

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

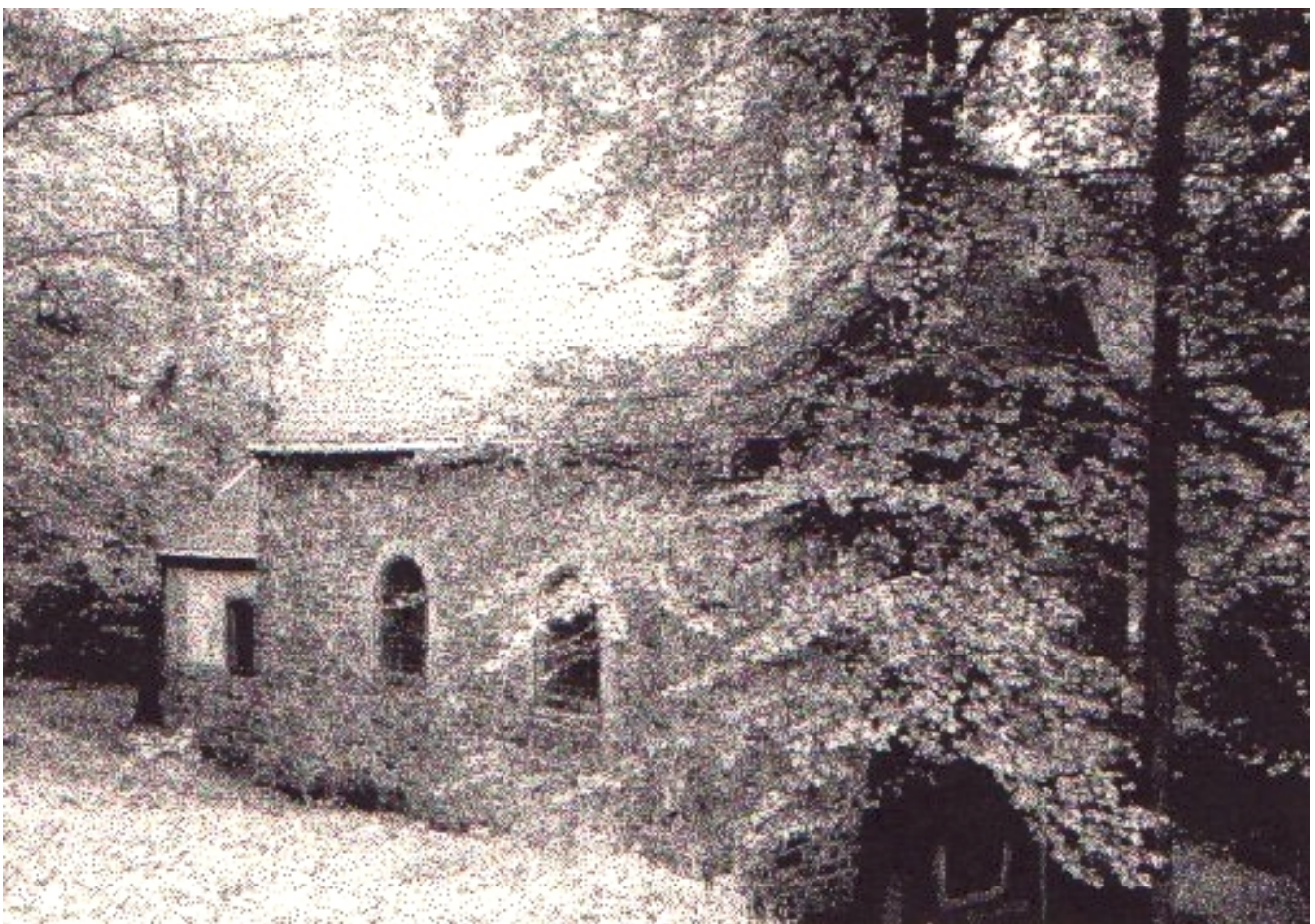
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PREP FIRE

I had hoped to have this issue out about a month ago, as Michael Davies sent me his scenario analysis of Chapelle Ste Anne days after issue 58 went out. Unfortunately work put paid to that plan :(I am however confident that the next issue will be out in time for HEROES 2005, as Michael has sent me another scenario analysis. I am also hopefully of a review of the new *ASL Journal 6*, which should be in the country by the time you read this.

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps

COVER: Chapelle Ste Anne, scene of the scenario analysis in this issue.

THE ASL MAILING LIST

The ASL Mailing List is devoted to discussion of *Advanced Squad Leader*, and is run by Paul Ferraro via a listserv program at the University of Pittsburgh. To subscribe go to:
<http://lists.aslml.net/listinfo.cgi/aslml-aslml.net>.

EMOTICONS

With the growth of the InterNet, emoticons have originated to allow people to show expressions in text. I find these very useful for the printed word in general, so you'll see plenty of them in *View From the Trenches*.

An emoticon is created with keyboard characters and read with the head tilted to the left. Some typical emoticons are:

- :-) humour or smiley
- ;-) winking
- :> devious smile
- <g> grin
- :-(sad
- :o shocked or surprised
- #-(hung-over

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is the bi-monthly British ASL journal. All comments are welcome. Even better, contribute. Write an article. Design a scenario. Share your ASL experiences with others. *VFTT* allows you to communicate with other ASLers. Don't be a silent voice.

Issue 60 should be out at the beginning of March 2005.

VFTT costs £2.00 per issue (overseas £3.00), with a year's subscription costing £10.00 (overseas £15.00). Payment should be in pounds sterling, with cheques made out to PETE PHILLIPPS. Readers are reminded to check their address label to see when their subscription ends.

Back issues are now out of print but can be downloaded for free from:

<http://www.vfft.co.uk/vfft.pdf.htm>

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INCOMING

JOURNAL 6 RELEASED

MMP have released *ASL Journal 6*. Priced \$28.00, it contains 13 scenarios, a series replay of 'J73 Tired and Unsupported' (a Bocage scenario), an article on Residual Firepower and Fire Lanes, along with a comprehensive example, and the first part of a look at the British in World War II. Highlight of the issue is the Primisole Bridge *HASL*, complete with map, special rules, three scenarios (with more promised for *ASL Journal 7*) and three CG.

Work continues on *Armies of Oblivion*, *ASL Starter Kit 2* and the reprints of the *ASL RB*, *Beyond Valor* and *ASL Starter Kit 1*. MMP are hopeful that all these will see print at some point in 2005.

FANATICS BLITZKREIG

Fanatic Enterprises have released the *Blitzkrieg Pack*, a set of 18 scenarios covering early war actions from Poland to the start of Operation Barbarossa. Among the scenarios are one featuring an armoured train and one featuring Romanian armour from the yet to be released *Armies of Oblivion*. Priced \$20.00 including shipping (\$22.00 for non-US orders) it is available from Paul Kenny, PO Box 644, Haddonfield, NJ 08033. You can also order it from <http://fanaticenterprises.tripod.com/>.

Also available from Fanatic Enterprises are several sets of AFV cards. Currently available are set for Japanese, Italian and Chinese AFVs at \$6.00 per set and Allied Minor and French AFVs at \$8.00 per set. Shipping is \$2.00 for one set (\$4.00

for non-US orders) and \$1.00 per additional set (\$2.00 for non-US orders). Anyone buying more than one set will also receive \$1.00 off their order per set ordered (maximum \$5.00 for 5 sets).

BUNKER 20 FOR MARCH

Dispatches From The Bunker 20 is expected to be released at the Nor'Easter tournament in March, and will contain three scenarios and the usual mix of articles and Tactical Tips. Four issue subscriptions are available for \$13.00 (\$15.00 outside the USA). Issue one is available free with a subscription or an SAE, while other back issues are \$3.50 (\$4.00 outside the USA). Payments should be payable to Vic Provost and sent to *Dispatches from the Bunker*, P.O. Box 1025, Hinsdale MA 01235. You can email them at aslunker@aol.com.



THIRD PARTY PRODUCERS UK AVAILABILITY

As well as editing *VFTT 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 *VFTT*:

<i>Wacht Am Rhein</i>	£14.00
<i>Canadians In Italy 1</i>	£9.00
<i>Canada At War 2</i>	£6.00

Add 50p per item for postage and send your payment made out to PETE PHILLIPPS to 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, England, LE4 7PY.

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@vfft.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, 100 Ballards Lane, Finchley, London, N3 2DN. 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 3535 or e-mail them at sales@secondchancegames.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.



THE TRENCHES



Strongpoint 11

A Kind Of After Action Report

Mark Walz

Played Bret Winters in this scenario last night it was vexing, it was invigorating, it was exacerbating, it was a hoot!

The funny stuff.

Turn 3 PFPH

Bret: Mark, would you mind getting out some smoke counter out for me

Mark: [looking aghast at my opponent] Hell no! the dice god's would frown upon me if I did.

