past all profits go to the ALS Foundation.

**Contact**: Multi-Man Publishing, 403 Headquaters Drive, Suite 7, Millersville MD 21108 or contact pettercole@asl.com or buytrey@cable speed.com. You can also sign up on MMP's web site at www.advancesquadleader.com.

#### FEBRUARY

**ASL SCANDANAVIAN OPEN**

**When**: 21 – 23 February.

**Where**: Danish National Armed Forces, Copenhagen, Denmark. You can sleep on the floor at the tournament site (there is a bath) and eat there. If you want more luxury then you can get accommodation from £13.00.

**Fee**: 150 Danish Kroner (about £12.00).

**Format**: The tournament will be a five or six round Swiss style affair depending on player numbers.

**Contact**: Michael Hastrup-Leth, Favrholmvangen 15, 3400 Hillerod, Denmark, or email at hastrup@fimgur.dk.

#### MARCH

**BERSERK 2003**

**When**: 15 – 17 March.

**Where**: Hotel Skyre, South Promenade, Blackpool, England. Room rates are £20.00 for a shared room or £26.50 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee**: £6.00.

**Format**: Five round tournament beginning Friday afternoon (arrangements will be made for those unable to arrive until Friday night), with three or six scenarios to choose from in each round. Players will be expected to have a knowledge of the first half of the Chapter G rules to play in the tournament. CG and friendly games can also be found throughout the weekend. There will also be a special three round tournament for new players.

**Contact**: Steve Thomas, 19 Deneview House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL, or email Trev Edwards at trec@cablespeed.com.

#### MAY

**STOCKHOLM ASL TOURNAMENT (LogCon)**

**When**: 29 May – 1 June.

**Where**: Stockholm, Sweden.

**Fee**: 25 Euro / SKR 200.

**Format**: Five round single elimination (for winning) tournament with five scenarios per rounds. (All players may play all 5 rounds but to win the tourney you may not have 1 loss).

**Notes**: Prizes are awarded to winning players and the Convention Champion, who is the player judged to have had the most successful tournament with all games played over the weekend being taken into consideration.

**Contact**: For more details or to register contact Pete Phillips, 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, LE4 1GB. Phone (0116) 233 5986 (evenings only) or email jf@vftt.co.uk.

#### OCTOBER

**INTENSIVE FIRE 2003**

**When**: 24 – 26 October.

**Where**: The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Bournemouth, England, BH2 5EG. Telephone (01202) 555 889 or fax (01202) 789 567 to arrange accommodation.

**Fee**: £6.00. Players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in September.

**Format**: Three round Five Team tournament (two rounds on Saturday, one on Sunday). There will also be some single day mini-tournaments on the Friday. Open gaming is available for those who do not wish to take part in the tournament.

**Notes**: Prizes will be provided on the basis of winning players and the Convention Champion, now the player judged to have had the most successful tournament with all games played over the weekend being taken into consideration.

**Contact**: For more details or to register contact Pete Phillips, 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, LE4 1GB. Phone (0116) 233 5986 (evenings only) or email jf@vftt.co.uk.

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**ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL**

Gross Deutschland

Continued from page 16

hard for victory. If the Russian wins on the CVP cap it could be worth playing on to see if the Germans can win with the balance if you’re enjoying the game. ‘Blood Flecked Snow’ is a bit different, well designed and playtested; do not be put off by the bombardment and barrage these add character and are not difficult to execute.
This year sees the seventh annual Advanced Squad Leader event in the North West of England. We are now well established in the world ASL calendar and offer an extended weekend (there are usually games played from the Thursday evening) where you can play in an ASL tournament and/or play friendly games (or even try your hand at a campaign game if you can find an opponent). In the main tournament, players of like record are paired off to allow us to determine the winners after five rounds. The first round will start on Friday afternoon and each round sees players choose from three carefully selected scenarios. Main tournament entrants are to be familiar with the rules through to the first half of Chapter G.

A special three-round event is to be arranged for up to eight new players (players who have only ever played five or fewer games against a live opponent). Scenarios with easy to handle units and manageable forces will be set. You can learn the game with an experienced player nearby to offer advice on rules. There will never be a better time to try your hand at ASL!

Remember, you can also drop in just for part of a day if you can't make it for the full weekend.

The Hotel Skye is under new management this year and our host is very keen to see us remain regulars. The facilities are already being improved with meals and good beer available in the hotel. The nearest train station is very close by and various alternative food outlets are not far.

The weekend, whether you enter a tournament or just play games with the people you will meet, is fantastic values at only £6.00!

Cheaper than last year!
B&B – for a shared room £20.00 (per person)
B&B – for a single room £26.50

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