AVALONCON • HANNIBAL • THIRD REICH

GENERAL

VOL. 31, NO. 2 • AVALON HILL

Featuring: LONDON'S BURNING and a Series
Replay of HANNIBAL: ROME vs. CARTHAGE

CONTENTS

Features

Columns

Some people enjoy mastering one game. Other people enjoy playing a huge variety of games. Some people seek a tension-filled, grueling, mental contest. Other people prefer a light, dicerolling affair. Yet other people are thrilled with the social interaction of diplomatic parlay. Some people are vacationing near a game convention. Other people are convening their gaming instead of vacationing. Some people have a point to prove about a game. Other people point to their play as their proof.

In one room, you will find the blips and bleeps and hum of computer gaming. In another room, you will hear the uproar as the fate of Napoleon is decided on an unfortunate withdrawal die roll. In yet another room, the only sound will be the tinkle tinkle of dice ricocheting in glass cups. Some hallways witness frantic gamers running from event to food bar and back. Other hallways are jammed with tables of players engaging in open gaming during the breaks between their main events. In yet other hallways, youths are fraternizing while their parents relax at a tournament. Some desks find GMs being slapped on the wrist for not following the rules. Other desks show the wares of Avalon Hill's extensive game line. Some bedrooms house a family that games together. Other bedrooms are jammed with cost-saving groups of barely-acquainted gamers.

Some participants seek points for their team. Other participants seek wins that add up to merchandise certificates for their next acquisition. Yet other participants relish the experience of learning nuances of a game from the masters they face over the game board.

One thing sums it up: AvalonCon

Another thing is quite self-evident on Sunday afternoon: with planes to catch, drivers to meet, fatigue setting in, boxes and suitcase in arms, participants depart from the experience with one thing very definitely occupying their subconscious thinking. *I will do everything I can next year to return to AvalonCon.* Nobody has heard of anybody vowing "never again."

This game convention provides a lot of different experiences to many people. Yet, there is one common thread: competition for those championship plaques. Some people value the plaques by the quantity they can hang on their wall. Other people value the plaque by the name of the game engraved upon it. Yet others value a plaque by the memory of the game and the opponent from whom they earned it. Almost universally, AvalonCon participants value a plaque and renown above the merchandise value of winning a tournament. Many a runner-up would gladly trade his accumulated certificates to the champion for the right to play again to claim that symbol of excellence . . . that right to be pictured on the page of *The GENERAL* . . . that piece of wood.

While the subscriber survey showed that the readership of *The GENERAL* is

THE AVALON HILL
PHILOSOPHY
Part 174
Goin' for the Wood
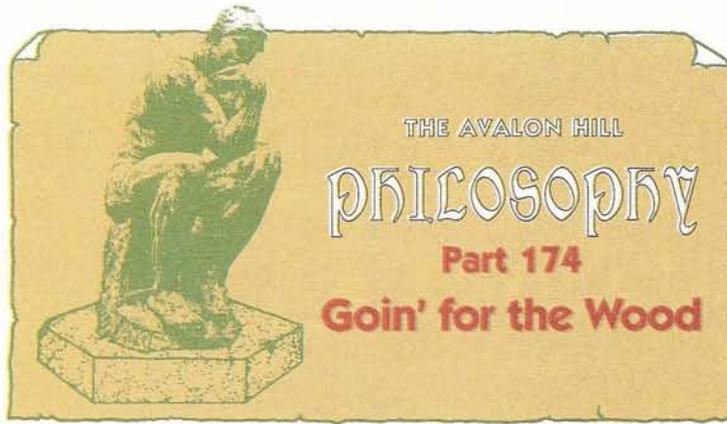
evenly divided with regard to how much coverage this convention should receive in these pages, the editor is not. Those who have attended understand when I say that the experience is just too important to their gaming enjoyment for me to shut up about it to those who haven't made the pilgrimage. I shall not absorb vast quantities of pages with long recitations of who played in the third preliminary heat and such. However, I will try to publish what I think is the required homage to the event: 1) information on who won and how they accomplished this supreme feat (many of us had to leave before the finals in a favorite event and want to know), 2) data on trends in a game or scenario for those interested in play balance, 3) human interest stories that enrich the hobby and 4) information on tournament formats and game variants that enhance the convention goer's enjoyment of his favorite games.