Bret: [Shakes his head] O.K. I'll fire willie pete right their. Tinkle tinkle 10. No willie pete no shot. I'll fire smoke there tinkle tinkle 9 no smoke no shot. OK. I'll use my other mortar and fire willie pete there instead. tinkle tinkle 11 no willie pete no shot. I'll fire smoke tinkle tinkle

Mark: 9 no smoke no shot

Bret: I don't ***** believe this ****. That's ***** up.

Mark: Never tempt the dice gods.

Turn 3 RtPh (this is a setup for later)

Bret: I'm going to no quarter that squad.

Mark: This is a control scenario, I don't think the Japs "have" to declare no quarter until sometime in mid 42. You should take the prisoners.

Bret: They're Japs they kill.

Mark: OK no problem.

Turn 4A

Bret: You can't rout into the pill box. You'd still be adjacent to me.

Mark: But you can't enter that location so I'm not ADJACENT.

Bret: You need to go to the nearest woods or building dude you know that.

Mark: Check the rules. That's exactly why I set up a bunker so I could rout into the pill box.

Bret: Why didn't you take your leader with the broken squad back into the pill box? If you survived the H to H you'd at least have a chance to rally him.

Mark: First, you can't H to H a pill box you must use CC.

Bret: Are you sure?

Mark: Yes

Bret: Let me look that up. OK, I'll go two to one against the broken hs and three to one against your leader then.

Mark: NOPE! You can't CC the pill box unless there are no other units in the hex.

Bret: That's ***** up!

Mark: That's in the rules.

Bret: Let me look that up... That's ***** up!

Turn 4B DFPh against CC6 bunker

Bret: All right I can get an 8 up three against your pill box. four goes to a seven ... one check. It's about time I got a result against those *****

Mark: Snakes!

Bret: ***** Seven! you went Berserk

Mark: *****

Bret: *****

Mark: I'll have to leave the pill box!

Bret: Your morale is ten I can't kill that.

Mark: I can't advance out of the pill box and move someone back in

Bret: Your right zerkers don't advance.

It won't matter I can't win this

Mark: Sure you can I'm ***** [What are you thinking shake his hand and walk. Now you've dissed the asl gods and you really are *****]

Later Turn 4B against CC8 bunker

Bret: OK After I kill that hs the first bunker will be mine.

Mark: NOPE! You can't claim the pill box until turn 5 when you move a unit in.

Bret: No way!

Mark: They're in separate locations.

Bret: Dude of course they'll have the pill box.

Mark: To get the pill box they have to move into the pill box they can't move in CC unless they roll snakes.

Bret: [Light Bulb is going on in Brets brain] You mean I could conceivably kill every one of your units and still lose the scenario because I can't move into the last pill box on my turn six?

Mark: [Insidious chuckling] Yup!

Bret: You wouldn't do that to me! That's not right! That is so {Politically Incorrect Term PIT}

Mark: I'm not doing it to you the rules are.

Bret: When did you turn into a ***** rules lawyer.

Mark: Now that's a low blow. God forbid I ever be that anal.

Bret: I'm going to check this out [Bret assumes the standard ASL Position back bent forward forty five degrees with book on knees and begins reading.]

Mark: I'll go finish the dishes.

Five minutes later

Bret this is ***** up what idiot wrote this rule this way? This should be changed!

Turn 5A CCPH CC6 Bunker complex

Bret: OK I am going to win this. After I kill this 437 in CC I'll be in good shape to put the hurt to your berserk squad when he exits in your MPH.

Mark: [Yes!!! he just dissed the asl gods and the dice are going to bite him]

Bret: It's to bad you flipped both those squads now I'll have to go two to one instead of three to one.

Mark: I'll go two to one against the 347 w/lmg and leader 447.

Bret: Why not go for all of them... you have nothing to lose.

Mark: Why get greedy with the dice Gods? Hand to Hand?

Bret: Ya.

Mark: Roll um Tinkle Tinkle

Bret: I can't believe this ***** This is absolutely the most **** scenario I've played in a long time. Eleven.

Mark: [With wicked smile on his face three!]

Bret: I don't believe this *****.

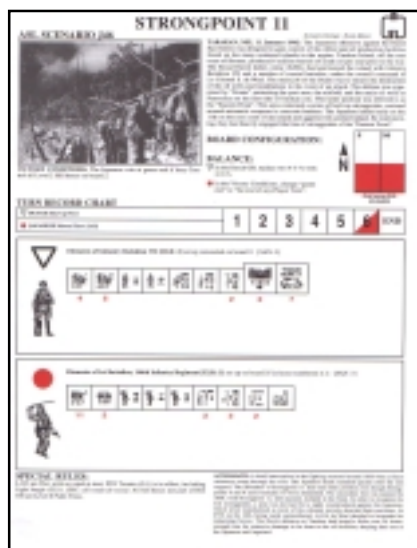
Turn 5B

I kill his squad in the CC6 trench in CC. My berserker is no longer berserk.

Turn 6A CC6 Bunker

Bret: There is no way I can win this even if I break your guys you'll just rout into the pillbox for the win. I have to kill both 437s and your broken leader in the pill box to win. It can't be done. Good game man.

Mark: Oh play it out to the end Bret ASL is a crazy game you know that! [You ***** moron shake his hand and walk you *****



VIEW FROM

idiot]

Bret: First I've got to finish off your 7-0 to have a chance. eight up three. five that's a normal.

Mark: Watch him die [Mark! the dice gods the dice gods you idiot!] tinkle tinkle twelve he's dead.

Bret: OK next I'll fire with a 2 + 2 with the hs with lmg then encircle you with a 16 + 2 that's probably my best bet. No Effect. 16 + 2 eight. My dice have been ***** for me all night. NMC.

Mark: Top squad 10 disrupts. Bottom squad 10 disrupts.

Bret: They can't rout if you've disrupted.

Mark: Yes they can, you invoked no quarter so one squad can rout back into the pill box and the other will die for fitr.

Bret: ***** Well, I guess that's game dude. You played well tonight.

Mark: Thanks you did too. That was to close.

**** BRETS REVENGE ****

Mark Offers his hand.

Bret: [With deer in headlights look in his eyes] Wait a second ... do you mind if I look one last thing up?

Mark: Sure go ahead. [What does he have up his sleeve?]

Bret: [Bret assumes the position] I can move through disrupted units as if they aren't even there

Mark: Huh

Bret: Dude! it ain't over

Mark: What do you mean!

Bret: I still have a 237 squad in the CC8 bunker who hasn't done anything. Declare CX. Out of the bunker into the trench for one down the hill in the trench for two up the hill in the trench for four into the bunker for five.

Mark: What kind of **** **** is that. Your Japs are going to run past my guys yelling get outa the way get outa the way we need to get into that bunker but don't worry we'll come back and no quarter you later!

Bret: Well, basically yes!

Mark: You son of a ***** sleazing me like that!

Bret: It's in the rules.

grrrr.....

3 to 1 some rules lawyer rips me for something we did in spite of spending as much time with our noses in the book as playing the game.

In any case I hope you enjoyed this AAR of a different sort.

One last thought. Between two even players this one is a dead heat. As the Dutch player you need to know and use bunker rules and face the fact that you will probably die to the man.

Ω

ELR IN RED BARRICADES

Mel Falk

The three rules presented here should be used in conjunction with each other.

RULE 1

Delete the whole section of Paragraph 11.617 ELR LOSS/GAIN and replace it with this rule:

"11.617 Russian and German ELR" The Russian ELR is 3 and the German ELR is 4. Their respective ELR can be altered by the historical positive DRM (see 11.6161 and rule 2). German assault engineers MMC always have an ELR 5.

RULE 2

At the end of rule 11.6161 HISTORICAL DRM CHART add:

"All the positive DRM in the given chart are also used for changes of the ELR. Each positive number reduces that side's ELR by one during the current day (only)" (delete in line 3 "/Gain").

This means that in Campaign Game III the German ELR drops to level 3 on 9 days and level 2 on one day and the Russian ELR drops to level 2 on 5 days.

RULE 3

Add a new paragraph after 11.6231 Russian Attack Limits:

"11.62315 German and Russian Idle Requirements". In the course of each CG, the German and Russian player must select at least one idle chit per 6-CG days period that will generate one idle day. With this rule each CG has a minimum number of idle days that must be generated. CG I - 13 days of struggle, 2 idle days required as a minimum. CG II - 5 days of struggle, no idle days required CG III - 30 days of struggle, 5 idle days required

Example: in CG III one or more idle days must be generated by the players during each of these 6-day-periods.

17/10-22/10, 23/10-28/10, 29/10-3/11, 4/11-9/11, 10/11-15/11

During 17/10-21/10 no idle day has been generated so both the Russian and German player must choose an idle chit for the next day 22/10 to generate an idle day. Then if another idle day was generated 23/10 then the next time a new day of idle must be generated would be 3/11.

