

# VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

Issue 77

Sept - Dec 2009

UK £2.00

US \$5.00



## IN THIS ISSUE

**BEAT THE SLEAZE** - Defending Against VBM

**ALONE IN THE BALKANS** - notes for SASL Axis Minor campaigns

**SOVIET ANTI-TANK RIFLES** - historical notes and use

**NIGHT BLINDNESS** - refereed night scenarios

**NORTH WEST FEST** - after action report

**BATTLEFIELD RUSSIA** - Paul Case visits Russia

## IN THIS ISSUE

PREP FIRE	2
INCOMING	3
BEAT THE SLEAZE	4
NIGHT BLINDNESS	8
ALONE IN THE BALKANS	9
NORTH WEST FEST	14
SOVIET ANTI-TANK RIFLES	15
BATTLEFIELD RUSSIA	18
“THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!”	22
ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL	23

# PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of *VFTT*, a couple of weeks later than planned despite having most of the material done months ago. Laziness is my only excuse :-)

There's not long to go now until INTENSIVE FIRE 2009 takes place, so if you haven't registered yet, now is the time to do so. You save a fiver if you do so, always important in these credit crunch times!

See a few of you at INTENSIVE FIRE next month. 'Til then, roll Low and Prosper.

Pete Phillipps

**COVER:** The German invasion of Poland on September 1st 1939 is announced by newspapers in London.

### 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 *ASL*ers. Don't be a silent voice.

Issue 78 should be out at the beginning of January 2010.

*VFTT* costs £2.00 per issue (overseas £4.00), with a year's subscription costing £5.00 (overseas £10.00). 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. You can also download *VFTT* free from the *VFTT* web site.

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

<http://www.vftt.co.uk/vfttpdf.htm>

### VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

9 Pier Road  
Kilchoan  
Acharacle  
Argyll  
PH36 4LJ

Telephone:  
(01972) 510 350

E-mail:  
[pete@vftt.co.uk](mailto:pete@vftt.co.uk)

World Wide Web Home Page:  
<http://www.vftt.co.uk>

### COPYRIGHT AND TRADEMARK NOTICE

Most products are trademarks of the companies publishing them. Use of a product name without mention of the trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

Copyright for all material printed within *VFTT* remains with its author, who can be contacted via *VFTT* if you would like to reprint his/her material.



# INCOMING

## ARGENT JOINS MMP

Noted *ASL* designer Chas Argent has been hired by MMP as a full-time *ASL* developer, as part of their plans to increase the production rate of *ASL* products.

MMP have also reached an agreement with Gary Fortenberry, Charlie Kibler, and Bob McNamara to produce *AP6 The Decade of War*, which will contain three new mapboards and ten scenarios. The new mapboards resemble two half-boards placed side-by-side and allow new mapboard configurations not possible before. The scenarios consist of one for each year from 1936 to 1945. The pack is expected to be ready for pre-order soon, at which point pricing will be announced, and if it hits it's P# as expected should start shipping later this year.

Also expected to ship this year are both *Blood Reef: Tarawa Gamer's Guide* and the *Doomed Battalions* reprint. Both are still available on pre-order, with the former being priced \$12.00 (with an estimated retail price of \$16.00) and the latter \$54.00 (with an estimated retail price of \$72.00).

## HOB's LONG MARCH

*The Long March* is a scenario pack from HoB covering the opening years of the Chinese Civil War from 1931 to 1936, with the main focus on the Long March of 1934-35, when the communist forces were

chased from the base in southern China to Yenian in the north. The pack contains 17 scenarios, a mix of small, medium and large, along with a linked campaign that uses 14 of them to represent the whole of the Long March itself. It is available for \$32.00 (\$37.00 for non-US orders).

## BUNKER 29 ON HORIZON

*Dispatches From The Bunker 29*, which will contain four scenarios, is due for release at the end of September. 'Sole Success' sees the Japanese and Filipino troops clash in Luzon in December 1941, while 'Out of the Shadows' is set in August 1944 and sees the rear guard of 11 Panzer Division clash with the American 3rd Infantry Division. 'Shifting Bricks', the second scenario in the Brickworks series, sees the British 78th Division trying to hold the Brickworks against the German 16th Panzer Division, backed with Stuka support. Finally, 'Speed, Shock and Surprise', the first scenario in the Operation Rosselsprung series, sees the SS Fallschirmjaeger Battalion 500 drop into action against Tito's Partisan forces, who have armoured support from four captured Italian L3-35(i) tanks.

There will also be a look at the Ilu CG from issue 28, a review of the Nor'Easter tournament, previews of both the upcoming Bunker Bash and NY State *ASL* Tournament, and the usual Tactical

Tips on the Back-Page.

Four issue subscriptions (starting with issue 28) are available for \$15.00 (\$18.00 outside the USA). Issues 1 to 10 are now out of print but PDF versions are available for free from [www.aslbunker.com](http://www.aslbunker.com). Other back issues are \$4.00 (\$4.50 outside the USA) or \$40.00 (\$50.00 outside the USA) for a complete set of issues 11-28. A complete set of issues 11-27 and a subscription for issues 28-31 is available for \$50.00 (\$60.00 outside the USA). Cheques should be made payable to Vic Provost and sent to *Dispatches from the Bunker*, P.O. Box 2024, Hinsdale MA 01235, or you can pay by PayPal to [PinkFloydFan1954@aol.com](mailto:PinkFloydFan1954@aol.com). You can email them at [aslbunker@aol.com](mailto:aslbunker@aol.com).

Ω



## 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, e-mail them at [shop@leisuregames.com](mailto:shop@leisuregames.com), or go to [www.leisuregames.com](http://www.leisuregames.com).

**SECOND CHANCE GAMES**, 182 Borough Road, Seacombe, The Wirral, L44 6NJ. Telephone (0151) 638 3535, e-mail them at [sales@secondchancegames.com](mailto:sales@secondchancegames.com), or go to [www.secondchancegames.com](http://www.secondchancegames.com).

**PLAN 9**, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen, AB25 1NE. Telephone (01224) 624 467 or e-mail them at [plan9@ifb.co.uk](mailto:plan9@ifb.co.uk).

**BATTLEQUEST GAMES**, 29 Victory Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2JF. Telephone 01403 242003 or go to <http://www.battlequestgames.com/>.

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



# BEAT THE SLEAZE

## Defending Against VBM

Craig Benn

A few years after World War Two...a couple of desert veterans reminisce...

Charles Spiffington-Warner: "It was a good clean war wasn't it? No quarter couldn't be declared and you had to take prisoners even if it was inconvenient."

Hans von Freytag-Loringhoven: "Yes. Yes. We had our own routing rules, and lots of interesting overlays."

The two walk towards a quaint English pub, before being accosted by a wretched excuse of a man.

"Awright your honours, you wanna see some fealthy pictures?"

Charles: "Unhand me you bounder, or I shall call on the local constabulary."

"C'mon now gentleman. Whats your perversion? Drugs? ATS?"

Hans (hitting him): "Verdamnit. Take that unterschmenschen."

"Oooff. Not the face. Not the face. Ow."

Charles: "Bloody half-track drivers".

We've all done it. Of course, you feel a bit dirty afterwards, the first time. I mean you know there's no historical justification for it, but it's just too effective not to use. Some people will bang on about game not a simulation blah,blah, blah. But we know don't we? Halftracks were battle taxis. Tanks did not go running up to buildings and woods to protect their infantry – rather the reverse.

In fact VBM is a bit naughty really. I mean would Audie Murphy or Clint Eastwood have used it? Or Gandhi? Would Luke Skywalker? Hell no. (Han Solo... possibly)

So how do we defend against it when the other guy has all those crappy vehicle counters with 20mm guns or halftracks that he's happy to throw away?

Well there's no one answer to the question really. VBM sleaze is effective, and often a needed part of your arsenal in attack. Most tactics are only partially successful in combating it. What you need is a veritable arsenal of tricks and a different way of looking at things.

So lets take this in three parts. Firstly – how to defend against VBM without defending against VBM. Secondly – know what the rules allow and don't allow. Thirdly – getting the most out of your SW.

## Defending Without Defending

"To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill" – Sun Tzu

Yep that's right. Time for some mellow hippy shit to mess with your head. The key to defending against VBM, is not to defend against the *bypassing* unit.

Let's take a typical situation. You have a squad with a MMG and a -1 leader that is central to your defence, which an enemy halftrack is about to VBM sleaze. To get there the halftrack has to pass a couple of squads and take street fighting attacks. With the -2 mods for open top and -1 for street fighting, that seems pretty attractive, right? Wrong.

Lets look at the basic chances – and assuming a 7 morale squad, the odds are as follows:

	Open -T	C-T/BU	
<b>Pinned</b>		41.67	41.67
<b>Burn</b>		4.86	0
<b>Kill</b>		11.34	4.86
<b>Immobilize</b>		8.10	4.86
<b>Miss</b>		34.03	48.61

Let's consider the results:

42% of the time, your squad will be pinned, halving firepower, losing ROF, with ambush and close combat penalties, *and* the VBM will happen.

34% of the time, you will miss, get marked First Fire and probably have your Final Fire options seriously limited by the halftrack *and* the VBM will happen.

11% of the time, you are marked First Fire and get a kill – yeah!

8% of the time you immobilize the halftrack – this is sort of good but the halftrack will now cut down on Final Fire options.

5% of the time the halftrack will burn creating an instant smokescreen.

So how does this stack up against option 6 – you let the VBM happen...

76% of the time the VBM happens anyway and a defending squad has used up some of its firing options.

19% of the time, there is a *goodish* result – one of your units has had its fire options reduced, so another can fire freely. If you only got the immobilization though,

everyone's Final Fire options are reduced.

5% of the time – a burn which is a bad result. Instant smoke, and most of the time the bypassing unit is a throwaway – the other player doesn't care about its loss.

So over 80% of the time you get a worse result than if you had done nothing. And the above represents pretty much ideal circumstances – against a close-topped buttoned up AFV, over 90% of the time you get a worse result than if you had done nothing. (this also assumes you are entitled to the street fighting bonus, and also ignores burns from unlikely kills and crew small arms).

There are various situations that can increase your chances of a kill – assault engineers, leaders, ATMM e.t.c but crucially they will also vastly increase the chances of a burning wreck.

What about your other options? If the AFV can't BU (e.g carriers), forgets or chooses not to BU – then you can attempt to stun them with small arms. But to get a stun with the +2 DRM for CE against a typically 8ML crew requires some serious firepower – 12 Firepower for a one in six chance, 16 firepower for a one in four chance (see table below)...firepower that would probably be best used against the follow up infantry.

### Small arms vs CE

IFT	Stun
1	0.77%
2	2.70%
4	5.79%
6	10.49%
8	16.82%
12	25.16%
16	34.72%

Light anti tank weapons? Well if you don't mind the sleaze vehicle burning, risking backblast in buildings ( a 4 in 6 chance of a NMC or worse), and the panzerfaust risks of pinning, using up your fire options for failed checks, and casualty reduction for twelves...well you get the idea...

So *Don't* fire...its clear that in the



vast majority of cases – firing at the AFV that is going to bypass is a *worse* result than not firing. Certainly in the Movement Phase, when the intention is for the low value AFV to draw fire – you can maybe think differently in the Defensive Final Fire phase when you’ve seen what else is coming -

So our first rule of thumb is: **ONLY THE DEFENDER GETTING SLEAZED FIRES AT THE BYPASSING UNIT.**

( *because it would lose its firepower anyway...* )

So what is the second rule of fight club... ahem defense against VBM? **PROTECT THE BYPASSED UNIT FROM ENEMY INFANTRY.**

Again lets think a bit differently – the bypassed unit is rarely in danger from the sleazoid AFV. If the AFV fires it will usually be halved and tripled (i.e stopping to fire, then starting again – if not its quartered and tripled). This gives a SPW 251/1 halftrack with a 3FP AAMG, a 4+TEM shot. Not too worrying if you are in a stone building. Main armament shots will usually be defeated by Bounding Fire and TEM modifiers. Not *always* true but generally so...

The *real* danger is because of target selection limits, enemy Infantry can move without risk and get adjacent to and possibly behind the bypassed unit to break it in the Advancing Fire Phase and eliminate it for failure to rout. Preventing *this* is the key to defending against VBM.

So how do you do it?

Put Residual Firepower adjacent to the bypassed hex. This should only be done by the defender getting sleazed. He should fire at the enemy AFV when it

moves adjacent, which you are entitled to do even if it can have no effect (**A7.307**), and Spraying Fire should also be used if available.

You may be thinking why don’t I wait until the halftrack is in my hex, when I can hit it with TPBF and can affect it even if BU? C’mon - *think boy* – if you get a Stun result in your own hex you can’t fire out anyway...so what’s the point?

If you can cover the position with another MG, then fire it at the offending AFV with a “To Kill” attempt, and declare a Fire Lane. Not only does this stop the chance of cowering (ordnance can’t cower), it doesn’t really violate the first rule – the attack you are making is not really about killing the bypassing AFV, it’s about stopping the follow up infantry. And most OBs will provide a LMG at least to allow this.

