IN THIS ISSUE

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COVER: British infantry charge into battle, in this artwork taken from the cover of the *Battle Picture Weekly Summer Special 1977*. This was used for the HEROES 2011 t-shirt.

PREP FIRE

Lazy (adj): not inclined to work or do any activity that needs effort; resistant to work or exertion; disposed to idleness.

Lazy: track 6 on Deep Purple's 1972 LP *Machine Head*.

Lazy: description of *VFTT* editor over the past few months (OK, this year).

As Craig Benn had sent me his massive article on OBA before HEROES, all I had to do was edit it, put together the tournament report, get the latest news, and a new issue of *VFTT* would be ready. But when you have so much free time, it's all to easy to think "I'll do it later" :-(And that in a nutshell explains the extreme lateness of this issue of *VFTT*. Hopefully the extra pages, thanks to an article by Chris Doary looking back on 25 years of *ASL*, will make up for it.

Fingers crossed the same problem won't affect the next issue……

Which may also be a bit bigger than normal, thanks to an article by Ivor Gardiner on how the army plans operations, and how to adapt those techniques to *ASL*.

'Til next issue, roll Low and Prosper.

Pete Phillipps

THE *ASL* MAILING LIST

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INCOMING

MMP REPRINTS BEGIN

The reprints of *For King and Country* and *ASLSK 3* are both underway, with work expected to be completed by late July/early August. Once the components are all in-house collation and shipping should begin soon after. Work is also due to begin on another reprint of the *ASLRB* at the start of June.

Work is proceeding on the laying out of the rules, player aids, and scenarios for *Festung Budapest*. Charlie Kibler has also made some small changes to the maps to clear up some building issues. *FB* will contain 4 historical maps, 9 counter sheets (including enough Hungarian and blue SS counters to allow play without ownership of *AOO* or *ABTF* being required), 2 campaign games, and 16 scenarios. A third CG is under development and may appear in a future *ASL Journal*. Once layout work is complete it will be placed on pre-order.

Final layout work has begun on the maps for *Action Pack 8* (maps 4a/b, 5a/b, and 6a/b), which is due to be placed onto the production schedule once the current batch of Gamers projects has been printed and shipped.

Although the module is still some way in the future, a half sheet of counters for *Hakkaa Päälle!* is being be printed during the *FKAC* reprint run. A second sheet (Finnish MMC) has been laid out, while work on a third (Finnish vehicles/ordnance) is well underway. A fourth sheet will contain Russian and Lend-Lease vehicles and ordnance, and a fifth sheet will contain markers, including some new informational markers.

The next issue of MMP's house magazine, *Operations*, will include two *ASL* scenarios, 2 *ASLSK* scenarios, and an article on the Singling Campaign Game which was featured in *Operations Special Edition 1*.

Rising Sun will reprint both *Code of Bushido* and *Gung Ho!* in one module, and thus will include counter sheets for the entire Japanese, Chinese and United States Marine orders of battle. There will also be a 2nd edition of Chapter G which covers the rules needed to play ASL in the Pacific Theatre, and an updated Chapter H covering vehicles and ordnance. It will also includes 32 scenarios, combining the original scenarios with thirteen out-of-print PTO scenarios. The module will also include the Gavutu-Tanambogo scenarios and campaign game (Sand and Blood) from the *ASL '93b Annual*, with the map being done as a single mapsheet rather than as a series of overlays. Layout work has finished on the new counter sheets, and the new versions of Chapter G, Japanese/Chinese Chapter H, and the Sand & Blood Gavutu-Tanambogo CG rules are currently being proofed. Work on the scenario layouts is ongoing. *Rising Sun* is expected to be placed on pre-order once FKAC has been released.

Plans are afoot for an *Overlay Bundle* to compliment the recently released *Map Bundle*. It will include all existing official overlays apart from the Gavutu-Tanambogo ones (which will be included as a single mapsheet in *Rising Sun*) and the *DASL* ones, produced by the same artist who did the *Map Bundle*.

If there is enough demand, there is a possibility of producing a Deluxe pack which would reprint the *DASL* mapboards and overlays in *ASLSK* style, along with four new *DASL* mapboards. 24-32 scenarios would also be included, a mixture of existing scenarios and new ones.

In-house playtest of the Korean War scenarios is well underway. 16 were submitted with the module and several groups are running through them all.

Play-testing of the scenarios for *ASL Journal 10* continues, with the issue likely to be released at Winter Offensive in January 2012. As well as several new articles and the scenarios, it is likely there will be some sort of insert also included, although the exact nature of this has yet to be decided upon.

FRENCH CELLAR

Le Franc Tireur have released *From The Cellar 6*, the latest scenario pack, which contains ten new scenarios. Priced €20 it is available from http://www.lefranctireur.org/.

Coming in July will be a new historical module, *Kampfgruppe Scherer : The Shield of Cholm*, which covers the battles from 21 January 1942 to May 5 when about 5,500 German defenders held the town of Cholm against over 100 major attacks launched by six infantry divisions supported by six independent infantry brigades and two tank brigades.

HEAT OF BATTLE

Steve Dethlesfen has announced that due to a lack of time he will be winding down Heat of Battle's operations in the next year or so, with a module covering the battle of Kohima likely to be the final product.

Out now though is *Special Forces II*, the second instalment in a series which focuses on special forces from a variety of nations. *SF II* focuses on the German Kustenjagers and their battles against the British, Greeks, and Italians in the Mediterranean. It includes six tournament-sized a half-size countersheet with counters for the Kustenjager SMC, MMC, and Crews, and special MGBs; an overlay; and six pages of rules covering the Kustenjager and Motor Gun Boats (the latter a condensed version of the rules from the Le Franc Tireur module *Raid on St. Nazaire*).

BUNKER BUILDING

Play-testing of the scenarios for *Dispatches from the Bunker 33*, which is due out at the Bunker Bash in September, has begun. 'Bedouin Blitz' is a tournament-sized scenario set in Iraq in 1941 which sees Bedouin cavalry attack British troops supported by a couple of armoured cars, while 'Atrocities Beget Atrocities' is a Chinese-Japanese action set during the Jinan Incident in China in 1928. 'The Streets of Kharkov' is a mid-sized, combined arms scenario featuring a clash between SS and NKVD troops during the battle of Kharkov, and 'Thunder From Heaven' is

3

HEROES 2011

15 years ago, Trev Edwards and Steve Thomas went BERSERK in Blackpool. After seven successful years, they took a break, and Pete Phillipps became a HERO and stepped in to continue the work they had started.

Which is a round-about way to say that HEROES 2011 was the 15th year *ASL*ers from around the UK (and even Europe for a couple of players this year) have gathered in Blackpool in March for a weekend of *ASL* action and drinking.

Arriving on Wednesday lunch-time (earlier than anticipated thanks to the M6 being trouble-free for the entire journey), me and Paul proceeded to the bar. When Ian Pollard arrived later that afternoon, we proceeded to set up the maps for the old SPI monster *Campaign for North Africa* on the pool table, along with the counters for the Bardia scenario, with the intention of making people think we were playing it as they arrived the next day :-) After that, we went down the pub in the evening for a meal and to watch the football on TV.

The following morning saw the first arrivals, and by the afternoon several friendly games were underway. Once Shaun Carter arrived I took down *CNA* as the pool table was the only table big enough for the Kohima *HASL* map, and Shaun was planning on play-testing one of the big scenarios with Ivor Gardiner.

Elsewhere, Ulric Schwela, Neil Brunger, Brian Hooper and Mike Standbridge began playing the monster scenario from the CH module *Berlin: Tyrant's Lair*; after two days of fighting they moved on to playing *Devil's Domain* (which covers the Ponyri battle during the Kursk offensive).

By the evening the majority of players were in attendance, with those who weren't playing *ASL* at the bar talking about it and catching up with each other. Attendance this year was up on previous years, with 43 players around for the weekend. Quite a few of those were first-timers, and there were also a few returning to the game after several (or in one case, many) years away. Hopefully this bodes well for the future of both the UK tournament scenario and the game as a whole.

The tournament itself started on Friday morning, with 24 players entered. The tournament is run on a Swiss-style system, with players paired up against those with a similar win-lose record, but for the first round players are placed into two groups with the highest rated players in the top group and the lowest rated in the bottom group. The top players from each group are then paired against each, then the next two and so on. After the first round there were 12 players with a 1-0 record, who paired against each other, and 12 players with a 0-1 record. After the second round, there were six players with a 2-0 record, 12 players with a 1-1 record, and six players with a 0-2 record. Somewhat surprisingly, Tim Bunce, whose rating of 3550 made him the second highest rated player in attendance, was in the latter group.

There were also quite a few players just playing friendly games throughout the week, particularly among the newcomers who felt they might not be good enough to play in the tournament. Special mention here must go to 17-year old James Short, not the youngest player to attend a UK *ASL* tournament (that honour goes to Derek Cox's lad Elliot, who turned 11 the weekend he attended INTENSIVE FIRE 2006), but in his first appearance he managed to get in 11 games, winning three – only Ruarigh Dale has played more at a single tournament, managing 13 at INTENSIVE FIRE 2004. Martin Mayers, with 10 games, and Ian Willey, with 9, came close to matching James for sheer number of games played, while Paul Case, despite being at the tournament longer than anyone other than me managed to avoid playing any *ASL*, other than play-testing a Kohima scenario with me! Though my only competitive game was one of the small scenarios from the latest Break Contact pack *Razorback Ridge*, which took less than half an hour to play, and that included setting it up!

The most important clash of the weekend took place on Saturday evening, when Manchester United played Arsenal in the FA Cup quarter-final. Several United fans (including your editor, and the hotelier) gathered around the TV, with Arse fan Paul Case in the middle of the group :-) Needless to say, Paul lost the HTH CC, being outnumbered 4-1 and being Lax due to the beer!
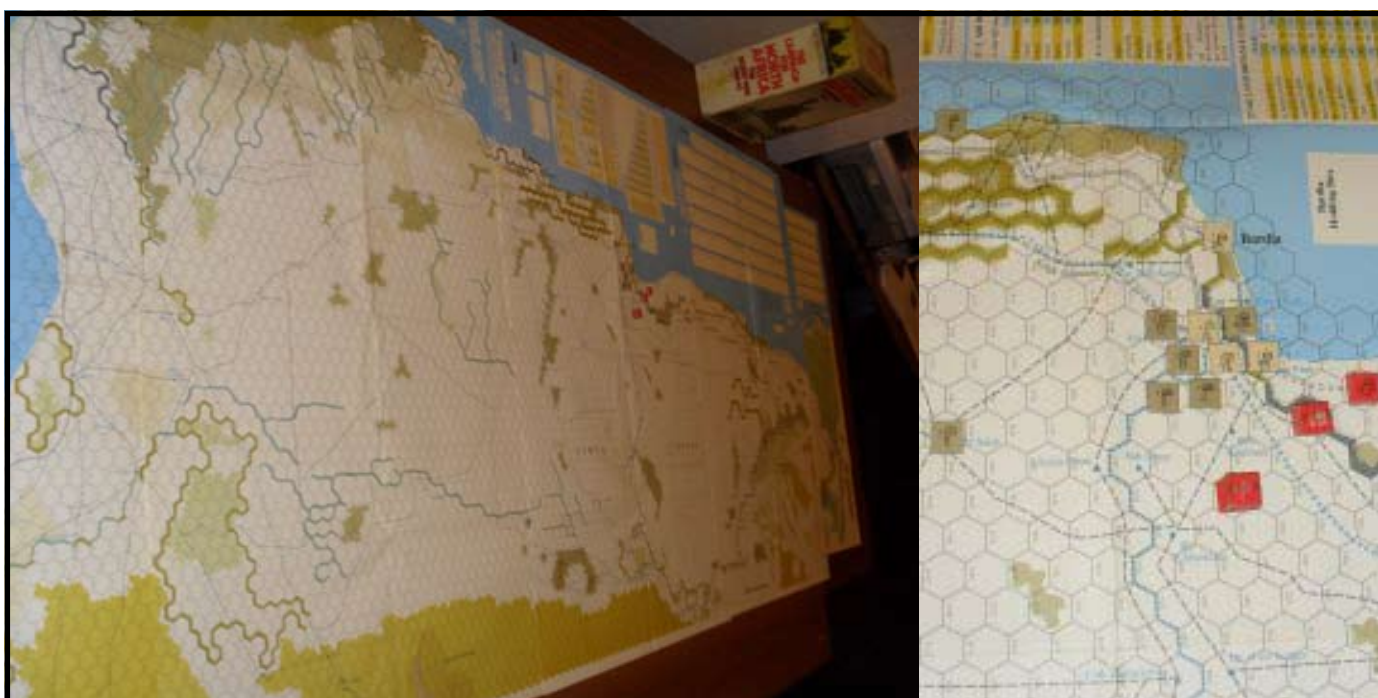
Campaign for North Africa - *so big the map wouldn't even fit on the hotel's pool table!*

By the end of round three there were three unbeaten players, so to balance up the numbers for round four, the highest rated player from the 2-1 group, in this case Mark Blackmore, was promoted to the 3-0 group. Mark was paired up against his regular opponent Craig Benn, leaving Dave Ramsey to take on George Tournemire.

Were Mark to beat Craig, then the winner of the other game would be the tournament champion, being the only un-defeated player by the end of round 4. On the other hand, if Craig won, then he would play the winner of the other game in the final round on Sunday morning to determine the tournament champion….

As things turned out, Mark beat Craig, leaving all eyes on Dave and George fighting it out in 'FrF40 Sporck's Eleven'. Ultimately George's Russians were too strong for Dave's Germans, leaving George the only undefeated player at the end of round four.

With Dave leaving on Sunday morning, to watch West Ham lose their FA Cup quarter-final make at Stoke, a quick game between Craig and Dave was scheduled before breakfast to decide who would be the runner-up. In the end I believe they tossed a coin, which Craig won to take the runner-up prize!

At the opposite end a hard fought match between Nick Ranson and Steve Cook saw a rare win for Nick, leaving Steve with the wooden spoon (or in this case, a copy of the rare *Battle for the Abbeye des Ardennes* scenario pack from Lone Canuck Publishing).

I'd like to thank Derek Tocher

The prize ceremony. Above left: tournament champion George Tournemire. Above right: runner-up Craig Benn.

Centre left: for valiantly avoiding bottom place, Nick Ranson received a £25 voucher from Second Chance Games.
Centre right: Steve Cook receives his prize for going 0-5 during the tournament!
Bottom left: Michael Davies receives a pair of BattleSchool precision dice for rolling 12 snakes while beating David Blackwood in 'Maczek Fire Brigade'.
Bottom right: Gerard Burton also received a set of dice for rolling 9 boxcars in his game of 'One Last Mighty Hew' - needless to say, he lost!

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Here are the individual win/loss records for the tournament

POS.	PLAYER	P	W	L	RND	CRUS
1	Georges Tournemire	5	5	0	0	3502.0
2	Trevor Edwards	5	4	1	3	3020.0
3	Paul Jones	5	4	1	2	3151.3
4	Craig Benn	5	3	2	4	2953.3
5	Phil Draper	5	3	2	3	2868.3
6	Michael Davies	5	3	2	3	2831.7
7	Sam Prior	5	3	2	1	3335.0
8	Martin Vicca	5	3	2	1	3121.7
9	Tim Bunce	5	3	2	1	2951.7
10	Gerard Burton	5	3	2	1	2905.0
11	William Binns	5	2	3	2	3277.5
12	Martin Mayers	5	2	3	2	3070.0
13	Nigel Blair	5	2	3	1	3152.5
14	Tony Gibson	5	2	3	1	3125.0
15	Paul Legg	5	2	3	1	3025.0
16	David Blackwood	5	2	3	1	2875.0
17	Hakan Isaksson	5	2	3	1	2230.0
18	Chris Walton	5	1	4	2	3030.0
19	Bill Sherliker	5	1	4	2	2230.0
20	Nick Ranson	5	1	4	1	3110.0
21	Tom Jackson	5	1	4	1	2230.0
22	David Ramsey	4	3	1	4	3150.0
23	Mark Blackmore	4	3	1	2	3195.0
24	Steve Cook	5	0	5	0	

RND is the round in which the player first lost – if players have the same W-L result, the one losing in the later round places higher.
The CRUS column is the average Crusader Ladder rating of the opponents beaten.

and Dominic McGrath for selecting the scenarios, and Shaun Carter and Steve Irwin for help with the prizes. Thanks also go to George Kelln for providing a copy of *Battle for the Abbeye des Ardennes* for use as a prize.

HEROES 2012 is set for the weekend of 8 – 11 March 2012. If the turn-out is anything like it was this year, book early to guarantee a room at the hotel itself! (as the hotelier owns the hotel next door,

PLAYER RESULTS

Here are the individual win/loss records.

PLAYER	P	W	L
Martin Barker	3	2	1
Craig Benn	8	5	3
William Binns	6	3	3
Mark Blackmore	6	5	1
David Blackwood	7	3	4
Nigel Blair	8	4	4
Neil Brunger	1	0	1
Tim Bunce	5	3	2
Gerard Burton	5	3	2
Shaun Carter	2	1	1
Steve Cook	6	0	6
Ian Daglish	4	3	1
Michael Davies	5	3	2
Phil Draper	5	3	2
Trevor Edwards	6	5	1
Tony Gibson	5	2	3
Brian Hooper	1	1	0
Hakan Isaksson	5	2	3
Tom Jackson	6	2	4
Paul Jones	6	5	1
Mike Kinley	5	2	3
Paul Legg	6	2	4
Martin Mayers		4	6
Pete Phillipps	1	0	1
Ian Pollard	1	0	1
Sam Prior	5	3	2
David Ramsey	6	4	2
Nick Ranson	6	1	5
Ulric Schwela	2	1	1
Bill Sherliker	5	1	4
James Short		3	8
Simon Staniforth	1	1	0
Georges Tournemire	5	5	0
Martin Vicca	5	3	2
Chris Walton	5	1	4
Gavin White	5	2	3
Ian Willey	9	5	4

accommodating any overflow is not a problem).

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THE SCENARIOS

Here is the table of Scenario Win/Loss records:

SCENARIO	ALLIED	AXIS
0? SCENARIO NOT KNOWN	0	2
6 Red Packets	0	1
14 Silence that Gun	1	0
31 The Old Town	1	0
134 Counterattack on the Vistula	1	0
AP4 L'Abbaye Blanche	0	1
AP41 The Meat Grinder	1	1
AP54 800 Heroes	1	0
AP59 Taking Heads	3	5
BC25 Tommy Tarzan	0	1
BFP-22 Speed Over Caution	1	0
BtB4 Firestorm in St Manvieu	1	0
BtB6 Men Against Tanks	0	1
FrF17 The Marco Polo Bridge Incident	3	1
FrF27 Cocktails For Molotov	3	0
FrF40 Sporck's Eleven	3	5
FrF42 Kiss of Fury	1	2
FrF43 Forest Devil	2	1
FrF45 Totensonntag	0	1
FrF49 One Last Mighty Hew	3	0
GH-A Ghosts in the Rubble	1	0
HG-7 Bonny Nouvelle	0	1
J9 A Stiff Fight	1	0
J60 Bad Luck	1	0
J94 Kempf at Melikhovo	1	0
J106 Marders Not Martyrs	1	0
J113 Maczek Fire Brigade	3	5
J115 Last Push To Mozhaisk	7	2
J122 Bloody Bois Jacques	4	0
J19 Merzenhausen Zoo	0	1
OA20 The Revenge of the Greys	0	1
OA21 Gunter Strikes Back	1	0
RB3 Bread Factory #2	0	1
SP147 The Zebra Mission	0	2
SP163 First To Fastov	1	0
SP174 Krupki Station	1	1
SP183 The Last Full Measure	1	0
SP95 Burn Gurkha Burn!	0	1
U31 The Front In Flames	1	0
WO1 French Toast And Bacon	1	4
WO3 Counterattack at Carentan	0	3
TOTALS 94	50	44

Below: the tournament action. Right: the Kohima map. Bottom left: the plan of attack in Berlin. Bottom right: the plan failing upon contact with the enemy!

The Crusaders Open *ASL* Tournament Ladder
HEROES 2011 Update
The Champion – George Tournemire
Derek Tocher

HEROES 2011 was the 35th British *ASL* tournament and there are now over 3000 results recorded on the ladder and we now have 272 players who have participated at least once. At any one time there are about 80-90 *ASL*ers attending tournaments on at least a semi-regular basis. The largest number of games played over the history of UK *ASL* tournaments has been racked up by Brian Hooper, 166, and there are nine players with over 100 games recorded, and another nineteen who have played 50+. The top 10% of players have ratings of 3280+ while the upper quartile are rated 3160+. Those in the lower quartile have ratings below 2810 while the bottom 10% of participants are rated 2665 or less. These numbers have remained essentially invariant over the last ten years and the distribution of results is essentially Gaussian about 3000.