DESIGN NOTES

34. A player who continues to attack day after CG-Day will soon find his troops ELR reduced to one or zero, and see them melt away before his very eyes. It is therefore imperative that a side "come up for air" every few days or so, as necessary, as their historical counterpart would have been forced to do.

Well... first we know that the German player is not forced to "come up for air" at all so he can continue to attack for 30 days. True he will see his troops melt away with an ELR of zero but the same applies for the Russians, so how realistic is it to purchase a STURM COY with an ELR of zero and a Pioneer COY with an ELR of five and all leaders of the two COY have an ELR of zero?

Not to mention the boring factor of replacing your units every time they break or having to mark them with a DISRUPTION counter.

The designers footnote about 11.6161 Historical DRM CHART notes that most of these DRM are an attempt to represent the actual historical influx of reinforcements. These same DRM are used for ELR Adjustment as well, as such an infusion of new "blood" (or the lack thereof) could have a profound effect on the troops morale and willingness to carry on the fight.

My comment would be that the attempt has failed these DRM only seems to have a very little effect when determining a side's ELR I am not saying that the rules above are perfect but at least they are a better reflection of the designers footnotes than the rules now available.

Ω



A.9: Random Selection

Bob Smith

One of the rules which I regularly failed to apply as a newbie is Random Selection (A.9). It's fairly easy to remember to use RS when resolving a K/# or #KIA result on the (I)FT, but there are many other instances in which RS applies. You may save yourself some heartache by remembering to use random selection when a group of units must suffer some effect, rather than affecting the whole group of units. I have attempted to list as many of the uses of Random Selection as I could below, along with any special rules which may apply. If I have neglected some cases or made mistakes, please let me know. My thanks to Patrik Manlig for suggesting some of the uses listed.

Fire Attacks

Use RS to select victims of #KIA (A7.301). Although the rules are not explicit on how to do this, a single RS dr is made for each unit. The units with the highest n dr's are affected, where n is the number of units to be KIA'd. More than n units may be affected if there is a tie for the nth highest RS dr. Use RS to select which units are reduced by a K/# result (A7.302). Note that when a squad is chosen by RS and reduced, the resulting HS must take the #MC. However, if an SMC is selected by RS and survives the wound severity check, it does not take the following #MC.

Critical Hits

When a CH (C3.74) is scored against multiple units, RS is used to determine which units are affected by the CH. If the attack scoring a CH affects more than one location, RS is used to determine which location is affected.

Cowering

When a Fire Group covers (A7.9) by rolling doubles on an (I)FT or To Hit attack, RS is used to determine which units cower. If a unit cowers it and all of its SW are marked with Final Fire/Prep Fire as appropriate. Units immune from cowering (SMC, Finnish, berserk, heroic, etc.) are not included in the RS process.

Malfunction

If multiple weapons malfunction (A9.71) while in a FG in which the IFT DR exceeds the B#/X#s of multiple SW, use RS to determine which SW are malfunctioned or eliminated.

Ammunition Shortage

When a FG suffering Ammunition Shortage (A19.131) rolls boxcars, use RS to pick who is replaced. Note that only MMCs are affected and selected units which can not reduce are broken. Units which roll boxcars on a To Hit attempt are not reduced.

Final Protective Fire

Units using Final Protective Fire (A8.31) are subject to both Heat of Battle and Casualty MC results. When a FG uses FPF and rolls either a 2 or 12, RS is used to determine which units are affected. This usage of RS is specified somewhere in Q&A.

Sniper attack

A non-standard form of RS is used to determine which units in a location are attacked by a sniper (A14.2). Unlike other uses of RS, if multiple units are selected not all are automatically affected. When RS selects multiple units, the sniper may choose which one to attack. For each of the other selected units a new sniper dr is made and resolved. Also, the sniper may choose to bypass the RS roll and instead target the enemy sniper, a vulnerable inherent crew, or an unarmoured vehicle.

Revealing Concealment

When a unit must be revealed from a concealed stack (A12.15), roll RS for each "counter" (A.9) under the top "?", including SW and Dummy counters. If a SW is chosen, select the squad possessing it. If a dummy is chosen, remove it and choose the counter associated with the next lower dr in the RS.

Booby Traps

If Booby Traps (B28.9) are activated by a unit taking a task check then RS is used to determine which units in the location

suffer Casualty Reduction. Notice as an aside that when Booby Traps are in affect, even units which are immune to pins must roll for Booby Trap activation when subjected to a PTC.

Search Casualties

When units attempt Searching/Mopping Up suffer Search Casualties (A12.154), RS is used to determine which are reduced.

Panzerfausts

When a Panzerfaust (C13.31) is used versus Cavalry/Infantry (C8.31) and attacks multiple units in a location, only units selected by RS are affected. The ATTACKER may bypass the RS and choose to attack an MMC which is Known and manning a SW or Gun.

Platoon Movement

When vehicles are using platoon movement (D14.21) and multiple units become subject to bog a single bog DR is made. If the bog check fails RS is used to determine which units actually bog. The same procedure is used for multiple units in a platoon which are subject to mechanical reliability or stalling.

Vehicular Overstacking

If a hit is scored on an alternate vehicular target due to vehicular overstacking (A5.132) then RS is used to determine which alternate targets are hit. In this case a drm is applied to the RS dr for each vehicle equal to the vehicle size to hit modifier.

There is only one case I can think of in which some people have mistakenly used RS. During Field Promotion (during CC, A18.12), RS is not used. The highest quality MMC is the one that creates the leader.

Ω



HEROES 2005

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT
11TH - 13TH MARCH (FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY) 2005
HOTEL SKYE, SOUTH PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, ENGLAND

THE EVENT

Following its success in 2004 HEROES continues in 2005 to fill the gap for UK ASL action in the first half of the year. As normal the action starts on Thursday and continues through to Sunday so 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). The focus of the weekend will be the main tournament, in which players of like record are paired off to allow us to determine the winners - depending on numbers attending there will be four or 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.

BOOT CAMP

Don't worry if you are a new player (someone who has only ever played five or fewer games against a live opponent), as a special tournament based on the *ASL Starter Kit* will be available on Friday. 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 VENUE

The Hotel Skye is familiar to those who have attended in the past and offers plenty of gaming room for the whole weekend, Meals and good beer are also available in the hotel, and numerous alternative food outlets are close by. The hotel is easily accessible from the M55 and the train station is a 5 minute walk away. Bed and breakfast is just £22.00 per person for a shared room or £28.00 for a single room.

THE COST

The weekend, whether you enter a tournament or just play games with the people you will meet, is fantastic value at only £7.00!

HEROES 2005 BOOKING FORM

Please enclose a cheque for £7.00 for registration payable to PETE PHILLIPPS and a cheque for £10.00 for the hotel deposit payable to HOTEL SKYE and return with this form (photocopies acceptable) to Pete Phillipps, HEROES, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, LE4 7PY.

NAME							
ADDRESS							
NIGHTS ROOM REQUIRED FOR (tick each one)							
THURS		FRI		SAT		SUN	
SINGLE ROOM				DOUBLE ROOM			
NAME OF PERSON SHARING WITH							

Chapelle Ste Anne

Michael Davies

Chapelle Ste Anne is an old favourite from *Kampfgruppe Peiper 1*, taking place on the South east corner of the Stoumont Map. The terrain is mostly Pine woods and winding roads covered in heavy mist. Both sides have some tactical problems, opportunities for clever play a small but varied selection of units and support weapons. All KGP Scenarios are subject to about a page of special rules, not all of these apply to this scenario, some are fairly important and I'll give a walk through of these in the analysis below.

Scenario Special Rules

Several special rules apply to this scenario, mines, bore sighting, and US hidden initial placement we will look at later. I do think discussion of the Kampfgruppe Peiper special rules that apply is worth while.

KGP2 covers wind and weather. There is no wind, with wind change rolls only made to determine building collapse and interrogation. This makes mist much more likely to persist. And there is lots of mist. The E3.32 rules are superseded by KGP3 which gives a table of mist types and hindrances at various ranges. At scenario

start mist is heavy, providing a low visibility +1 hindrance at up to three hexes range, rising by +1 at three hex intervals. A LV hindrance does not negate FFMO, of FFNAM, doesn't effect interdiction, fire lanes or residual firepower. If it rains or rain becomes heavy the mist density rises one level. Very heavy mist and Extra heavy mist are LOS hindrances, and even more severe in their effects. During extra heavy mist LOS is restricted to five hexes maximum! With a +1 hindrance for each hex of range. Mist also changes as a result of the wind change roll. A DR of four or less reduces mist by one level. Expect this to happen every three or four player turns.