Of course, the list of tournaments held at AvalonCon continues to grow and some new events drew good crowds. Tournament size this year ranged as high as 118 participants for the new reigning biggest tournament (*AIR BARON*, replacing *ASL*). The organizers' determination remains unchanged with regard to recognizing the winners in a consistent fashion. Tournaments are ranked by numbers of participants, with the largest events gaining their champion a listing on the mailing cover for a year and a picture on the photo spread on pages 20-21 (which will be framed for display at future events). In

this sense, each tournament is in competition with each of the 100+ tournaments for recognition as being among the well-attended, so that their winners will get more coverage. Juniors tournaments will continue to get special recognition (see page 41).

As editor, I am in the quandry of deciding what summary information cannot fit into this magazine. Part of this decision is out of my hands, as not all events are well-documented by their game masters or other participants. Rather than trying to overburden one issue with as much as I can piece together, I have chosen an alternative format. This article will summarize the highlights, but is not the end of the story. Throughout the pages of upcoming issues, a sprinkling of sidebar coverage of the action will appear next to articles on related games. In this manner I hope to be able to cover the smaller events not mentioned up front in this article (and perhaps find room for photos of winners left off pages 20-21 as well). In any case, if you won a tournament, congratulations for your excellence in gaming. If your picture doesn't appear on page 20 or 21—then perhaps a little recruitment for next year's tournament might boost the status of your event in 1997.

I offer my gratitude to the many writers who contributed the following information. Their largely underheralded efforts as game masters are deeply appreciated by the thousand or so gamers who got to play this year and by me, who could not do this article without their tireless efforts to support our hobby.

EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESSES

The first mention goes to those cited by others for acts of sportsmanship: Michael Anchors, Don Chappell, Terry Coleman, David Cross, Jim Doughan, Tom Drueding, John Ellsworth, Christine Frattali, Cathy Kratz, James Hughto, Jean Maurice La Belle, Bill Levay, Jason Levine, Jim Matt, Keith McFarland, Gary Moody, Tom Oleson, Mike Puffenberger, Dane Sidelinger, Bruno Sinigaglio, Phil Van Wiltenburg. Afterall, without sportsmanship, competition loses much of its fun. One example that caught my eye: Bruno Sinigaglio entered the *BREAKOUT: NORMANDY* tournament with very limited knowledge of the rules with the intent to learn more about the game. *[This has a familiar ring to it, eh?]* His first opponent, Keith McFarland, patiently continued to explain situations to Bruno throughout the game, rather than taking advantage of his inexperience, and ultimately ended up in a losing position as the Allies. As a show of respect for the time and effort provided Keith to teach Bruno the rules and tactics of *BKN*, Bruno graciously evacuated Caen, allowing Keith to obtain a win.

Our hats are off to the 53 participants who won their very first AvalonCon plaques. It is a deeply satisfying feeling to take home such an award
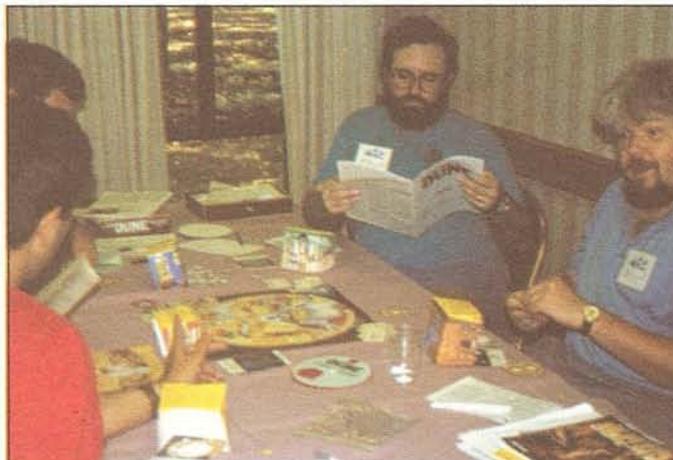
Foreseeing his own doom, Editor Stuart Tucker double-checks a rule in a game of *DUNE*.