Georges Tournemire was undefeated in the tournament (5-0) and is the new champion and now appears in ninth on the full ladder and fourth on the active players ladder after having picked up a record 525 pts. A second impressive performance was put in by Paul Jones who went 5-1 and gained 395 pts ending up on 3335 pts putting him 26th on the full list and 11th on the active players list. Other players with significant point gains were Nigel Blair (+220 pts) and David Blackwood (+205 pts).

Of course we also had a number of significant losers over the weekend. Most prominent among these was Steve Cook who lost all six games he played dropping 400 pts in the process, placing him to 240th on the full ladder. Newbie James Short played an impressive eleven games, with a 3-8 record but dropped 370 pts which means he enters the ladder in 248th position. The only other player to have lost over 200 points was Bill Sherliker dropped 255 points.

A final mention should go to Nigel Blair who has now played 137 games since his first outing at INTENSIVE FIRE 2002 only to find himself back on 3000 pts after HEROES 2011.

Without further ado here is the full Crusaders Ladder as of April 2011

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Rank	Player	P (W-D-L)	Pts	Rank	Player	P (W-D-L)	Pts	Rank	Player	P (W-D-L)	Pts	Rank	Player	P (W-D-L)	Pts
1	Toby Pilling	75 (68--2--5)	4085	71=	Paul O'donald	72 (44--1--27)	3135	141=	Paul Kettlewell	89 (42--0--47)	2975	212=	Kevin Croskery	16 (6--0--10)	2790
2	Derek Tocher	125 (94--2--28)	3935	71=	Frenk Van Der MEY	4 (3--0--1)	3135	141=	Sergio Puzziello	5 (1--0--4)	2975	212=	Alistair Fairbairn	3 (0--0--3)	2790
3	Steve Thomas	42 (32--1--9)	3755	71=	Andrew Whinnett	16 (9--0--7)	3135	143=	John O'rielly	5 (2--1--2)	2970	212=	Nick Sionskyj	8 (3--0--5)	2790
4	Simon Strevens	87 (60--1--25)	3720	74=	Chris Courtier	13 (7--2--4)	3130	143=	Miles Wiehahn	27 (13--0--14)	2970	215	Brian Hooper	166 (59--2--105)	2785
5	Dave Schofield	151 (110--0--41)	3710	74=	Malcolm Hatfield	59 (26--0--33)	3130	145=	Elliot Cox	2 (0--1--1)	2960	216=	David Blackwood	20 (8--0--12)	2780
6	Mark Blackmore	66 (48--0--18)	3665	76	Paul Sanderson	41 (21--0--20)	3125	145=	Tom Jackson	23 (11--0--12)	2960	216=	Chris Littlejohn	14 (3--2--9)	2780
7	Mike Rudd	38 (32--1--5)	3660	77=	Lee Brimmicombe-Wood	12 (8--0--4)	3120	145=	Ben Jones	49 (23--0--26)	2960	218	Graham Worsfold	3 (0--0--3)	2775
8	Fermin Retamero	13 (11--0--2)	3650	77=	William Hanson	19 (11--0--7)	3120	148	Michael Maus	7 (3--0--4)	2955	219=	Wayne Baumber	73 (32--0--41)	2770
9	Georges Tournemire	8 (7--1--0)	3640	77=	Philip Jones	5 (3--0--2)	3120	149	Gavin White	5 (2--0--3)	2950	219=	Lee Bray	14 (3--0--11)	2770
10	Trevor Edwards	128 (72--1--55)	3635	77=	Anthony O'boyle	3 (2--0--1)	3120	150=	Laurent Forest	3 (0--0--3)	2945	219=	Richard Kirby	7 (2--0--5)	2770
11	Michael Hastrup-Leth	45 (31--1--13)	3615	77=	Paul Ryde-Weller	10 (5--1--4)	3120	150=	Alex Ganna	2 (0--1--1)	2945	222=	Richard Dagnall	3 (0--0--3)	2765
12	Aaron Cleavin	6 (6--0--0)	3565	82	Mark Walley	4 (3--0--1)	3115	150=	David Murry	5 (2--1--2)	2945	222=	Bill Hensby	31 (10--0--21)	2765
13=	Peter Bennett	14 (12--1--1)	3560	83=	Luis Calcada	43 (21--1--21)	3110	150=	Pedro Ramis	6 (3--0--3)	2945	222=	Simon Taylor	18 (6--1--11)	2765
13=	Bjarne Marell	36 (26--0--10)	3560	83=	Luc Schonkerren	5 (3--0--2)	3110	154=	Paulo Ferreira	9 (4--0--5)	2940	225=	Andrew Hershey	10 (4--0--6)	2760
15	Steve Linton	17 (14--0--3)	3545	83=	Stewart Thain	24 (12--0--12)	3110	154=	Wayne Kelly	11 (4--1--6)	2940	225=	Flemming Scott-Christensen	6 (1--0--5)	2760
16	Paul Haesler	17 (10--2--5)	3530	86	Simon Morris	11 (6--0--5)	3105	154=	Bob Nugent	3 (2--0--1)	2940	227	Peter Townsend	4 (1--0--3)	2755
17	Dominic Mcgrath	156 (96-2--59)	3495	87	Russ Curry	6 (4--0--2)	3100	154=	Jon Williams	14 (6--0--8)	2940	228	Peter Neale	3 (0--0--3)	2750
18	Jes Touvdal	24 (16--0--8)	3475	88=	Nigel Brown	26 (11--0--15)	3095	158=	Martin Barker	22 (9--1--12)	2935	229	Andy Mcmaster	34 (12--0--22)	2745
19	Tim Bunce	72 (49--0--23)	3405	88=	Marc Hanna	6 (4--0--2)	3095	158=	Derek Briscoe	1 (0--0--1)	2935	230	Burnham Fox	23 (10--0--13)	2740
20	Lars Klysner	11 (8--0--3)	3400	88=	Mikael Siemsen	6 (3--0--3)	3095	158=	Martin Bryan	19 (8--0--11)	2935	231=	Rupert Featherby	3 (0--0--3)	2735
21=	Ran Shiloah	11 (7--0--4)	3370	91=	Jas Bal	5 (3--0--2)	3090	161=	Andrea Marchino	1 (0--0--1)	2930	231=	Nick Quinn	14 (5--0--9)	2735
21=	Peter Struijf	10 (8--0--2)	3370	91=	Kevin Beard	13 (9--1--3)	3090	161=	Andy Price	3 (1--0--2)	2930	233=	Stuart Brant	8 (3--0--5)	2730
21=	Martin Vicca	38 (26--1--11)	3370	91=	Gary Lock	2 (2--0--0)	3090	163=	Paul Boyle	5 (2--0--3)	2925	233=	Gareth Evans	4 (0--0--4)	2730
24=	Andrew Dando	48 (27--2--19)	3365	91=	Iain Mackay	43 (22--0--21)	3090	163=	John Sharp	8 (3--0--5)	2925	235=	Hamish Hughson	4 (0--0--4)	2725
24=	Carl Sizmur	21 (13--0--8)	3365	91=	Peter Michels	3 (2--0--1)	3090	165=	Steve Allen	6 (1--1--4)	2920	235=	Chris Walton	57 (17--1--39)	2725
26	Paul Jones	37 (19--0--18)	3355	96	Paulo Alessi	6 (4-0-2)	3085	165=	Tim Collier	17 (7--0--10)	2920	237=	Steve Cocks	4 (0--0--4)	2720
27	Bernt Ribom	5 (5--0--0)	3350	97=	Dirk Beijaard	5 (3--0--2)	3080	165=	Paul Legg	140 (58--2--80)	2920	237=	Marc Horton	6 (1--0--5)	2720
28	Craig Benn	62 (43--0--19)	3345	97=	William Binns	35 (16--0--19)	3080	168=	Iain Ainsworth	1 (0--0--1)	2915	239	Ray Jennings	11 (3--0--8)	2715
29	Gerard Burton	43 (25--0--18)	3335	99=	Billy Carslaw	11 (4--0--7)	3075	168=	Edo Giaroni	3 (1--0--2)	2915	240	Steve Cook	29 (14--0--15)	2710
30=	Phil Draper	78 (49--2--27)	3330	99=	Robin Langston	9 (4--2--3)	3075	168=	Nathan Wegener	3 (1--0--2)	2915	241	Graham Smith	46 (17--1--28)	2700
30=	David Ramsey	55 (30--0--25)	3330	99=	Chris Milne	5 (3--0--2)	3075	171=	Joel Berridge	3 (1--0--2)	2910	242	Simon Hoare	4 (0--0--4)	2690
32	Joe Arthur	21 (13--0--8)	3305	102=	Jean-Luc Baas	3 (2--0--1)	3070	171=	Brian Martuzas	5 (2--0--3)	2910	243	Jeff Howarden	7 (2--0--5)	2685
33=	Sam Prior	69 (38--1--30)	3295	102=	Serge Bettencourt	3 (2--0--1)	3070	171=	Andy Smith	4 (0--0--4)	2910	244	Christain Speis	5 (1--0--4)	2680
33=	Aaron Sibley	58 (35--0--23)	3295	102=	Robert Schaaf	3 (2--0--1)	3070	174=	Mark Caddy	1 (0--0--1)	2905	245	James Crosfield	15 (6--0--9)	2670
33=	Frank Tinschert	15 (10--0--5)	3295	102=	Simon Stanisforth	1 (1--0--0)	3070	174=	Michael Essex	33 (16--0--17)	2905	246	Pedro Barradas	7 (1--0--6)	2655
36	Philippe Leonard	9 (7--1--1)	3285	106=	Tony Gibson	36 (19--0--17)	3065	174=	Ian Gaueman	3 (1--0--2)	2905	247	Nigel Ashcroft	52 (19--1--32)	2635
37=	Will Fleming	3 (3--0--0)	3280	106=	Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire	4 (2--1--1)	3065	174=	Mike Kinley	5 (2--0--3)	2905	248	James Short	11 (3--0--8)	2630
37=	Ralf Krusat	6 (5--0--1)	3280	106=	Bob Runnicles	3 (2--0--1)	3065	174=	James Neary	5 (2--0--3)	2905	249	Adrian Catchpole	11 (2--0--9)	2625
37=	Alan Smee	4 (4--0--0)	3280	109=	Scott Byrne	12 (7--0--5)	3060	174=	Phil Ward	5 (2--0--3)	2905	250	Adrian Maddocks	12 (3--0--9)	2620
40	Dave Booth	7 (5--0--2)	3270	109=	Raurigh Dale	38 (17--0--21)	3060	180=	Shaun Carter	79 (35--1--43)	2900	251	Arthur Garlick	21 (2--5--14)	2615
41	Daniel Kalman	11 (8--0--3)	3245	109=	Patrik Manlig	16 (9--0--7)	3060	180=	Mat Haas	13 (6--0--7)	2900	252=	Bryan Brinkman	9 (1--0--8)	2610
42	Jackson Keddell	5 (5--0--0)	3240	112=	Stefan Jacobi	11 (5--0--6)	3050	180=	Josh Kalman	10 (5--0--5)	2900	252=	Justin Key	66 (25--1--40)	2610
43=	Daniel Batey	4 (4--0--0)	3235	112=	Bo Siemsen	4 (2--0--2)	3050	180=	Martin Mayers	50 (21--0--29)	2900	254	Ian Parkes	10 (3--1--6)	2595
43=	Paul Saunders	19 (10--0--9)	3235	114	Scott Greenman	8 (3--1--4)	3045	184	Martin Kristensen	6 (2--0--4)	2895	255	John Fletcher	6 (0--0--6)	2585
45	Ray Woloszyn	31 (18--1--12)	3225	115	Steve Pleva	6 (3--0--3)	3035	185=	Jakob Norgaard	6 (1--1--4)	2885	256=	Oliver Gray	15 (4--0--11)	2580
46	Christain Koppmeyer	15 (8--0--7)	3220	116	Mark Warren	20 (11--0--9)	3030	185=	Bernard Savage	21 (9--1--11)	2885	256=	Neil Stevens	65 (25--2--38)	2580
47=	Ian Percy	12 (8--1--3)	3215	117=	Daniele Dal Bello	4 (1-0-3)	3025	185=	Bill Sherliker	38 (18--2--18)	2885	258	Pete Phillipps	130 (55--0--78)	2575
47=	Tom Slizewski	5 (4--0--1)	3215	117=	Peter Hofland	4 (2--0--2)	3025	188	Sam Belcher	8 (3--0--5)	2880	259	Chris Netherton	30 (10--2--18)	2560
49=	Klaus Malmstrom	4 (3--1--0)	3210	119	Ian Daglish	150 (70--2--78)	3020	189=	Patrick Dale	38 (15--1--22)	2875	260	Mike Stanbridge	47 (13--1--33)	2555
49=	Nils-Gunner Nilsson	5 (4--0--1)	3210	120	Vincent Kamer	4 (2--0--2)	3015	189=	Hakan Isaksson	9 (4--0--5)	2875	261	Michael Rhodes	43 (10--0--33)	2545
49=	Yves Tielemans	3 (3--0--0)	3210	121=	Colin Graham	5 (3--0--2)	3010	191=	John Johnson	5 (2--0--3)	2870	262	Ian Pollard	120 (45--1--74)	2520
52=	Francois Boudrenghien	3 (3--0--0)	3205	121=	Andrew Saunders	33 (15--1--17)	3010	191=	David Kalman	5 (2--0--3)	2870	263	Roger Cook	30 (9--2--19)	2515
52=	Bob Eburne	56 (32--0--24)	3205	123=	Eric Gerstenberg	13 (8--0--5)	3005	193	Russell Gough	81 (45--4--38)	2865	264	Robert Seeney	5 (0--0--5)	2510
54	Jean Devaux	3 (3--0--0)	3190	123=	Allard Koene	7 (4--0--3)	3005	194=	Brendan Clark	16 (6--1--9)	2860	265	Damien Maher	9 (1--0--8)	2485
55	Armin Deppe	13 (7--1--5)	3185	123=	Ian Willey	11 (5--0--6)	3005	194=	Peter Ladwein	21 (9--0--12)	2860	266	Nick Carter	11 (2--0--9)	2475
56=	Derek Cox	18 (9--0--9)	3180	126=	Nigel Blair	137 (52--1--84)	3000	194=	Lutz Pietschker	4 (1--0--3)	2860	267	Paul Case	124 (32--3--89)	2445
56=	Bill Durrant	5 (4--0--1)	3180	126=	Nick Brown	3 (1--1--1)	3000	194=	Neil Piggot	4 (1--0--3)	2860	268	John Kennedy	24 (5--0--19)	2415
58=	Steve Crowley	47 (21--1--25)	3175	126=	Thomas Buettner	3 (2--0--1)	3000	198	Neil Brunger	49 (18--0--31)	2855	269	Chris Ager	26 (7--0--19)	2400
58=	Jonathan Pickles	8 (5--0--3)	3175	126=	Stephen Burleigh	37 (15--2--20)	3000	199	Nick Angelopoulos	5 (1--0--4)	2850	270	Ray Porter	39 (4--0--35)	2375
60=	Grant Pettit	7 (4--1--2)	3170	126=	Steve Grainger	8 (4--0--4)	3000	200=	Keith Bristow	69 (39--1--29)	2845	271	Jackie Eves	45 (12--0--33)	2330
60=	Bruno Tielemans	3 (3--0--0)	3170	126=	Martin Hubley	4 (3--0--1)	3000	200=	John Martin	6 (2--0--4)	2845	272	Nick Ranson	39 (5--1--33)	2305
60=	David Tye	45 (20--0--25)	3170	126=	Ian Kenney	4 (2--0--2)	3000	202	Bill Eaton	21 (8--3--10)	2840				
63	Michael Davies	80 (43--1--36)	3165	126=	Phil Nobo	11 (6--0--5)	3000	203=	Mark Furnell	13 (5--1--7)	2835				
64=	Rodney Callen	6 (4--0--2)	3160	126=	Duncan Spencer	4 (2--0--2)	3000	203=	Dave Otway	5 (1--0--4)	2835				
64=	Mel Falk	9 (5--0--4)	3160	135=	Gilles Hakim	5 (3--0--2)	2995	205	Mike Daniel	5 (2--0--3)	2825				
64=	Tim Macaire	64 (35--0--29)	3160	135=	Kris Pugh	14 (6--0--8)	2995	206	Mark Chapman	6 (2--0--4)	2820				
67	Ulric Schwela	46 (21--1--24)	3155	137=	Eric Baker	2 (1--0--1)	2985	207	Michael Robertson	4 (1--0--3)	2810				
68	Jeremy Copley	9 (6--0--3)	3150	137=	Matt Blackman	2 (1--0--1)	2985	208=	Michael Allen	3 (1--0--2)	2800				
69=	Simon Croome	59 (31--0--28)	3145	139=	David Farr	4 (2--0--2)	2980	208=	Ivor Gardiner	17 (8--0--9)	2800				
69=	Nick Edelsten	22 (14--1--7)	3145	139=	Malcolm Rutledge	3 (1--0--2)	2980	208=	Clive Haden	5 (2--0--3)	2800				
								208=	William Roberts	11 (3--1--7)	2800				

BIG BANG THEORIES

Using and Abusing OBA

Craig Benn

In the world before the flowchart, primal chaos reigned. MMP sought order, but the phoenix can fly only when its feathers are grown. Scenarios with OBA were played wrong again and again, as endless aeons wheeled and passed. Time and the pure essences of heaven, the moistures of Curt Schilling and the powers of the sun and moon worked upon an action pack until it became magically fertile. Elemental forces caused the action pack to hatch. From it came a stone diagram…*the nature of OBA was irrepressible!*

OBA is one of the least liked parts of the game. For the newbie or casual player, the rules are daunting, and something always seems to go wrong. For the veteran, the randomness offends his very soul – the fact that something so powerful can disappear with two red chits, or alternatively totally dominate a game upsets his OCD bump *severely*.

Never fear, Pigsy and Sandy, the path to enlightenment is long, but a journey of a thousand li starts with but a single step…well okay you need radio contact *and* battery access…look just shut up will you. Although there are many articles published on overruns, vehicle dances of death, sleaze freezing and other esoterica, there is very little on OBA, so feel honoured I'm benefiting you with my hard won wisdom.

What's all the fuss about anyway Tripitaka?

Okay, leaving aside all the annoying times when you forget to do OBA first, it has to be said even when it works, it just isn't *that* effective. If we do some basic number crunching for say a 100mm OBA against defenders in stone buildings, we're looking at a 20FP+3 attack. The average result is a 1MC, and if they are in foxholes/trenches or the ground floor of a multi-hex building that average is just a plain old MC. If you're looking to kill the defenders by double-breaking them – (and barring fate MCs or critical hits, this is the only way you can) – the odds are not good…

For 7 morale troops, there's a 45% chance of them failing a MC (yes I know that is not the odds for failing a 1MC but trust me). To get the double break is 45% x 45% = about 20%. For 8 morale troops the double break odds are even worse at about 12%, and if you plan on using your big guns against a killstack with a 9-2 leader and 8

morale dudes, then you're looking at more like 5%. Whoopee do.

And getting two bites of the cherry is the exception rather than the rule. For a standard 7 hex FFE, most targets are going to be on the edges of the blast zone. After one attack these guys can move/rout/advance away, so the *most* you can do is break them.

Plus to get the centre of the FFE on target needs an accuracy dr of 1 or 1-2, (possibly worse for hindrances) or a lucky deviation. You are much more likely to miss, and although there is a +1 hindrance for LOS traced *into, through, within or from it's blast area hexes* (**C1.57**), (which cancels FFMO - it's not a LV hindrance) this works both ways. As well as putting that +1 onto *your* IFT attacks, it cancels interdiction, and makes it rather awkward to get into close combat or that failure to rout position. In fact you know what – lets just not bother with OBA at all….

Reaching Nirvana with the help of Trinitrotoluene

Tskk…Sandy, Sandy, Sandy. This is not the path to enlightenment. When considering your attack, is not the sum of its effect greater than any individual part? If this is all you use OBA for, then you are right, it will hardly be worth the effort. But three things cannot be hidden for long – the sun, moon and truth – lets look at some specific examples of using OBA more effectively.

VOTG Map K1-K21 and Z1-Z21
German set-up

M8 Level one	2x 2-4-8 w MMG
	2x 1-2-7 w HMG
	9-2 Ldr
	7-0 w radio
L7 Level one	3x 1-2-7 w HMG
	2x 2-3-7 w MMG
	9-2 Ldr
P3	8-3-8 w DC
	8-1
N4	5-4-8 w LMG
N5	4-6-7
N8	4-6-7
N9	4-6-7
P2	5-4-8
O3	5-4-8

Russian set-up

R9 cellar	4-5-8
	?
Q10 cellar	4-5-8 w LMG
	?
Q11 cellar	4-5-8
	?
R5 cellar	2-2-8 HMG
	8-1 ldr
	?
R5 ground level	4-5-8 w MMG
	?
	?
V3	2x 6-2-8, LMG
	8-1 ldr
	?
U3	2x 6-2-8
	8-0
	?
S5 cellar	4-4-7
	?