Soft ground conditions apply under KGP5. Moving off a paved road risks bog, and is slowed by an additional 1 MP per hex entered. This encourages German road movement, but doesn't totally restrict the half tracks to this. KGP7 makes unpaved roads in woods or pine woods single lane.

Although KGP8 allows the Chateau Froidcour cellars this shouldn't have any impact on play. If the action is taking place near here something has gone a bit wrong! More significant KGP9 prohibits kindling attempts.

KGP11 reminds us the Germans are SS. KGP13 covers German fuel shortage. All German half tracks enter play with the fuel gauge close to empty. A DR is required on starting the vehicle or changing covered arc to determine if it is out of fuel. A roll of 12 is needed but can happen. A vehicle without gas (I think the Yanks mean petrol), cannot move. Shouldn't happen to often but potentially a problem for the German player.

The last rule to consider is KGP18, interrogation. The effects can be triggered by a wind change DR or by questioning prisoners. In a game with mines and hidden units this does make the Germans attack a bit easier. At best the Americans will strip concealment from an enemy units, more often the Germans will benefit from revealed mines, or better still the hidden unit.

The special rules are logical and add a lot of colour to the game. At a pinch you could suspend the soft ground, interrogation, and out of gas rules, but the mist rules need to be played to give the Germans an easier drive on map.

The KGP map is very colourful. This helps differentiate gradients you shouldn't have too many problems with these during

CHAPELLE Ste ANNE

ASI. SCENARIO KGP4

STORMING, 21 December 1944: As the third prong of the concerted American attack planned for 21 December against Peiper's Stoumont salients, Major Earl D. McCown's 2119th Infantry was to move south through the Bois de Bassange and cut the N.33 between La Glorie and Stoumont, then attack westward. The Major and his liaison detachment Remouchamps at 0245 hours, and by 1400 the two leading companies had reached the road. Once they had established a roadblock position by felling trees and laying anti-tank mines across the pavement, the GIs began advancing west. After moving about 400 yards they encountered enemy small-arms and automatic-weapon fire which forced them to fall back into the woods. To make matters worse, Major McCown had disappeared; in fact he had been captured while making a personal reconnaissance to locate tank support that had been promised from Task Force Jordan. In the late afternoon, with the two other American attacks having failed, the 2119th was ordered to withdraw back north. One platoon of Company G left at the roadblock as a covering force bound itself in the path of a small group of German panzergrenadiers attempting to re-open the road.

MAP-GROUP CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

- ◆ Extend the game length to 6 1/2 Game Turns.
- ★ Add one more A-T mine factor and one more BKZ-45 to the U.S. OR.

TURN RECORD CHART

☆ AMERICAN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
◆ GERMAN Moves First							

Elements of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 119th Infantry Regiment (EIGR: 3) set up on both sides of hexes 31 in hexes numbered 2-52 (SAN: 2)

Elements of SS-Panzergrenadier Regiment 1 (ELGR: 5) enter on Turn 1 along the west edge (SAN: 5)

SPECIAL RULES:

1. Use KGP 508. Weather is Overcast with Heavy Mist; time of day is P04 (508: KGP5).
2. Bore Sighting is NA.
3. A-T mines may not be exchanged for A-F mines.
4. Place the roadblock in hex P54 along hexside P54/P55.
5. The U.S. may use HRP for one MMC (and all SWGMC) that set up in the same Locations with it.

AFTERMATH: After a brief firefight the panzergrenadiers charged, forcing the American platoon to abandon the position. The link between Stoumont and La Glorie was thus re-established but, with the remaining pressure in and around Stoumont having now stretched Peiper's supply stretching resources to their absolute limit, the German commander doubted it would be wise to evict the town before the Americans could cut the road again. Later that night the German withdrew everything save a small contingent of wounded from the Stoumont Road area, consolidating all remaining elements in and around La Glorie for what was already beginning to look like another desperate "see-saw".



play. KGP introduces slopes, barbed wire and pine woods. The rules for slopes do go on a bit, although they are on map the action takes place away from them so a quick read through the rules is all that is needed. For some scenarios slopes do have an impact, but not this one. Barbed wire is also present slightly slowing movement and requiring a bog check for vehicles. Pine woods are in play, represented by woods hexes with a lighter background. They are slightly easier for infantry to move through costing 1.5 MF instead of the usual 2MF. Pine woods do change fighting in woods, both attacker and defender can move further in the movement or rout phases. This is crucially important close to the end of this scenario when the Americans might want to run units into the objective area and the Germans will want to stop them!

American Set up

The Americans mission is to contest control of the area within two hexes of the road block in P54. Two good order MMC are needed. Don't get confused on this. Two MMC means just that, a squad is not two units until it deploys no matter how loudly you make your point! Good order means you can't be in melee or berserk. An unarmed unit such as a recently escaped prisoner also doesn't count. The absolute worst way to lose this scenario is to lose sight of the objective and move all your units out of the victory area to gift the German's a win.

Although the mission is very clear you do have a host of defensive options. The two polar opposites are a point defence of a single location close to P54, and a fall back defence along the edges of the woods. Sub plots include the placing of mines and HIP units. Other options include a frontal position on the edges of the woods, two or maybe three defensive islands and in my opinion the least favoured a variation of hide and seek splitting up your forces to encourage similar dispersal by the enemy.

To plan the defence you need to look at the Terrain and consider how the Germans' will attack. SS Panzergrenadier regiment 2 elements comprise a strong platoon. Three Infantry squads a 9-1 Leader and a LMG arrive in four SPW251 halftracks. One of the half tracks is a 251/SMG with a vehicle crew half squad, coaxially mounted HMG, and an AA machine gun that can be dismounted to use as another HMG. This force has considerable fire power 40 factors at normal range with the possibility of rate for the machine guns. The main strength of these units though is their high morale. SS units are hard to break,

and even quicker than American units to rally in general. It is highly probable that a skilled German attacker will exploit his units combination of high morale and fire power to overcome you in a series of short decisive fire fights. Feel slightly happier if he seeks close combat where your own fire power is equal and the fight more even. With more units you can just afford to trade squad for squad and come out on top. German units can try for smoke either from the vehicles inherent crews or from squads. The inherent smoke exponent of two is reasonable. Although most enemy units can use spraying fire they don't qualify for assault fire very helpful as there will be times when the Germans will be edging forward and would have enjoyed the extra fire power. I've assumed the infantry will enter as passengers. They can use Leadership or CX to run down the roads towards you but I am not convinced this is sensible. By using the halftracks to transport unit the Germans can make good progress down roads towards you and almost certainly will.

Each halftrack carries a crew and LMG that can be removed from the vehicle and fight against you. The crews are useful for manning the LMG's, guarding prisoners, searching for your hidden units, and generally complicating your defence. The half tracks can conduct low fire power overruns to attack broken units or tie up unbroken ones. They do have weaknesses. With fuel shortages in play movement after entry becomes tricky for the Hun. OK box cars are needed to trigger the event and you would be extremely optimistic to expect all four vehicles to suffer this. If the German is moving a lot, it will happen. You can encourage this by melting away from his half tracks line of sight and encouraging a movement attempt. Another mobility problem is the soft ground. This slow movement and creates a risk of bog, perhaps immobilisation. The unit you most want this to happen to is the half track toting the HMGs.

You can of course shoot at them! As armoured open topped vehicles small arms fire is subject to a +2 DRM, and some expected LV hindrance. A morale check is a fair result. Using the Bazooka is more deadly. I think you can use WP ammunition. A hit subject the crew and any passengers to a morale check and covers the hex with WP smoke. The upside is you only need to roll to hit to place this. Perhaps a conventional rocket is a better bet. The Bazooka 45 to kill is 16, the half track armour at best one factor. That's a to kill of fifteen and a burning wreck half of the time. A regular wreck result allows the crew and passengers to attempt to bail out, a five or

less is needed for this. Your MMG enjoys longer range than the Bazooka and generally better to hit numbers. It does struggle against even thin armour. The basic to kill is four, the largest possible range modification is plus two for a to kill of five. This is well worth taking if the target vehicle contains passengers or the HMGs'.

Don't forget the Germans Panzerfausts. With three squads he has four. If you are hunkered down in the Chapelle Ste Anne or behind the road block (effectively a stone wall) expect to see this fired! ASL allows vehicle crews to roll for these, some characters will even try firing them from the back of a half track. Other anti tank weapons include your demolition charge and your troops close combat capabilities and if you are lucky your mines.

Note the Germans very high ELR of five and it is underscored. Broken units will get back into the game very quickly and not much effected by the experience. With a very low unit density it is fortunate the German SAN is low at three. This gives a one in eighteen chance of sniper activation on an eligible DR. when it happens you don't want an attack on a big stack, preferably not on your Leader and ideally on a dummy stack. If you set up a Death Star of three squads most of the support weapons and your Leader, don't roll SAN.