Mutual support – the target hex should have other troops adjacent, so the bad guys can’t waltz behind the target, or at least be able to deliver point blank fire at any attackers getting adjacent. (Unless the enemy has radioless AFVs – no point allowing Platoon Movement bypass sleaze by being adjacent).

Again this is a cost/benefit analysis. You may feel that you have to cover the entire map on the defence and not leave a hole that the attackers can pore through. In fact your two options are A) defending units adjacent, and attackers poring through hole on one side of the board and B) defending units not together, attackers poring through hole on one side of the board and dead unit that has been VBM’ed. Take your pick.

Don’t kill the AFV that’s bypassing the defenders in the Defensive Final Fire Phase. *Excuse me?* Yes you heard right the first time. Imagine you have a magic cloak of invisibility that gives -2 or -3 to your Ambush dice and lets you hit first in close combat if there’s no Ambush. You wouldn’t give that up lightly would you? That’s exactly what having a live vehicle in your hex does. In fact the attacker

is crazy if he moves into close combat – he should skirt round in the Advance Phase if the defender isn’t broken in the Advancing Fire Phase.

Smoke. Killing the enemy AFV so that it burns does create cover against the enemy infantry in the AFPh, but it does remove your magic cloak of invisibility for close combat. Instead of doing that – why not fire Smoke into the bypassed hex to reduce its effects? Normally firing in this phase is not worth it because it disappears in your following Prep Fire Phase. But think about it, your defending unit is protected against enemy advancing fire. Your opponent doesn’t move into your hex because of the close combat penalties. You kill the enemy AFV in close combat. In your Prep Fire Phase the Smoke clears (it was placed Dispersed) and you get to hit the enemy infantry at point blank – feels good doesn’t it?

What else can you do? Well you’ve already reduced the effects of VBM by not firing too much at the AFV, and protecting the unit getting sleazed, but how about reducing the value of the hex being sleazed? For example:

Usually you stick your best leader with your best MGs – to prevent cowering as well as for the IFT benefits. If you know you are going to get sleazed – split them up. Not cowering is of no benefit if you can’t fire out of your hex anyway, and you get the services of either the MG or the leader as opposed to neither of them. Don’t stack. Consider deploying more.

Okay lets sum things up –

VBM is effective because:

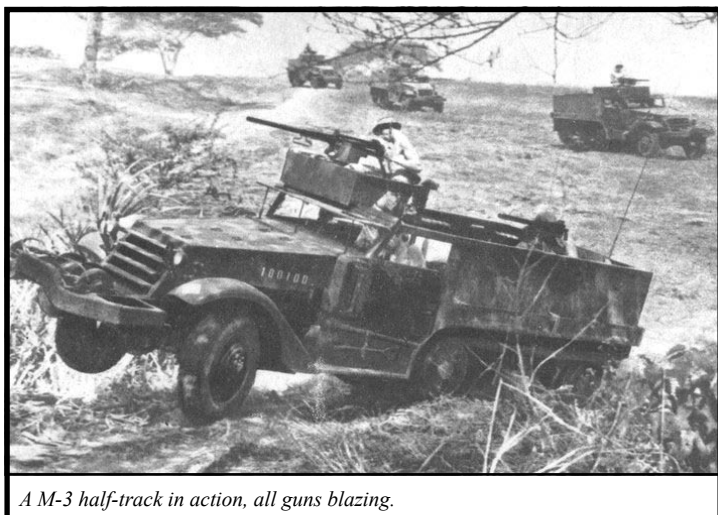
1) The bypassing unit is low value but draws a lot of fire protecting the movement of other higher value units.

2) The defending unit can’t fire out allowing freedom of movement for the enemy infantry.

3) The Attacker’s infantry can get adjacent to the defending unit and hit it with point blank fire in the AFPh, and possibly get behind it to cut rout paths.

Reduce VBM effectiveness by:

1) Don’t over react. Only the unit being bypassed should fire at the enemy AFV. It does this by point blank small arms fire with the aim of putting down residual rather than killing the AFV. As a general rule don’t try CC reaction fire or LATW – most of the time it won’t work and the enemy AFV actually gives you protection in close combat. In some cases



A M-3 half-track in action, all guns blazing.

another unit can lay a Fire Lane to protect the bypassed unit – but again this is more about point 2 than actually trying to kill the enemy AFV.

2) Other units should be set up to deny that freedom of movement to the enemy infantry caused by the loss of fire from the bypassed unit (interlocking fields of fire). Also reduce the value of the bypassed unit by separating SW and leaders.

3) All adjacent hexes to the bypassed unit should be covered by Residual Firepower or supporting units that can get point blank fire to the adjacent hex.

And now the second part - knowing the rules – VBM is effective enough as it is. Don't give the other guy anything that the rules don't allow:

## The F – Plan Diet

1) And the most important rule to know is **D2.3** “...Therefore, the interior of each hexside traversed must be clear of any obstacle depiction to the depth of an edge of a unit counter for VBM to be usable. Hold a unit counter vertically so that the entire thickness of the hexside is just visible along the edge – if the other edge touches any obstacle depiction, VBM is not allowed along that hexside. Walls/hedges are considered extensions of hexsides for this rule....If the hexside clearance is insufficient, the vehicle must expend one extra MP to stop in its present position...”

This rule resulted in the legendary (possibly a urban myth) crash dieting Panther, where the counter was cut in two, shaved and glued back together so there would be enough clearance...

Your rule of thumb should be to challenge any even slightly dodgy bypass. Even if there is enough room, start putting doubts in your opponents mind – let him know you know the rules – and maybe, just maybe he won't risk a bypass which would otherwise be clear.

2) **A7.211** TPBF & **A7.212** Target selection limits

These rules won't help you much, as they basically explain why you can't fire out of the same location as the bypassing unit. (If they are in the same Location as you/ If you are entitled to Triple point blank fire against them).

Still there are two instances where VBM may be ineffective – both related to

buildings.

Firstly if you are in the upper level of a building, then the VBM'ing enemy vehicle is not in the same Location. You are therefore entitled to fire out unless you can fire at that vehicle with TPBF. Unfortunately you usually can, because all open-topped vehicles in the same hex can be attacked by TPBF regardless of BU/CE status. However close-topped vehicles will have to be CE – something your opponent may be unwilling to do if they have proper tanks.

Secondly, for those playing *Red Barricades* or *Valor of the Guards*, a cellar is not in the same Location as a ground level unit and it is not entitled to TPBF as the offending vehicle is higher, so it can fire out *freely*.

### 3) **A11.5** Melee

Something you should know but I'll repeat it anyway –

You are not marked with a Melee counter until the end of the Close Combat Phase.

You are not marked with a Melee counter unless the VBM'ing vehicle is *Stopped*.

So if broken you can rout out of the hex in the rout phase – and you may want to consider a voluntary break – without the total death modifiers that apply to withdrawing from melee. Of course usually this is not a good option – but it may influence whether you risk weapons that *can* break you – EG molotovs and LATW backblast. Of course if you have SS or Commissars with high morale troops it's more of an option.

If an ambush situation arises – (and it only will if infantry *advance* into CC (**A11.4**)), then you have a reasonable chance of getting the ambush with the other guy getting +2 for a vehicle and +1 for BU. It may be an appropriate time to withdraw – hitting the other guy with point blank Prep Fire next turn.

The VBM'ing vehicle must be Stopped to hold you in Melee. Basically he has the choice of foregoing the +2 Motion/non-stopped modifier on your close combat attacks, or not. This is a huge modifier when attacking at low odds. In a totally vanilla situation, a squad hits an in-Motion bypassing AFV on a four or less – a 16.67% chance of a result but half of those results will be Immobilizations. Against a Stopped AFV the squad will get a result a much healthier 41.67% of

the time – and only about 30% of these results will be Immobilizations. If the AFV stays in Motion, you are not marked with a Melee counter and can move out of the hex in your next Movement Phase, *and* crucially you are still Good Order for VC purposes.

### Don't forget in **A11.8**

...Any vehicle in stationary bypass or using VBM is also subject to Street Fighting rules from any Infantry in the Bypassed obstacle of their hex...which gives you a nice -1 modifier against all bypassing AFV's in close combat.

And other close combat modifiers:  
-2 vs open-topped/partially armoured vehicles

-1 vs CE close topped vehicles.

-1 vs vehicle with no manned usable

MG

## Part Three... Support Weapons

As we've seen above, most of the time you *shouldn't* fire at the sleazy halftrack. But lets expand on that a bit - most of time during the *Movement* Phase you shouldn't fire at the sleazy halftrack.

As the turn phases go on, the more reason you have to fire – for the very obvious reason. VBM is dangerous because it allows freedom of movement to other units. Once that movement has already occurred, blow the little fucker away!

In Defensive Final Fire – you may not want to fire if there are enemy infantry adjacent, as it does provide some protection in close combat to the sleazed unit. In your own close combat or your next Prep Fire Phase though, time to blaze away. (If you kept your cool, it's unlikely the other guy moved any of his high value targets into LOS). And of course if the sleaze machine is blocking rout paths you will *have* to fire at it.

Annoyingly it's probably a small target and in motion, so its often harder to hit than many more valuable pieces. You probably don't want to lose your HIP on that AT gun either – so what other ways are there of taking it out?

Indirect	Shock or better result		
	-1 acq	-2 acq	
<b>50* mtr</b>	4.63%	7.72%	11.57%
<b>Rng</b>	<b>0 - 1</b>	<b>2 - 6</b>	<b>7+</b>
<b>MG</b>	16.20%	9.72%	4.86%



.50 MG/ATR 24.31% 16.20% 9.72%  
 20mm ATR 34.03% 24.31% 16.20%  
 (This assumes a halftrack with 1 armour factor, in motion and a small target.)

The most commonly OB provided SW are light mortars, machineguns and ATR's. I personally favour light mortars, once double acquired the chance of a shock or better is respectable enough, especially with high ROF, and most importantly they aren't much use against anything else! Because of the effects of acquisition at this end of the scale, make sure you don't fire until after the halftrack has finished moving, because you can't track the acquisition when the halftrack moves to a new hex, and the acquisition really does make a big difference.

Note also at this end of the scale, the big difference the range modifiers make to MG and ATR To Kill numbers. Another good rule of thumb is not to fire them at more than 6 hexes range. Note although the MG numbers are better than the mortar overall, a higher percentage of them will be stun/immobilization results compared to Shocks.

## Candygram for Mongo

DCs can be thrown or placed and get a special -2 modifier on the DC placement roll if the "vehicle target is in bypass in same hex". Yes, even though normally you can't place a DC in your own Location, there is an exception for bypassing vehicles in **A23.61**. Note also **A23.5** "A DC Placed/Thrown from within the same hex attacks the Rear Target Facing of the AFV" – provided of course you are successful with the placement DR – and you will still need to pass a PAATC.

You can also place DCs from an ADJACENT Location – although you will forego the -2 modifier, you can do it in relative safety as the AFV won't have a LOS to you if it is on the opposite side of a bypassed obstacle.

On the few occasions you get the chance, try sticking a dummy stack in an obvious VBM site, then put A-T mines there. It will certainly make your opponent more cautious. Even dummies on their own can be effective – you don't have to reveal them until the enemy vehicle has ended its Movement Phase.

Of course the best SW to put a stop to bypass shenanigans is an AFV of your own that the sleazoid AFV can't destroy or

shock with an Original TK or IFT DR of 5. (D2.6)

## How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Halftrack...

So VBM ain't that bad really – certainly if you keep your cool. There are of course exceptions to the general principles listed above of not firing too much – where in fact you should fire pretty


much everything at the sleazoid AFV. (EG if it's VBM'ing on its own and you have no better targets, or the Victory Conditions mean it has to be stopped). But I'll let you figure out the rest yourself.

My thanks to the Gamesquad Forums for giving out ideas on VBM that I pillaged shamelessly for this article - without giving proper accreditation of course. Obviously my version is far more entertaining and well written.

Ω



# Swedish Volunteers



**CONTENTS:**

- 1 Countersheet (128 counters)
- 14 ASL Scenarios
- 1 Chapter H notes for the Swedish Volunteers
- 1 Historical Background
- 1 Designers Notes

**TIME SCALE:** 2 minutes per Game Turn  
**MAP SCALE:** 40 meters per hex  
**PLAYERS:** 2  
**UNIT SCALE:** 5-10 men with individual leaders, and guns

**PLAYING TIME:** 2 hours (or more)  
**COMPLEXITY:** High  
**SOLITAIRE SUITABILITY:** Medium



**MÄRKÄJÄRVI, FINLAND, 27 February 1940...** On the afternoon of the 27th, a "Ten-ton-tank" showed up beside the road at the rim of the woods opposite the Swedish position. The Swedes carefully took their aim, awaiting its next move...

**OS, NORWAY, 2 May 1940...** While organizing local hunters to bolster their forces, the Norwegians received unexpected aid. Led by Tage Holmqvist, a band of Swedish veterans from the Winter War appeared, ready and willing to fight. Soon, German forces approached across the broken terrain...

**SHEMENSKI, RUSSIA, 18 April 1942...** Following an artillery barrage, the attack against the hills started, but a knee-deep mix of snow and mud slowed the Finns and Swedes significantly, while the Soviet artillery strikes and automatic weapons fire were taking their toll...