The Germans are making a push for Pavlov's House and the Volga beyond. Very little of the Russian defence is on view because of the lethalness of the German MG killstacks. In the Voentorg, the cellar-dwellers behind walls have a LOS to adjacent hexes only, but may ascend to ground level if the killstacks get smoked in. Pavlov's House itself appears lightly defended, but the 6-2-8's in the Flour Mill are probably a counterattack force waiting for the right moment. No doubt there are plenty of HIP units waiting for the assault troops to give them -2 shots.

Conventional wisdom would be to centre the FFE on R5, which will also hit the back of Pavlov's house at S5, and possibly detonate any mines in the shell holes and debris adjacent. Another alternative would be S6 - hitting Zabolonov's House as well. Assuming a 100mm+ module, we are looking at 20FP+7 for units in a cellar, and 20+5/+6 for the ground floor (depending on it being fortified) due to the +1TEM for each non-roof level above you (**B23.32**). Hmmm, that's fours to get a MC on anyone in the cellar, fives or sixes for the ground floor. Not fantastic. There's always Smoke, but putting it on R5 is probably going to be counter-productive, as it's just going to protect the Russians from the L7 and M8 killstacks.

So how do you get your money's worth out of the module?

The important thing to remember about OBA is that it is not (usually) about killing units, it's a tool to help you meet the VC's. It neutralizes part of the enemy defence allowing you to manoeuvre. So Smoke, where you automatically neutralize
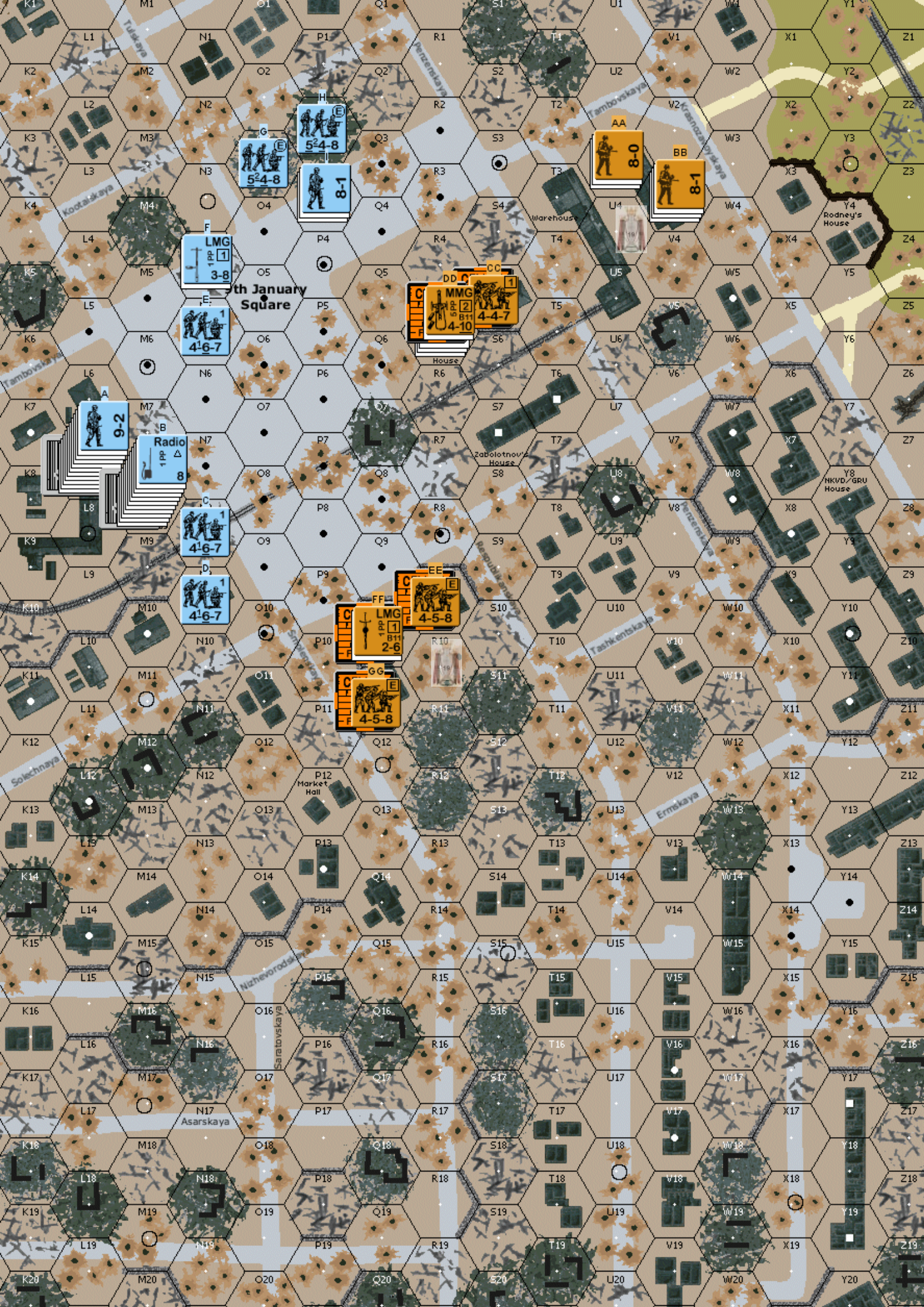
by giving +6 or more LOS hindrances, is usually preferable to HE where you have to rely on the vagaries of a dice roll. R5 though, is definitely the wrong place for Smoke.

The correct position is Q8. Under these particular circumstances, the Russians can't have an upfront defence because even HIP units, once revealed, will quickly melt away to German HMG rate tears. It is much more likely (and sensible) that the open terrain in front of Pavlov's House will be covered by units on level two of the Y17/Y18/Y19 building and/or waterworks. This might be a HIP kill stack or 82mm mortars (gutted buildings), probably getting long range and over 16 hex area fire protection

from the German firebases. Or there might be a HIP half squad spotting for ground level mortars or a HIP observer with a field phone, in which case the German player might never even suspect they were there.

In this case Smoke in Q8 isolates Pavlov's House from the supporting Russian positions in the Voentorg and Y17/waterworks allowing you to *defeat the defence in detail*, and without hindering your own firepower. Also if you haven't managed to strip any concealment from the defenders by this point, placing it here won't force an extra chit draw.

Now assume that this is a scenario not a CG, and only HE is available – is there a

better spot than R5 or S6?

There are two points to consider here:

A23.3 …The act of Placing the DC is considered movement expended in the *Placement Hex (the Location occupied by the Placing unit – not the Location in which the DC is actually Placed)*…

Nice, heh? Put the FFE one hex back, so R5 is on the edge of the blast zone. That 8-3-8 with a demo charge in P3 can waltz over and place the DC on R5, *without being attacked by the German OBA*. Even if the OBA doesn't break the defenders, then it will at least provide a +1 LV hindrance and cancel FFMO, but this won't apply to the DC's attack. In fact OBA and demo charges go together *very* nicely indeed.

20+1 attacks are more effective than 20+5/6/7 attacks. In other words dumping OBA directly on the defender's heads is not always the most effective way to go. Putting FFE's *behind* the defenders to interfere with routing, and to stop reinforcement of the defenders is usually better.
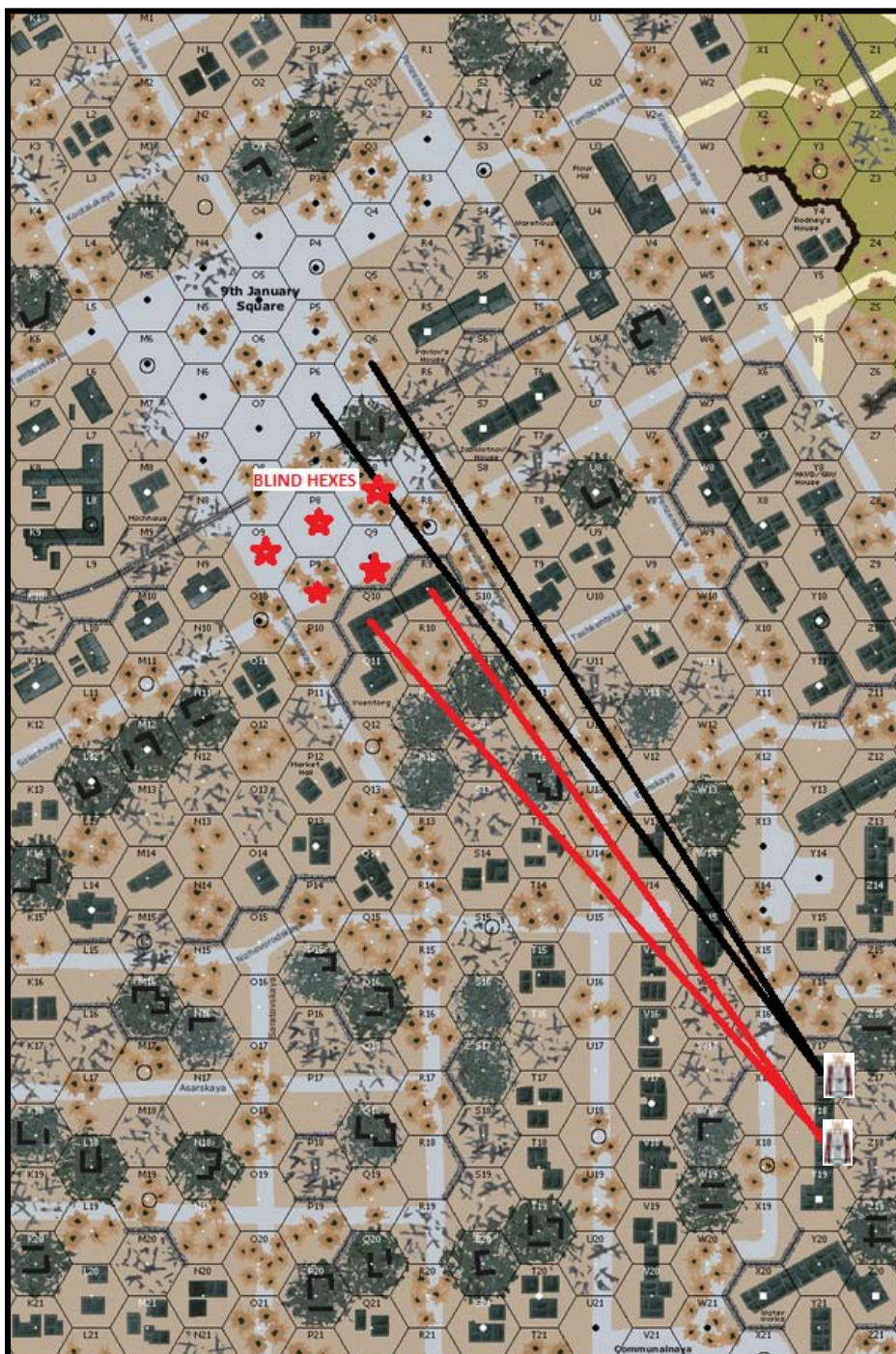
So S5 is good, it hits R5, but allows DC placement from Q5 and Q6, and covers all the potential rout/reinforcement hexes in S4/T4/T5/S6. Any defenders having to rout are going to take 20+1 attacks when leaving the building, or rout up or down stairs within Pavlov's House (taking an extra attack if routing up a level **C1.51**).

However to break into Pavlov's House and *kill* the brokies, you'll want to shift the OBA back a hex, ideally to T4 so there are no easy rout paths, and no easy reinforcement from the lurking 6-2-8's.
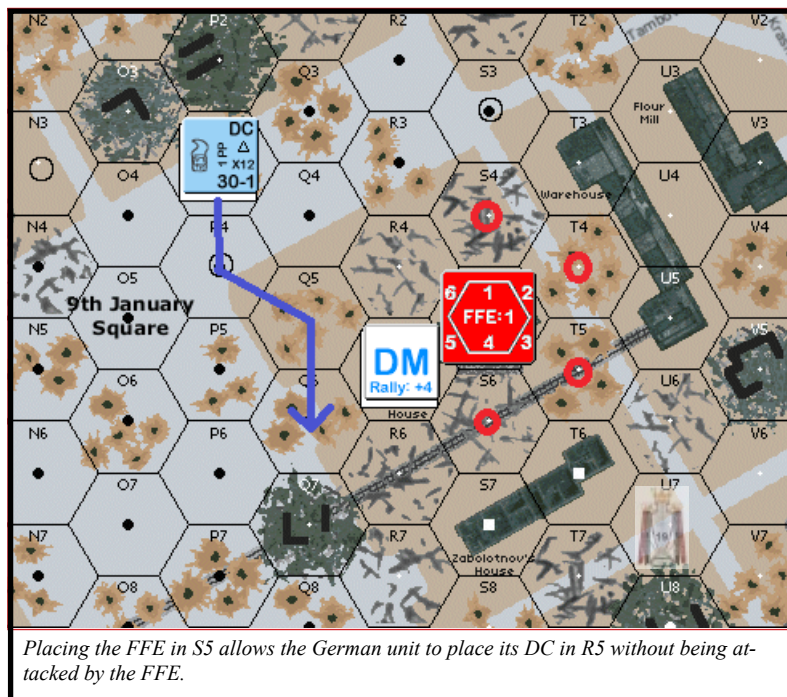
Oink oink –oi Sandsy! Master is playing a trick on you, what kind of nonsense is this - the observer can't see S5 or T4 from where he is – how can the godsfire be brought down upon Pavlov's head?

Pigsy, you must learn to look beyond the end of your nose and acquire foresight. Your observer has legs – he must learn the art of timing…

Time is the fire in which we burn, the eternally revolving wheel that brings both nirvana and the void…but in terms of the *turn sequence*, time encourages you to move…Consider, you place a Spotting Round in the Prep Fire Phase and convert it to a FFE:1 in the Defensive Fire Phase of the opponent turn. Doing it that way allows the defender an entire Movement Phase to spread out and get out of the LOS of the observer, once warned of the upcoming monkey magic from the skies. Far better to place the SR in the Defensive Fire Phase, and convert it in your Prep Fire Phase – this only allows an APh for the defenders to disperse a max of one hex. So you can and should move your observer in your turn – in

Pavlov's House is likely to be covered by HIP Russian units on level two of the Y17/Y18/Y19 building.

Placing the FFE in S5 allows the German unit to place its DC in R5 without being attacked by the FFE.

this case the 7-0 should move to the first floor of N9 which gives a LOS to T4.

(Note also Smoke placed in the Defensive Fire Phase by OBA will be dispersed **(C8.51)**)

Timing is also crucial in another sense. You shouldn't use OBA on its own – it has to complement the movement of your assault troops – and as every time you pick a chit it could be red, DON'T waste it until you need it.

Scatter the Russians are coming

Let's consider using OBA on the defence now in the classic scenario, the Hedgehog of Piepsk. Here we have a very different situation with 32 Russian squads about to steamroller over a mere seven 4-6-7's. If how you use OBA should be tailored to the VC's, what does a quick look at the scenario card tell us? Well firstly the Germans are under the cosh, and if the Russians get in close they are going to overwhelm the landsers through sheer force of numbers. Every weapon in the German arsenal is going to have to be used to full effect to keep them at a distance, and if artillery was subsidiary in the example above, here it's going to be crucial – the defenders need all the help they can get.

So no unnecessary risking of the whole module – no extra chit draws, especially as there's already an extra red from scarce ammo. But it's not all bad, half of the Russian troops are 6 morale conscripts with 2 range and they have only three leaders. Just breaking them in *VOTG* wasn't enough, but it's probably good enough here, as the Russians will struggle to rally a large number of brokies.

Targeting the few leaders to prevent rallying and human waves is also going to be very worthwhile.

What else? Well the situation seems perfect for harassing fire. The maths works like this – normal HE affects seven hexes at full strength, while harassing fire affects 19 hexes at one third strength. Because of the way the IFT* works, certain calibres get short changed: 120mm and 70mm divides neatly (24>8 and 12>4) but 150mm and 100mm do less well (30>8 and 20>6) while 80mm (16>4) comes off worst.

(* There is no such thing as the IIFT. But if some mad scientist was to create one, in the brief period before the temporal paradoxes made it disappear, then it wouldn't make much difference. Unless there was a very high SAN or booby traps in which case the extra PTCs might count for something.)

The general rule of thumb is not to use harassing fire except in 0 and -1 airburst TEM, and not always then. Most of the time a standard FFE is much more effective – as can be seen in the table below. Percentages are the effectiveness of harassing fire compared to a normal FFE concentration, taking a TEM modifier as equivalent to a column shift, and measuring the number of

hexes affected.

So in theory you should *never* use harassing fire with 80mm OBA even in airburst terrain, but the table is a guide – it will depend on a number of things, like how many hexes of the blast zone contain targets and what are their vulnerabilities/values.

But harassing fire does have a few specific advantages all of it's own –

Firstly it is *not* a HE concentration so does not give a LOS hindrance (**C1.57 & C1.72**) which means it does not hinder your fire into it, and does not prevent interdiction – Russians caught in the open will have to rout away normally and may take additional attacks whereas with normal OBA they could stay where they were (not necessarily the best option, but…).

Secondly critical hits are resolved with double the normal FP (not double 1/3rd) – (**C3.75**), so where a normal FFE is going to have little or no effect except with a critical hit, it can be better to treble the area affected. This will usually apply to well protected vehicles, but also to low calibre OBA in the 60-80mm range against things like pillboxes, caves and cellars.

Thirdly if you have Wire or Mines and there are targets on top of them, a normal FFE might have the unfortunate effect of clearing your own fortifications, but harassing fire can't (**B26.52** and **B28.62**) as it is not a HE concentration (neither are barrages).

And as a rule of thumb, more lower FP attacks are a much better proposition against six morale troops than eight morale types.

Going back to Piepsk, the OBA's job in this scenario is to keep the Russians at arms length rather than to necessarily hurt them. But on it's own it has too small an effect – there are too many Russians, and too large an area for them to move through. It has to complement the German machineguns. Where to put the observer then?

The obvious place is in level two of 3N2. As the scenario is ten turns long, the Russians have the option of making some wide out flanking moves, and have so many troops that there is likely to be more than one avenue of approach. From here an

TEM OBA calibre	-1	0	1	2	3
70mm	101.79%	90.48%	67.86%	67.86%	
80mm	81.43%	67.86%	45.24%	33.93%	
100mm	90.48%	81.43%	67.86%	45.24%	33.93%
120mm	108.57%	90.48%	81.43%	67.86%	45.24%
150mm	90.48%	72.38%	67.86%	54.29%	33.93%

TABLE 1: % Effectiveness of FFE Concentration vs Harrassing Fire
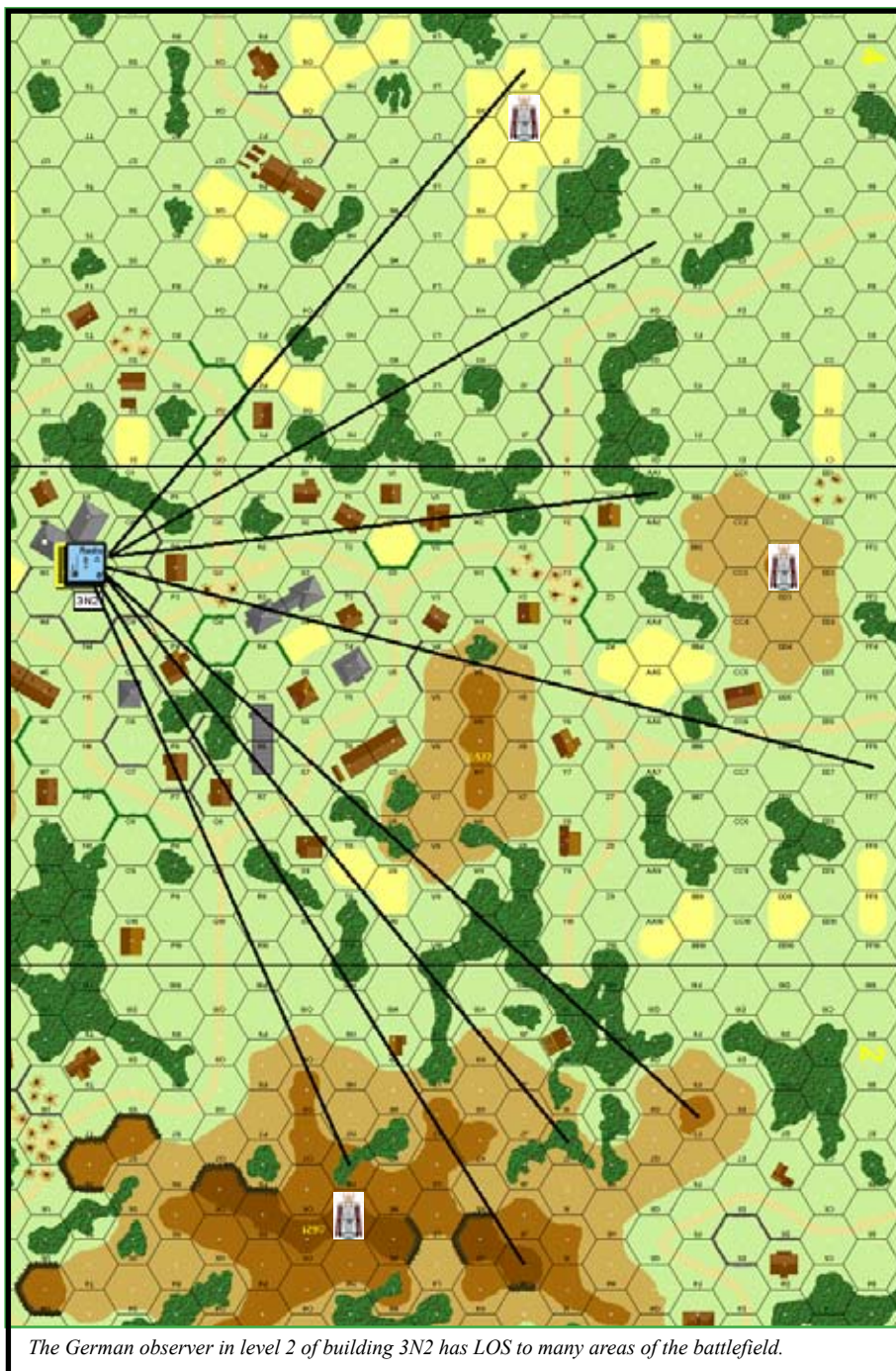
The German observer in level 2 of building 3N2 has LOS to many areas of the battlefield.

observer can bring down fire on 4J8, 4G5, 3AA1, sneakily to 3FF6, 2I7, 2F7, 2J4, and 2N6 (possibly 2V2 for the really wide outflank).