So that's the third Reich. Company G are also in platoon strength. Three Elite and one first line squad, manning a Bazooka, a Browning .30 calibre MMG, and a demolition charge. Squads have inherent smoke, assault fire capability and excellent broken side morale. They are led by an 8-1 Leader. Further help comes from some fortifications. Four concealment counters are in addition to being able to conceal your units before German entry. You can also hide a MMC either squad or half squad and accompanying leader and support weapons. The road block is fixed to P54. The mines have more freedom. As the mines must be used against vehicles makes sense to avoid woods or pine woods hexes and instead concentrate of road, brush or open ground hexes. Mines are static units of considerable patience, if detonated they destroy vehicles. They also create uncertainty. On unpaved roads, in brush or open ground they are not revealed until successfully searched for or a vehicle moves onto their hex. The chance of activation depends on the number of mines present. Five factors has a very high probability of detonation, smaller fields compensate lack of individual success by channelling enemy movement and creating greater uncertainty. With paved roads in play, mines can still be placed on them but must be revealed as present once a German

unit has a line of sight to them. Mines on paved roads can be lifted by enemy Infantry at the end of the movement phase but the delay involved should help your cause.

Remember you have the option to deploy another squad, or recombine the half squads if it fits your plans. During play remember you can try to dig fox holes whilst waiting for enemy attacks. Not too much to say about SAN, only snakes will trigger activation! Be very pleased with a pinned squad, delighted with a dead leader or recalled half track. Remember the Bazooka can be used against Infantry targets. WP is available and should be attempted, you may also get a shot at units behind the road block or in a building. Don't forget inherent smoke. It can cover your movement. WP grenades are a bonus weapon that is sometimes overlooked, try for it at least once in this scenario.

The main weakness of your force is morale. A first line squad has a morale of six, an elite squad seven. In a fire fight the German squads and machine guns will get the upper hand. An ELR of three is much weaker than an underscored morale of five so avoid fire fights with equal numbers of enemy units. Don't get too timid if you have a strong advantage take the shot!

A quick look at the map helps to plan set up. The area around P54 is a mix of pine woods, brush, two types of road, Orchards, and the small Stone Chapelle that gives the scenario it's name. The road block in your OB must be set up in P54 and with a predetermine facing, sensibly covering the road! It is very important to note the crest lines in play. These create some interesting line of sight possibilities and at times will have a significant effect on movement. Moving up an elevation into pine woods costs 3 MF so an assault move is still possible.

Looking across a larger area you can make some reasonable assumptions about the route the Germans will take to reach you. To save time German Infantry units will likely enter as passengers. Very occasionally an attacker will opt to enter on foot, perhaps moving as a stack to benefit from leadership. This helps a bit by slowing their entry and might get you some way closer to a win. The advantage becomes greater if the SS are very cautious neurotically fearing a phantom hidden unit and moving slowly towards you. More often the troops will be in half tracks. I'd expect opening vehicle moves to stick to the paved roads, using the N33 or the network to the South, possibly both.

It would be nice to contest this entry with fire attacks or at least the threat of it. American set up is restricted to hexes numbered 52 or less. The only hex offering



a forward position is pine woods G52. With heavy mist in play and other hindrances Infantry fire from here needs ridiculous luck to be effective. Using the machine gun from and firing to hit the halftracks also needs some low numbers both to hit and to kill. If you are lucky destroying a half track on turn one would weaken the SS attack, if you destroy a squad at the same time you really do gain a serious advantage. More often your cunning "ambush" will either be totally ineffective due to realistic die rolls or movement that restricts your fire opportunities. Once you have taken any shots from G52 you must move quickly towards P54, to return to the main action around the road block.

Starting a force in G52 is a gambit. A half squad and the browning .30 is a reasonable tactic, larger forces are hard to justify. With HIP you can attempt this without alerting your opponent. You could also try a small dummy stack or if you are convinced the Germans are moving along the J46 to J50 road go for a stack of up to three squads and lots of support weapons. My own preference would be for a half squad. And two or three dummy counters. This looks like a substantial force right up

to the point when it opens fire!

Any units not in G52 should be set up to limit the extent the Germans can penetrate on turn one. A crew exposed half track can tear down a paved road at half a movement point per hex, with enough movement to unload infantry and have then move a little further. By using mines you can make rapid movement risky. Anti tank mines on paved roads are visible, and relatively easy to remove by infantry or dismounted crews unless covered by fire. You can create between one and four mine fields again subject to set up restrictions. O52 is a paved hex that merits at least one factor of mines, N52 is an unpaved road allowing a hidden mine and might be used by a German in a hurry. Further South the road net is harder to interdict, K52 is feasible. Don't expect the Germans to crash through woods as the risk of bog is greater than the possible damage from a small field. Deciding how much to place in any selected hexes is a judgement call. Larger fields are sensible if you intend to conduct a forward defence covering the mines with Infantry fire, smaller fields are ideal if you are slowly falling back fully expecting Panzergrenadier to nonchalantly pick up mines. The best spot

is of course under the tracks or wheels of an SPW 251.

I think there are at least three main defensive plans. These are a forward defence that might take place either on the woods line or at the edge of the woods, a series of successive defensive positions or a hedgehog defence of a chosen point.

There are many variants of these, especially when you start to throw in the hidden initial placement options, positions for particular weapons and specific choices about which squad goes where. I'll give an outline of the three plans without going as far as to say where each unit starts or should move throughout the game!

A defence at the edge of the woods requires American movement on turn one. By avoiding line of sight or exploiting movement in the advance phase you can end up with units ready to contest German movement on turn two. If this is in line of sight of the Germans, expect some enemy prep fire. Being so far forward can work if enemy fire is largely ineffective, but looks pretty grim if you start to suffer casualties. The Germans might try a rush or more likely occupy terrain with high TEM and shoot a way through your units. To win a fire fight you need more better cover (TEM), firepower, higher morale, better leadership, numerical advantages or good luck. If most of these advantages are lost or not present a fall back will happen either as a tactical solution you've devised or as troops break and rout!

If you are winning the skirmish don't get reckless, and give thought to a slight withdrawal or at least skulking to slow the pace of the German attack. If you decide or are forced to fall back Always concede the minimum amount of territory. This can be just one hex, sometimes two or if hard pressed even more.

You can start a forward defence a hex back from the tree line intending to hit German troops with fire attacks as they move into the woods or to create ambush possibilities by remaining concealed.

Although a forward defence will appeal to many players and can make for a very short exciting game (win or lose) a series of successive defensive positions might be a safer option for you. Your defence could be just back from the tree line or a series of defensive positions along the N33 road. The main departure from a forward defence is in aggression and timing. You will seek to maintain concealment or hidden status for longer, will withdraw if placed under pressure and seek to conserve our forces instead of exchanging troops for enemy casualties. Occasionally you will be faced with a very attractive target, don't be

afraid to get a little vicious and try shooting. If a single shot has a real chance of destroying a SPW251 complete with crew and passengers or you've sight of adjacent troops moving in open ground take the shots.

Accept the German will have a tactical plan. Whilst you seek to slowly trade acres or pine woods for time he will seek to engage parts of your forces and totally annihilate them! You can just about afford to lose a half squad per game turn and still have a credible force. If loss rates are higher and you are not similarly destroying SS hopes of victory may lie with hidden units or a turn five charge and some good luck.

A point defence or hedgehog also places importance on the N33 road. A small screen of units may be forward of the main position but the main idea of the defence is to heavily defence a strong positions against enemy attacks.

Begin by picking the area you will defend. It could be the Chapelle, around the road block or almost anywhere along the N33 road. On turn one some of your units can try for foxholes to improve your position. Aim to occupy territory with higher TEM than that available to your opponents. For example be in woods when he is in orchard, brush or moving, be in a stone building or newly dug foxhole when pressed by troops in woods. Even with better protection you can expect to fail more morale checks than your opponents would. Pre plan rout paths and rallying. As long as broken units are quickly returning to the fight you are only losing some firepower for a game turn or two. If sorely pressed a short retreat one or two hexes can save your troops and frustrate German plans particularly if the pressure was the result of several turns of careful movement.

Mines are a sub plot. If really stuck place them in N52, O52 and P52. Any mines in road hexes can be picked up the cost for the attacker is time or the risk of SPW casualties if he ignores them.

A few quick ideas. Dig foxholes whenever you can. Have fun with the hidden unit if it can appear part way through the game to eliminate a broken German unit excellent, even better if you can appear in or run into the victory area for a win. Make use of your support weapons. The MMG barrel should melt, the Bazooka should run out of rockets, the demolition charge is a one shot weapon that begs to be used. Make use of captured equipment take the odd MG shot against a halftrack and if you capture a halftrack think about overruns, driving into the victory area and German use of Panzerfausts.