**South of NÄÄTÄLÄ, FINLAND, 21 June 1944...** Following a brief artillery preparation, Russian troops charged the height. After some hard fighting, the attackers were forced to retreat. The battle around Vierumäki had resulted in heavy losses for both sides. Avdelta Kompaniet alone was down to less than 30% of its initial strength...

**North of TALI, FINLAND, 25 June 1944...** At the same time Russians with bayonets and their familiar "Urra" battle cry were already present on the hill. Everything happened by instinct and reflex. Fire positions against tree or stone, short fire bursts against closest enemy, machineguns filling the air with lead...

This is **SWEDISH VOLUNTEERS** - bringing the Swedish Volunteers' order of battle into the ASL system, thus enabling you to command every major gun, support weapon, and troop type used by the Swedish Volunteers throughout the war.

This is an independently published product for aftermarket use with the ASL game system. Any referenced non-Swedish Volunteers products remain the trademark/property of its respective owner/publisher and no association with Swedish Volunteers is implied.

Available online from <http://www.marmeladov.com/svevol/> for SEK 264 (SEK285 Europe, SEK296 outside Europe).



# NIGHT BLINDNESS

Tim Macaire

Night scenarios should be a time of confusion and worry. Where are the enemy? Is it worth calling in the mortars on a suspected, but unseen, target? Has that tank broken through the front line, or is it running into an ambush?

Sadly, under the normal night rules, this just doesn't happen. Most of the defenders and all of the attackers start on board, though with plenty of concealment. Starshells go up as soon as the troops get reasonably close, and from then on the scenario is very like daylight, with extra complications.

If, however, you play double-blind, all of the confusion comes back, and most of the complication goes away. You can see your units, and a few of the other side - but is that half-squad just a scout, or the start of the main attack? Keeping a reserve is suddenly not useful, but vital - so long as you don't keep it too long. It's not just more realistic, but more fun - particularly for the all-seeing referee.

You will need three sets of boards and two sets of counters (strictly two and one, but this is just too confusing the first time). Also needed are two players, and one referee familiar with the night rules. You, of course, being a *VFTT* reader, are both intelligent and experienced (as well as extremely handsome), so these suggestions assume you will be the referee; the more preparation you do, the more everybody gets out of it.

A good start is to reduce the amount of information the players start with. Hand out photo-edited scenario cards, so that neither player knows what the enemy forces are. (This is actually a good idea for any scenario, whether double-blind or not.) Ask them to prepare their forces in advance, and put up tables at each end of the room, with your table in the middle. Somebody who would like to find out about *ASL* but can't face the rulebook would make a good assistant.

Both sides set up normally on their own boards, including cloaking counters. Forget the HIP: it's a needless complication, and the defence has an advantage as it is. You record on your

board which hexes are occupied, but don't need to keep track of which counters are where (unless you want to). When the attacker starts to move forward, you move a corresponding counter on your map, until it comes within NVR. At that point, you announce "Concealed German unit in G4, Russian cloaking counter in G6" probably followed by "Defensive Fire from G4, no effect". If concealment is not lost, there is no reason to reveal the number of factors; you check the units on the firing player's board (or yours if you are conscientious) and roll the dice. You may prefer, for simplicity, to allow a player to say "6 factors from G6 on G7, (roll), PTC" provided that you keep an eye on the numbers for concealment and so on.

Both players will presumably put enemy counters on their maps, but will they keep track of them? Remember to put on (and announce) all Prep/Defensive fire counters, as they may be vital clues to the enemy positions.

Have another look at the Illumination rules. Starshells (which should be called flares) can only be fired before contact if enemy AFVs move within earshot of the firer (the rules specify 16 hexes, but the referee may want to modify this for hills, wind, etc). If there are no Known enemy on board (remember concealment isn't lost for movement unless Illuminated, and it's not lost at all unless a real unit is momentarily shown within NVR), the limits on placement mean your starshells are more likely to reveal yourself than the enemy. Illumination Rounds (which should be called starshells) are bigger and better, but there will be other uses for your mortar/OBA (see below). The players don't know which hexes they need to light up, so they have to think like commanders, not chess-players ("Putting up a flare destroys my ambush, but it's worth it to discover what is out there - isn't it? Even if it drifts, revealing empty space is useful - but more useful to him. If I keep quiet maybe he will give himself away by shooting at the empty building. Damn, I never had to make these decisions at Kursk!") Once you start thinking this way, the rules restrictions make more sense: even MGs

on fixed lines (1.71, normally pointless), are useful to channel the attack.

As referee, it is up to you how much control to exercise. Area fire on an apparently empty hex (within LOS but not seen) is now a viable tactic. You decide when this is allowed, and also whether a successful result is announced (technically not, but presumably there would be screams and explosions); historically, it should be restricted to mortars. OBA is similar; as well as the usual choices of waiting to see an unconcealed unit or drawing another card to target a cloaked/concealed unit, the observer can now (as long as you don't think he's taking advantage) call in fire, without an extra card, on empty hexes where the enemy are expected. The No Move rule, strictly, is superseded by the double-blindness, but I suggest you keep it, as otherwise the Defender has too much flexibility.

After two or three turns the front line will be lit up, most of the forces will be engaged, and you may be too busy running between boards repeating hex numbers to do anything else. This is a good point to say "The German front line runs G5-H6-J4-K7, the Russian line G7-I8-M6-N6", and then let the players get on with it, one saying directly to the other "Concealed unit moves from G5 to G6". This frees you to watch unengaged units, decide rules questions, and keep track of the game as a whole. Oh, is the German leader in H6 on your map, but H7 on his? Too bad: it appears the NCO misread his map, and is actually in H6.

If this sounds simple (or you feel mischievous), there are several other touches you can add in to increase the confusion:

A few unarmed counters placed and/or moving randomly are always good for causing 'jitter fire'. (Night combatants were constantly engaging cows, horses and even birds, let alone unlucky civilians or abandoned vehicles).

Straying units can be taken off the

Continued on page 21, column 3





# Alone In The Balkans

## Axis Minor SASL Campaigns

Nick Smith

The following are notes for owners of *Armies of Oblivion* who wish to try out some *SASL* campaigns.

### Romania

Although perhaps the most formidable Axis Minor country in *ASL*, Romania actually participated in fewer campaigns than her “Allies”, partly because Nazi and Soviet collusion had left her extremely vulnerable. Therefore Romanian scenarios should commence only in 6/41 against a Russian or Russian-Partisan ENEMY in the Barbarossa campaign. However, a scenario in 1/41 is possible using Mission “Block Party”. This is based on the short but violent attempted coup by the anti-Semitic and fascistic Iron Guard who in turn were heavily defeated by the regular Romanian army with Hitler’s connivance (the German dictator finding Antonescu and the oilfields more of an asset than the mystically-minded “Legionnaires”). The ENEMY should be represented by Partisan rules and counters since the Iron Legion were a paramilitary rather than regular body.

Romanian troops played a considerable part in the siege of Sevastopol from 9/41 to 6/42. A Romanian mountain corps (1st and 4th Mountain Divisions and 18th Infantry Division) was under von Manstein’s command and took part in the fighting. The fighting for access to the Crimean peninsula took place during September and October, and by the middle of November only Sevastopol held out, having repelled German attacks from 18 October onwards. Towards the end of December the Soviets made landings on the Kerch peninsula with a view to relieving the pressure on Sevastopol. The only reserves in the area at this time were the German 46th Infantry Division and a Romanian mountain regiment. Heavy fighting would continue in the area until the final Soviet attacks at the beginning of April. The Axis forces resumed the offensive against Kerch in May: Romanians made up about one third of the troops available to von Manstein. Following the success of this action Manstein went on to attack Sevastopol in June in a ferocious battle that would last all month despite heavy artillery support.

Even after the fall of the port, some Soviet remnants held out in caves around the city until July 9. For this campaign, scenarios 4, 6 and 7 would be eminently suitable for the months 9-12/41 and 5-6/42, as would Mission 11 (“Tank Attack”) in 3-4/42. Von Manstein also attempted an amphibious assault on part of Sevastopol, although this was not successful. Therefore Mission 20 would also be valid for 6/41.

Romanian forces on the Eastern Front are largely remembered, perhaps unfairly, for their role in the Stalingrad campaign, when they and the Hungarians and Italians were struck hard by Operation Uranus, the Soviet counteroffensive on the Don that drove them back and allowed the encirclement of the German Sixth Army. The offensive fell in 11/42 with the Stalingrad pocket finally surrendering in 2/42 and the front only being stabilised in 3/42 following Manstein’s recapture of Kharkov.

Several scenarios would be ideal for recreating the difficult situation the Romanians found themselves in. Mission 11, “Tank Attack” or Mission 10, “Enemy Offensive”, would be especially good for the 11/42 date, and could be played on Steppe terrain to recreate the open spaces of southern Russia. An offensive scenario would be appropriate in 11/42, to reflect the fluid situation in which the 1st Romanian Armoured Division found itself counterattacking, and in 12/42 to reflect Operation Winter Storm, the

German-Romanian attempt to relieve Stalingrad. Thereafter all scenarios should be defensive up to 3/43. At some point Scenario 19, “Escape!” should also be played to reflect the chaotic conditions of the Axis collapse at the time.

The fighting during the early part of 1943 also covers the Ozeryeka Bay landings against the Taman Bridgehead by the Soviets which met German and Romanian resistance. Thus Mission 21 “Beach Defence” could be played on 2/43. For historical reasons, Soviet AFV could include Lend-Lease M3 Stuarts and M3 Lees (use British-colour counters for the Lees).

Although Romanian training was improved after the disaster of Stalingrad, and better equipment provided by the Germans, morale fell both at home and the front, not helped by the heavy hand of the Nazi hierarchy. Both these changes are reflected in the rule A25.87, improving the chances of Romanian infantry against armour, and in the lowered ELR.

Fighting around the Taman bridgehead continued throughout most of 1943 with attack and counterattack by German and Romanian units, but the situation inevitably deteriorated given the overall situation on the Eastern Front. In 8/43 the Soviets launched a tank-heavy offensive, and in 9/43 the final offensive against the bridgehead began, forcing



Romanian mountain infantry in the Caucasus mountains.

the Axis units back on a succession of defensive lines. By early 10/43 all Romanian forces had left the bridgehead, but some were reassigned to the continuing defence of the Crimean peninsula, which also involved Romanian units in anti-partisan operations, 12/43-1/44. A renewed Soviet offensive began in 4/44 and forced the Axis troops back onto Sevastopol. During this time German-Romanian relationships were considerably worsened by the apparent readiness of German commanders to sacrifice Romanian units. The culmination of the campaign was reached in 5/44, when the remaining Axis troops were either evacuated (including over 36,000 Romanians during the period 4-5/44) or surrendered. The latter included some of the most experienced Romanian troops, men of several mountain units. A campaign for the Taman bridgehead would commence 4/43 with the final mission being played in 9/43. The 4-6/43 missions could be randomly chosen from either Offensive or Defensive column to portray the attack-counterattack pendulum of the early stages, after which the Romanian should be on the defensive. 8/43 would be ideally played as Mission 11 "Tank Attack". If continued, allow an Extensive Rest and Refit of two months until 12/43, when this and the following month should have missions played against a Partisan ENEMY (randomly chosen from either column). Thereafter a mission should be played each month until 5/44, for which date the ideal Mission would be Mission 19 "Escape!". A loss in this campaign would signify the capture of the Romanian company.

The final stage of fighting against the Soviets was the Jassy-Kishinev offensive of late August 1944, which took place against a confused political background in which King Michael staged a coup against the Romanian dictator Ion Antonescu. The Romanians did put up a fight but as usual suffered from a dearth of modern weapons and were additionally disheartened by the changing tide of war and politics. A short (6-8/44) campaign could be played at this point. Thereafter Romania came in on the Allied side against the Germans and (more forcefully) against the Hungarians, against whom they fought for the recapture of the Transylvanian territory lost due to the Vienna Awards. The fighting in Transylvania lasted 9-10/44 with Soviets and Romanians pitted against Germans and Hungarians. After this Romanian troops participated in the campaign in Hungary and the siege of Budapest (11/44-2/45), including the

Seventh Romanian Corps under General Nicolae Sova which fought for command of the Eastern Railway Station (see *ASL* A121). Romanian troops also fought under Soviet command in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Austria, right up into 5/45.

A late war *SASL* campaign with a Romanian company would thus commence in 9/44 against the Hungarians and Germans in Transylvania. (To accommodate paragraph 5 in S18.54 regarding the Extended Rest and Refit for the company if a continuation of the previous campaign, consider the Extended Rest and Refit to have taken place earlier in the month and the 9/44 mission to take place towards the end of the month). 12/44 and 1/44 missions may optionally be chosen from Missions 6 and 7 to reflect the fierce and emotionally charged fighting in Budapest. Thereafter play the missions as normal from the "FRIENDLY on Offensive" column, not forgetting that the Romanians are eligible to have a Russian Ally (S2.7).

## Hungary

As a first scenario the Hungarian player may be the Attacker in a 3/39 Mission against the Slovaks. This was a short "war" of about 8 days which



*A Hungarian soldier with a Solothurn 43M 7.9mm LMG.*

was more of an opportunistic grab at the territory of Ruthenia, taking more the character of a series of skirmishes involving mainly infantry with a handful of AFV on either side. Therefore it is probably best to only use Missions 1, 2, 3, 5 or 8 on this date. German and Italian pressure on both the Axis Minors stopped the war from spreading further.