Although this covers a fairly wide chunk of the board, it is *essential* to stack the HMG in the same location for a number of reasons. Firstly some of the LOS's are narrow lines to individual hexes with blind zones around them. To avoid the extra chit draw, which you *really really* don't want in this scenario, it would help if there's a nice visible broken or pinned unit from the HMG, instead of the Russian infantry waltzing through the hex in the Movement Phase and leaving nothing to see in the DFPh.

Secondly OBA is a fickle beast – how

fickle? – well on any one turn, keeping radio contact (5 in 6) times not drawing a red (2 in 3) gives you only a 56% chance of being able to call OBA down. Or in other words a 44% chance of just watching the Russians come closer. You should never rely *solely* on OBA to cover one approach when defending. On any battlefield where targets disappear in and out of LOS (most really), rapidly moving attackers are a problem – OBA works best in conjunction with obstacles to slow them down – here there are none so you're going to have to rely on lead.

Also, in Piepsk, the threat of Russian long range firepower is very low, and having an extra leader in the final VC building to complicate control is not to be sniffed at.

(Note also that Germans greater than 11 hexes from the east board edge can set up

HIP, and using a radio is not a concealment loss activity so you will retain HIP here).

Nice Master

Ah nice master, this enlightenment business is difficult for a poor pig demon's brain…is there any simple principles to remember?

Why yes Pigsy, when attacking:

Use Smoke instead of HE unless the defenders are in very low TEM.

Use the Smoke to isolate the defenders, instead of masking your own firepower.

Don't be afraid to move your observer in the Movement Phase, the turn sequence encourages it.

Don't use OBA just for the sake of using it, or indeed on its own. Time its use to benefit the movement of your assault troops, and combine it with other weapons EG DCs.

HE can often be better used *behind* a defenders position to interfere with rout paths if they are well dug in, or to block the movement of reserves.

When defending:

1) A good defence is flexible and does not rely solely on one weapon. OBA *complements* infantry weapons and SW, but is too fickle to cover an avenue of approach on its own.

2) Use harassing fire or barrages to cover mines and wire, or if you don't want the +1 hindrance to affect interdiction.

3) Breaking attackers is often of less value than breaking defenders – it is usually harder to get into a failure to rout position. Therefore Smoke in attacker firebases, and:

4) Put HE in open ground in *front* of attackers, not on top of them. Either channel their approach to somewhere you want them to go, or put it somewhere they *have* to move through. (EG put down harassing fire on the VC building you occupy in the last turn – you should be okay against 6+4 or whatever attacks, but crossing the street into 6-2 attacks is a different story.) On the same principle there is no point placing OBA where it can be easily bypassed.

5) HE should only be put down *behind* attackers when they are moving through several hexes of open ground. That way *their* firebases further back are masked with the +1 hindrance, while the defenders can shoot normally - and broken attackers *have* to rout back into the OBA.

Campaign Games

If you just play tourney sized scenarios, with a bit of effort you can avoid OBA completely. But not in CGs most allow 2+ modules per date (offhand *Pegasus Bridge* is the only CG I can think of that has no artillery), with a range of additional

extras. From my own experience, you don't really grokk OBA, until you use it date after date in a CG. It's only then that you remember the correct order – OBA Smoke, then normal Smoke, then normal OBA…and only then you can truly be philosophical over two red chits, or a broken radio. (By the way it's quite acceptable to have a piece of paper pinned to your head saying "OBA first numbnuts!" – if that's what it takes).

Purchasing OBA in a campaign is a struggle between the yin and yang of two opposing forces. On the one hand Confucius says - *Infantry wins campaign games, for only a fool spends CPPs on toys* – but on the other hand Confucius also says *OBA is not a toy, but as essential as air itself.*

Because those purchase points disappear after one CG date, as opposed to an infantry company where you expect *some* survivors to carry on in future days – you *must* get your moneys worth from an OBA module. So the first thing to ask yourself is why am I buying this instead of infantry? And the answer should be – because it can do things infantry can't. If you need to block a particular part of the map – here is a defender that doesn't break and rout. If you need to blind kill stacks that your infantry weapons can't reach or protect an advance over open ground that would otherwise be suicide, then OBA is what you need. Let's consider all the bells and whistles.

1) Pre-registered hexes.

In *VOTG* the Russian shopping list is **70/80mm-1 , 120mm- 3, 150mm- 5** and each pre-reg hex costs 1 (with a maximum of two per module). Although the accuracy of 1-4 is nice*, you might think this is a bit extravagant as you have to guess the right hex after all. Wrong. Get them, possibly not for the 70/80mm, but certainly for the other two modules. Due to the small Russian draw piles, the extra black chit is not to be sniffed at – it increases the average number of fire missions before two reds are drawn from 3.33 to 4.00, (two increases it to 4.67), although the effect is less marked for larger draw piles (U.S 5 to 5.50, German 4 to 4.50 – see *VFTT 12*).

The main advantage though is the lack of warning to the enemy. A spotting round will always give the defenders time to disperse, (even if only an advance), but it's quite possible that deviation will put the SR base and blast height out of LOS in a city fight meaning you have to start over. Also having the OBA cycle complete in two player turns instead of three (or more), means much more chance of getting a respectable number of missions down before the CG date ends. With an average CG date at 6 or 7 game turns, or 12/14 player turns, this gives a maximum of four cycles. Of course assuming no lost radio contact, red

chits, mandatory SR corrections and targets appearing from the get-go instead of the more usual half squad reconnaissance *may* be optimistic. However it is the reduced chance of drawing two red chits (or worse one black and two reds) that make it worthwhile. If you spend the CPP's, reduce the chance of getting very little in return. A pre-reg hex also allows barrages in most CG's…

* No hindrances apply to the dr as long as the observer's LOS is not blocked. .

2) Barrages

There has been some debate on GameSquad over whether a pre-reg hex automatically allows you to use a barrage. Although **E12.1** says "*A barrage is a type of OBA Fire Mission (C1.7), and is available to a player if he is allowed one or more Pre-Registered hexes.*"…naysayers quote **E.1** that "*Chapter E is composed entirely of Optional rules and SSR. Therefore there must be a specific SSR or agreement between the players prior to play...*" So sadly, best to agree in advance with your opponent, while waiting for a MMP clarification. You will generally get to play with them in CG's though.

Barrages are similar to harassing fire in some respects – as they are not a HE *concentration* **(C1.7)** they do not cause a +1 hindrance, and cannot clear wire and mines, and affect more hexes (nine) at the cost of reduced FP. Unlike harassing fire the reduced FP is only one column shift, and the difference with a normal FFE in terms of firepower times hexes is minimal.

Generally speaking barrages are much more useful on defence than attack, although you can put down a Smoke barrage affecting nine hexes instead of seven. Because you have to put the barrage in a straight line, instead of completely blocking LOS through the smaller area of a normal FFE, you may end up giving +3 hindrances over a wider area. In a mild breeze though, the Smoke barrage is far more effective.

Defensively a HE barrage is ideal for city fights particularly factories. Provided the factory and barrage align (in *RB & VOTG* there are restrictions to the axis of the barrage, basically North/South but not East/West, in normal scenarios any (alternative) hex grain is allowed.), the pre registered hex should be in the open ground adjacent to the factory. You should wait until the first assault wave comes in, then drop the barrage behind them. After defensive fire breaks them because they only get the +1 interior factory TEM, they will then *have* to rout back through the OBA in open ground. This is much better than hitting them *before* they get into the factory, which will only break them instead of casualty reducing them.

And as it is often better to put OBA into open ground instead of on top of well dug in defenders (or attackers), the barrage

following a street line will usually be able to get nine hexes in open ground, whereas the shape of a standard FFE will have some firepower 'wasted' on high TEM hexes.

Is it worth it? Well you don't pay extra for a barrage *per se*, it comes automatically with a pre-registered hex. If you are not using it to hit a single specific target – in which case why take the column shift – and you don't mind losing the +1 hindrance (which has advantages and disadvantages), it does affect a much wider area.

3) Creeping Barrages

Although not a HE concentration, the FFE does provide a +2 hindrance (**E12.75** – note this is for the entire blast zone not per hex.) Like a barrage, the blast hex is nine hexes long and there is a column shift downwards, but this particular beast advances 1-3 hexes each player or game turn, and has a chance of going off 1-3 turns early. (Pick a chit – if the chit is red it goes off early).

Although great fun in scenarios, the cost in campaign games is usually fearsome – typically you pay for a pre-reg hex plus 50% of the module cost (FRU). For Russians in *VOTG* this means 3 points for 80mm, 6 for 120mm (more than a rifle company) and 9 for 150mm (the same as a Guards Rifle Company). All accountants should stop reading at this point.

Creeping barrages do have a number of advantages though – there are no chit draws after the first one. There is no radio contact, no AR or SR to be placed and unlimited ammunition – it lasts as long as you tell it to last. If you can keep up with the barrage, it nicely isolates the front line defenders from reinforcements, makes it difficult for them to run away, and provides essential cover when crossing large chunks of open ground. Of course the darnn thing trundles on regardless of how the infantry battle is going on, and the unlimited ammo is meaningless if the barrage only hits the defenders for one turn, then runs behind them.

From a tactical point of view, infantry can only keep up with the barrage when it is slow (advances 1-3 hexes per game turn), but any kind of resistance will cause them to fall behind a fast barrage (advances each player turn). Fast barrages are for mechs and tanks. Creeping barrages also don't go well against wire/mines – there is no chance of clearing obstacles as it is not a HE concentration, and they will separate the assault troops from the barrage. You also need to think carefully about when to lift the barrage – as a rule of thumb, plot where the barrage will be if it advances one hex a turn, then calculate how many Movement Phase it will take infantry to get to the victory area. Then add at least one turns grace.

Paradoxically creeping barrages that go off early can be more effective – the

"pre-game" turns don't have Rout or Rally phases so it is possible to get double breaks, or have broken defenders with the barrage behind them. Overall the verdict has to be too expensive for CG unless the defenders are echeloned in some depth.

Offboard Observers

Only one purchase point but are they worth it? Well, the automatic radio contact is nice, but their key advantage is immunity from opposing fire. If the number of level two buildings with good LOS is limited because the other guy drops nebelwerfers on top of them, or shoots at empty hexes with -3 leader directed kill stacks then it's probably time to give it some consideration.

Otherwise OBA is expensive enough, and if you're in a campaign with overcast weather, your observer may have his LOS completely blocked from a board edge. Accuracy is also only on a 1, which will upset Germans, British and Americans but not anyone else.

5) Aerial Observers

Although the theory is nice, being able to function as an offboard observer from any hex on a friendly board edge and change that hex at will, the disadvantages are too great. The need for a sighting TC before beginning the OBA cycle, which typically for *RB*/*VOTG* will be 7's or 6's (-2 not concealed, +3 building, possibly +1 friendlies within 4 hexes) means a good chance of an extra player turn per cycle, compounded by the inherent radio which will lose the odd turn or so.

In comparison a normal observer can swap for a field phone in most CG which is much more reliable, and an offboard observer doesn't have to bother with radio contact at all. If you spend an extra point you want to increase rather than reduce the number of missions you get.

Anti-OBA tactics

Okay we have some ideas on how to use OBA effectively, but what's a poor pig demon to do when on the receiving end? Most of the sacred texts in existence offer fairly banal advice like not stacking and trying to keep concealment to force an extra chit draw. Neither of these are completely true though – the universe is a complicated place. Here are seven sacred principles of safety…

Stacking with a good leader in good TEM can be better than spreading out. It reduces the chances of a critical hit, and ensures everyone gets the morale bonus. (Although you are more vulnerable to getting smoked in.)

Look at the map differently. There is no height advantage. Walls and bocage are +1 TEM, Hedges are 0 TEM, and open ground is safer than woods. Foxholes and Trenches are equivalent to fortified buildings.

Instead of trying to force an extra chit draw – (it is difficult to keep concealment when on the attack after all) – get the other guy to burn through black chits by offering low value targets, preferably on one flank, then making your main effort somewhere else. Once a FFE is down it can only be shifted 3 hexes, and an existing SR suffers accuracy drm if shifted more than 6 hexes, and can deviate larger distances, making the other guy less likely to risk conversion.

Look for avenues of approach on the attack that are in dead ground to the observer – behind in season orchards, or buildings. When defending put your troops in areas with short LOS so the observer has to move up to you, then skulk and fall back.

If the enemy observer is HIP, scope out the best positions, and then watch where AR are placed, so you can cross them off mentally. When the number of positions is manageably low, start firing at the empty hexes or smoke them in. The observer can't do anything if he has 6+ LOS hindrances.

On the attack, move fast and close in. OBA works best against fairly static targets, where the delay of a turn or two to red chits or loss of radio contact won't matter much. Get through the observed zone while this kind of faffing about is going on and drive your enemy before you while the womenfolk lament.

You're moving through woods when suddenly hot metal is flying about and you're in the middle of an FFE. Move and take an attack, or stay still and take an attack…*hmmm*…dig! It's a Prep Fire Phase action that makes you TI but a foxhole is placed immediately (**B27.11**).

Enlightenment for Deviants – PTO, DTO and Night

In the Pacific, paradoxically, OBA is more powerful but harder to use effectively. The normal ETO rule that a break on its own isn't enough, doesn't apply when fighting

the Japanese – step reductions are. Stopping the attacking sons of Nippon generally requires lots of low-medium FP attacks to grind their squads down by attrition. So for OBA harassing fire over the generally low TEM, with plenty of airburst terrain, is a good way to do this – without risking the usually high Japanese SAN.

From the Japanese perspective, breaks on their own *are* enough too – because they are uniquely suited to getting behind a defensive line and into failure to rout positions - but often lack the raw FP to break defenders in the first place. The fact OBA attacks don't activate snipers, but PTCs and MCs from OBA attacks *do* can often benefit the high Japanese SAN.

However the limited LOS in most PTO battlefields means you will only have a short time to bring down fire before the Japanese will be on top of you with a banzai or infiltrating behind you. The +1 radio contact and maintenance drm (**G.7**) also has quite a big effect, because the contact numbers are in the middle of the DR bell curve, and increase the chance of your observer faffing about until its too late. You should therefore get a SR down early before the Japanese are close enough to force the extra chit draw, and convert to a FFE:1 as soon as they move into their final attack positions – risking the extra draw then. (If it fails it fails-which is no worse than being too late). If you are defending a foxhole line, harassing fire on your own position with +4 TEM is not a bad option. White Phosphorous on your own position is particularly good, as it will strip any adjacent stacks of concealment, but as long as you are in foxholes you should pass the *minus* 4MC, but any banzaing or advancing Japanese will take the MC based on the surrounding terrain (see **C1.7** and **A24.31**).

When attacking the Japanese the situation is somewhat different, but high odds FP attacks from a normal FFE may be the only way to chip away at defenders in cave and pillbox TEM. For Japanese defenders OBA is one of the few ways to strike back without revealing a target to the awesome U.S late war FP.

On the other hand DTO is the *yin* to the PTO's *yang* – completely different. In the desert, barring overlays LOS will be clear to board edges, TEM will usually be zero, there's only a little scrub for concealment terrain and foxholes are hard to dig, so OBA is potentially king. On the other hand it's a very mobile war and calling down artillery on a fast moving column of tanks and halftracks presents a few challenges of its own.

Putting the SR down in the Defensive Fire Phase (in the right place) instead of in the Prep Fire Phase is important. Any concentration of vehicles can easily disperse 13-16 hexes (or more) if forewarned by a SR. When shifting a SR and converting it

to a FFE, the accuracy dr gets a +1 mod for 7-12 hexes and a +2 mod for 13-18 hexes (**C1.3**). So it is almost certain to deviate and *can* deviate virtually full distance (max 1 hex for every 3 hexes or fraction thereof).

Note also **F11.75** where EC are dry or very dry and one or more desert boards are in play, OBA dust takes effect. This bumps up normal hindrances from FFE's and creeping barrages to +1/+2 per *hex*, and gives harassing fire and barrages a hindrance. Again this will have advantages and disadvantages depending on what you want to do.

There are mysteries. There are differences. In this world, these must be reconciled in time. Some differences are as wide as those between night and day….

Most players would not think of using OBA at night, figuring it's too hard for observers to get a decent LOS. Plus in a campaign, this might translate into only one or two FFEs appearing in an entire CG date – which just isn't value for money. And although this line of thought *is* true to an extent, enlightenment requires that to function, minds, like parachutes, must be *open*. Night OBA has a few special gifts to give.

In the dark broken units are especially vulnerable. Not only do they keep the +4 DM modifier unless they roll <= current printed morale when rallying, but they only rout one hex (**E1.54**). You probably don't fully appreciate the implications of that.

If you are the Scenario Attacker at night, then the defenders will initially be under No Move counters. OBA attacks do <u>not</u> give freedom of movement (**E1.21**) so defenders cannot move or advance away from the OBA. They have to sit there and take it like schmuks. The only way they can get away from it is to rout one hex away. Because FFEs count as gunflashes to an observer (**E1.87**), you can always put a fresh AR down on the edges of the blast zone and creep the OBA one hex at a time after them regardless of the randomness of star shells. In a city fight that one hex at a time won't be enough to cross a street, and even if the brokies rally – the No Move counter is still in play.

Say you are in a campaign date where you are desperately outnumbered and can't afford to take casualties or the bulk of your troops are purchased as reserves. (The night of 14th September in *VOTG* after a bad day scenario springs to mind). You can make a night counterattack without risking a proper fight but still cause a few casualties from OBA.

However like in the daytime, OBA is much more effective as part of a whole rather than on its own. You rack up the big kills at night by running cloaked/concealed units up to brokies and jumping on them in CC. OBA is unaffected by concealment

or the +1 Night LV hindrance, and may pick out those 25% HIP defenders. For the Russians counterattacking at night in RB/VOTG it's also nice to know units in sewers are unaffected by OBA.

See also **E1.93** about Illumination Rounds for OBA. In most campaign games you lose a module after you've placed a FFE on board, but you never do that at night, and any black chits drawn are shuffled back into the pile. So you get to use it at night for IR, then normally the following day.

The characters Monkey, Tripitaka, Pigsy and Sandy appear by kind permission of Wu Cheng'en. No Bhuddists were harmed in the writing of this article.

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a late war scenario featuring a US para-drop and British glider landing against a mixed company of German troops supported by 3 20L AA guns, and variable reinforcements.

There will also be an analysis of the *VotG* scenario 'Raid on Rodimtsev', the latest part of Carl Nogueira's article on the Japanese and a report on the local tournament scene.

Four issue subscriptions (starting with the current issue, number 32, which contains four scenarios ('Lack of Communication', 'Jumonji Pass', 'Get Tito', and 'No Rest for the Weary') as well as an analysis of the *HASL* version of the scenario 'In Sight of the Volga') are available for $15.00 ($18.00 outside the USA). Issues 1 to 20 are now out of print but PDF versions are available for free from www.aslbunker.com (note that the site is currently down being hacked but should be up soon). Other back issues are $4.00 ($4.50 outside the USA) or $35.00 ($45.00 outside the USA) for a complete set of issues 21-32. A complete set of issues 21-31 and a subscription for issues 32-35 is available for $45.00 ($55.00 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. You can email them at aslbunker@aol.com.