Defending woods can be difficult. The roads complicate movement by allowing fast

transit across the board. Aim to restrict the enemies use of roads whilst being free to use them for your own routs, withdrawals or advances. If you make mistakes or are unlucky an initial defensive plan may become unhinged, for example forward defence may become an unruly mass of falling back broken units. If it happens accept this wasn't the original plan but reorder your troops and fight on. As long as you haven't suffered anything worse than broken units your still have enough defenders to keep the game interesting. If you do suffer high casualties and are pushed apart by the Germans try a deadly game of hide and seek. Deploy into half squads and dance around the German units until you must enter the victory area.

Expect to enjoy the game. The forces engaged are tiny and luck will have an impact on play. At times this hurts but it can also keep the game alive when your winning chances are suddenly improved by a single event.

The absolute worst way to lose is to be confused by the victory conditions. You need two MMC in the victory area, this has to be at least two half squads. If stuck with a lone squad late in the game you'll need to take prisoners (plural), or generate a leader to deploy, or be captured and escape?

Most games will be fun. It is hard to lose very quickly or to win immediately. A good defensive plan will help, though you might just be able to fly by the seat of your pants and counter enemy moves for a harder win.

German set up and entry

There are two possible ways to win this scenario. The Victory conditions state there must be one or less (presumably zero?) armed good order U.S Multi man counters within two hexes of P54 at the game end. So you win on a casualty cap if the US are down to a half squad or down to one squad and unable to deploy. It is well worth a read of the ASLRB Index to check the definition of good order. Broken and prisoner units are not good order as you would expect. Berserk and units in melee are also not good order. I'm not too sure how you could induce enemy unit to go berserk, getting them into melee is easier and should form part of your game plan late in the game. With the importance of melee in the closing turns expect some close games. Keep sight of the territorial objective. You can lose your entire OB and still win if you have drawn the Americans away from P52.

A good look at your OB will help planning. Your Infantry force is a three squad platoon commanded by a (9-1) Leader with

a LMG, and inherent Panzerfaust and anti tank magnetic mine capability. The mines you possess are not useful unless the Yanks capture a Half track, the Panzerfausts may be used against troops behind the road block or in any of the buildings in play. The basic SS Squad is a 6-5-8 with underscoring morale and an ELR of 5. This is important. As mist and cover are likely to effect most IFT attacks unbroken the SS are unlikely to be killed or reduced by a single attack. Most often they will be hit by a morale check, which you would expect them to either pass or survive as a broken full strength squad. With a broken side morale of nine, even units subject to desperation morale and self rally can return to combat quickly. The Americans are different. Their squads morale is seven with a lone 1st line squad with a morale of six at the game start. Against similarly strong attacks an American unit is more likely to break, massively more likely to ELR replace becoming less combat effective with each step. You can exploit this to engage in a three or four turn fire fight to wear the Yanks down. Be careful though. Although the SS squads are more resilient getting them into fire fights where they are out gunned or facing troops in better cover is not healthy.

In addition to the Infantry platoon you have their SPW251 Half tracks as transport and an SPW251/SMG giving fire support. All half tracks have inherent crews that can dismount or rather abandon their vehicles to bring more machine guns to the fight. Each basic SPW251 comes with an inherent 1-2-7 crew and LMG. The fire power is welcome, the units are also useful for basic infantry tasks, searching, guarding prisoners, out flanking units, and sometimes helping in fire combat or even melee attacks. The MG halftrack is covered in section H. The ASLRB allows the anti aircraft machine gun to be used as a HMG if removed by the 3-4-8 half squad that is available with the unit. I'd recommend considering this early in the game. Primarily the vehicles are there to transport units. As offensive units they bring fire power and the threat of overruns. Against your armoured vehicles, the US forces have a bazooka, a LMG and IFT or close combat attacks from Infantry. Oh yeah and a demolition charge and some mines. Driving onto mines is very risky. If the mines are on paved roads you are warned of the danger, in brush, or unpaved road hexes the threat is less obvious. Don't forget vehicular smoke grenades even rolling for them looks stylish and should impress some opponents.

Using the half tracks to protect passengers from small arms fire will work. If the Yank can hit your units with either the Browning machine gun or Bazooka give serious thought to moving out of line of sight



or at least dismounting the units. It is really painful to lose a half track, its crew and passengers to a lucky shot, so consider spreading the risk.

On the down side your force is small, very small, the half tracks are thinly armoured and open topped. On the upside, well the troops you have are extremely resilient.

The Americans main advantage is it's size, closely followed by concealment, firepower and support weapons. The numbers advantage pits four US squads against three and a half SS squads and four vehicle crews. The squads are mostly elite 6-6-7s' plus a lone 1st line 6-6-6 squad. Draw some comfort from the slightly lower morale of even elite units. On a straight morale check an 8 morale squad has 5/36 more chance of passing a morale check over a 7 morale unit, and a 11/36 better chance compared to a 6 morale unit. That is a good edge in a fire fight. In close combat, the Yanks are your equal so don't go for this unless you have a pressing need, or significant advantages like concealment, or attacking a pinned or Cx'd squad. American squad are allowed the assault fire bonus, tremendously useful in close terrain. By exploiting this they can move adjacent, take a shot then fall back in the advance phase or opt for close combat. In this scenario I'd rate assault fire a deal more useful than spraying fire!

American support weapons are dangerous. The Demolition charge is a nasty 30 IFT attack, that can kill or reduce a unit. It can be used against your half tracks with a good chance of success. Fortunately it is a one shot weapon and once used ceases to be

a problem. If you capture it use it quickly against the first available target. Doing damage early in the game is likely to be more useful than a veiled threat. The American Machine gun has a respectable fire attack and rate of fire. If stacked with a squad it threatens a 20IFT attack against adjacent units. Fire lane possibilities do exist but most of the time would expect combat ranges to be just one or two hexes. The MMG can be used against lightly armoured vehicles, this is historically accurate, the Browning .50 HMG was designed for anti tank work at the tail end of WW1. To kill numbers are low, and Mgs do not gain acquisition, but a SPW251 left in the line of sight of the weapon for long enough could be knocked out and might occasionally burn! The Bazooka is a much more effective anti tank weapon. At the likely engagement ranges of one or two hexes it's to hit rolls are a basic 9 or 10, modified by mist, any motion, target size and possibly leadership. A basic to kill of 16 modified by at most one armour factor destroys the vehicle on anything other than box cars. Losing one half track this way is reasonably particularly if the shot results from clever American play, but losing more units when the position of the Bazooka is known shouldn't happen unless you expose them to avoidable risks or are darned unlucky.

The Anti tank mines are difficult to deal with. I've seen players almost ignore them and drive on, expecting 1 factor fields and calculating the odds of destruction are too slight to matter. Sometimes this works, and by all means try this if it is your playing style! You can be more cautious, using

Infantry to search for mines in brush, Orchard or dirt road hexes, or picking them up carefully in paved road hexes. Mines either impose delay or the threat of casualties. It helps to plan a response to mines before you encounter them.

Give some thought to the road block. You know where it is. Within the time scale of the game it is hard to see it being destroyed or removed. For the American or even your own troops it provides cover, at the slight risk of HEAT attacks. It does make vehicular access to the area around Chapelle St. Anne very difficult. The road block and a mine in a dirt road hex allows for an American last stand away from your half tracks.

The entire American OB can start the game hidden, with hidden initial placement an option for one MMC and any accompanying support weapons and/or the Leader. With concealed units in play you should try to analyse enemy set up to guess where support weapons and the Leader might be. This is quiet good fun and an important part of the game system. No one can do this correctly all the time, but you should be pleasantly surprised how close you can get. The hidden unit is a problem, which can be magnified by fear. If you are lucky your opponents clever set up with conceal an elite squad, the Bazooka and the sole US leader for most of the game whilst you flatten the rest of his troops. Taking prisoners and interrogating them can lead to hidden or concealed units being revealed. Makes sense to exploit this, perhaps employing vehicle crews to guard prisoners. Massacre is an option later in the game, something I'm loath to consider, but certainly allowed by A20.4. It increases the American ELR to 4, so think and don't just do this as a flash gesture.

Chapelle Ste Anne takes places in the South Eastern corner of the Stoumont map. The closing stages of the game will most likely be in the woodlands around P52, whilst your opening moves will cover entry and movement towards the enemy forces. With mist in play significant line of sight hindrances are in play. For the Americans these are inconvenient on the opening turns limiting the effectiveness for fire against you. As the Germans you should view mist as a weak smoke screen that helps to cover your movement. From the Western edge to the Woods line is a two turn walk for Infantry, even if you use the roads, double time and Leadership to speed you along. I can't see any advantage in entering like this except as a shock tactic to unsettle a nervous opponent! Moving onboard as passengers makes a lot more sense allowing rapid movement across the board using the roads in play. The risk of interdiction by enemy fire is limited. Line of sight gives you the best protection. The

only hex the Americans can set up in to shoot at you as you enter is G52, which has limited line of sight. Moving along N33 at ½ MP per hex gets you well onto the board, and allows you to disembark and move perhaps another hex. Going too far is risky. Mines should deter road movement unless a burning wreck is part of your game plan. Be a bit careful if you drive past N47. Using road movement allows an American line of sight along the woods road hexes comparatively save if being shot at by the Bazooka, risky if attacked by small arms fire or to hit attempts by the MMG.