The second Hungarian campaign, or first game of a longer campaign, can take place against a Yugoslav ENEMY. This campaign was short and the Hungarian participation even shorter, so only 1 game should realistically be allowed and should not include Missions 6, 7 or 20. This can be a good introduction to *SASL* and/or to playing the Hungarians, since the Yugoslavs are more likely to roll up Green squads than the Russians. Scenario date will be 4/41. A Balkan Partisan-ENEMY will be eligible from 5/41 onwards.

Partly from a desire to placate Hitler and keep up with the Romanians, Hungary entered Operation Barbarossa in early 7/41. Thereafter, depending upon location, a Hungarian company will be facing a Russian or Russian-Partisan ENEMY until late 1944. However Hungarian participation in the Russian campaign was uneven, with Horthy by no means eager to throw large numbers of troops and equipment in, and it appears that there were some months when the Hungarians only fought rear-area enemies if at all. This, and the probability that most players will find a Hungarian campaign from 7/41 to 5/45 playing a Mission each month somewhat repetitive and exhausting, means that most will wish to opt for the most important dates involving this Axis Minor ally as a basis for an *SASL* campaign or campaigns. The following is an attempt to offer some guidelines in this direction.

The Hungarian "mechanised" force participated in the Battle of Uman, 7-8/41 and had some success in 10/41 encircling the defences of the Russian 18th Army. By the end of the month, however, losses were so high in men and material that Horthy had the corps returned to Hungary in 11/41, leaving a relatively ill-equipped force in Russia, although the cavalry were useful in the conditions. Therefore a Hungarian Barbarossa campaign could be played 7-10/41 with the Hungarians mainly on the offensive. Should the Hungarian player wish to extend the campaign beyond this date, play until 5/42 (inclusive). To reflect the quieter nature of

Hungarian occupied areas, make a dr each month: a dr of  $\leq 2$  allows a mission to be played. There is a -1 drm for each month prior to that that a mission was not played. Play only those missions which are eligible to have a Partisan ENEMY and add an additional -1 drm to the 12.21 pre-Mission dr.

In 1942 the Germans then demanded further contributions from Hungary, which resulted in the sending of the Hungarian 2nd Army to Russia. This took part in the Battle of Voronezh in 6-7/42 and in late 1942 took up position on the Don River, north of the Italian 8th Army. Here the Soviets launched Operation Little Saturn in 12/42 against the Hungarians and Italians. The following Voronezh-Kharkov operation in 1/43 lasted two months and effectively destroyed the Hungarian 2nd Army, whose survivors were sent home in 3/43. A campaign involving the Hungarian 2nd Army should commence in 6/42 with the Hungarians on the offensive for the period 6-7/42. After this fighting ceases until 12/42. For 12/42-1/43, the Missions "Enemy Offensive" and "Tank Attack" should be played (each once). The Missions for 2-3/43 should also be selected from the Defensive column, ideally with "Escape!" as the final one.

By this time the Hungarian ruling circles, mostly not enthused with Nazi ideals, realised that participation in the war was no longer in Hungary's interest, and withdrew most of the army to Hungary in 4/43: those few units remaining in Russia appear to have been used as security troops. If you wish to have a campaign involving the Hungarian 8th Corps (the so-called "Dead Army"), then play Missions from 3/43 to 2/44 using the system of selecting months as described for the post-Barbarossa Hungarian campaigns above, since these were rear-echelon security units who furthermore historically were not averse to minimising conflict with the partisans in their occupation zone of Galicia, Ukraine. Only a Partisan ENEMY is used in these campaigns, although the Partisan is eligible to have a Russian Ally.

Hitler was aware of Horthy's desire to leave the war and in 3/44 the Germans occupied the country, forcing a pro-Nazi government and the Final Solution on the hapless country. At the same time Hungary was forced to increase its contribution to the Axis forces. The Hungarian 1st Army, which had been occupying Transylvania and watching the Romanians from 8/40 since the Second Vienna Award, was sent

to the southern Ukraine at the end of 4/44 and pushed back as a result of the Targu-Fromos battle in 5/44. In 7/44 it was subordinated to 1. Panzerarmee and faced Konev's Lwow-Sandomierz offensive, where it managed to avoid the fate of being caught in the Brody pocket. The *AoO* scenario 'A116 The Sixth Blow' gives an illustration of the chaotic fighting and Hungarian predicament of this time. The 2nd Army was revived in 8/44 and saw successful action in the Battle of Debrecen 9-10/44 as part of *Armeegruppe Fretter-Pico*. However again losses were heavy, and this led to the disbandment of the army in 12/44. The Hungarian VII Corps held the line to the west of "Hube's Pocket" in the battle of Kamenets-Podolsky, 3-4/44, and in 8/44 became part of the Hungarian 3rd Army, which was raised to defend Hungary against the rising Soviet tide. The 3rd Army was however badly mauled in the early stages of the Battle of Debrecen in 10/44, despite having armour support in the form of Hungarian 1st Armoured and German 23rd and 24th Panzer Divisions, the whole army being part of German LVII Panzer Corps. In 10/44 Horthy again tried to make peace with the Soviets, who had now crossed the borders, but was deposed by the Germans who installed the extreme fascist Arrow Cross party to prevent Hungary leaving the war. The 1st Army's commander, Belá Miklós, favoured leaving the Axis and in 10/44, partly as a reaction to a German summons, went over to the Soviets. (He was to head the new interim government until 11/45). In 12/44 some elements of the Hungarian 1st Army did defect to the new pro-Soviet government set up by the Russians, but the rest of the formation fought on with 1. Panzerarmee until 5/45.

With the disbandment of 2nd Army, the latter's spare units were sent to 3rd Army in time for the siege of Budapest (12.44-2/45), at the end of which battle the surviving elements of 1st Armoured were disbanded. The surviving 3rd Army was virtually destroyed in 3/45 west of Budapest, but a few remnants fought on until 5/45 by which time they had been pushed into Austria.

A late-war Hungarian *SASL* campaign can therefore run from 3/44 to 4/45 inclusive if one is not too fussy about which parent formation the unit is attached to. With the exception of the Battle of Debrecen (9-10/44), the Hungarian units should be on the defensive. A Romanian ENEMY in 10-11/44 will be especially appropriate if the company is fighting in



Slovakian infantry on parade.

Transylvania.

Mention should also be made of the Szent László (St Laslo) division. This was essentially an ad hoc formation made up of army and air force personnel (paratroopers) raised in 10/44 and first seeing action in 12/44. Heavy losses were suffered in Hungary and the unit did not fight properly as a division until 4/45, having made up some of the losses from other units. It fought in northern Croatia and Austria, including in the Battle of Vienna where it was part of the German 2nd Panzer Army. It finished the war in southern Austria, surrendering to the British. Despite its somewhat improvised nature it has been considered an elite formation (at least in *ASL* annals!) and therefore a company belonging to this unit should consist of Elite MMC. A campaign using a Szent László company would take place 12/44-4/45 inclusive.

## Slovakia

A Slovak company may fight one campaign in 3/39 (see above under Hungary). Given the skirmish nature of this "war", Missions 8, 9, are best suited. Remember that the German infantry company is used for all scenarios prior to 6/43.

Slovakia was the only non-German Axis nation to participate in the invasion of Poland, 9/39, mainly to gain territory on the Slovak borders. However this was a limited campaign, so only 2 weekly scenarios should be played. Missions 1-3, 5 and 8 are best suited.

The Slovaks participated in Barbarossa shortly after its start. Because of difficulties in keeping up with the front line, eventually some of the best units of the Slovak forces including the AFV were

formed into the 1st Slovak Fast or Mobile Infantry Division, while others became the 2nd Slovak Infantry Division and were given rear-area security duties in 7/41. The 1st Mobile Division fought well but in 1943 had to be airlifted out of the Kuban minus all its heavy equipment, and later in the year was caught by a Soviet attack and practically destroyed as a fighting unit. Although rebuilt somewhat in 1944, in 6/44 it was disarmed and downgraded to a construction unit for service in Romania. The 2nd Infantry Division served as a security unit and as an occasional pool of reinforcements for the 1st Mobile Division, but after Stalingrad morale slumped and in 11/43 the unit was disarmed and sent to Ravenna in Italy as a construction brigade. Thus from 6/41 a Slovak company in *SASL* can carry out normal missions until the end of 5/44. The decline in morale and mission focus is represented by the use of the German infantry company from 39-5/43 and its conversion thereafter to the Slovak Infantry company and Axis Minor MMC with their lower range and FP. A Slovak *SASL* campaign therefore begins in 7/41 and thereafter is eligible to play monthly missions until 8/43, when the unit was practically destroyed and not rebuilt until 1/44 at the earliest. Further missions may be played bimonthly if wished until 5/44 inclusive. A victory allows the company to go on to participate in the Slovak Uprising.

The Slovak Uprising lasted 8-10/44 and was conducted against the Germans, although some pro-Axis Slovaks assisted the German forces. Since Stalin and STAVKA's decisions actually undermined the Slovak position in a similar way to their effect on the nearly simultaneous Warsaw Uprising, the Slovaks are not eligible to have a Russian ally - however, Partisan allies are possible. Some survivors of the Uprising indeed took to the hills themselves. Thereafter the Germans who had occupied the country (as they did many other former Axis allies) did the bulk of the fighting against the Soviets and their allies until they were forced out of the territory, the surviving Slovak Government surrendering to US forces in 4/45. If you wish to play the Uprising as a Campaign Game, use the Slovakian Infantry Company and play one Mission per month. Roll on the "FRIENDLY on Offensive" column for the first (August) mission but if Missions 3, 4, 15, 17, 18 or 21 are selected, reroll on the "FRIENDLY on Defensive" column instead. The months of September use the Defensive column to reflect the desperate straits of the Slovaks. A victory allows the Slovaks to disband

and take to the hills. By 1945 a Slovak company should consist of Elite MMCs to reflect the fanatical and desperate nature of the remaining pro-Axis Slovaks, who appear to have been mainly the Hlinka Guard.

## Croatia

Even before the end of hostilities in Yugoslavia in April 1941, Ante Pavelic led the declaration of an Independent State of Croatia, the culmination of roughly twenty years of animosity and violence between Serb and Croatian. To defend the state, the Domobranstvo (Home Defence) was created, an organisation rather like the Wehrmacht encompassing the three major combat services as well as the Gendarmerie, Railway Security and Labour Service. Manpower was mostly supplied by conscription.

Creating a Croatian *SASL* campaign may cause some uneasiness among gamers in the light of the brutal history of Pavelic's regime (which caused comment even among German commanders) and the atrocities committed regularly (and on both sides), and in the echoes found in recent years in the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. Needless to say this author does not advocate recreating some of the unmilitary, political and criminal activities of certain units and organisations, any more than creating an *ASL* scenario where German SS counters shoot down Prisoner counters to gain VP. The basis of legitimate Croatian *SASL* campaigns involves Croatian units fighting regular warfare on the Eastern Front against the Soviets or in the Balkans against the Partisans. If you wish to skip the latter, feel free: however, a strictly military campaign played in this way would be challenging as the home Croatian units were somewhat brittle and under-equipped.

The basic paucity of heavy equipment for Croatian units was compounded by the three-way pull on Croatia's limited manpower. Some

of her best officers and soldiers became volunteers in the German Wehrmacht: at various points a full Croatian infantry regiment was fighting on the Eastern Front (Reinforced Infantry Regt 369), while Croatians manned three infantry divisions, 2 Waffen SS divisions (the notorious 13th "Handschar" and the 23rd Mountain Division) and an SS police division. Other, more ideologically motivated and/or more brutal volunteers with allegiance to the Ustashe joined its military wing, the Ustascka Vojnica. In addition to these pressures Italian interference and military inefficiency in her own occupied areas were to give further headaches to the Croatians.

The 369th Reinforced Infantry Regt fought hard in the Barbarossa and summer 1942 campaigns and was one of the few non-German units to take part in the fighting in Stalingrad itself from 10/42 onwards. It was wiped out in the pocket, only 18 wounded Croats being evacuated on one of the last flights out on 23/1/43. An *SASL* German-Croat campaign for this formation is therefore fairly straightforward, beginning in 6/41 and playing 1 Mission per month until 1/43. Due to its participation in Stalingrad, scenarios 4, 6 and 7 will be especially suitable for the timeframe 9-11/42. A campaign win means that the company has been evacuated from Stalingrad and is eligible to be used in the reinforcement of the Croatian Legion Division (see next paragraph).

A Croatian Legion Division, also numbered 369, was raised in Austria



Ante Pavelic inspects the Croatian Legion Division in June 1944.