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15

Double One 2011

Friday June 24ᵗʰ to Sunday June 26ᵗʰ

The London ASL tournament "Double One" returns in 2011, over the weekend of June 24ᵗʰ to 26ᵗʰ, with the same venue and continued support from its main sponsor, **Leisure Games** – www.leisuregames.com.

The Writtle College offers excellent value for money bed and breakfast accommodation, a large gaming room, open for extended gaming times, and is located close to Chelmsford, Essex, with easy access to London via a 40 minute main rail link, the M25, and Stansted international airport.

The weekend

The gaming room opens at 9am on Friday 24th June for a couple of one day 8 man mini tourneys. Last man standing after 3 rounds wins! Early arrivals may instead wish to tackle one of those monster scenarios that you never normally get to play in a morning or afternoon.

On Saturday morning, players will have the option to continue open gaming or enter the main tournament. Participants that want to take part in this will be entered according to their "UK Crusaders" ASL ladder rating. Subject to demand, we will also be running a Starter Kit mini tournament.

Each mini tournament will have capacity for up to 8 players, and will consist of 3 rounds, with round 1 commencing at 9.30am, round 2 at 3.30pm, and round 3 on Sunday morning at 9.30am. Details of the tournament scenarios will be released in December 2010 and will be sent to all those pre-registered at the time.

Mini-tournament sponsors last year included MMP, East Side Gamers and Le Franc Tireur. Like Leisure Games, they kindly agreed to provide prizes for mini tournament winners.

The venue

The tournament's venue will be the Writtle Room, Writtle College, Lordships Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RR – www.writtle.ac.uk. Room opening times are 9am – 11pm Friday, 8am-11pm Saturday, and 8am-1pm Sunday (prize giving circa 2pm)
The venue is less than 2 miles outside Chelmsford and is easily accessible:

- By car – the college is less than 15 miles from both junction 28 of the M25 and junction 7 of the M11.
- By train – Chelmsford station has a regular direct service on the London Liverpool Street line. Free pick ups and travel between the station and college can be arranged with the organisers
- By plane – London Stansted airport is less than 30 minutes from the venue, and for those flying into Stansted, free pick ups and transportation can again be arranged with the organisers.

Participants intending to stay overnight should book their B&B accommodation directly with the college (£30.00 plus VAT per person per night). Contact the organisers for a booking form and T&Cs, or Jenny Phillips at the college (phone +44 (0) 1245 424200 ext 25645 or e-mail jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk).

The college has a licensed bar which will be open during the weekend. Sandwiches and snacks will also be available at certain times. Writtle village is a very short walk from the college, with a varied selection of pubs, restaurants and a mid-sized supermarket.

Attendance fees

The attendance fee for the weekend is £15.00 if paid before 30ᵗʰ April 2011, or £20.00 if booked after that date. Payment can be made by either Paypal or cheque.

For further details, please either visit the tournament's website at www.doubleone-online.net or contact the organisers as follows:
Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1 2RD. United Kingdom. derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com
Brendan Clark brendan.clark@virgin.net

We look forward to welcoming you to Double One in 2011!

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Steel Master is a series of model-based turret counters in supplementing ASL system counters. Its first module, Steel Master Module A, contains 3 double-side color counter sheets depicting the full set of 1/2" turret counters for official German & Russian AFV plus their variants, some previously omitted. It functions as an all-embracing marker for skilled players, reminding all once-forgotten or overlooked turret factors in your next fierce ASL battle. Victory is always on the side of forward-thinking commander.

DC0039 - Steel Master, Module A (German/Russian)
product info:
- 3 die cut double-side color turret counter sheets (780 turret counters)
- a turret counter feature menu
- individual plastic package

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DC0040 - SteelMaster, Module B (US/BR) - June
DC0041- SteelMaster, Module C (Italian/French/Axis minor) - September
DC0042- SteelMaster, Module D (Chinese/Japanese/Allied minor) - November
DC0043- SteelMaster, Module E (Finnish) - To be confirmed

Our Contact: countersmith@gmail.com
http://countersmith.blogspot.com/

SPECIFICATIONS OF TURRET COUNTER

6 reasons why you will put our new design turret counter on top of original AFV counters:
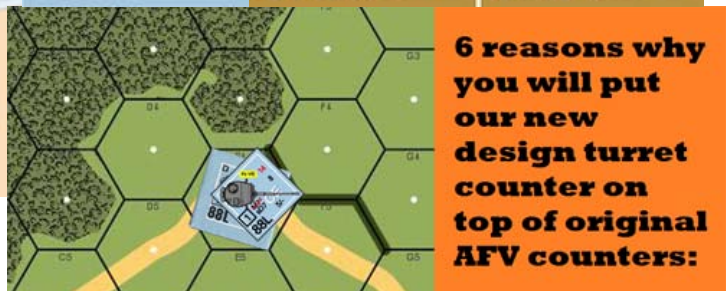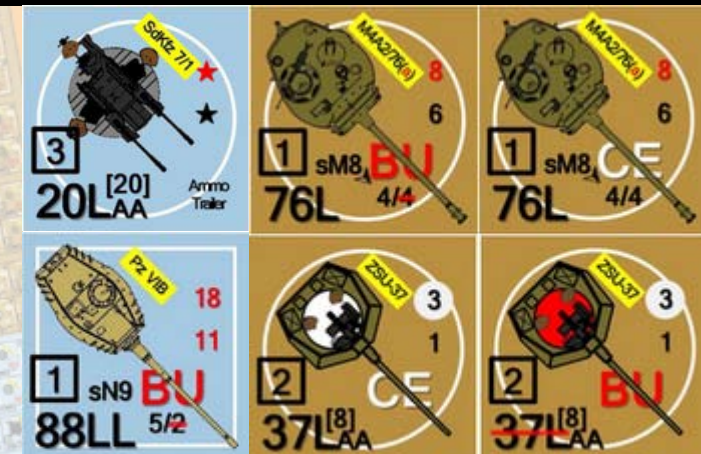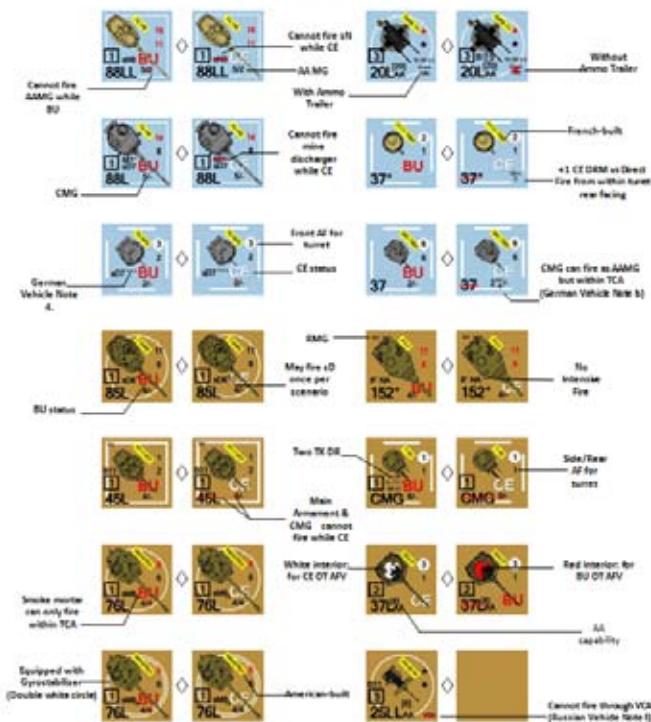
1. It tells the exact-calculated turret armor factor, both the front and the side/rear.
(For example, the turret of PzIIIF has an AF of 4 and 2 for its front and the side/rear respectively. The exact turret AF is now displayed on our new design to save us from the confusion on reading the square and circle symbol on the official vehicle counters.)

2. It tells whether each equipment could be operated or not under CE/BU status, i.e. the MA, CMG, AAMG, sP, SN etc. There is also an reminder for the firing of sM within TAC.

3. It tells all the complicated information on the official AFV counters in a simple way by our separate turret counter without the worries of studying the back of the official counters and the vehicle note in the rulebook before each act of tactical move.
(For example, a single glance at the M3 Lee turret counter will tell the distinguishing fact that it can fire its AAMG under both CE/BU status.)

4. It tells the allocation of the optional equipment among the same set of counters of a particular model of AFV without the trouble of writing down the identity letter of each counter manually. We provide two different sets of turret counters for the same AFV model displaying if there is an optional equipment or not.
(For example, there are two sets of turret counters for PzIVF2 with or without Sz. It makes you less worried about the pencil marking but more focusing on your next move to victory.)
In addition, turret counters with optional AAMG and/or RMG are provided to get rid of the limitation of the official countermix.
5. It tells if a particular model of the AFV is in the condition dug in and/or armored cupola in the strong point while there was only the universal turret counter to all the AFV models in the official counter set.
6. It adds a series of the long-omitted AFV variants for connoisseur AFV combat players and creates new legendry scenarios.
(For example,T-34/57 M1941, more than 100 produced in the early stage of the Russian Campaign, is now added to our new design to recover the lost history in ASL combat. A new turret counter for T-34/57 could be placed on top of the official T-34/76 AFV counter, which is identical to T-34/57 in all aspects expect the main gun, to defend the Holy Motherland of Russia during the high tide of Axis invasion in 1941.)
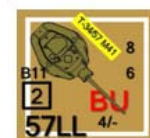
HAPPY (BELATED) BIRTHDAY!
ASL at 25
Chris Doary

Advanced Squad Leader turned 25 in 2010. In honour of this milestone, BattleSchool — a recent startup — sponsored a contest on the [GameSquad *ASL* Forums](). The aim of the contest was to indentify individuals who have helped further our hobby in the past 25 years. Based upon arguments presented by forum members, three individuals would receive a set of precision, *ASL* Anniversary BattleDice, compliments of BattleSchool.

Background

On 15 November 2010, I asked forum members to identify people whom they felt had done the most for the *ASL* hobby in the past 25 years and/or who were worthy of special recognition for their efforts in promoting The Game. Regrettably, the thread title emphasized the superlative, namely those who had made the most significant contributions. This led some posters to create a list of hallowed names suitable for induction into a notional *ASL* Hall of Fame. Creating a Hall of Fame short list was not the intent of the thread. (I take full responsibility for the poor wording of the thread title and the contest description.) In spite of these missteps, the thread produced some interesting responses and over 50 candidates for special recognition. The responses also produced a partial overview of where *ASL* has been, and perhaps, an indication of where the hobby may be headed. At the request of the editor, I have attempted to incorporate some of these responses into an imperfect narrative. The sum is neither a history of *ASL*, nor a biographical dictionary of its leading figures. It is merely a fragmented reminiscence of an *ASL* past, and my hopes for our hobby. I claim no special knowledge of *ASL* or its history. Pete nonetheless thought that his readers might find my ramblings of interest.

In the Beginning

The list of candidates included a veritable who's who of the *ASL* world. Included were designers, artists, tournament directors, third-party producers, rules gurus, and long-time *ASL* opponents. However, the names of those who fathered *ASL* figured prominently. Some posts were simple lists of names. Some were thought provoking. Others were witty. And still others were plain silly. The more interesting posts contained succinct supporting arguments for each name nominated. Among these posts, one — from a gent in the United Kingdom — caught my attention. Gavin claimed to be poorly qualified to judge, but he nevertheless produced a catchy and worthy list of candidates. Here is his list:

Don Greenwood for starting it.
Brian Youse for continuing it.
Perry Cocke for ruling it.
Curt Schilling for paying for it.
Chas Argent for restarting it.
Mark Pitcavage for his webpage.
Gary Fortenberry for his scenarios and passion.
Klas Malmström for his sensible answers to rules questions.
Charlie Kibler for his maps.

Ole Böe for the IIFT with CTC.

All of these names would appear in other posts. As Tony Newman of the UK asked, "How can you go past the designer?" In addition to Don Greenwood, Tony made a case for Bob McNamara, without whom, the *ASL* system may have lacked North African and Pacific Theatre expansions. In Tony's view, no one could come close to these foundation builders. His only concession was to Charlie Kibler for his groundbreaking design: *Red Barricades*. There is no question that this first *Historical ASL* (*HASL*) module elevated *ASL* to a new level of play. Mark Hatfield from Ohio had similar sentiments. He praised Greenwood's authorship of the original ASL Rule Book:

The rulebook is, quite simply, a wonder of rules-writing. It is a masterpiece [the] clarity, precision, and tremendous scope [of which] has yet to be equalled in wargaming, and may never be. Greenwood understood that rules-writing is technical writing. Although some find the language and density of the rules off-putting, those [who] stick with it for the long haul will inevitably come to appreciate Don's work. It set the tone for the many rules chapters that have followed. It is the best wargame rulebook every written.

Mark had similar praise for Charles Kibler, who worked in the Monarch/Avalon Hill art department from 1981 until 1995:

Avalon Hill's advert for the release of the ASL Rulebook, *and* Beyond Valor, *from* The General Vol 22 No 3 *(1985).*

Charlie Kibler defined the look of ASL. From the original counters, to the geoboards, to the Chapter B terrain drawings, to his revolutionary *Red Barricades* map, Charlie's art set the stage for all that followed. The realistic look of his mapboard paintings is still relevant today, and he understood that form and beauty should complement functionality, not replace it (a lesson that some current wargame artists seem to have forgotten). His art alone would qualify Charlie for an inaugural spot in [an ASL Hall of Fame], but he is also probably the game's greatest innovator. The concepts of historical modules, campaign games, and Solitaire ASL, which have become staples of the game, were all Charlies's brainchildren.

I cannot argue with these appraisals. Don and Charlie undoubtedly laid the foundations of *ASL*, and as Mark Hatfield underlined, they "did it competently and professionally." Like Tony, Mark also credited Bob McNamara, along with Rex Martin, with the creation of a dynamic game system. And Steve Pleva reminded us that we would not have *ASL* without John Hill's *Squad Leader*.

I have fond memories of *playing Squad Leader* during the late 70s and early 80s. However, I was immediately taken with the *ASL Rule Book* and the modular nature of the new system, and never looked back. I recall thinking how great it was to finally receive replacement pages for the *ASL Rule Book (1st edition)*, when my copy of the French *ASL* module *Croix de Guerre* arrived in the mail six years later. Regrettably, I never got a chance to play Le Herrison, or most of the other scenarios in this module before heading overseas to Somalia. When I returned to Canada in 1993, my life took a different path. I met my wife to be, and enrolled in university studies. My *ASL* play declined and virtually stopped. I lost touch with the wider hobby.

Multi-Man Publishing

Consequently, I was oblivious to the crisis that developed when Hasbro purchased Avalon Hill (AH) in 1998. (I had completed my undergraduate degree the year before and was neck-deep in graduate studies at the Royal Military College.) Fortunately Multi-Man Publishing (MMP), and Curt Schilling in particular, stepped up to the plate and gave *ASL* a future. Curt was an *ASL* fanatic. His enthusiasm for *ASL* — not just his monetary investment — rescued the game from the Dark Age of *ASL*. When not playing professional baseball, Curt was playing *ASL*, and researching, designing, and writing about it too. Some of his former business partners at MMP have since left.

However, two gentlemen have kept the home fires burning for almost 15 years. We all owe Brian Youse and Perry Cocke a huge debt of gratitude. They have taken a lot of grief for their efforts. But in spite of all the flak that has been thrown their way, they have stuck with us. Nay, they have done more than that. The creation of an *ASL Starter Kit* and the hiring of a full-time *ASL* developer (Chas Argent) are but two tangible signs that Brian and Perry are committed to the future of *ASL*. As Roger Whelan of Erie, Pennsylvania noted, "without [Brian and Perry] there would be no *ASL*."

Volunteers

Now while the principals at MMP have done much good for our hobby, they have not done it alone. Well before *ASL* was released in 1985 squads of enthusiasts were busy behind the scenes play testing, proof reading and putting together the most impressive game system in the history of board gaming. Some were paid employees; most were not. The truly remarkable thing is that many of those *ASL* pioneers are still with us today. Some, such as Jim Stahler, continue to contribute to MMP. Take, for example, Jim's recent conversion of *Squad Leader* scenarios and the release of the *Turning the Tide* scenario pack. Others such as Steve Swann have lent their expertise to third-party publishers (TPP). Moreover, virtually all of these people continue to support MMP, and thus our hobby, by their voluntary contributions. As Swedish *ASL* player Ola Nygårds pointed out, the rule book would not be what it is today without the contributions of people like Norwegian Ole Bøe. In fact, the core and historical modules, the *ASL Journal*, the Action Packs and so forth, would never have seen the light of day were it not for the commitment of these unsung *ASL* heroes [A15.25]. Their work continues.[1]

Clubs, Fanzines and Toureys

The popularity of *ASL* saw the emergence of specialized *ASL* clubs, amateur fanzines, and tournaments devoted to the game system. The people who organized these clubs, published the fanzines, and ran the tournaments, supported the hobby in a number of important ways. Clubs provided a rally point where players could get together and play *ASL*. Players could discuss and debate their interpretations of the rules, experiment with different tactics, and teach new players how to play. Occasionally, some clubs — the Southern California *ASL* Club is a prime example — morphed into something beyond the traditional notion of a club. The SoCal club not only has its own website, but it also

runs an annual tournament and publishes it own scenarios. But I am getting ahead of myself. Suffice it to say that *ASL* clubs have sometimes been the genesis of other *ASL* endeavours, but for the most part remain local entities with primarily local influence.

Fanzines, such as *At the Point*, published by North Carolinian Marc Hanna[2] took the process a step further by sharing local knowledge with a wider audience. These amateur magazines also provided a medium for budding designers to introduce new *ASL* scenarios to the gaming public. *Tactiques*, an ambitious French enterprise begun in 1991 by Parisian duo Théophile Monnier and Jean-Luc Bechennec, was a trailblazer in this regard. By the time it had ceased publication in 1995, it had bequeathed 75 *ASL* scenarios to the hobby. Some of these scenarios were subsequently republished in the *ASL Annual*.

Tournaments were the natural place to put your *ASL* knowledge, skills, and possibly scenario designs to the test. It was one thing to be top pooch of your local *ASL* club, quite another to be a tournament champion, and quite another again to match wits with *über* players the likes of Mike McGrath, Steve Pleva and Gary Fortenberry. Only a dozen players have been crowned Gröfaz in the 24-year history of the annual *ASL* Oktoberfest (ASLOK) tournament in Ohio. Together, Mike, Steve, Gary, and Bob Bendis have won top honours an astounding 18 times, leading Mark Hatfield to contend that "despite the massive amount of die-rolling and incredible swings of fortune, [*ASL*] really *is* a game of skill — not luck."

ASLOK began life as a modest event only a year after the release of the first *ASL* module *Beyond Valor*. The organizers of ASLOK were the legendary Bill "Fish" Connor — a top player in his day — and Daryl "Action Burke" Burke. These gentlemen were heavily involved with play testing for Avalon Hill during the late 1980s, and their Series Replay articles — essentially scenario play-by-play narratives — became a staple of Avalon Hill's *The General* magazine. Bill and Daryl are also credited with the creation of *In Contact*. Although this fanzine later grew to encompass articles and scenarios, its original intent was simply to put ASL players in contact with each other. It is difficult to assess how well their magazine accomplished this goal. However, there is no question that by kick-starting ASLOK, Bill and Daryl have helped thousands of *ASL* players make contacts that have flourished in the decades since ASLOK began.

The pair ran their tournament in Youngstown, Ohio for 10 years. Mark Nixon — an early Gröfaz and author of numerous *ASL* articles in *The General* magazine

— later took up the torch, moving the tournament to its present home in Cleveland. Mark held the reigns for the better part of a decade before handing the event over to its current custodian Bret Hildebran, yet another top player and *ASL* commentator. Today, *ASL* Oktoberfest is the most prestigious, largest and longest running *ASL* gaming *event*. (As anyone who has attended ASLOK will tell you, much of this ten-day festival consists of open gaming and socializing.) With all this talk of ASLOK and *über* players, we should not overlook the fact that, for the most part, tournaments provide a venue where ordinary players can meet, play, exchange information, collaborate on future *ASL* projects, and most importantly, have fun.

A Canadian Case Study

The historical sketch that follows charts the evolution of a small but ultimately influential *ASL* club. The sketch illustrates how a local interest in *ASL* can frequently give rise to a club, a fanzine, a tournament, new *ASL* products, or some combination of these. The Winnipeg *ASL* Club is an interesting case study. Although a relative late comer to the *ASL* scene and modest in size — with perhaps a baker's dozen of players at its peak — this club has nonetheless had a significant impact on the development and spread of *ASL* in Canada. The late Jim McLeod (designer of the forthcoming *Ortona HASL*) is likely the best-known member of this cabal. However, a number of other former club members have been prominent in the *ASL* scene (EX: George Kelln of Lone Canuck Publishing, and scenario designer Ray Kruger). Granted individual members of this club have accomplished much, but the impact that this group has had on *ASL* in Canada is arguably greater.