Blitz by Number
Ground School for *LONDON'S BURNING*

By Charles Bahl

Most games of *LONDON'S BURNING* are squeakers. You may send a lot of flaming Messerschmitts spiraling down into Sussex farmyards, but the Luftwaffe is equally busy putting craters in your airstrips and reducing the East End to rubble. I'd say about 70 per cent of the games I've played have been close calls—with either the RAF or the Luftwaffe winning by fewer than eight Victory Points. In a way that's good: nicely balanced games have a way of keeping your interest over many replays. Yet, I'm sure that doesn't mean you wouldn't like to tip the scales a wee bit in your favor by getting a jump on *Reichsmarschall* Goering's boys. After all, they've got quite an assortment of their own tricks hidden away in their rucksacks. So sharpen your pencils, grease your slide rule (remember this is 1940), and masticate your spit wads—ground school is about to begin.

OVERVIEW

LONDON'S BURNING is not a game of football, but the game's short scenario does conveniently divide into two halves, each of which has distinct strategic goals. In the first half, pilot and plane conservation is the primary objective. During the first turns of the game, you should take kills only when easy opportunities present themselves. Stay away from those dangerous, fighter-laden raids. Pick and choose your targets carefully. In the second half of the scenario, you should adopt a more aggressive stance in which both protecting your targets and shooting down enemy planes becomes your overriding aim. At this point in the game, you take to the skies as one of Churchill's "few," eager to even the score. Tallyho!

THE FIRST HALF

The first half of the *LONDON'S BURNING's* short scenario lasts from turn 1 through turn 3 (August 13 through 15). This should be the RAF's conservative phase. You should attack German raids only when they pose an extremely small risk. (Remember, however, that no raid is completely risk free.) Here is the idea to keep in mind: lost pilots (those killed or those injured beyond the time frame of the scenario) and, to a lesser extent, lost planes are a deficit from which the RAF player can rarely recover. Two pilots lost in the first one or two game turns is virtually equivalent to an RAF defeat. With your original pilots lost, you will have to nurse your remaining pilots too carefully. In all likelihood you will yield the initiative to the Luftwaffe. If this happens, bomb damage will increase to an unacceptable, game-losing level. Here are some rules of thumb to follow in turns 1 through 3 to make sure that this eventuality never happens.

REBASING

In the short scenario, I recommend selecting a game base far from the thick of things. In the short scenario, you will never have a problem finding an airfield for an emergency pancake. I think Debden is the best field for a base. Raids will very rarely ever make it there.

At the beginning of the first two phases of each turn (7 and 10 a.m.), you will want to rebase your planes to a satellite field (rule 5.2). At this point in the game send both of your planes to Manston. (This applies only if there is currently no damage to any Home Chain station.) The reasons behind this move are simple. Manston occupies a centralized position near the coast from which the RAF, in most circumstances, can respond quickly to any Nazi incursion. Only those raids starting on and moving to the left of the mapboard will be hard to catch. There is a small chance (less than one in twelve) that the Luftwaffe may attack your pilots when they have just taken off from Manston, but the risk is acceptable and must be taken. (Remember that not only must the raid enter the Manston hex, but it must also be at a sufficiently low altitude to make contact with your air units.) Although Hawkinge is a more centrally located field, the risk of German interception here is higher. However, if you tend to be a more aggressive player, and just cannot stand letting a German raid get by without so much as a look, Hawkinge is, more than likely, the place for you. Of course, if one these locations has been bombed, you have no choice but to rebase to the other.

When at least one Home Chain station is damaged (or both Manston and Hawkinge are no longer available), you should move your planes further inland to Gravesend (first choice) or Rochford. This is basically a defensive move. It prevents German bombers from catching your planes on the ground. (Recovery from such a fate is extremely difficult, if not impossible.) The drawback is that you will be giving the Luftwaffe, at least temporarily, a free hand at bombing the coast. You will still stand a good chance against raids that penetrate further inland. Use your repair points to get all Home Chain stations operating as soon as possible, unless you need the points to recover lost planes.

During the last two phases of each turn, instead of rebasing your pilots as mentioned above, put them up on patrol over a central target near the coast. Lympne, Dunkirk and Rye are good selections. (Dover is not as good because of potential Luftwaffe interception there.) Late in the day, pilots can get away with the extra fatigue that accrues if no German raid appears. Put your patrols at 20,000 feet. This is an optimum altitude for responding to nearly any Nazi threat.