*Bulgarian paratroopers briefed by an officer in Macedonia in 1943.*

built partly on a cadre of veterans from the original 369th Regt. The original intention was to send this to the Russian Front, but as the situation in the Balkans became more precarious it was sent instead to Bosnia. Its operations began in 1/43 against the partisans in a battle that would last until 3/43. Other large-scale anti-partisan operations took place in 5/43 and 12/43-1/44. Such fighting continued on a lesser scale throughout 1944, but by 11/44 the situation for the Axis in the Balkans had become critical, and the unit thus began a fighting retreat that ended in 5/45 with its surrender to the British. Most of the survivors were sent back to Yugoslavia where many were executed by the vengeful victors. A campaign game for this unit could include monthly missions for the dates 1-3/43, 5/43, 12/43-1/44 and thereafter bi-monthly missions (3/44, 5/44, 7/44 and 9/44) until 11/44, upon which date monthly missions commence until 5/45 (exclusive).

A similar unit was 373 Croatian Infantry Division, raised in Germany in 1/43 for anti-partisan duties in Croatia. The unit took part in the 5/43 action against Tito and in 12/44 in the defence of Knin, where they suffered heavy losses. Thereafter the unit retreated with the German XV Mountain Corps until surrendering to the partisans in 5/45. The 392nd Croatian Infantry Division was raised in 8/43 and saw much defensive fighting in 1945 until the end of 4/45, when its German leadership released the Croatian soldiers before surrendering to the partisans.

Controversy surrounds the SS 13th Handschar Division and to its exact nature or record on atrocities. However it is known that the unit was in France by 9/43, sent to Bosnia in 2/44, where it engaged in many anti-partisan operations, and then

sent to southern Hungary. It was at this point that desertions became rife as many of the Bosnians felt a greater need to defend their own homes than to serve the Greater German Reich. The unit itself was pushed out of Hungary and into Austria, where it surrendered to the British in 5/45. A second SS unit, 23 Kama, was raised, but disbanded in late 1944 due to the impossibility of completing the training of the men in time. Most were sent to the SS 31st Division instead, others having already deserted.

For their part, the Italians also wished to utilise Croatian manpower. The Light Transport Brigade was raised in 7/41 from volunteers originally intended for the 369th Regt. The unit's initial operations were in Croatia until 12/41, when it was sent to the Italy for training, and thence in 4/42 to Russia. The unit fought well but was surrounded and overrun by the Soviets in 12/42. The Italians then sponsored the creation of an Italian Croatian Legion in 5/43. This unit spent the next four months in northern Italy and the Slovenian border areas until the armistice of 9/43, after which it was used to reinforce existing German-Croatian formations, mainly the 373rd. A campaign using the Italian-Croat Legion should start in 8/41 and be eligible for 1-2 missions in that year (random selection for the months) to reflect their initial "working up". Extended rest and refit then follows until 4/42, after which the campaign can continue until 12/42 when the unit was historically wiped out. A victory at the conclusion of the 12/42 mission suggests that the company has survived the catastrophe and is eligible to continue from 9/43 as a German-Croat company.

In 11/44 the final reorganisation of Croatian forces took place, essentially placing them all under a single command. By this time the Axis cause was clearly collapsing with the Red Army pushing into Yugoslavia and joining up with the partisans. Surviving Croatian units fought their way west to surrender to the British in 5/45, only to be handed back to Tito and victor's justice. Ironically Pavelic

himself escaped and died in exile. In this last period the most battleworthy unit was the 1st Assault Division, for which an SASL company could be represented by 4-4-7 MMC. A final campaign at this stage would involve a monthly mission from 11/44 to 4/45 inclusive against a Partisan ENEMY (1-4) or Russian ENEMY (5-6) to reflect the desperate battles of that period.

## Bulgaria

Although Bulgaria allowed the use of her territory for German forces against Greece and Yugoslavia, she did not participate in the Balkans campaign until the closing days of the Greek campaign, when Bulgarian troops entered Thrace. Therefore only 1 scenario should be allowed against a Greek ENEMY in 4/44. Greek resistance had largely been overcome by the Germans by then, so I suggest that the most suitable scenarios would be those which would be eligible to have a Partisan ENEMY (although the Greeks are represented by ordinary Allied Minor counters).

Thereafter until 10/44 the Bulgarians mainly fought Greek partisans, the leadership being anxious to keep Bulgaria out of the fighting against the Soviet Union. Bulgarian occupation of Greek territory was extremely unpopular so there was plenty of fighting, increasing as the war went on. Since most players might find playing 3 years' worth of scenarios against Partisans (about 38 scenarios in all if one goes up to 8/44) rather arduous, a compromise might be to play one scenario per quarter in the period 7/41 to 8/44. The actual month could be randomly selected. The only other enemy in this period was Bulgarian partisans who fought in the mountainous part of the country, Bulgaria itself being somewhat politically divided between pro-German and pro-Soviet camps. After 8/44 the normal SASL rules for the Bulgarians can be used, ie fighting against a German ENEMY with possible Soviet reinforcements.

## Sources

One of the best ASL articles on the Axis Minors is still Charles Markuss' "Forgotten Legions" from the *ASL Annual 91*, despite the absence at that time of *Armies of Oblivion* (which did not appear for another 16 years!).

The Internet has provided a handy source of information for this article, in

Continued on page 17, column 3



# North West Fest

Craig Benn



The *ASL* community in the north west of England is small but perfectly formed – with three players in the top 10 UK rankings, and trash talking skills (quite frankly) second to none.

To commiserate the loss of *DOUBLE ONE*, we decided to get together and fight it out over three extremely small scenarios, for the prize of a *HOB Special Forces* pack. Real life issues restricted us to six competitors (sigh...) including an unusually sober Pete Phillipps (not that it helped his game any).

Because of limited writing space I'm going to describe the scenarios in the style of an idiot savant.

## Round 1 - Duel at Reuler

Early *Schwerpunkt*. Bulge. Mud. Five easy eight Shermans vs. five Mark IV's. Minor infantry (U.S) and German (halftrack) supporting cast. U.S tanks better but Jerries get to VC area first, and Yanks having to knock out all the tanks north of a line.

My tourney began with Mike Davies rolling snakes To Hit, then snakes for effect, turning a U.S half squad with a HMG into a pile of smoking boots. Sigh. Somebody pointed out that mud was +1MP and no Smoke except for building hexes. This stopped a lot of my evil tricks but Mike ended up with his tanks separated into two groups, and I took them out piecemeal.

Elsewhere Mark Blackmore's and Pete's game was over in twenty minutes as they play with armour like children! All I saw was blaze counters for a Mark win.

Bill Sherliker decided he didn't like



the mud costing 1 extra MP so decided to ignore it and get his tanks behind a wall that dominated the centre of the map on turn one. Paul Jones' panzers had to advance into their sights to get to the victory areas and suffered accordingly.



*Bill Sherliker with his prize. Other photos, clockwise from top left: Craig Benn and Michael Davies Duel at Reuler; Paul Jones battles Bill Sherliker; Craig against Bill in the final; Craig and Bill battle, as Paul Jones and Mark Blackmore look on.*

## Round Two - One Log Bridge

*ASLUG*. Guadalcanal. Nine squads of early Marines (five Raiders) vs. seven Japanese squads and a crew. Three knee mortars is as heavy as it gets. Extra HIP Jap squad. Marines have to capture a footbridge and hexes either side.

My great tactical masterstroke was choosing the Japanese who won all the scenarios in this round – and ehrrmm, well all our pre-tourney practice games too. Sorry Pete – ya should of prepared better!

Paul Jones knee mortars with airbursts were deadly, but Mike pressed him hard and it came down to some vicious hand to hand for a Japanese win.

Don't know much about Bill Sherliker's win over Mark. All I can

truthfully say is the ugly player won...and lost.

## Round Three - North Bank

Arnhem. Four squads of Brit paratroopers, with a 10-3, 9-2, 6pdr A-T gun and spare crew vs. Two King Tigers, seven SS squads and a 9-2. Bad guys have to reach the riverbank.

Paul Jones made the classic newb error of letting Mark go SS and defended far too deep. Over quickly is the kindest thing to be said of this travesty of a mockery of a game.

Mike Davies and Pete Phillipps battled for the wooden spoon, with Pete winning. The wooden spoon that is. A respectable 0-3 for the ManU fan.

I faced Bill in the tourney decider. Bill decided he didn't understand the LOS rules to take some 1-5 and 1-4 shots at the start which ended up with one pinned squad. Sigh. Crucial point in the game when the 6pdr takes out one of the King Tigers, kills the tank but not the riders or crew. I fire on them with rate shots, setting off a sniper that wounds my 10-3 and breaks the PRC who rout forward then rally messing up my defence. I end up having to take fire to mop them up and it ends badly.

(Idiot savant gets Tourettes syndrome). Cockmonkey! Mendicant! Hamsterworrier! Bill shows his rating rise and Scofie scalp is no flash in the pan.

Ω



# Soviet Anti-Tank Rifles

Michael Davies

The Red Army experimented with several designs for anti tank rifles in the 1930s, using the 12.7 mm machine gun bullet as a starting point. Success was limited by the size and power of the bullet, and none of the designs was adopted for mass production. All of the rifles tested had a similar performance to existing heavy machine guns. In 1932 a 14.5 mm round was developed, that fired a heavier steel cored bullet at greater velocity, which led to further experimental work but no production weapon.

When the Axis forces invaded in June 1941 the idea of an anti tank rifle to counter light armour again found favour. Two teams developed weapons, Degtyarev developed the PTRD 1941, and Simonov the PTRS 1941, both rifles using an improved 14.5 mm round with a tungsten core. The development work was completed within a month. Setting up production was also accelerated with perhaps 17,700 rifles reaching the front line in November/December 1941.

Both designs had similar performance; capable of penetrating 20mm of armour sloped at 30 degrees at a range of 500 metres (twelve hexes). At 90 degrees typically 34mm of armour could be penetrated at the same range. Just about good enough for 1940/41 vintage armour. The round is listed as API, Armour Piercing Incendiary. The incendiary was positioned in the nose of the bullet to cause a small flash when impacting rather than a destructive conflagration inside the tank. Usually AFV destruction was achieved by the bullet pushing a cylinder of metal into the tank then having that bounce around followed by the molten remains of the bullet. The effective maximum range of both weapons was about 800 metres, although some sources quote between

1000-1500 metres. A tracer round was developed which burnt out to 2000m range.

The PTRD was a single shot design, weighing 38 lbs, it was 79 inches long. The PTRS was heavier 46lbs, longer 84 inches, and semi Automatic. Rate for fire for the single shot weapon was 8-10 rounds per minute; the Automatic version could manage perhaps 15 rounds. That said rifle teams were trained to relocate after firing four or five rounds to evade counter measures. It is doubtful the PTRS1941 should qualify for rate of fire in *ASL*. Some sources state the PTRS 1941 didn't function as an automatic in extreme winter conditions, but it could still be fired by working the bolt manually. Ammunition was carried in 20 round canvas satchels, each man carried one giving a 40 round ammunition supply. That's enough ammo for a fire fight; prepared positions would have additional ammunition in boxes.

Eventually production favoured the PTRD1941 design, as it was lighter, simpler than and as effective as the PTRS1941, but both were initially manufactured. It's likely two designs were commissioned to ensure at least one was effective and speed up the process.

Generally the weapons were not used routinely against personnel, partly to save barrel wear, and unnecessary cleaning of a long barrel. A 14.5 mm round had tremendous power, good range and accuracy, but ordinary rifles or machine guns could be used as effectively for anti personnel work. Trucks, trains, wagons and horses were all valid PTR targets, I've also seen pictures of anti tank rifles mounted on a wagon wheel used against aircraft. The Russians did use PTR weapons in street fighting to blow doors off their hinges, shoot through walls, floors

and ceilings and against light bunkers.

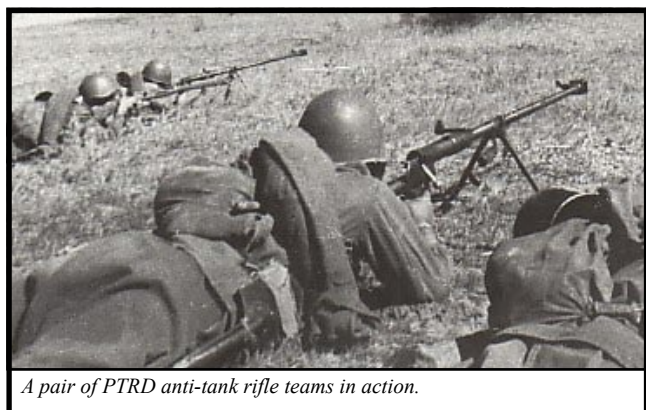
Reconnaissance teams occasionally carried a PTR or light mortar for mischief behind the lines. Weapons were also air dropped or carried overland to Partisan groups.

Certainly in 1941 the PTR were very effective weapons against existing armour. As armour thickness increased their utility declined until they were generally retained for use against soft skin targets and very light armour such as halftracks, light armoured reconnaissance vehicles, or light assault guns. Until the Panther and Tiger appear in 1943 though they were generally useful.

Production figures for PTR are phenomenal, from 1941 to 1945 approximately 469,700 were produced, nearly 250,000 in 1942 alone. The number authorised per infantry division varies from zero in April 1941, to a peak of 279 per division in March 1942, dropping steadily after that as division size reduced and better artillery support became available. Even tank and anti tank units had some anti tank rifles.