The Winnipeg group was especially active in the 1990s, so much so that it began running a local *ASL* tournament. However, the club, and its passionate President Jim McLeod, had grander ideas. In the latter half of the 90s, they founded the Canadian *ASL* Association (CASLA). (Dave Olie, author of "A Place for Your Stuff" in *ASL Journal 8*, is a long time member of CASLA.) The CASLA published a newsletter, *The Maple Leaf Route*[3] which initially contained only articles and information on upcoming *ASL* events. The Association — in reality, the Winnipeg *ASL* Club — later published its own scenarios in *The Maple Leaf Route*.[4] Drawing upon their tournament experience, these Winnipeggers established the annual Canadian *ASL* Open (CASLO) in 2003, as the premier *ASL* tournament in Canada. The tournament drew 29 players in 2004, four from the USA.

The Charter of the CASLA is a noteworthy document, and its tournament format has withstood the test of time. Alas the CASLA, like the Winnipeg *ASL* Club, has seen brighter days. A review of the player directory on the CASLA website is nevertheless instructive. There are over 200 names in the directory.[5] Having played *ASL* since 1986 (and *Squad Leader* before that), I was surprised to learn in 2006 that so many Canadians still played The Game. Today, the Canadian *ASL* scene is showing signs of a revival. CASLO 2010, held in Ottawa, was probably the best-attended Canadian *ASL* event in the past five years.[6] Despite having a population less than a third of Canada's, a similar process is underway in Sweden. This process is greatly aided by advances in technology, especially the Internet and desktop publishing software.

The Rise of *ASL* Websites, Third-Party Publishers, and Virtual *ASL*

There was a time when placing an advert in *The General* was one of the better ways to find an *ASL* opponent. The advent of the Internet not only made it easier to lasso an unsuspecting player, but it also (eventually) made it easier to play this newfound opponent — but I am getting ahead of myself again.

The Internet has arguably done more to put *ASL* on the world map than anything else. Websites created by *ASL* enthusiasts deserve much of the credit for the recent rise in the popularity of *ASL*, especially outside of North America and the United Kingdom. A single industrious *ASL* player can create an impressive website dedicated to the hobby, as Mark Pitcavage of Columbus, Ohio has done. His Desperation Morale site truly is a "compendium" of things *ASL*. Some *ASL* websites are geared toward new players. Some target a specific aspect of *ASL* — witness the oxymoronic Group Solitaire *ASL* website. And still others offer a specialized service, such as Dave Ramsay's searchable *ASL* Scenario Archive. Online *ASL* forums such as those found on GameSquad, BoardGameGeek, and Consimworld have allowed players around the world to "meet" and interact. *ASL* clubs have also capitalized on this medium. The Texas *ASL* Club website is a prime example. The Texan site not only connects plays across the Lone Star state, but also crosses state lines into Oklahoma and New Mexico. The site is home to the well-received fanzine *Banzai!!* and a host of other useful information. In addition to linking players to each other, Texas *ASL* links visitors to other *ASL* sites. One of these links leads to Bounding Fire Productions (BFP), a prominent third-party producer (TPP) of material designed for the *ASL* system.

Like many aftermarket producers,

BFP owes part of its success to the development of desktop-publishing software.[7] This software has allowed "amateurs" to produce material that, in some cases, rivals the quality of Avalon Hill and MMP products. In terms of material quality, the French magazine *Le Franc Tireur* (LFT) has set a high standard with 80 full-colour pages, striking original cover art, entertaining cartoons, and smart layout.[8]

Granted abundant enthusiasm can go a long way to creating a vibrant homegrown *ASL* community. However, technological advances deserve some credit too. How else could a small country like Sweden hold two major *ASL* tournaments each year, support a domestic TPP — Friendly Fire, and publish an *ASL* magazine in Swedish? Okay, I will admit that there has only ever been one issue to date, but this in no way diminishes the accomplishment. Friendly Fire, in contrast, has been producing scenario packs for its annual tournament in Linkoping six years running. Affordable desktop publishing software, domestic online forums, and email are just a few of the technological advances that have allowed Swedish fans of *ASL* to collaborate with each other and the wider *ASL* community. And while the Internet has helped bring Swedish players together, it has also helped the Linkoping and Stockholm tournaments attract players from across Europe and beyond. But to be fair, there is another catalyst that has done a great deal to make *ASL* accessible to more and more people. No, as entertaining and congenial as Jeff and Dave are, I am not hinting at The 2 Half-Squads *ASL* podcast — yet another example of technology helping to spread the good word.

The *ASL Starter Kit* line notwithstanding, the birth and growth of *Virtual ASL* (*VASL*) has probably done more for the hobby than anything else in the past decade. Rodney Kinney is a physicist turned software engineer. Rodney was inspired by the Internet Go Server (for the ancient board game *Go*), which allowed *Go* players to play each other remotely. Rodney desired a similar open-source interface for *ASL*. He got his wish in 1995 with the debut of Java. As Rodney noted in a 1999 interview, this "write-once-run-anywhere" software lived up to its promise. Java allowed him to develop a game platform that would run on Unix, Mac and Windows. (Being a born-again Mac user, I certainly appreciate that *VASL* is not a Windows-only program.) Rodney did the initial programming and continues to refine his prodigy. However, as with most open-source projects, a host of developers, tinkerers, and "map elves" share the credit for making *VASL* (and *VASSAL* — the underlying board-game engine) what it is today.[9]

The original intent of *VASL* was

to bring players together by allowing them to play *ASL* by email (PBEM), or in real time, regardless of their real-world locations. While this continues to be the primary attraction of *VASL*, the interface has proven to be a valuable tool for teaching *ASL*, as well as testing new *ASL* material. In this latter regard, *VASL* has facilitated the development of new *ASL* products by allowing MMP and TPPs to coordinate play testing and development like never before. *VASL* has also proven to be a cost-effective and eminently accessible tournament "venue." Alan of sunny Seattle had this to say on the matter:

> **I must whole-heartedly nominate Rodney Kinney as the most important person in the *ASL* world of the past 10 years. Publishers come and go and hit stumbling blocks which delay their products but Rodney (and his many helpers!) have a record of non-stop improvement for the worldwide phenomenon that is *ASL*. …without *VASL* many people would either be stuck playing solo or with the same 2-3 guys for decades. It's a lot easier to keep up interest with new opponents, watch games and learn and 'meet' people with *VASL*. The *VASSAL* platform supports 100s of games but *ASL* was the seed that started it all.**

In my view, there is no question that *VASL* has helped fuel a resurgence of interest in our hobby. I have great hopes that the continued evolution of *VASL* (and *VASSAL*) will do even more for *ASL* in the years to come.

Air-miles and the *ASL* Renaissance

Gone are the days when an *ASL Annual* or a subscription to *The General* was the average player's only contact with the wider *ASL* community. Technological advances have done much to make *ASL* more accessible to newcomers, as well as crusty *Grognards*. Kenn Dunn and Brian Youse undoubtedly rekindled interest in *ASL* with the development of the ASL Starter Kit line. A maturing demographic has helped too. With careers stabilized and children grown, some older players are returning to the hobby. This cohort appears to have more free time and more money to devote to *ASL*. Having accrued air miles over the years, a few lucky souls are tempted to attend tournaments in distant and exotic cities like Melbourne, Verona (see photo), or Albany, NY — all right, maybe not Albany.[10]

The resurgence of interest in our hobby may also be due to a more generalized return to board gaming and face-to-face social interaction — a growing disenchantment with video games, perhaps.

"National" websites, such as the Finnish Self-Rally site, also suggest that *ASL* is rapidly expanding beyond its traditional, primarily English-speaking, base. [Self-Rally](#) lists some 80 players on its site. If all are active players, then *ASL* has surely arrived in Soumi.

Admittedly some of the enthusiasm for *ASL* in Finland is attributable to the development of the forthcoming Finnish core module *Hakka Palle* (*HP*). Nevertheless, the spread of *ASL* across Finland is a remarkable development that Tuomo Lukkari and Lars Thuring (the developers of *HP*) can take some credit for facilitating. To put the Finnish numbers in perspective, let's assume that all of the players on the Self-Rally site are active. Based on a per capita ratio, this would translate into roughly 300 Australians, about 500 Canadians, around 1200 in the UK, and almost 5000 in the United States, all of who would be active in the hobby! Now I am almost certain that these numbers are an exaggeration, but they do highlight what can be accomplished when a gaming community is as highly motivated as the Finnish one appears to be. Regardless of the actual numbers involved, I still believe that we are witnessing something of an *ASL* renaissance. This rebirth is a direct consequence of the legions of *ASL* players worldwide who have contributed, and who continue to contribute, so much to our hobby in the past decade. Let's take a look at some of the people who were nominated on the basis of these contributions.

The Nominations

The GameSquad thread produced over 50 nominations. The list included a host of *ASL* luminaries dating back to the time when *ASL* was still under development in the mid 1980s. More players nominated

designer Don Greenwood than anyone else. Regrettably he is no longer active in the *ASL* community, although he remains a force in the wider gaming world.[11] There are nevertheless many names that never made the list. Where, for instance, are the keepers of the *ASL* Scenario Archive and the Remote On-line Automated Record ([ROAR](#))?[12] Where is the intrepid man behind the Australian Balance System (ABS)?[13] How about the fellow who gave us the only two-part historical module *Kampfgruppe Peiper* (*KGP*), barbed wire fences and slopes?[14] Or how about that English man of letters and scenario designs, the chap behind *Action Pack 4*.[15] And what of the man who has kept the *ASL* Mailing List (ASLML) running for all these years?[16] Surely the folks behind the ASL Starter Kits deserve a nod too.[17] The truth is that we have all helped to foster a vibrant *ASL* community. Even those of us who have done nothing more than continue to play *ASL* have helped keep *ASL* alive — apparently no one more so than Brian Lazewski of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who nominated himself:

> **After all, I'm the one that has to punch a gazillion counter chits, store in specific Planos, search for specific cardboard chits, search for specific maps, setup those specific chits and maps in a specific order, read a rulebook that earns a PhD, look for a specific rule in a specific chapter for the specific scenario that I and my opponent specified to play, play the thing, roll lots of dice, moan about outcomes of said dice, conclude the specific scenario, search for all the right places to put away all those specific chits, maps, charts and finally fight off my annoyed wife, complaining children and screaming granddaughter… That's a typical Saturday and I think I've contributed**

ITASLIA 2009: Standing L-R, Federico Corso, Andrea Pagni (winner VASLeague 2007), Mario Nadalini, Fabrizio Da Pra (winner ITASLIA 2008), Nicola Marangon, Leonardo Conforti, Paolo Mengoli, Rich Domovic (Majordomo), Marco Merli, Massimiliano Tuzzi, Daniel Kalman, Arnaud Sanchis, Miguel Guerrero (winner ITASLIA 2010). Seated L-R Andrea Olivieri, Paolo Cariolato, Manlio Mussini, Alessandro Canevese..

more than anyone!

Brian's tongue-in-cheek tirade underlines the effort and dedication required of *ASL* players. What is surprising is not that so many people have taken the time to learn *ASL*, but rather that they have managed to stick with the hobby in spite of what life has thrown in the way.

Before I announce the finalists, it is worth mentioning a few of the other names that made the list of nominees. Far and away the largest proportion of nominees may be characterized as innovators and producers. I have mentioned a few of these movers and shakers already. But as Roger Whelan and Scott Holst reminded us, there are plenty of others who have left their mark on our hobby. Take for instance Mark Neukom, founder, along with co-founder John Knowles (and later Mike Reed), of Kinetic Energy Productions (1994-1999). In less than three years, Kinetic Energy earned a place in *ASL* history with its landmark newsletter (later magazine) *Time on Target* (*TOT*). The publication was memorable not so much for its articles or even the scenario inserts. Rather *TOT* rose to fame by virtue of its impressive physical quality, not least the components that came with later issues.[18]

Another pair of SoCal *ASL* players were responsible for founding what to date is the longest, continuously running TPP: Heat of Battle (HOB). Front men Eddie Zeman and Steve Dethlefsen wanted to do something unique, at least for a TPP. Their debut publication was *God Save the King* (1994), a full-blown historical module. It was the first of its kind to be published outside the hallowed halls of AH. The pair would publish additional historical modules, and eventually their own magazine: *Recon by Fire*. Eddie's departure from HOB in 1997 may have spelt doom for the company, but an injection of new blood — in the form of veteran designers, developers and artists (e.g. Andy Hershey, Bruce Rinehart, Burnie Hegdahl, Derek Spurlock, Eric Morton, Jeff Newell, Klaus Fischer, Sam Tyson, and Steve Swann) — reenergized the company.[19] But it was perhaps the addition of Chas Smith, a serving US Army artillery officer, that pushed HOB to the fore. Chas had run a small company briefly in 1999, but opted to "mothball" Bounding Fire Productions after producing a well-received scenario pack (*Hell on Wheels*) the same year.[20] The influence of Chas (and noted game artist Klaus Fischer) was readily apparent with the publication of *Onslaught to Orsha* in 2002. According to Roger Whelan and others on GameSquad, this historical module — depicting part of Operation Bagration in June 1944 — is "one of the best *HASL*s out there, official or not."

Not surprisingly, Chas Smith received

a good number of nominations. However, I suspect that these nominations were not based solely on a single publication. Indeed, after leaving HOB and reviving Bounding Fire Productions (BFP) in 2007, he gained additional kudos for his work on BFP publications, especially the massive *Blood and Jungle* scenario pack released in 2010. I suspect that it was consistency of effort that led many people to nominate other designers such as Evan Sherry of Tampa, Florida.

Evan is the owner of Schwerpunkt, a small TPP that has published scenario packs exclusively for more than 15 years. To paraphrase Roger Whelan, Schwerpunkt deserves mention due to its impressive body of work, and Evan in particular for revolutionizing scenario design. As anyone who has played Schwerpunkt scenarios can attest, they are often tense tactical situations with little room for error. Dull they are not; popular with tournament directors they are.

Pete Shelling's designs tend to be more substantial affairs. Pete is based in Willoughby, an eastern suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. His designs have been featured in MMP and TPP publications, including Schwerpunkt. Pete's work includes some novel linked scenarios — such as the Nuremburg trio featured in ASL Journal 9 — that offers a mini "campaign game" experience.

Another pair of designers who received special mention was Vic Provost and Tom Morin. These New Englanders are two of the better-known members of the "Bunker Crew," after the newsletter *Dispatches from the Bunker*. Vic has edited *Dispatches* since its inception in 1997. Tom came to prominence with his much anticipated HASL design: *Valor of the Guards*.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the important contributions of Ray Tapio and his upstart, but invariably creative publishing company Critical Hit. Scott Holst (a prolific Chicago-based scenario designer) was correct in noting Ray's penchant for esoteric subject matter, something that defunct *Time on Target* hoped to specialize in. Be that as it may, Critical Hit has continued to expand our *ASL* horizons and imaginations.[21]

Finally, there are what may be referred to as the facilitators, those individuals who have promoted the hobby at a more personal level. Alan Bills nominated Glenn Housemann because of the wit he brings to the *ASL* Forum on GameSquad, and because, as he put it, Glenn is "trying to survive in Detroit so I figure he could use some BattleDice." Truth be told, Glenn is not your average *ASL* player, and by all accounts is thriving in Royal Oak, a suburb

of Detroit. Along with his brother Scott, and fellow Detroit denizen Eric Safran, Glenn is the centrepiece of the jocular trio that runs East Side Gamers (ESG). Although ESG has published six *ASL* scenario packs since 2005 — including tournament favourite ESG12 Road Kill — ESG, and Glenn in particular, has become known for its eccentric brand of *ASL* humour. Suffice it to say that ESG's zombie rules for *ASL* have added a novel and entertaining dimension to our hobby. In doing so, Glenn and his undead partners have reminded us that *ASL* is really about socializing and having fun.

I imagine that Doug Bleyaert of Monroe Michigan would agree with this assessment. Doug credited three gentlemen with doing the most to keep him in the hobby. For years, Patrick J Norton has been running Office Fest, so called, because it takes place in his back office in Wayne, Michigan every three or four months. To date, there have been more than 25 of these gatherings. "Without Office Fest (and all the guys there) I would have never had the joy of face-to-face *ASL*," Doug confessed. Doug praised another Michigan player, Chris Garrett, for having the patience over a three- or four-year period to teach him the finer points of *ASL* via *VASL*. One of Doug's goals in life is to eventually win a game against Chris. It is good to have goals. But perhaps the best *ASL* pal to have is one who shares your level of ability. I have a friend like that; and we have been playing on and off since the early 80s. In Doug's case, it is Toby Fall of Toledo, Ohio. "Having an equal player to learn with is a blast," Doug said, "we have messed up more rules and had more fun doing it." And that is a sentiment that I wholeheartedly share, having played *ASL* for years oblivious to the finer points of target selection limits and skulking! Without these three gents, Doug reflected, "I would probably not be playing." I think we can all name a few people who have done the same for us. Now, perhaps, is the time for us to do the same for others, as Don Lazov of Chicago is doing. For him, the greatest satisfaction comes from seeing his 14 year-old son learn the old man's favourite game. It does not get much better than that — although watching my wife chalk up a win while "teaching" a newbie to play is always a treat.

The Tough Part

In the course of narrowing down the list of nominees, I made several arbitrary decisions. First, I discounted those who were no longer active *ASL* players. This should not be taken as a slight toward the significant contributions of these individuals. Don Greenwood is a case in point. Rather I thought that an active player might find more use for a set of *ASL* Anniversary BattleDice than an inactive

player. Second, I decided to exclude anyone who was a paid employee of AH/MMP, or a TPP. I then immediately made an exception to this criterion, but I believe a justifiable one. Third, I excluded anyone who already owned some of these BattleDice. I did this, not because they did not deserve more dice, but simply because it made the list of nominees shorter. Therefore one should not think that Bill Connor, Bret Hildebran, Daryl Burke, or Mark Nixon — to name a few — were not worthy of consideration, far from it. Fourth, I decided not to adhere to specific categories, as most nominees have contributed to the longevity of *ASL* on several fronts. And fifth, I included four people who never made the list of nominees. So in the end, instead of three finalists, we had seven, all of who received a complimentary set of Anniversary BattleDice as a token of our appreciation.

The People's Picks

1. Apart from Don Greenwood, one of the names that appeared more frequently in the Game Squad thread was Charlie Kibler. Charlie is a special case. Although he has long been a hired gun — first as an employee of AH, and later as a contractor for MMP — he is the only remaining member of the AH faction that gave us *ASL*. He worked alongside the likes of Don Greenwood, Rex Martin, and Bob McNamara. Many are familiar with his artistic talents, but fewer realize that he was the lead developer of the first (and the most popular) *HASL* module: *Red Barricades*. I am indebted to Mark Hatfield for the succinct case he made for Charlie's nomination. His arguments in favour of Charlie made ignoring my criteria easier. Charlie, from everyone who has ever played *ASL*, a heartfelt thanks.

2. Rodney Kinney was a no-brainer; a hands-down winner due to the impact of his *VASL* program that has done so much to reinvigorate the hobby. Keep on programming Rodney!

3. Klas Malmström made the short list for several reasons. Many on the GameSquad *ASL* forum know him for his measured and invariably correct responses to their rule conundrums. But Klas is also a long-time proofreader for MMP and TPP. He is a prominent member of the Swedish *ASL* community, and active in the international tournament scene. He is also a gentleman to play. Tack Klas!

Personal Picks

There were many worthy people whose names did not appear in the thread. Sadly some are no longer with us. It is my hope that drawing attention to four dedicated souls will encourage readers to enlighten us with the selfless deeds of a great many other *ASL* players.

4. Tom Repetti, the Grand Spudster, tireless map elf, and *ASL* humourist was a shoe-in for my short list. Tom's website is chock-a-block with useful — and delightfully frivolous — *ASL* stuff. Tom has supported our hobby in many ways, not least by his sportsmanship and good nature. (Losing to Tom is painless, his humour a superb analgesic.) He has written numerous *ASL* articles, assisted MMP behind the scenes, and supplied us with an *ASL* website that takes neither itself nor us too seriously. Tuomoland is seriously good fun. But lately what probably warms the hearts of most *ASL* players is Tom's devotion to *VASL*, and more specifically, his talent in converting game maps into their *VASL* format. (Apparently there is not much to do in Colorado after the sun sets.) Thanks to Tom, I was able to play a new scenario with a European player over Christmas. Kiitos Tuomo ;)

5. To those not in the know, Jay Richardson has become something of a patron saint to ASL Starter Kit (*ASLSK*) players. Adrift in Lindsborg, Kansas — his nearest face-to-face opponent some 500 miles away — Jay has devoted a great deal of his spare time to creating tutorials that are immensely popular with new players. His tutorials include step-by-step explanations, coupled with *VASL* screen shots, which allow beginners to grasp the mechanics of *ASL* more readily. One of these tutorials — on Defensive Fire mechanics — was published in MMP's *Operations* magazine (Issue 49, Spring 2006). Jay regularly answers questions posed by newbies on BoardGameGeek and in the Starter Kit sub-forum on GameSquad. He also proofread the updated rule booklet that came with the *ASLSK Expansion Pack* (2011). Like Texan Patrick Ireland, who has schooled many new players using *VASL*, Jay is to be commended for his commitment to the future of *ASL*.