Once into the woods, I think the scenario gets more interesting. American units are concealed, so you never really know what you are up against. The height of stacks gives you some clues, whilst simple notes on a scrap of paper of what you have found are helpful. Most of the time you will be faced with a short line of American units. The most basic attack against this is a frontal charge. This is a quick win if your opponent is unlucky, more often a decisive reverse! If you can try for a flank attack working against part of the line and rolling up the US defenders. If you move onboard quickly this pattern of attack can start on turn two, if you can wear the defenders down by a squad per game turn you will earn a win.

Watch out for carefully planned defences. Some defenders will go on the offensive counterattacking parts of your forces to cause you casualties. If this allows you to remove larger chunks of the 119th Regiment elsewhere this is not a problem but is a real problem if your losses are greater than the Yanks. The Half tracks can help here, adding firepower, contesting enemy movement and threatening overruns. Given a fair run of the dice aggress defence should lead to a win for you.

Another defensive option is to disperse, for a deadly game of hide and seek. On the plus side isolated enemy units are "easier" to break and capture or eliminate for failure to rout, on the down side you will spend more time moving and less time shooting. Whatever the Defenders strategy it helps to expect it as an option before you start play, and to give the impression however the enemy is playing is both expected and preferred! Don't overplay this, you want a slight edge rather than to alienate your opponents! My own preference would be for the Americans to pick a spot, dig in and die in place, however part of the fun of ASL is seeing someone do a better job of playing a side than you would yourself!

Close action in the woods will be good fun, aim to do the job by firepower, use your high morale to survive a few attacks and generally avoid close combat. Keep your

casualties down, but don't aim to finish the game with every unit in tact!

Possibly the most important consideration is pacing your attack. You are allowed five and a half game turns, which you will need! The German balance is an additional turn which is enormously helpful if you are given it. With an extra turn you can recover from some bad luck, maybe rally units that were reluctant the first time or gain concealment before making one of your attacks. Without the balance you need to move onboard briskly, and develop a series of careful attacks against two or three lines of American defence. If you want to make this very challenging try to win in five and a half turns!

To recap, you need to move onboard quickly using the N33, dismount your Infantry, and optionally your crews, and develop an attack through the woods to destroy or drive away American units. Make use of your superb morale and high firepower. Don't worry too much about the weather. For long range shots heavy mist is a problem but for combat ranges of one or two hexes a +1 modifier moves combat results away from KIA/K results to morale checks which you are more likely to pass than the Yanks!

Conclusion

This is a beautiful platoon action. For the Americans you can expect to enjoy the defence of a road block. Although clever play will be rewarded you can still enjoy a reasonable game by setting up close to P52 and hanging on grimly to the end! This has less chance of a win than a carefully crafted collapsing defence falling back from one position but is much easier to execute.

As the Germans, the attack must be carefully paced to trade casualties for time. Too aggressive or unlucky and your troops will disappear in the mist. By exploiting the vehicles for mobility and fire power you can hit the defenders the defenders hard and fast.

Some games will end with close combat, most often initiated by the Germans, for either side this is risky, make sure if you lose or are held in melee you give yourself credit for a near win!

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OPPORTUNITY FIRE

Many new players tend to wonder why they should use Opportunity Fire. After all, why wait until the Advancing Fire Phase to fire when you can fire just as easily in the Prep Fire Phase?

Opportunity Fire is best used when coupled with manoeuvring/scouting half-squads against a concealed enemy. If you Prep Fire against a concealed unit, your FP is halved for using Area Fire (or for Ordnance attacks, you suffer a +2 DRM for shooting at a Concealed Unit). This makes softening up a concealed defensive line difficult. In the AFPh, you fire at half FP anyway, UNLESS marked as an Opportunity Firer, in which case you fire at full FP. The key is to ensure the enemy is still not concealed. This is where half squads come into play. A half squad moves towards the concealed unit, tempting it to fire and thus lose concealment. If he doesn't fire at you, you move into his Location, forcing him to lose Concealment, or possibly make a Search attempt with the same results. Your Opportunity Fire marked unit may then fire in the AFPh without being halving for either Advancing Fire or Concealment.

In 'ASLI Fighting Withdrawal' the Russians tend to set up their squads heavily up front under the scenario-given concealment counters. If they do this well, the Finns have very little manoeuvre room to run past them and generally have to reduce part of this line during turn 1. The way they do this is to create a couple of large fire groups, mark them with Opportunity Fire, and then attempt to cross the street and into the opposing line with sacrificial HS to reveal dummies. Most Russians can't resist shooting them up at point blank range with a -2 DRM for FFNAM and FFMO. If the Russians fire they are revealed, if they don't they are revealed when the HS attempt to enter their Location. Either way, the fire groups have several targets to shoot at.

The disadvantage of Opportunity Fire is that your Opportunity Fire units have to survive any Defensive Fire attacks before they get to shoot. The theory behind this is what the military call "Over-watching Fire" – you're not shooting yet, you are covering someone who is moving. When the enemy shoots at your moving unit, you shoot at him. If he shoots at the over-watching unit, the moving unit is able to assault him. This is

the essence of the dilemma that the fire and movement technique offers the enemy.

As a defender you always have to be aware of the Opportunity Fire / sacrificial half squad ploy. The best defence against half squads that try to remove concealment (especially if there are likely to be several of them) is often a flanking fire lane. Important buildings that are protected by, for example, two fire lanes (even from LMGs) will make the attacker think twice or make him pay more for the information gained. If you are in buildings, and have the important units on ground level, it is usual a good idea to have squads (without SW, since they cannot place a Fire Lane) on 1st level. They still have PBF and if broken they are easy to replace. Opportunity Fire possibilities that just shot up unimportant units without Area Fire is also often very frustrating for the attacker.

The other common use for Opportunity Fire is to remove CX from units. If you mark your CX unit with Opportunity Fire, the CX will be removed in the MPh and the unit can then fire in the AFPh at full FP (and ROF if it has any) without being halved.

Another use for Opportunity Fire is when firing a back blast weapon from inside a ground-level building. Opportunity Fire avoids the +2 for Case C3 and the back blast penalty (C13.8).

If you have a good leader (EG 9-2) stacked away from a stack, mark the stack with Opportunity Fire, then move the leader into the squad's Location, and fire away in the AFPh with the leadership modifier.

Opportunity Fire has a big disadvantage: units opting for it lose "???" they have. The only time this is not true is if your unit can only be seen by concealed stacks. In this case the enemy must momentarily reveal a real unit to force you to lose concealment. If he does, you gain another piece of information about the enemy dispositions, if he doesn't you have lost nothing.

Finally, remember that only Infantry/Cavalry can be marked with an Opportunity Fire counter. A vehicle can't, but a crew manning a Gun can.

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RECON BY FIRE 2

Seth Fancher

I feel obligated to make a partial disclaimer at the start - I have done some proof reading for HoB in the past, although I don't recall if I did any of the articles in this specific magazine. In any event, this activity was always on a voluntary and uncompensated basis. I believe that the opinions I have stated below have been reached objectively.

Heat of Battle released the second issue of their *Recon by Fire* magazine in October 2004, five years after the first issue was released in 1999. Santa left this nugget under the tree for me this year. List price for those who can't wait for The Fat Guy next year is \$36 from HoB at www.heatofbattle.com. Following are my personal thoughts and comments:

Overall, the magazine has 40 pages of "stuff" (the actual page count is 44, including front and back cover and a couple of pages of advertisements), plus a new *Deluxe ASL* map and Armored Personnel Carrier player aid. The magazine is printed in full colour throughout, including numerous *VASL* screenshots to supplement the tactical articles.

Ten scenarios are included (RbF 9-18), although one is a re-print of 'NFNH-14 The Bitter End' from the third SS pack *Neither Fear Nor Hope*. These take up 10 pages attached in the middle of the magazine. This may not be the preference of some people, but for me it matters little, as it is consistent with the format used in *RbF 1*, as well as many other current publications.