In combat two man teams operated PTR from trenches, buildings or the edges of woods. The team would combine to carry the weapons and ammunition was held in 20 round satchels, carried by each man. Generally the team would not carry much other equipment, beyond food, water, and weapons for self defence. They were trained to concentrate fire on weaker portions of a tank, specifically the running gear, engine, vision slits and any crew if exposed. They were also expected to work with other combat teams such as anti tank guns, machine guns, and infantry within an area, and avoid friendly fire.

Both the PTRD1941 and PTRS1941 were useful in 1941/42, reasonably



A pair of PTRD anti-tank rifle teams in action.



PTRS anti-tank rifles in action in Belgrad.

effective in 1943, and of limited use in 1944/45. Something weighing 40 lbs with considerable recoil and muzzle flash was never going to be a popular weapon; even so some soldiers took considerable pride in its use. After the war Russia gave surplus weapons to its friends and allies. Some were used against armour, more often it was used for long range shooting against personnel. Although the fire was not particularly accurate, being on the receiving end of a near miss was unpleasant. Several gun manufacturers subsequently developed anti material sniper rifles loosely based on the tactic. The 14.5 mm round was popular with the Soviets, in the 1950's a heavy machine gun for the BTR60 and BTR80 series APC was produced.

Some German tanks were factory fitted with Scheurzen (Skirts) from April 1943 to reduce the effectiveness of PTR. Scheurzen were thin sheets of boiler plate about 5mm thick, which could be penetrated by ordinary rifle bullets, but did deflect some of the incoming rounds, with the added bonus of providing some protection against Hollow Charge war heads. In September 1944 wire mesh skirts (Drahtgeflecht Scheurzen) replaced the original type, their effect was roughly equivalent with a slight reduction in weight, and slightly more protection against grenades.

Admittedly neither the PTRD 1941 nor PTRS 1941 were particularly powerful or effective weapons. That said they did play an important part in helping Red Army infantry stand up to enemy armoured attack. The Germans found them a nuisance and suffered casualties as a result of PTR attack throughout the war. Even Tiger tank crews complained about PTR rounds damaging periscopes and prisms.

## PTR (Protivo Tankovoye Ruzhyo) Tactics in ASL

I'll suggest tactics for Soviet anti tank rifles in *ASL*, although most of what's written could apply to other nations.

Usually a squad is used to crew a Soviet PTR, though a spare crew, bailed out vehicle crew or half squad can do the job equally well. A hero or Leader/Commissar can operate a PTR. Keep in view firing a PTR counts as using a support weapon, so a full squad could conceivably use two of them or another support weapon at the expense of its own firepower. Giving a squad two PTR might be a useful tactic if you can hide or



*A PTRS team under fire.*

conceal units. Hidden it gives a powerful ambush, concealed the stack could look like a machine gun team.

Giving a hero a PTR is creative, he can apply his heroic modifier to improve the chances of a hit, and it extends his field of fire when used in Fire Groups. I'd do it as soon as a hero is generated or if there is one given in the OB. Giving a Leader one can work, though generally the Red Army needs every Leader it has for a host of other duties.

If you stick with the idea of using a squad, well select the highest morale unit you have as this improves survivability. I tend to prefer 5-2-7 SMG squads to give them a ranged capability, and the option to improve IFT attacks against personnel.

Soviet military manuals give a maximum range of 1000-1500m for the PTRS/D; combat range is likely to be much closer to 500m which is near enough 12 hexes as suggested in the rules. Basic To Kill is 6, case D applies, increasing the to kill number to 7 at 2-6 hexes range, and 8 at 0-1 hexes. Fire enough shots and you'll get a critical hit with a To Kill number between 12 and 14. These are fairly low numbers. Very often you will have no trouble hitting a target before being frustrated by the 10mm thick armour of a halftrack!

Rolling low is the answer, failing that be patient. Before you start play look at the Armour Factors of your opponent's vehicles. I've felt very foolish taking shots that can't possibly penetrate (trust me I've done it often enough); it reveals a position, wastes a shot and is avoidable. I'll talk about Deliberate

Immobilization later, when shooting to kill, stun or disable, you need a final To Kill number of 1 or more to get a result against an AFV. There's an awful lot of German AFV with AF lower than 4 or 6 so happy hunting. Side armour is generally thinner, and rear armour suffers an additional -1 AF. Whilst knocking out armour is cool, you can use the PTR to discourage enemy tank movement; just forcing enemy tanks to keep their front towards you complicates and frustrates enemy options. A revealed PTR works well in this role, a hidden or concealed one even better as your opponent never really knows where it is.

Against soft skin vehicles the PTR rates a To Kill of 7, with a good chance of some result. PTR were used to ambush vehicle convoys, firing a few rounds then disappearing, try that with a 45mm gun! Soft skin vehicles with passengers or towing guns are very valuable targets; half tracks are almost as vulnerable. A burning wreck kills everyone; otherwise you want failed Crew survival rolls.

PTR can be used against Guns and personnel. Generally the Soviets discouraged using PTR against infantry, but Russian soldiers did use them in an anti personnel role, especially in built up areas. An ordinary rifle or even pistol round will go through brickwork, floors and ceilings, PTR had even greater penetration and impact. In general though a normal rifle or machine gun could do most anti personnel work better and generally with more accuracy. In *ASL* a 1 FP capability can be useful moving an attack up a column. At times even a 1 IFT attack is enough to discourage movement in the open, help to keep Infantry under Desperation Morale and perhaps most importantly force broken enemy units to rout.



*An anti-tank team of the 186th Rifle Division, equipped with a PTRD, in action on the Karelian front in 1942.*





*A PTRS fires during the battle for Breslau in February 1945.*

PTR can be used against bunkers. The basic To Kill number has to be greater than twice the Covered Arc defence modifier, so you are limited to attacking “wooden”  $n+3+5$  bunkers through the covered arc at six hexes range or less. This gives you a basic 1 IFT attack not subject to any modifier for the bunker, the target unit would be better off behind a hedge! Your attack is just a straight DR which can be subject to your Leadership and/or Heroic factors. You can only do this when the enemy has bunkers!

Worth remembering whilst Leadership and/or Heroic modifiers do modify IFT attacks, when used against armoured targets they effect the To Hit roll. It’s worth adding a Leader to a PTR team if killing or immobilising armour is more important than other leadership functions. This is very much the case when you need to immobilise AFV, a modifier greatly increases the chance of obtaining a hit.

PTR can’t Bore Sight, and don’t gain Acquisition. This makes sense as the weapons had a fierce recoil, were supported on a bipod and used basic iron sights. Field artillery, medium and heavy machine guns had better optical sights, and slides rules and/or range tables to plan fire attacks. This does make obtaining a hit harder, barring a specific SSR it has to be accepted.

Some enemy tanks have very thick armour. It makes sense to try to attack targets through the weakest armour possible. One other option is Deliberate Immobilisation. To attempt this you r target must be at six hexes or less range, and its weakest hull Armour Factor has to be less than the basic To Kill of your PTR, which is eight for adjacent or same hex targets, seven for anything beyond that. Keep in view the weakest hull Armour Factor is generally the hull rear, effectively raising the To Kill by 1. Virtually every

German AFV except the Maus can be immobilised, although Tiger I/II and some of the super heavy assault guns can only be immobilised from the same or an adjacent hex.

The process is very simple, roll To Hit, which is modified by +5 for the attempt, you have to hit the hull from any target facing. Nearly forgot, you can’t attempt this against a hull down target. Short range, big static targets can

be vulnerable to this sort of attack, fast moving, small ones less so. The attack targets the suspension and tracks or wheels of the target. A hit could strip the rubber off a drive wheel, break a track or blow out a tyre. Tiger I/II and related vehicles had a fairly strong suspension in part to support their weight; wheel rims would be vulnerable whilst several solid hits might distort part of the suspension. Needing to secure a hull hit can be difficult. I’ll give you one example. An anti tank rifle firing at six hexes range at a vehicle secures a hit on a DR of 10 or less, that’s 33 chances out of 36. If instead the firer decides to try for Deliberate Immobilisation, the DR for a hit drops to 5, that gives 10 chances in 36 of a hit, of which four will hit the turret. In effect you have six chances in thirty six of securing the hull hit you need. You can just go for it, or you can spend many happy hours in analysis before you even start the game. Most of the time I’d recommend taking the shot, unless your modified To Hit needs a DR of 2, and a critical could do some damage, if you want to analyse the potential for a hit and take the best mathematical strategy for a win, perhaps its’ best to do that before the scenario starts. Partly this is etiquette, but keep in view most opponents against a slow player will use the time to either plan themselves or relax and be more alert in the closing stages of the game.

Immobilisation can be very useful. A static tank obviously can’t exit, and becomes a bunker, still dangerous but less so than a mobile AFV. For non turret AFV, immobilisation fixes their main weapons covered arc. The crew are immediately subject to an Immobilisation Task Check, if failed they are forced to leave their AFV. Some subsequent hits also cause a TC, if the hit could have Shocked or Immobilised the target with a DR of 5 or less. A direct fire attack can cause a possible shock on a DR one greater than the final To Kill number. Hit location and Armour Factor come into this, most late war tanks are not vulnerable, anything with an AF of

1 or 2 is, maybe 3 or 4 at close range. There’s still value firing at a target you could destroy with a PTR even if there’s no opportunity to cause an Immobilisation TC.

Depending on the terrain and your opponent’s movement you might get the chance of trying for an underbelly hit. Again it’s limited to six hexes range or less, against AFV moving over a wall or hedge, into or out of a stream. Any hit that would have hit the turret is assumed to have hit the underbelly of the tank, resolving the attack using the Aerial AF table C7.11, at best the target has an AF of 4, giving a chance of killing even heavy armour.

Nearly forgot Malfunction. Soviet PTR are robust, malfunction on a B12, with the usual repair rules applying. As a support weapon it can’t Intensive Fire. Being 14.5mm calibre they don’t qualify for multiple hits, the cut off is 15mm.

## Conclusion

Soviet Anti tank rifles are always a credible threat against light armour, soft skinned vehicles and half tracks throughout the war; they can attack personnel, are marginally effective against wooden bunkers, and are a good weapons choice for heroes and spare leaders. Against heavy late war armour you are limited to Deliberate Immobilisation, or perhaps close combat. A PTR counter should always be a welcome addition to your OB.

Ω

---

## AXIS MINOR CAMPAIGNS

Continued from page 13

particular the websites [www.feldgrau.com](http://www.feldgrau.com) (for Slovakia and Croatia) and [www.worldwar2.ro](http://www.worldwar2.ro) (for Romania), and [www.hungarian-history.hu/lib/thou](http://www.hungarian-history.hu/lib/thou) for Hungary. Wikipedia has some informative articles on the campaigns in which Axis Minor countries were heavily involved, including the operations in southern Russia. [www.axishistory.com](http://www.axishistory.com) has some useful material on individual formations and a good discussion on Croatian armour.

Ω

# Battlefield Russia

Paul Case

Well folks, I never thought I would do this, but I'm on a tour in the former Soviet Union (and not via the Gulag system!!). The trip is chiefly a battlefield tour, where we get to visit Moscow, Volgograd (Stalingrad) and Kursk. All three were the scenes of defeat for Hitler's War Machine. I do plan to take plenty of pictures, and put them on a website.

Prior to the flight to Moscow, I decide to stay at a hotel near Heathrow, as I have to meet the rest at Terminal 2 at 07.30hrs. That would mean travelling up on the 02.40hrs coach, and no sleep! So, hotel it is.

The other members of the tour are: Ian (the organiser, a Scot living in Birmingham), Steve (a brummie living in Scotland), Mike (from Surrey), Pete and Sue (from Hampshire), Mark and Gladys (a Yorkshire couple from California), Manita (our guide/interpreter from Sevastopol, Crimea) and, finally and naturally, me (from Somerset).

## Monday 15th June

The flight was on Aeroflot, the Russian airline, and it left late, by 45mins. Nice flight, as the plane wasn't full, so we could spread out a bit.

Arrived in Moscow in the long 'Rush hour', but once we got onto the ring road, the driver was able to speed up a bit. Got to the hotel, got rooms sorted and then got a beer (got to keep up the tradition, you know!). Next, we had our evening meal, a few more beers and then bed at midnight.

## Tuesday 16th June

Breakfast was at 07.30 and on the bus for 08.30.

First off, we went to the Kremlin. A tour of the Armoury, which was mainly ornaments, though we did see some muskets and swords. Then it was a walk to the churches (one was closed) and got a couple of nice pictures. A short walk, and a photo of a 40 ton gun, which has never been fired!

Then, the best bit for me, a couple of photos of the 'Eternal Flame'. Then off to 'Lenin's Tomb', where you aren't allowed to talk, stop, put hands in pockets. It's all very sombre. I thought that it only meant inside the place, but I found out that it also meant along the pathway outside as

well, along a line of bust of dead leaders (a security guard told me, in Russian, not to walk back, but to carry on walking forwards).

Then I took a couple of photos of 'St Basil's Church', followed by a walk through a shopping centre. Then, lunchtime, and I tried a Russian dish, cold soup, and a big jug of some fruit juice type drink (it was very refreshing).

After lunch, I walked down to the statue of Zhukov on his horse, and also took a photo of two security guards on their horses. Health and Safety yellow vests are also available in Russia!