6. Pete Phillipps, full-time Manchester United fan, Newcastle Brown Ale poster boy, and *ASL* devotee has been publishing an *ASL* 'zine since 1995. This is a huge accomplishment. Many amateur publications never see their second anniversary. The fact that Pete has kept *View From The Trenches* going after all these years surely is a testament to his dedication and love of our hobby *(and desire to get a free beer at tournaments :-) - Pete)*. On top of this, Pete remains a driving force in the UK tournament scene, especially Intensive Fire and Heroes. Like his signature brew, which incidentally survived the closing of its Tyneside brewery, Pete keeps chugging along. Here is to another 15 years of *View From The Trenches…* bottoms up!

7. Bruce Probst was a latecomer to my short list, not because he has been inactive, on the contrary. Despite living in the 'burbs of Melbourne, Australia, Bruce has long been at the centre of the Australian *ASL* scene, and the Army Group South *ASL* club in particular. He is also the *ASL* FAQ guy. But what I did not know was how important his contributions as a proofreader have been to the publication of "official" *ASL* product, I only learned of this when listening to an interview with Perry Cocke on a recent podcast "aired" on The 2 Half-Squads. Normally, Bruce does not stray far from his home for tournaments — Sydney is a 900 kilometre drive one way — but in 2009 he made his first trip to Cleveland for Oktoberfest. His registration is already paid for the 25th anniversary of ASLOK later this year. Bruce will have some shiny new dice to try out. And I will shamelessly try to get in a game with him.

Congratulations to the finalists. A big thanks to all who shared their thoughts in the thread. And to you, the reader, remember that we are all responsible in some way for the current state of our hobby. Our enthusiasm and support for *ASL* is ultimately why the hobby continues to thrive. Play fast, play often, and play for the fun of it!

Acknowledgements

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Footnotes

1. Chas Argent, a former volunteer by the way, is always looking for play testers and proofreaders. If you are not already involved somehow, then why not lend a hand. You will help the hobby, meet some new people and invariably improve your game. You can contact MMP directly through their website, or check the MMP sub-forum on the GameSquad *ASL* forums.

2. After a five-year hiatus from *ASL*, Marc Hanna was in Blackpool for the annual Heroes tournament in 2009. Marc wrote about

his experience in Issue 76 of *View From The Trenches*.

3. It is perhaps no coincidence that *Maple Leaf Route* is the title of a series of well-illustrated historical "guide-books" penned by Canadian historians Terry Copp and the late Robert Vogel. I toured the battlefields of Normandy with Professor Copp in 1996. He is extremely familiar with the terrain over which Canadian and Allied forces fought in 1944-45, both in Normandy, and Northwest Europe where we also toured. Published in the 1980s, this series would likely provide some interesting detail for scenario designers. If my copy of *Maple Leaf Route: Caen* is any indication, the series provides maps, excerpts from unit war diaries, and plenty of photographs to supplement the strategic, operational and tactical narratives.

4. You can download these *MLR* (*Maple Leaf Route*) scenarios from Issues 32, 33, and 34/35 of *View From The Trenches*.

5. The list includes the usual suspects. There is George Kelln of Lone Canuck Publishing, reputed to be hiding out in a hippy commune on Vancouver Island. Dave Olie, the clever fellow who penned "A Place for Your Stuff" in *ASL Journal 8*, can be found in the Nova Scotia list. There are some top Canadian players such as Adrian Earle, Darren Kovacs, Gerry Proudfoot, John McDiarmid, and Wai-Kwong Wong. Then there is Montreal resident Michael Rodgers. Michael created the Montreal *ASL* Festival, which ran from 1993 until 2004. Michael is also a staunch supporter of the CASLA, having served as tournament director on several occasions. Moreover, Michael is arguably the most traveled of Canadian *ASL* players. He is certainly a regular fixture at the Nor 'Easter (near Boston, MA) and NYASL (Albany, NY) tournaments.

6. As the Tournament Director of CASLO 2011, I aim to build on this success. The CASLO will be held in the nation's capital (Ottawa) for the second year running. The dates are 16-18 September 2011. The CASLA Charter stipulates that we obtain a single-malt whisky for the opening ceremonies. Should you be in Ottawa on the 16th of September, we encourage you to join us for our annual toast to *ASL* comrades, past and present, and our Game.

7. BFP also owes much of its success to the strength of its production staff and scenario designers, especially Chas Smith.

8. It should be noted that although *LFT* was initially published in French, this is no longer the case. Beginning with the tenth issue, editor Xavier Vitry has gone with a virtually exclusive English format. Under Xavier's stewardship, *LFT* has become a leading TPP and raised the bar for the hobby as a whole.

9. I am afraid that I cannot provide even a partial list of those who helped get *VASL* off the ground. Alan Bills was able to recall a few names, but even then I was only able to decipher the following: Zoltan Grose, Mr. Neuralman, and someone with the initials G(ary)JK. If you have not tried *VASL* yet, I recommend that at the very least you have a look at this handy, if somewhat dated, explanation of its features and the accompanying tutorial.

10. Albany may not be an exotic locale, but the NYASL Championship held there each December is well worth attending. The field usually contains some of top *ASL* players in the world, including one or more Gröfaz title holders. The event organizers also raffle off an impressive amount of *ASL*-related swag.

11. Don Greenwood founded the Origins,

Avaloncon, and the annual World Boardgaming Championships (WBC). WBC is held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The weeklong event routinely draws 1500 enthusiasts. Sadly, WBC no longer includes an *ASL* component.

12. I find the advanced search feature in Dave Ramsay's scenario archive particularly handy. J.R. van Mechlen's record of scenario win-losses is an indispensable tool for players and tournament staff alike. Canadian Rob MacDonald reminded me that the predecessor of ROAR was the Avalon Hill International Kriegspiel Society (AHIKS), founded in 1965. AHIKS is alive and kicking on the web, but no longer appears to have an *ASL* presence. Coincidentally, the new AHIKS Ratings Officer — the fellow who manages the match results — is Texan Kenneth Oates. Kenneth and I were matched for a GMT game (The Rock of Marne) in the second round of MMP's Iron Man Tournament in 2011. When pressed, Kenneth admitted to owning all of the *ASL Starter Kit* line and occasionally playing a scenario. T'is a small world after all.

13. The ABS is a variant of the standard balance provision found on *ASL* scenario cards. But rather than the customary provision, the ABS employs a tiered system that provides three grades of balance per side. The system is ideal for tournaments because it allows players greater latitude when bidding for sides. Australian David Longworth is credited with developing ABS for use in Australian tournaments. The first official *ASL* publication to use this system was Gary Fortenberry's *Action Pack 6*, released in 2009. I had the pleasure of playing David in Cleveland in 2010. If I recall correctly, David went 11-0 in the World Cup. Happily for me the scenario that we played did not have an ABS provision.

14. The designer of the *KGP* historical modules is Belgian Phillipe Léonard. The rest of the credits for these modules reads like a veritable who's who of *ASL*: Bob McNamara, Charles Kibler, Brian Youse, Chuck Goetz, Perry Cocke, and Steve Peterson. The latter four were founding members of MMP.

15. Ian Daglish is a prolific author of *ASL* articles, a noted scenario designer, and a published historian.

16. That would be Paul Ferraro of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

17. In my view, Ken Dunn remains the driving force behind the Starter Kit line. However, as Ken commented to me during a recent *ASL* game, the project would never have gotten off the ground were it not for the foresight and support of MMP. As he reiterated in a later email, "Both Perry Cocke and Brian Youse provide invaluable support for the series. While they provide guidance on different aspects of the series, without them the series would not exist today and I can't thank them enough for their generosity. I'm sure that there are also about a hundred others who need to be thanked as well from proofers to play testers, and I'm sorry that I can't name them all. However, it is really the market that is the driving force. I just try to help to satisfy demand." Perhaps, but if Ken did not develop the Starter Kit line, I doubt very much that we would have seen so many new and former players enter the hobby in the past decade.

18. The quality of the counter sheets equaled that of AH and surpassed that of any other TPP at the time. *TOT* is also credited with publishing the first three-player scenario TOT45 Dogs of War (1996), wherein each side is competing with the others for victory. It would be more than two decades before we would see a similar three-player scenario published (Robert

Hammond's Russian Civil War mash-up FT127 In the Mouth of Madness, published in Le Franc Tireur's *From the Cellar 4*). Kinetic Energy officially dissolved on 1 June 1999. See *View From The Trenches* Issue 25, page 3 for more details. On the bright side, the *ASL*-compatible Korean War module, first announced by Kinetic Energy in 1998, was picked up by MMP and is in the final development stages.

19. *God Save the King* (*GSTK*) focuses on the battle for the Arnhem Bridge in September 1944. The module was released on the 50th anniversary of Operation Market-Garden. HOB was at the forefront of HASL design at time when the release of *ASL* material from AH had slowed to a trickle. HOB would go on to produce more historical modules: *King of the Hill*, *Fortress Cassino*, and *Blood Reef Tarawa* (*BRT*). *BRT* was eventually sold, along with the rights to *GSTK*, to MMP. MMP revamped, expanded and subsequently republished *BRT*, and a renamed and expanded *GSTK* (*A Bridge Too Far*), as "official" HASL modules. According to Steve Dethlefsen, the sale of these modules to MMP may have had a significant bearing on the ability of MMP to obtain a license from Hasbro. Before Ed Zeman left, HOB planned to focus solely on campaign game modules and *Recon by Fire*. (In spite of this, HOB produced a pair of much sought after SS packs in 1998. These packs were unique in that they included counter sheets of black SS and red berserk counters, reminiscent of the counters used in the original *Squad Leader* series of gamettes.) When the Steve Swann team joined HOB, there was a discernable shift toward scenario packs. But as Steve Dethlefsen pointed out in a recent email, "when I partnered with Chas [Smith] we became more well rounded."

20. Many of the better scenarios in the *Hell on Wheels* scenario pack were later published in the *ASL Journal*: J19 Merzenhausen Zoo, J20 Guns of Naro, J28 Inhumaine, and J62 Lee's Charge. There were other mitigating factors that led to Chas suspending production. See *View From The Trenches* Issues 24,29-30, and 34-35 for a bit of background on the so-called copyright wars of the late 1990s when Hasbro threatened legal action against HOB and in one case, actually issued a court order against another TPP (see note 21 below). Curt Schilling's candid letter to the *ASL* Mailing List in November 1999 provides a good overview from MMP's perspective. A transcript of this email may be found in *View From The Trenches* Issue 29-30, pp. 5-6.

21. Critical Hit began life as *Critical Hit Magazine* in 1994. Robert Wolkey (and co-editor Curt Schilling) had been producing the *ASL* newsletter *Fire for Effect* for a couple years when he decided to join forces with New Yorker Ray Tapio. Ray's only experience in helping to publish the only issue of another *ASL* newsletter *Trailbreak*. What Ray lacked in experience, he made up for in vision and ambition. According to Mark Pitcavage, if we exclude MMP — which acquired a license from Hasbro to produce *ASL* material — Critical Hit is, to date, the only TPP to make a "serious business" of its efforts. Unfortunately, the reputation of Critical Hit and its mercurial owner has been marred by controversy and lacklustre customer service. This reputation may have its roots in the late 1990s when AH threatened legal action for copyright infringement. Mr. Tapio has also been criticized for appropriating the intellectual property of other producers (official or otherwise). See *View From The Trenches* Issue 16, p. 3 for more background.

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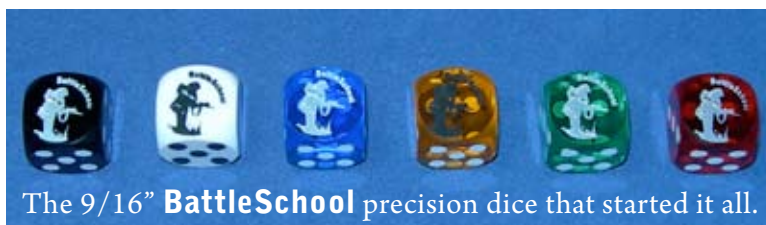
The 9/16" **BattleSchool** precision dice that started it all.

What's so special about **precision** dice anyway?

Precision dice are manufactured as "precise" cubes, equally weighted on all sides. Admittedly, there is no way that dice can be perfectly square. Instead, precision dice are manufactured to strict tolerances. The most notable of these is that each measurement must be true to within 5/1000" of an inch—measured with a micrometer.

Precision dice are manufactured this way in order to ensure as much randomness as possible each time they are rolled. Because each side of a die is the same size and weight as another side, a die will not favour any particular face over another. All this is to say that these dice are not unintentionally "loaded," as some standard dice are—due to poor quality control. Precision dice will not yield more "snake eyes" than standard dice. At the same time, they will not yield more "boxcars" either. Simply put, precision dice are designed to provide for fair play.

Apart from providing you with a reliable game accessory, we hope that our BattleDice will add some fun to your gaming experience.

25th Anniversary ASL **BattleDice**

In celebration of 25 years of Advanced Squad Leader, we released our anniversary dice at the 24th ASL Oktoberfest (ASLOK), held in Cleveland Ohio (1-11 October 2010).

Our Limited Edition **anniversary set of four dice features a unique image on the "ace" of each die. Each set consists of two "matching" pairs of 5/8" precision dice. We paired the iconic German squad leader with a Knight's Cross (Ritterkreuz), and the familiar Soviet officer with a Hero of the Soviet Union medal (ГЕРОЙ СССР). About 50 sets left as of June 2011.**

We also produced 20 sets with Gröfaz on the "deuce." Gröfaz† is the title awarded annually to the top finisher at ASLOK.

Manufacturing Process

The dice are cut from a block of cellulose acetate. Holes for the pips are milled out and later backfilled with paint the same density as the cellulose removed. The paint for each pip is applied with a syringe. The dice go through several polishing and measuring steps.

All designs are foil. The foil is applied with a hot-stamp process, at the end of production. *The dice are not engraved.*

Characteristics

Ball-cornered dice are ideal for ASL because they:
1. provide more rolling "action" in dice cups, dicetowers and trays;
2. are less likely to chip with prolonged use; and
3. are less likely to damage leather cups, or wooden towers and trays.

Precision dice have a couple other advantages over regular dice:
1. the flush surface reduces sliding and last-second flipping; and
2. the pips are almost ⅛" thick and are therefore less prone to wear.

Sizes and Designs

Bigger dice not only provide a bigger canvas for designs, but also offer an increase in visibility, as the photograph below illustrates. We plan to release dice in each of these sizes. The largest size is reserved for special dice such as our anniversary dice. Our main line will continue to be same size as our BattleSchool dice. We are currently working on a ½" "nationality" line that will feature simple graphics on the "ace" of the white die. However, the matching coloured die will not feature a design. This will reduce the cost of this large set. We are also working on a Rate of Fire die. It can be used either in lieu of the coloured die, or as a third, ROF-only die.

½"	9/16"	⅝"
(12.5mm)	(14mm)	(16mm)
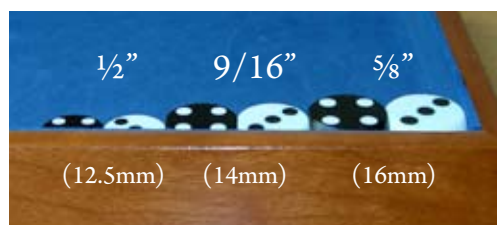
ASL 1985-2010

25th Anniversary
Advanced Squad Leader

BattleDice
Limited Edition Set

5/8" (16 mm) precision dice
designed in Canada ◇ crafted in the USA

Knight's Cross w/ Oak Leaves

Hero of the Soviet Union

†Gröfaz: Größter Feldherr aller Zeiten
Greatest Field Commander of all Time

"THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!"

This is the latest edition of the *ASL* Players Directory. It is broken down by country and then by postal code region. Where a date (in dd mm yyyy format) is shown at the end of each entry this indicates when it was last confirmed.