The scenarios themselves tend to be East Front action (6 scenarios) and early war seems slightly more prevalent (6 scenarios occur in or before February 1943). Two offerings are *DASL* actions using the included mapboard BF2 Distinctive within the scenarios are the lone British v German scenario [RbF-14 Kampfgruppe Lang] which uses boards HOB I and HOB II (the massive, two board large hill from HoB's *High Ground*), an east front scenario that occurs in Deep Snow during extreme winter [RbF-13 Neubauer Battalion], and a Russian v Japanese contest set in August 1945 in Manchuria [RbF-18 First Day at Fuchin]. An early war German v Norwegian *DASL* scenario [RbF-9 Rolling Stones] rounds out the mix. Nine of the scenarios were designed by Chas Smith (Executive Editor of *RbF*),

and one (RbF-16 The Bitter End) was designed by Burnie Hegdahl.

The *DASL* map (BF2 - BF1 was included with the *Hell on Wheels Battle Pack*) is by Klaus Fischer. It is un-mounted, so you will have to put another board underneath to get a flat playing surface when using other boards. But this should not be a huge deal in my opinion. Of greater concern is that the hexes are just slightly smaller (~1/16th of an inch) than the MMP boards at 2 1/2 inches across. The result across the width is about 1/4 inch misalignment. Not a huge difference, but players should probably agree how they will align the boards as some LOS may change slightly depending on which side of the board is lined up. Also perhaps some

ment.

The APC Player Aid, designed by Mark Pitcavage and Chas Smith, is formatted and looks similar to the *ASLRB* chapter dividers. The aid is specific to German and American APCs and presents a "Characteristic Chart" for a variety of APCs for these nationalities. The chart summarizes the information included in Chapter H, and includes: Chap H Ref #, #PP, towing #, special IN additional to the inherent crew, weapons, and some information on removal of the weapons. Some footnotes add specific detail where needed. Perhaps not necessary for the die-hard grognards who have all this information memorized, but for most of us, it will serve as a valuable tool.

Two tactical articles take up ~19 pages of the remaining 30. The articles discuss the principles of breaching in general military terms, and then walk the reader through two examples of breaching in *ASL* (one using the *OtO* map and the mine-roller tanks included in that module, the other an example of an Infantry-only breach).

The rest of the magazine is shorter articles including some "standard" ones like the "Notes from the Command Post" (editor's comments) and some discussion of HoB scenario results reported on ROAR. Of special interest for Tournament Directors will be the "HoB Tournament Support" article which discusses what HoB can and will provide in the way of prizes and other support for tournaments. While the specific audience for this article is fairly limited (TD's), given the prevalence of criticism from the "peanut gallery" when publishers are perceived to not be generous enough in terms of tournament support, it is perhaps a good thing to get this information out to everyone. If support is not received (or is felt not to be generous enough), people should be able to identify what the specific problem was.

An interesting article (which will supposedly become a regular feature in future issues) on "What Happened To...?" The intent is to update readers on the status of *ASL* projects that were originally announced by publishers several years ago, but have yet to see the light of day. Discussed in this issue



discussion on handling LOS that would go along the hexsides but that does not because of the different sizes. And also, if one is playing *VASL*, be aware that the LOS will be different from the actual boards (as I would expect the *VASL* hexes to be the same size).

The board itself is a small town/village with ~22 single hex buildings spread across the map. A 1-hex wide water obstacle runs the length of the board and is intended (per a note in the magazine) to be a river, stream or whatever other kind of obstacle scenario designers choose. There is a 12-hex L1 hill also on one corner of the map. Some interesting LOS are here as some other buildings create some blind hexes adjacent to the water obstacle, allowing a player attempting to cross some cover and conceal-

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RECON BY FIRE 2

Continued from page 15, column 3

is HoB's *Company Commander* which was announced in the first issue of *RbF* and which has never come to fruition. In future articles, the intent is to provide info on other long awaited products from all different publishers, both official and third party.

If I have one criticism it is that the magazine could have used a final proof read before going into production. For one article we are incorrectly told that it continues on page 37 (it actually continues on 35), and there are a few too many non-spelling typos that disrupted the flow for my taste (e.g. words that were inadvertently omitted, extra words inadvertently left in, "odd" quotation marks, that disrupt the reading flow). These are very minor criticisms in the grand scheme - perhaps it is because of how outstanding the product otherwise appears that these items stood out to me.

I thought the magazine overall was very good - a high quality product with several interesting articles, and a "new" board included. Definitely worth getting and adding to a collection. The other side is "how much to pay" for this product then. In my opinion it is fairly priced in my opinion. I have bought other products (*OtO* from HoB) where I was just blown away and thought that I got great value - I would have paid more to get the same product. In hindsight, I would certainly pay the \$36 again for this magazine. But I think that had it been priced even slightly higher, I would have started to feel like I overpaid. For people who buy mags for the scenarios, you're paying \$4 apiece (I have not included *The Bitter End* since this is a duplicate from SS Pack 3, which is still available from HoB - \$25 for 14 scenarios or less than \$2 each) and I think those people may be slightly less satisfied with the "value." The tactical articles are what I enjoy most in this type of publication, so the articles here were of interest to me. Advertising in the issue is a little bit more obvious than I recall in the past (could be because they are also in colour and stand out more too) and some other magazines, but if the additional revenue from advertising helps to put out a product of this physical quality at a lower cost then that is a good thing in my opinion.

A couple of article types that I would be interested in seeing in future editions, just based on my personal tastes:

- a series replay - these are great anywhere;
- more discussions of tactics.

HoB is one of the few publishers that will go out on a limb and publish articles like these. I include this here just because I know Chas Smith from HoB has asked for this information - I am not in anyway trying to imply that *RbF 2* should have had a series replay or more tactical articles.



THE TRENCHES

ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL

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!

FEBRUARY SCANDANAVIAN ASL OPEN

When: 25 - 27 February.

Where: Tøjhusmuseet (Danish National Arms Museum), Frederiksholms Kanal 29, 1220 Copenhagen K., 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: 200 Danish Kroner (about £18.00).

Format: The tournament will be a five round Swiss style affair open to a maximum of 32 players. There will also be an 8 man mini-tournament running Friday to Sunday based around the HoB *Beyond The Beachhead* scenario pack.

Contact: Michael Hastrup-Leth, Favrhølmvænget 15, 3400 Hillerød, Denmark, or email at hastrup@image.dk. For the latest information visit <http://aso.strategispil.dk/>.

MARCH 2005 HEROES 2005

When: 11 - 13 March.

Where: Hotel Skye, South Promenade, Blackpool, England. Room rates are £22.00 for a shared room or £28.00 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

Fee: £7.00.

Format: Four or 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 opportunities for new players to learn the game and friendly games available.

Contact: For more details or to register contact Pete Phillipps, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, LE4 7PY. Phone (0116) 210 1798 (evenings only) or email heross@vift.co.uk.

OCTOBER 2005 INTENSIVE FIRE 2005

When: 27 - 30 October.

Where: The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Boumemouth, England, BH2 5EG Telephone (01202) 555 889 or fax (01202) 789 567 to arrange accommodation. Single rooms are £33.00 per night, double rooms £29.00 per night per person if booked prior to 1 October - thereafter normal rates apply. Remember to mention INTENSIVE FIRE when reserving to qualify for the special rates. You can also book online at www.kiwihotel.co.uk.

Fee: £7.00 (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). Players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in September.

Format: Three round Fire 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 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 Phillipps, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, LE4 7PY. Phone (0116) 266 6894 (evenings only) or email if@vift.co.uk.

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INTENSIVE FIRE 2005

28 – 30 OCTOBER 2005



INTENSIVE FIRE is the UK's longest running tournament dedicated to the play of *Advanced Squad Leader*. 2005 sees us enter our second decade and players of all standards are invited to attend.

FORMAT

The well-established Fire Team Tournament is the main event and offers the chance for competitive play on the Saturday and Sunday. In addition, the Friday mini-tourneys offer the chance for glory in more specialised fields of warfare. There will also be a Training Camp for inexperienced players. For those not interested in tournament play, or not able to make it for the whole weekend, there is always room for pick-up games and friendly play.

VENUE

The Kiwi Hotel, centrally located in Bournemouth, offers both excellent gaming facilities and reduced accommodation rates (£35 per night for a single room or £30 for a double room). The hotel is within a short taxi-ride of Bournemouth rail station and ample parking is available. To book contact the hotel on (01202) 555 889 (+44 1202 555 889 from outside the UK). You can also book online at www.kiwihotel.co.uk. For foreign visitors, lifts can often be pre-arranged to and from major airports. For those contemplating an extended stay, Bournemouth offers an excellent base for the military historian, being within easy reach of important military museums at Bovington Camp, Winchester, Portsmouth and Aldershot.

COST

Weekend registration for the tournament costs just £7. The tournament program listing the weekend's scenarios and events is available from late September to anyone registering in advance.

FURTHER DETAILS / REGISTRATION

Contact Pete Phillipps, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, England, LE4 7PY. Telephone (0116) 210 1798 (+44 116 210 1798 from outside the UK) or email if@vftt.co.uk.