Next, it was off across the Moscow River, and to a memorial and museum. This had five good dioramas of various major battles (Stalingrad, Leningrad, Kursk, Berlin and Dnieper River crossing).

## Wednesday 17th June

Had a good night's catch-up sleep, then brekkie at 07.30, then load bus with the cases as we leave the hotel, and catch the train for Volgograd at 13.40. Today's visit was to the Armed Forces museum in Moscow. Outside were two memorials, one to the submarine 'KURSK' ('KYPCK' in Russian) and the other to the Soviet-Afghan war 1979-1989.

Inside the museum, you had to pay 100 Roubles (about £2.00) to be able to take photos. This I did, and got to wear a pink wristband! I took a few photos inside, including one of an AGL-30 30mm Grenade-Launcher. Outside behind the museum, was the vehicle park. I took a few more, including a T.80 and a T.64 MBTs, ISU-122 and ISU-152 next to each other, ZSU-23/4, SA-8, Mi-24 Hind Gunship, SU-25 Ground-Attack plane, and other big toys.

Just as we got back into the bus for the trip to the train station, it started to rain, and was still raining at the station. Whilst at the station, we had about an hour and half to spare, so went to a cafe for lunch. I am getting used to tea

without milk, but it is an acquired taste! Boarding the train, yours truly stayed with the luggage, and it really rained. BE WARNED, Moscow station's platforms are not covered!

Whilst on the train, we met a Russian, Denis, who spoke pretty good English. During his time in the Russian Army, he was a captain, and is also a judo expert (something I was not going to test!!!). He was going to Volgograd on business, and he is also hoping to join the Police. Just my luck, sitting next to a nearly copper!

## Thursday 18th June

The train journey was overnight, and I had an OK sleep, waking up at 03.00. First one in the group to see the Mamayev statue, at 08.13 Russian time.

After arriving at the station, it was a short taxi ride to the hotel, called 'Hotel Volgograd'. Then, it was a quick shower and breakfast, followed by a short talk by Manita (our guide).

Outside the hotel, is the 'Eternal Flame' (they have one in Volgograd), and naturally, I had to take a photo. Then, it was off to the Department store, which was von Paulus's HQ, where he was captured.

Next and a short walk down to the Volga, and a boat trip along it. What was disappointing to me was that when we reached the 'Red October' factory, the boat turned round and went back. I hoped it would go to the end of the factory district. So, we did not see the 'Red Barrikady' or the 'Tractor Factory' from the river.



An ISU-122 and ISU-152 outside the Moscow Armed Forces museum.



But I did get a photo (well, a few) of the Mamayev Kourgan statue, just to show you the size of the thing).

One thing that you might want to know, the sniper, Zaitsev, did not cross the Volga under fire, but was already on Mamayev Kurgan in September, as he was in the 284th (Siberian) Rifle Division. Another point, the boy in the film was not with Zaitsev (Hollywood for you), but he was at Stalingrad, and the Germans did capture him, but he was executed.

This was followed by a tour of the round museum, with an official guide, Olga. Manita had to translate, of course. In the museum, I even got a photo of Zaitsev's sniper rifle.

## Friday 19th June

Late start today, 09.00, and it's off to the factory district. But first, we stop at the Gorge, and take a couple of photos. I did not risk crossing the road; it was like a 2 way Fire-Lane. Then, we went to the Dzerinsky Tractor Factory. Outside is a statue of the man himself, and a T.34/76 (could not find one that was not painted, shame really).

Then, it's off to the Red Oktober Factory, where I took a photo of the front gate, and had a guard shout at me (it was in Russian, so I could, if he caught me, claim ignorance!). Next and it's the Red Barrikady's turn for the Gun-Pit's photo session. This time I knew I was not allowed to take any photos, and the bus did not stop near the gate. But you will be happy to know, I still got some round the back.

Lyudnikov's Island was next, and some more photos, including inside the building (even though it was overgrown). Actually, this is just a strip of land, but with their backs to the river, it felt like an island. This was followed by a trip to 'Big Mama', the Mamayev Kourgan. First, we stopped at the bottom, so I took a couple of photos, including the big statue, then a drive to the top. Got some photos of the statue and of the 'Crying Mother' (I think they call her that) statue. Even managed to get a photo of a Russian bride, and she looks nice! During the trip, we must of seen about ten to fifteen wedding couples, and all the brides looked beautiful!!

Next, it's off to the 'Changing of the Guard' at the 'Eternal Flame' (how many 'Eternal Flame' things do they have in Russia? Not that I am complaining, of course). Got a photo of the 'All Saints' church by the statue, and even managed to dodge the sprinklers.

Lunch was at the restaurant, which had a 1942-43 theme. Forced to put on a Red Army greatcoat and helmet (no forcing really!!), and had my photo taken, you can even turn your head to the left and right without the helmet turning with it!! How's that for fun!! Never got a photo of the waitress, she did not want her picture taken. Do not know why, she looked great in her 1942-43 uniform!

Then, we did a tour of the 'Stalin Museum', which was below the restaurant. Had my photo taken with 'Uncle Joe', and then took a photo of our tour guide and the official tour guide of the museum. This one did not turn out as I would have liked it too.

Next, off to the statue of the girl who wrote to her father, a Soviet General. He was at Stalingrad and she was in Moscow. The triangle next to her statue is a plaque, on which is inscribed the words of her last letter to her father, who was killed there.

Then, it was off to 'Rossoska' Cemetery, where both Russian and German dead are buried with dignity. It is a nice touch in a land where such devastation occurred.

At dinner, we were joined by Georgi Prokofievich, a Volga Flotilla veteran, who was about 90 years old. Through our interpreter, I asked him a few questions:

- 1) Who is your favourite leader?  
Stalin
- 2) Who is your worst?  
Gorbachev and Yeltsin
- 3) Worst time at Stalingrad?  
August 23rd, when Luftwaffe destroyed the city, there were flames on the river
- 4) Favourite time? 02.00 9th May 1945 (Easy to see why!!!!).

It was nice to hear a veteran speak, and not be political. I hope to hear what other veterans think, if I can.



*Mamayev Kurgan (guess where?), and the Rodina Mat' Zovoyot! (The Motherland Calls!) statue, look at the size of the thing!*

## Saturday 20th June

Up and fed for the 08.30ish start and it's off to see a steam engine used during the Revolution, even though the date on a plate said 1955. This was when some repairs were carried out on it, and the engineers put the plate on. Note: Soviet Union only came in to existence in 1924, before that it was known as 'Federation of Socialist Republics'.

Then we went to Kalach-On-Don, and the 'Cossack Museum'. I took a picture of a photo of a Major General, who is a Cossack. Outside, there is a memorial to the meeting of the 4th and 26th Tank Corps from the north, and the 4th Mech Corps from the south, thereby sealing the fate of the German 6th Army. There is a T.70 in the memorial grounds, and this vehicle actually took part in the meeting.

Crossed the Don River on a unique bridge (the pillars are on air-bags!), and a quick stop at a memorial to the Soviet Pilots.

Next, and a stop at the Don-Volga canal, where there was a wedding party. Note: After the wedding ceremony, the couple go to a war memorial, and offer their thanks to the memory of the fallen.

Lunch at a Cossack hotel/diner, another wedding couple turned up and there speaker had the mike on LOUD!! We were then sung too by a Cossack group, with the first song being 'Kablinka', you'll be glad to hear, I did not join in!

After lunch, it was to the Grain Silo, and a couple of photos taken there, I would of taken better ones, but the sun was at the wrong angle, and my camera is not one of those expensive ones.

Then, we stopped at the Tsaritsa Gorge, where Shumilov, Chuikov and Hoth had their HQ's (not together, naturally!)

Finally, it was to the 'Volga Flotilla' memorial, and the boat's name is 'Fire Fighter'

## Sunday 21st June

Left Volgograd, and drove to Voronezh and to the nicest hotel so far. The only trouble was, was that we had to buy water. But being as I had some anyway, I did not need too. An early night for yours truly, ready for the next morning, and the trip to Kursk.

## Monday 22nd June

Breakfast at 08.00, and then load the bus for Kursk. We meet Elena, who will be our guide for Voronezh and Kursk.

Being as it is the anniversary of the start of the 'Great Patriotic War', there are ceremonies all over Russia, and Voronezh is no exception. So we visit one, at the only place on the west bank that the Germans did not capture, 'Chisliv Bridgehead'.

Then it was off to a museum, and while there, we met a female veteran, and she answered some questions for us. Outside, there was a group of singers

performing traditional folk songs. While there, I got a photo of a Mi-8 that was on three concrete posts, damn good flying, I'd say!!

We then head back across the river, and visit a church. Built after the war, it is in need of some repairs, but this is the usual thing in Russia, no money.

Near Kursk, we stop at a German War Cemetery, and I take a couple of photos of the memorial plaque. The thing with the German Cemeteries is that they are done with German money.

Then lunch in Kursk, before going on to our hotel (joint top in nice hotels, in my view).

At dinner, we were joined by another female veteran, Nina (no last name was given [I respected her privacy, and did not ask]), who was in an Anti-Tank Division during Kursk, and finished the war near Prague. The group asked a few questions, which she was glad to answer.

She had joined her unit at Kursk, as a loader on a 45mm A-T gun, and even managed to kill a Tiger or two, plus other German tanks (I refuse to write Panzer, so they are called German tanks). A very nice lady and she showed us her ID card from the war.

Why is it that after a veteran has gone, you remember all the questions that you should have asked them?

## Tuesday 23rd June

Breakfast at 08.00, followed by a talk by Elena about the battle at 09.00. Afterwards, it's all aboard the bus for the trip to the Northern part of the salient. First stop was a cathedral in Kursk. This had me wondering, why don't our churches look this good? Then it was the supermarket's turn to get the tour bus arrival treatment. Water stock up time, but just a couple of bars of chocolate for me (got to look after the figure, you know!).

Off to a cemetery, and I got a couple of pictures of a 'Hero of the Russian Federation' grave, as they are called now. He was killed in Chechnya.

This is followed by a visit to a monument to Zhukov, with another behind it (four soldiers, two towards Zhukov, and two the

other side). I then took a walk along the line of various guns, taking a couple of photos of each, until the ISU-152. Then it was back to the bus. On and off drizzle, combined with the last few days of heat, made it muggy.

Next, a trip to a Gun Position on the Teploye Heights (where we also had lunch). In 1943, this position had 45mm A-T, 76mm A-T, 122mm Hows and 37mm AA guns, plus Infantry. Got a few photos of the area from which the German 9th Army would have come from. And the rest of the group hunting either for souvenirs, or strawberries.

Visit to a memorial to Soviet Gunners, which had a gun on a column, but had to check what it was, turned out, it was a F22 USV (76.2mm ancestor to the Zis-3). Then we stopped at a memorial with an IS-2 on a stone column (thank God someone remembered to apply the brakes!!).

Next was a visit to Ponyri, first stop being the 'Eternal Flame', followed by the station, and a quick walk around the inside, looking at the pictures on the walls.

Note: Please be warned, the toilets are OLD and they STINK!!

This was followed by a visit to a memorial to the Airborne troops who helped to defended Ponyri.

Last trip was to Rokossovsky's HQ. A quick tour of the museum, followed by a visit to his bunker. Whilst in the bunker, a mouse made an appearance, only to disappear before I could get a photo. Shame really!!

## Wednesday 24th June

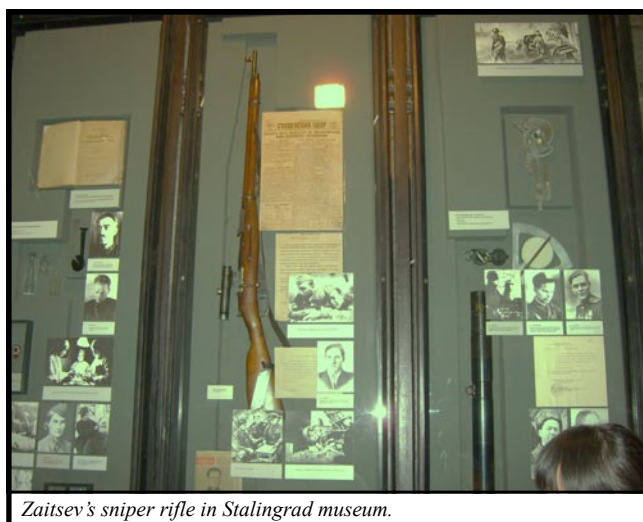
Cases packed and loaded on the bus, for the trip to the southern part of the Kursk battlefield. Later that evening, we will be getting the sleeper from Belgorod to Moscow.

First stop is a memorial to the Soviet pilot, behind which was the airfield (now just a field) he used. It was just a dirt airfield, and the maintenance crews and pilots worked and slept in the woods in the distance.

Next stop is the grave of a Soviet pilot, who destroyed 9 (nine) German planes in one engagement, his last. He rammed the last one because he'd run out of ammo.

Then, a visit to a trench system and a memorial, to be followed by a stop at a Katyusha. This was followed by a photo of Prokhorovka church, then we had lunch in the 'Prokhorovka Hotel' opposite.

Next and the museum. I got a couple of photos of maps and one of the



Zaitsev's sniper rifle in Stalingrad museum.