England

Joss Attridge, Newtown Linford, Leicester, Leicestershire (14/04/2007)
F. B. Dickens, 62 Yarnfield Road, Tyseley, Birmingham, W. Mids., B11 3PG ()
Billy Carslaw, 52 Spring Lane, Birmingham, B24 9BZ (19/03/2005)
Stuart Brant, 16 Kings Court, 25 Cox Street, Birmingham, B3 1RD (25/10/2007)
Garry Cramp, 25 Ferndale Road, Hall Green, Brimingham, W. Mids, B92 8HP (31/10/1996)
Gary Lock, 7 Dover Place, Bath, BA1 6DX (25/03/2004)
Jeff Hawarden, 9 Laburnum Road, Helmshore, Rossendale, Lancs., BB4 4LF ()
Craig Ambler, 2 Queensbury Square, Queensbury, Bradford, W. Yorks., BD13 1PS (28/02/1997)
Phil Ward, 7 Burnsall Mews, Silsden, Keighley, W. Yorks., BD20 9NY (06/03/2000)
Mat Haas, 8A Farcroft Road, Poole, Dorset, BH12 3BQ (03/09/2008)
Dave Schofield, 11 Longfield Drive, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 8TY (03/09/2008)
Stuart Holmes, 1 Milne Street, Irwell Vale, Ramsbottom, Lancs., BL0 0QP (08/03/2002)
Shaun Carter, 3 Arnside Grove, Breightmet, Bolton, Lancs, BL2 6PL (06/03/2008)
Mike Standbridge, 31 Hunstanon Drive, Bury, Lancs., BL8 1EG (09/03/2006)
Ian Kenney, 53 Withdean Crescent, Brighton, W. Sussex, BN1 6WG ()
Marc Hanna, 42 Sancroft Road, Eastbourne, Sussex, BN20 8HB (10/03/2009)
Graham Smith, 56 Durham Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 0SW (01/08/2008)
Andy Tucker, 78 Constance Crescent, Hayes, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7QQ (11/11/1999)
Neil Piggot, 2 Beechmount Grove, Hengrove, Bristol, Avon, BS14 9DN ()
Mark Warren, 5 Gazzard Road, Winterbourne, Bristol, BS36 1NR (26/10/2006)
Rasmus Jensen, 17 Berkeley Road, Bishopston, Bristol, Avon, BS7 8HF (29/10/1997)
Gaute Strokkenes, Girton College, Cambridge, CB3 0JG (23/10/1998)
Paul O'Donald, 13 Archway Court, Barton Road, Cambridge, Cambs., CB3 9LW (07/08/2002)
Martin Barker, Tradewinds, Wratting Rd, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 0DA (17/09/2008)
Ken Watson, 18 Arrendene Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 9JQ (18/04/2011)
Andrew Eynon, 36 Greenbank Drive, Pensby, Wirral, CH61 5UF (08/07/2005)
Gareth Evans, 29 Hillfield Road, Little Sutton, South Wirral, Merseyside, CH66 1JA ()
Derek Cox, 44 Pines Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2DL (03/03/2010)
Brendan Clark, 5 Borda Close, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 4JY (25/10/2007)
Miles Wiehahn, 37 Nursery Rise, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 1XW (06/09/2009)
Alistair Fairbairn, 3 School Lane, Brantham, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 1QE ()
Martin Johnson, 16 Wick Lane, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3TA ()
Matthew Leach, 12 Lodge Road, Little Oakley, Dovercourt, Essex, CO12 5ED (19/08/2002)
Rob Gallagher, 153 Halstead Rd, Stanway, Colchester, Essex, CO3 5JT (31/07/2001)
Nick Ranson, 31 Ashlong Grove, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2QH (24/08/2008)
Derek Tocher, 19 Tyrell Square, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3SD (25/10/2007)
Derek Briscoe, 129b Melfort Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 7RX (18/01/1999)
Joe Arthur, 33 Cedar Close, St Peters, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 3BU (31/10/1999)
Peter Wenman, 12 Clementine Close, Belting, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6SN (26/07/1998)
Andy Back, 21 Elmwood Court, St Nicholas Street, Coventry, W. Mids., CV1 4BS ()
Hubert Noar, 39 Rugby Road, Cifton, Rugby, Warks., CV23 0DE (06/01/2004)
Tim Collier, 71 Kinross Road, Leamington Spa, Warks., CV32 7EN (09/05/2005)
Tony Wardlow, 6 Beech Tree Avenue, Coventry, W. Mids., CV4 9FG ()
Ray Jennings, 4 Dame Agnes Grove, Coventry, West Midlands, CV6 7HL (03/09/2008)
Ian Pollard, 19 Doria Drive, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4HS (05/09/2008)
Aaron Sibley, 61 Ridgeway Avenue, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 5BE (29/08/2008)
Kris Pugh, 22 Norfolk Place, Welling, Kent, DA16 3HR (25/10/2007)
Carl Sizmur, 81 Millfield, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8HN (25/10/2007)
Sean Pratt, 19 Premier Avenue, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 1LH (07/08/2002)
Neil Brunger, 72 Penhill Close, Ouston, Chester Le Street, Co. Durham, DH2 1SG (03/09/2008)
M. W. Jones, 1 Cheviot View, Front St, Dipton, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 9DQ ()
Brian Hooper, 38 Ridsdale Street, Darlington, County Durham, DL1 4EG (03/09/2008)
Chris Bunyan, 89 Hallcroft Road, Retford, Notts., DN22 7PY (17/10/1998)
Roy Quarton, 8 Bassey Road, Branton, Doncaster, S. Yorks., DN3 3NS (01/11/2000)
David Farr, First Floor Flat, 259 High Road Leyton, Leyton, London, E10 5QE (25/04/1999)
Larry Devis, 104 The Mission, 747 Commercial Road, London, E14 7LE (21/07/2001)
Michael Chantler, Flat 7, Pickwick House, 100-102 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DH (04/05/2004)
Lee Bray, 1 Oakfield Road, Exeter, Devon, EX4 1BA (04/03/2009)
Mike Elan, 26 King Edward Street, St. Davids, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4NY (01/06/2000)
Andrew Saunders, 43 Torbay Court, 221 Devonshire Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY2 0TJ (29/12/2000)
Nigel Brown, 3 Chepstow Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY3 7NN (31/10/1996)
Ulric Schwela, 18 Stuart Road, Thornton, Lancashire, FY5 4EE (15/09/2008)
Arthur Garlick, 23 St. Annes Road East, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs., FY8 1TA (04/05/1998)
Michael Davies, 36 Heyhouses Court, Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St Annes, Lancs., FY8 3RF (06/03/2008)
Russell Gough, 'Bellare', New Road, Southam, Cheltenham, GL52 3NX (09/03/2006)
Tim Bunce, 33 Ryde Court, Newport Road, Aldershot, Hants., GU12 4LL (03/09/2008)
Jeff Cansell, 24a Upper Queen Street, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1DQ (17/03/1997)
Giulio Manganoni, 111 Kings Road, Godalming, Farncombe, Surrey, GU7 3EU (30/04/1996)
Simon Croome, 1 Dowling Parade, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx., HA0 1AJ (25/10/2007)
Jackie Eves, 1 Dowling Parade, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx., HA0 1AJ (25/10/2007)
Malcolm Hatfield, 336B Alexandra Ave, South Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9DB (03/09/2008)
Neil Stevens, 8 Trenchard Avenue, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 6NP (14/02/2007)
Chris Littlejohn, 214A Field End Road, Eastcote, Pinner, Middx., HA5 1RD ()
Ben Kellington, 12 Clayton Fields, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD2 2BA (21/04/2007)
Fish Flowers, Church Farm, Westerns Lane, Markington, HG3 3PB (27/11/2004)
Paul Kettlewell, 1 Puffin Way, Watermead, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP20 2UG (06/03/2008)
Chris Walton, nb Burgan Pod, Aylesbury Canal Society, Canal Basin, Walton Street, Aylesbury, HP21 7QG (03/09/2008)
Nick Edelsten, 139 Hivings Hill, Chesham, Bucks., HP5 2PN (05/09/2001)
Malcolm Holland, 57 Westfield Rise, Barrow Lane, Hessle, Humberside, HU13 0NA ()
Ruarigh Dale, 77 Riverview Avenue, North Ferriby, HU14 3DT (27/10/2005)
Steve Balcam, 1 Cornwall Street, Cottingham, N. Humberside, HU16 4NB (01/01/1996)
Mark Furnell, 123 Roycraft Avenue, Thames View, Barking, Essex, IG1 0NS (10/09/2008)
Tony Maryou, 41 Benton Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 4AU (15/08/2000)
Kevin Gookey, 95 Willingdale Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 2DD (17/02/2001)
David Austin, 86 Lindsey Way, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 2PD (04/01/2000)
Paul Legg, 21 Grimsey Road, Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4BW (24/09/2008)
Sam Prior, Flat 8, Wren House, 2B High Street, Hampton Wick, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 4DP (14/11/2010)
Andy Smith, 31 Egerton Road, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4AP (23/06/1999)
Craig Benn, 122 Larkfield Road, Aigburth, L17 9PU (03/09/2008)
Damien Maher, 4 Woolton Court, Quarry Street, Liverpool, L25 6HF (05/07/2010)
Andy Ashton, 62 Earlston Drive, Wallasey, The Wirral, Merseyside, L45 5DZ ()
Wayne Kelly, 72 Grassmere Road, Lancaster, Lancs, LA1 3HB (19/03/2005)
Adrian Bland, 15 Blankney Road, Cottesmore, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 7AG (10/12/2004)
Patrick Dale, 28 Bancroft Road, Cottingham, Market Harborough, Leics., LE16 8XA (25/10/2007)
Nick Brown, 53 Henley Crescent, Braunstone, Leicester, Leics., LE3 2SA (15/11/1996)
John Overton, 68 Brantingham Road, Whalley Range, Manchester, M18 8QH (09/08/2002)
Bernard Savage, 73 Penrhyn Avenue, Middleton, Manchester, M24 1FP (04/03/1998)
Simon Sayers, 21 Barlea Avenue, New Moston, Manchester, M40 3WL (21/11/2008)
Bob Eburne, 33 Whitton Way, Newport Pagnell, Bucks., MK16 0PR (24/02/2004)
Jamie Sewell, 115 Cresent Road, Alexandra Palace, London, N22 4RU ()
Jas Bal, 63 Gardner Park, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 0EA (09/03/2006)
Philip Jones, 10 hazeldene, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, NE32 4RB (09/03/2006)
Steve Jones, 90 Biddick Lane, Fatfield Village, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE38 8AA (04/04/2005)
Martin Sabais, 36 Chalfont Road, Walker, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne & Wear, NE6 3ES (17/09/2008)
Andy McMaster, 29 Kingsley Place, Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 5AN (06/03/2008)
Andrew Cochrane, 19 Churchburn Drive, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2BZ (04/08/2009)
Mike Rudd, 2 Blaeberry Hill, Rothbury, Northumberland, NE65 7YY (12/03/2002)
Geoff Geddes, 30 Sheepwalk Lane, Ravenshead, Nottingham, Notts., NG15 9FD ()
Ian Willey, 17 Strawberry Bank, Huthwaite, Sutton-In-Ashfield, Notts., NG17 2QG (26/03/2002)

George Jaycock, 51 Burleigh Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Notts., NG2 6FQ ()
Chris Gower, 7 Boxley Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Notts., NG2 7GQ (28/09/1998)
L. Othacehe, 17 Russel Drive, Wollaston, Notts., NG8 2BA ()
Duncan Spencer, 33 St Anthonys Road, Kettering, Northants, NN15 5HT ()
A. Kendall, 12 Hunsbury Close, West Hunsbury, Northampton, NN4 9UE (13/12/1998)
Nigel Ashcroft, 5 Grasmere Way, Thornwell, Chepstow, Gwent, NP16 5SS (30/03/2011)
Paul Williams, The Cottage, Robins Lane, Devauden, Chepstow, Monmouthshire, NP16 6PB (14/08/2010)
Clive Haden, Holly House, The Street, Swanton Abbott, Norfolk, NR10 5DU (09/05/2005)
Tom Jackson, 40 Keyes Rd, London, NW2 3XA (02/09/2008)
Steve Joyce, 23 South End Close, London, NW3 2RB (31/01/2001)
Peter Fraser, 66 Salcombe Gardens, Millhill, London, NW7 2NT ()
Nick Hughes, 15 Layfield Road, Hendon, London, NW9 3UH ()
Martin Mayers, 41 Frank Fold, Heywood, Lancs., OL10 4FF (28/10/2004)
Stephen Ashworth, 1 Nelson Street, Walsden, Manchester, Lancashire, OL14 7SP (12/12/2006)
Toby Pilling, 51 Wensum Drive, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7RJ (09/03/2006)
John Sharp, 3 Union Street, Oxford, Oxon, OX4 1JP (23/10/1998)
Simon Stevenson, East Dairy Cottage, Welton Le Marsh, Spilsby, Lincolnshire, PE23 5TA (28/05/2005)
Jason Johns, 26 Hamerton Road, Alconbury Weston, Huntingdon, Cambs., PE28 4JD (22/01/2003)
Alan Anderson, Penmareve, Maddever Crescent, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3PT (11/12/1998)
Nigel Blair, 105 Stanborough Road, Plymstock, Plymouth, PL9 8PG (03/09/2008)
Paul Rideout, 5 Fisher Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants., PO14 3RA ()
Keith Bristow, 39 Carronade Walk, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 5LX (25/10/2007)
Simon Strevens, 14 Teddington Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 8DB (25/10/2007)
Justin Key, 25 Hilary Avenue, Portsmouth, Hants., PO6 2PP (03/09/2008)
Simon Hunt, 26 Inhurst Avenue, Waterlooville, Portsmouth, PO7 7QR ()
Steve Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL (23/10/1998)
Trevor Edwards, 11 Thirlmere Road, Preston, Lancs., PR1 5TR (05/05/2011)
Bill Sherliker, 16 The Heathers, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancs., PR5 8LJ (09/09/2008)
Phil Draper, 8 Chesterman Street, Reading, Berks., RG1 2PR (25/10/2007)
Paul Sanderson, Flat 4, Russell Street, Reading, Berks., RG1 7XD (26/03/2000)
Michael Strefford, 3 Walton Way, Shaw, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2LL (05/06/1998)
Dominic McGrath, 19 George Street, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 7RN (06/03/2008)
Chris Netherton, 36 Eungar Road, Whitchurch, Hants, RG28 7EY (26/10/2006)
Kevin Croskery, 4 Burway Way, Copthorne, W. Sussex, RH10 3LT (10/08/2008)
Richard Webb, 14 Kitsmead, Copthorne, West Sussex, RH10 3PW (14/08/2010)
Bill Hensby, 32 The Vineries, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 0NF (18/06/1999)
John Barton, 194 Chanctonbury Road, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 9HN (08/05/2007)
Gerard Burton, Flat 7 The Beacons, Beaconsfield Road, Chelwood Gate, London, RH17 7LH (08/08/2009)
Wayne Baumber, 39 Station Road, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6DZ (25/10/2007)
Keith Graves, 51 Humbar Avenue, South Ockenden, Essex, RM15 5JL ()
David Higginbotham, 18 Westfield Garden, Brampton, Chesterfield, S40 3SN (03/07/2000)
Andy Osborne, 42 Atlantis Close, Lee, London, SE12 8RE ()
Simon Horspool, 188 Leahurst Road, Hither Green, London, SE13 5NL (03/08/2007)
Martin Edwards, 127 Pepys Road, London, SE14 5SE (02/09/1999)
Michael Essex, 1B Wrottesley Road, London, SE18 3EW (11/06/2009)
David Ramsey, 25 Grenville Way, Stevenage, Herts, SG2 8XZ (03/09/2008)
Chris Milne, 19 Redoubt Close, Hitchin, Herts., SG4 0FP (25/03/2004)
Andrew Dando, 26 Constable Drive, Marple Bridge, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 5BG (17/09/2002)
Andrew Daglish, 7 The Spinney, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 1JA ()
Paul Jones, 11 Irwin Drive, Handforth, Wilmslow, SK9 3JS (04/03/2009)
Ian Daglish, 5 Swiss Hill Mews, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7DP (03/09/2008)
Pete Bennett, 84 Littlebrook Avenue, Burnham, Slough, Bucks., SL2 2NN (16/09/2002)
Steve Crowley, 2 Mossy Vale, Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 7RX (23/10/2003)
William Binns, 150 Carshalton Park Road, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 3SG (25/10/2008)
Adrian Catchpole, The Malting Barn, Top Lane, Whitley, Melksham, Wilts., SN12 8QJ ()
Jon Williams, 17 Larch Road, Colerne, Chippenham, Wilts., SN14 8QG (06/12/1998)
William Roberts, 20 Clayhill Copse, Peatmoor, Swindon, Wilts., SN5 5AL (03/09/2008)
Bill Gunning, 14 Eagles, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7DT (14/09/1997)
Roger Cook, The Brick Farmhouse, Cleuch Common, Marlborough, Wilts, SN8 4DS (26/10/2006)
James Crosfield, Lower Langham Farm, Langham Lane, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5NT (15/02/2009)
John Fletcher, 191 Trent Valley Road, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 5LE (23/10/1998)
Robert Seeney, 43 River Road, Newcastle Under Lyme, Staffs., ST5 2EN (19/03/2005)
Ronnie Tan, 250 Hydethorpe Road, Balham, London, SW12 0JH (21/07/2001)
Simon Taylor, 81 Valley Road, London, SW16 2XL (05/09/2008)
Julian Blakeney-Edwards, 1 Elmbourne Road, London, SW17 8JS (21/10/1998)
Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, 49 Edgecombe House, Whitlock Drive, Southfields, London, SW19 6SL (03/08/2009)
Christopher Chen, Flat 11, 14 Sloane Gardens, London, SW1W 8DL (25/02/1999)
Jonathan Pickles, 115 Wavertree Road, Streatham Hill, London, SW2 3SN (26/03/1999)
David Tye, 35 Redburn Street, London, SW3 4DA ()
Chris Courtier, 17b Hargwyne Street, London, SW9 9RQ (23/10/1998)
John Sparks, 2 Standfast Place, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8QG (01/10/2007)
Paul Case, 4 Brymas House, Rockwell Green, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 9BZ (06/03/2008)
Nick Carter, 13 Oak Tree Court, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1TT (03/09/2008)
Mike Batley, 2 The Gables, Argos Hill, East Sussex, TN6 3QJ (29/04/2001)
Bill Eaton, Dart House, 20 Bridgetown, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5BA (02/09/2008)
Richard Dagnall, 480 Chertsey Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW2 6PS (18/10/2010)
Ivor Gardiner, 19 Gibson Road, Ickenham, London, Middlesex, UB10 bEW (03/09/2008)
Aaron Patrick, 9 Arundel Gardens, London, W11 2LN (31/12/2004)
Nick Quinn, 9 Woodgrange Avenue, Ealing, London, W5 3NY (04/03/2002)
Alan Lynott, Woodlands Parkway, Cheshire, WA15 7QU (10/12/2009)
John Kennedy, 2 Hawthorn Road, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 9RG (23/10/2003)
Dave Booth, 47 Dunnock Grove, Oakwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6NW (07/10/1996)
Paul Ryde-Weller, 44 Farm Way, Watford, Herts., WD2 3SY ()
Robin Langston, 105 Little Bushey Lane, Bushey, Herts., WD23 4SD (19/09/1996)
Sandy Goh, 12 Mornington Road, Radlett, Herts., WD7 7BL (31/10/1996)
Matt Blackman, 10 Alfred St, Wigan, Lancs., WN1 2HL (14/03/2008)
Ian Parkes, 45 School Lane, Standish, Wigan, Lancs., WN6 0TG (23/09/2008)
Michael Murray, 34 Bell Road, Walsall, West Mids., WS5 3JW (30/03/1999)
Andy Evans, 232 Bushbury Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV10 0NT (27/04/2010)
Ian Price, 19 Upper Green, Yettenhall, Wolverhampton, W. Mids., WV6 8QN ()
Michael Clark, Wold View, East Heslerton, Malton, N. Yorks, YO17 8RN (12/02/2002)
David Murray, 29 Middle Street, Nafferton, Driffield, S. Yorks, YO25 4JS (02/09/2008)

Scotland

Steven Trease, 2 Charlestown Circle, Cove, Aberdeen, AB12 3EY (17/06/1999)
Tony Gibson, 107 Queen's Drive, Hazelhead, Aberdeen, AB15 8BN (06/03/2008)
Steve Cook, 159 Lee Crescent, Aberdeen, AB22 8FH (13/03/2009)
Martin Vicca, 37 Dean Gardens, Westhill, Aberdeen, AB24 2UB (02/09/2008)
Paul Saunders, 59 Grampian Gardens, Arbroath, Angus, DD1 4AQ (03/09/2008)
Michael Green, 27 Rotchell Park, Dumfries, DG2 7RH (12/09/2002)
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, Murieston, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 9LF (25/10/2007)
Bill Finlayson, 19 Taymouth Road, Polmont, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, FK2 0PF (16/06/2001)
Andrew Kassian, Flat 14/2, 20 Petershill Court, Glasgow, G21 4QA (01/01/1996)
Ellis Simpson, 4 Langtree Avenue, Whitecraigs, Glasgow, G46 7LW (20/04/1999)
Hamish Hughson, 15 Esmonde Gardens, Elgin, Moray, IV30 4LB (21/03/2010)
Kevin Horner, 11 Bailies Road, Forres, Moray, IV36 1JA (11/10/2010)
Oliver Gray, 117 Upper Dalgairn, Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JQ (04/02/2009)
Garry Marshall, 24 Allardice Crescent, Kirkcaldy, Fife, KY2 5TY (21/05/2001)

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!

JUNE
DOUBLE ONE 2012

When: 24 – 26 June.

Where: Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3RR. On-site facilities include en-suite and standard bedrooms, free car parking on application, mini market, cash points, a self-service cafeteria and licensed bars. Bedroom rates start at £30.00 for a single room and breakfast.

Fee: £15.00 if paid before 30 April, £20.00 thereafter.

Format: A two day tournament with two rounds on Saturday and one on Sunday offering a choice of scenarios. A number of mini-tournaments are also planned for Friday, and friendly games will also be available.

Contact: For a booking form contact Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RD or by email at derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com, or Brendan Clark by email at brendan.clark@virgin.net. Check out the web site at http://www.doubleone-online.net/1.html for the latest details.

OCTOBER
ASLOK XXVI

When: 2 – 9 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. 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.

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. Check out the web site at www.aslok.org for the latest details.

INTENSIVE FIRE 2011

When: 27 – 30 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 £40.00 per night, double rooms £33.00 per night per person if booked prior to 1 October – thereafter normal rates apply. Remember to mention INTENSIVE FIRE when reserving to qualify for the special rates. You can also book online at www.kiwihotel.co.uk.

Fee: £10.00 if registering with the organisers before 18 October, £15.00 thereafter and 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 Phillipps, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle,

Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email if@vftt.co.uk. For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at www.asltourneys.co.uk.

NOVEMBER
Grenadier 2011

When: 10 – 13 November.

Where: "Gästehaus Heimbach", Schulstraße 6, Hergarten. Hergarten is a little town in the German part of the Eifel. It is 10 Km to Zülpich 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 €45 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. Check out the Grenadier web site at www.asl-grenadier.de at for up to date information.

2012
MARCH
HEROES 2012

When: 8 – 11 March.

Where: Colwyn Hotel, 569 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NG. Tel 01253 341 024. Room rates to be confirmed, in 2011 they were £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 1 March, £15.00 thereafter and 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 Phillipps, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email heroes@vftt.co.uk. For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at www.asltourneys.co.uk.

JUNE
DOUBLE ONE 2012

When: 22 – 24 June.

Where: Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3RR. On-site facilities include en-suite and standard bedrooms, free car parking on application, mini market, cash points, a self-service cafeteria and licensed bars. Bedroom rates start at £30.00 for a single room and breakfast.

Fee: £15.00 if paid before 30 April, £20.00 thereafter.

Format: A two day tournament with two rounds on Saturday and one on Sunday offering a choice of scenarios. A number of mini-tournaments are also planned for Friday, and friendly games will also be available.

Contact: For a booking form contact Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RD or by email at derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com, or Brendan Clark by email at brendan.clark@virgin.net. Check out the web site at http://www.doubleone-online.net/1.html for the latest details.

Ω

Pete Phillipps, 9 Pier Rd, Kilchoan, Argyll, PH36 4LJ (02/09/2008)
Jonathan Swilliamson, 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)
Nick Rijke, Aneddfa, Cellan, Lampeter, Ceredigion, SA48 8HY (06/09/2010)
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/aslers.asp - contact me if you need your user name and password to do so.

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INTENSIVE FIRE 2011
27 – 30 OCTOBER 2011

INTENSIVE FIRE is the UK's longest running tournament dedicated to the play of Advanced Squad Leader. 2011 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 (£40 per night for a single room or £33 for a double room). The hotel is within a short taxi-ride of Bournemouth rail station and ample parking is available. To book contact the hotel on (01202) 555 889 (+44 1202 555 889 from outside the UK). You can also book online at www.kiwihotel.co.uk.

For foreign visitors, lifts can often be pre-arranged to and from major airports. For those contemplating an extended stay, Bournemouth offers an excellent base for the military historian, being within easy reach of important military museums at Bovington Camp, Winchester, Portsmouth and Aldershot.

COST

Weekend registration for the tournament costs just £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.