Me and 'Uncle Joe' (forget where).

big picture. Then to Prokhorovka Field, and a couple of photos (the Tower and sign).

After snoozing on the bus, we arrive in Belgorod, and the 'Diorama Museum'. Took photos of replicas of Vatutin's and Katukov's HQs. Then took some pictures of the 16 metres by 67 metres painting of the engagement at Prokhorovka. Told Manita of a couple of mistakes with the picture, and she agreed with me, the woman in the museum did not! [They were:- 1) No Ferdinands were in the southern sector, and 2) The Panther has its wheels the wrong way round].

Visited a memorial to Zhukov, then dinner in a restaurant. Then the drive to Belgorod station, and the train to Moscow.

By the way, Belgorod in Russian means 'White City', on account of the chalk in the area.

The train left at 21.50, and Russian trains are pretty punctual for leaving on time, you have been warned!!

## Thursday 25th June

Arrived in Moscow to the same weather that we left it with, rain!! Also, the platform looked more like a building site!

Loaded the cases on to our bus, then it was off to 'Stalin's Bunker'. On the way, Manita tells us more about 'Uncle Joe'. The Russian idea about him seems to be a bit different than the wests.

We had a few minutes to spare, so into the market we went. Gladys proved herself to be a damn good haggler, three camo hats for her grandchildren at half price. Unfortunately for the rest of us, we ran out of time, so her skills could not be used again. I did not buy anything, no time as we were watching her.

In the bunker, our guide could

take a rest from translating, as the bunker's guide could speak very good English (puts my Russian to absolute shame!!!). Some photos were taken inside the Bunker, and one of a T.10M that is outside. One of the photos that I took was of Stalin's 'Order of Victory'. Brezhnev had awarded himself one when he was leader, but when he died, the Politburo took it from him.

Apparently, it was the only medal he did not have, but he wanted one, greedy sod! Only 20 were made, five went to foreigners (Monty had one, so did Tito).

Lunch in a nice restaurant, followed by a trip on the Moscow Metro (which is very clean, London take note!!). Took a photo of part of the ceiling, should have taken more.

Still raining, we head for the hotel. It is the same one we stayed at when we arrived.

## Friday 26th June

The last full day of the tour, and we head for the 'Kubrinka' tank museum, about 70km outside of Moscow. When we get there, we have a change of guide (we had to have an official guide), Oleg, and a museum guide, Andrei (who used to be a Snr Lt in the Motor Rifle troops). We have to have him along as the museum is on a Military base. Oleg speaks very good English, but Andrei's is very poor, but he is a good laugh.

About photos, I am down to my last two batteries, just hope they hold out.

Asked a question about smoke dischargers on the T.34/85, answer is:- No. So, folks, the ASLRB Chapter H is wrong.

Also asked about the 'Shtora' system on the T.90, answer is:- It is very rare and only used on a few vehicles.

Back to Moscow, where we have lunch next to the 'Siege' Museum. Unfortunately, the Russians had decided to close the museum for cleaning!! So we are off to the 'Sparrow Heights', named after an Admiral who became a monk. From here you can get a panoramic view of Moscow, so photos were taken. Whilst there, a taxi driver asked me directions, but 'nyet Russki' came in handy.

On the way back to the hotel, we passed the 'White House', not the one in Washington. This was the building that the tanks fired at back in 1991, when the Army came out in support of Yeltsin, and against the Politburo.

## Saturday 27th June

Today we fly back to the UK. We said 'Goodbye' to Manita at the hotel (she goes back to the Crimea by train!!), and our driver (who lives in Moscow), at the airport.

We had to wait a long time at check-in, and be warned, Air Conditioning has not reached Russian check-ins. With the build-up of people, it got quite warm, to say the least.

I have enjoyed the trip very much, and would do it again, especially if they did one to Belarus. Perhaps combining it with the western Ukraine.

Ω

---

## NIGHT BLINDESS

Continued from page 8

controller's map, and only reappear after the Advance Phase. (Strictly, you could wait until the next player turn, and create the possibility of friendly fire; but I think you'd get lynched if you tried it.)

You could conceal the precise Victory Conditions, saying only "the Attacker is ordered to take the village without too many casualties."

After the first game, it may be practical to dispense with the referee's boards (and you can happily revert to being a player, as the others will be sure they can do a better job as referee). The more you practise, the easier it will get; it would theoretically be possible to dispense with the referee, with the attacker announcing the forwardmost occupied hex. If you get this far, I look forward to reading your article -you will be a true Master of the Night.

Ω



# 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!

## SEPTEMBER ITASLIA 2009

**When:** 11 – 13 September.

**Where:** Hotel Antares, Viale Postumia, 88, 37069 Villafranca di Verona, Italy. Tel 045 630-18.79 or visit [www.hotelantares.com](http://www.hotelantares.com) for details. Rooms are available for €62 per night for a single room, or €42.00 per night sharing in a double room.

**Fee:** €20.00

**Format:** 5 round Swiss format, starting at 1PM Friday. And finishing at 2.30PM Sunday.

**Contact:** Mario Nadalini at [rockgheba@gmail.com](mailto:rockgheba@gmail.com) or [itaslia@gmail.com](mailto:itaslia@gmail.com). Visit <http://www.aslitalia.org/verona2009/index.html> for the latest details.

## JIM MCLEOD MEMORIAL OPEN

**When:** 18 – 20 September.

**Where:** Viscount Gort Hotel, 1670 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3J 0C9, Canada. Tel 204-775-0451 or visit [www.viscount-gort.com](http://www.viscount-gort.com). There are a limited number of rooms available for a rate of \$105.00 CDN per night including breakfast (but not taxes).

**Fee:** \$45.00 CDN, with a \$5.00 CDN discount for CASLA members.

**Format:** 5 rounds of gaming. There will also be a three round mini-tournament on Saturday and Sunday for eight players.

**Notes:** Souvenir t-shirts (in S, M, L, and XL), beer steins and coffee mugs are available for \$20.0 each.

**Contact:** Michael Rodgers at [mtrogers99@gmail.com](mailto:mtrogers99@gmail.com). Payments should be sent to Bill Bird, 839 Strathcona Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3G 3G5.

## A BRIDGE TOO FAR

**When:** 24 – 27 September.

**Where:** Stayokay Hostel, Diepenbroeklaan 27, Arnhem. There are 30 pre-booked 30 beds at the hostel, which will be offered on a first-come first-serve basis. If you wish to organise your accommodation at the tournament venue through the tournament organisers, you MUST register and pay in full before 1st of August, 2009. Accommodation for the three nights in a 4-bed room, including breakfast and dinner, is €130.00; add €30 for a room from Wednesday night, and €6.00 if paying by PayPal.

**Fee:** €30.00.

**Format:** 6 rounds of gaming. On Thursday and Friday, all players take part in the main tournament. On Saturday and Sunday, half continue in the main tournament, while the rest compete in a variety of mini-tournaments.

**Contact:** Peter Struijff at [amhemas@hotmail.com](mailto:amhemas@hotmail.com). You can also check out the website at <http://www.xs4all.nl/~hennies/> for the latest details and scenario details for each round

## OCTOBER ASLOK XXIV

**When:** 4 – 11 October.

**Where:** Holiday Inn Airport, 4181 W. 150th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44135, phone 216-252-7700, fax 216-252-3850 or visit [www.holidayinn.com/cle-airport](http://www.holidayinn.com/cle-airport). Rooms are \$75.00 plus tax if reservations are made by 21 Sep - request "ASL Oktoberfest" to receive this discounted rate. Check the ASLOK web page for the hotel discount code to book on-line.

**Fee:** \$25.00 in advance, \$30.00 on the door.

Mark Chapman, Flat 7, 265 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, EH11 1TX (01/12/2005)  
Garry Ferguson, 30E Forrester Park Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9AW (07/12/1998)  
Stewart Thain, 77 Birrell Gardens, Murrieston, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 9LF (25/10/2007)  
Bill Finlayson, 19 Taymouth Road, Polmont, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, FK2 0PF (16/06/2001)  
Sam Prior, Flat 4, 264 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5RL (03/09/2008)  
Andrew Kassian, Flat 14/2, 20 Petershill Court, Glasgow, G21 4QA (01/01/1996)  
Ellis Simpson, 4 Langtree Avenue, Whitecraig, Glasgow, G46 7LW (20/04/1999)  
Oliver Gray, 117 Upper Dalgairn, Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JQ (04/02/2009)  
Garry Marshall, 24 Allardice Crescent, Kirkcaldy, Fife, KY2 5TY (21/05/2001)  
Pete Phillips, 9 Pier Rd, Kilchoan, Argyll, PH36 4LJ (02/09/2008)  
Jonathan Williamson, Da Croft, Bridge End, Burra, Shetland Islands, ZE2 9LE (01/05/1998)

## Wales

Andrew Whinnett, 6 Aquilla Court, Conway Road, Cardiff, CF11 9PA (03/09/2008)  
Paul Jones, 9 Cwm Nofydd, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF14 6JX (22/11/2002)  
Martin Castrey, 1, Thomas Cottages, The Highway, Hawarden, Flintshire, CH5 3DY (03/09/2008)  
Kev Sutton, 1 Gorphwysfa, Windsor Road, New Broughton, Wrexham, LL11 6SP (25/02/1999)  
C. Jones, Deer Park Lodge, Stepaside, Narbeth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8JL ( )  
Emyr Phillips, 2 Cysgod Y Bryn, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 4LR (27/08/2002)

If there are any mistakes, please let me know so I can correct them for the next edition. If you have Internet access you can also correct your details on the *VFTT* web site at [www.vftt.co.uk/aslrs.asp](http://www.vftt.co.uk/aslrs.asp) - contact me if you need your user name and password to do so.

**Format:** Same as always. Weekend tournament plus numerous mini-tournaments. There is also an informal USA vs. World Cup where everyone keeps track of their games and a plaque is presented to the winning side.

**Notes:** T-shirts are \$10.00 ea (XXL \$13.00, XXXL \$15.00, 4XL \$18.00)

**Contact:** Bret Hildebran, 17810 Geauga Lake Rd, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023-2208 or by email [damavs@alltel.net](mailto:damavs@alltel.net). Check out the web site at [www.aslok.org](http://www.aslok.org) for the latest details.

## INTENSIVE FIRE 2009

**When:** 22 – 25 October.

**Where:** The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Bournemouth, England, BH2 5EG. Telephone (01202) 555 889 or fax (01202) 789 567 to arrange accommodation. Single rooms are £37.00 per night, double rooms £30.00 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](http://www.kiwihotel.co.uk).

**Fee:** £10.00 if registering with the organisers prior to the event; £15.00 on the door (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). In addition to a discount on the entry fee, 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 Phillips, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email [if@vftt.co.uk](mailto:if@vftt.co.uk). For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at [www.asljourneys.co.uk](http://www.asljourneys.co.uk).

## NOVEMBER Grenadier 09

**When:** 5 – 8 November.

**Where:** "Gästehaus Heimbach", Schulstraße 6, Hergarten. Hergarten is a little town in the German part of the Eifel. It is 10 Km to Zulpich and around 40 Km to Cologne. There is a railway station in Heimbach which is the neighbouring town and you can reach it from Cologne by train, which goes every hour. From Heimbach you need to take a taxi to Hergarten which is about 6 Kilometers. The location offers sleeping rooms nearly 60 persons, a huge kitchen (where our Marketenderin Andrea will continue her cooking business for us), a big playing area and an additional separate big room which we will use for eating. Rooms are mostly three and four bed rooms with shower (you will need to bring a sleeping bag or blanket and pillows). Bed and breakfast is €40 per night – single rooms are €6.50 extra.

**Fee:** €5 per day.

**Format:** The tournament will be again a Swiss style five Round tournament. We will offer again an event for players who don't want to participate in the tournament.

**Contact:** Christian Koppmeyer, Hagebuttenweg 9, 41564 Kaarst, Germany. You can email him at [Christian.Koppmeyer@freenet.de](mailto:Christian.Koppmeyer@freenet.de). Check out the Grenadier web site at [www.asl-grenadier.de](http://www.asl-grenadier.de) at for up to date information.

## 2010 MARCH HEROES 2010

**When:** 11 – 14 March.

**Where:** Hotel Skye, 571-573 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NG. Tel 01253 343220. Room rates are £25.00 for a shared room or £30.00 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee:** £10.00 if registering with the organisers prior to the event; £15.00 on the door (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). In addition to a discount on the entry fee, players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in February.

**Format:** Five round tournament beginning Friday morning (arrangements will be made for those unable to arrive until Friday afternoon), with three scenarios to choose from in each round. Players will be expected to have 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 Phillips, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email [heroes@vftt.co.uk](mailto:heroes@vftt.co.uk). For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at [www.asljourneys.co.uk](http://www.asljourneys.co.uk).

Ω

Ω

# INTENSIVE FIRE 2009

22 – 25 OCTOBER 2009



INTENSIVE FIRE is the UK's longest running tournament dedicated to the play of Advanced Squad Leader. 2009 sees us well into 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 (£38 per night for a single room or £31 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](http://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 £15, or just £10 if you register before 1st October. 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, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Telephone (01972) 510 350 (+44 1972 510 350 from outside the UK) or email [if@vftt.co.uk](mailto:if@vftt.co.uk).