CLOSING FOR THE KILL

The first question you should ask yourself when intercepting a raid is this: Now or later? In other words should you intercept at the first available opportunity, or should you wait until you can achieve a more favorable altitude or angle of attack? Here's a basic rule—if you can get your planes up to the same altitude (reported or true) as that of the raid, before the raid reaches its target, by all means intercept. Don't allow the raid to reach its target, if you can at least match its altitude. Of course, if you have time to spare, take advantage of it by getting to the best altitude and angle that you can. Generally, you should never intercept a raid below its altitude, even if this means allowing it to bomb a target. Above all, do not put your planes within the "triangle" of a raid's potential flight paths. Interception by the Luftwaffe means lost Spitfires and lost Hurricanes. Stay to the front of a raid, beyond its three hex range, or approach it from the side, outside of its potential flight paths (see Figure 1).

By the way, don't intercept at higher than 5,000 feet above the raid's reported altitude. Rule 8.2 forces a break-off when the nearest German air unit on the altitude display is two or more altitude levels away from an RAF fighter. If you repeatedly intercept at a differential of 10,000 feet or more, you will be letting too many enemy aircraft slip through your defenses.

Also, never intercept raids over the water. (Remember that this dictum, as well as all the others in this section, applies only to turns 1 through 3.) Combat over water spells disaster. Too many of your pilots will die in the icy waters of the English Channel. The drawback is, of course, that the German bombers will usually reach their target. If this is unavoidable, then try to intercept the raid over the target hex. Dover harbor may be reduced to smoking ruins, but at least you can prevent the raid from getting back
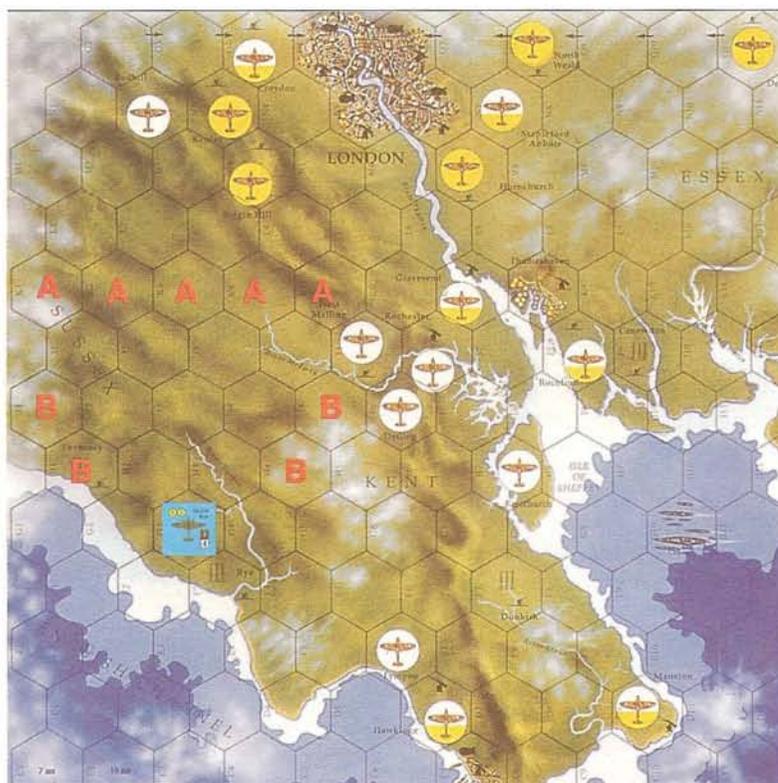
Figure 1. A raid approaches London from the southeast. Interceptors should stay out of the raid's flight-path "triangle" (shaded area). Intercept by approaching from the raid's front (the hexes marked "A") or from the raid's side (the hexes marked "B").

to France unscathed. Such a situation is frustrating to say the least. Do not, however, let an increasing German VP total entice you to a rash and risky attack. Be patient. Your chance for revenge is coming.

Once you've intercepted, you must decide whether or not to actually fight. During this conservative phase of the game, never attack a raid that contains more than two fighters. Attack a two-fighter raid only if you can attack from a higher elevation (but not necessarily from "out of the sun"). Attack all one-fighter raids. If you can't or shouldn't attack a raid that you've just intercepted, break off immediately, before the first round of combat. If you do attack, attack enemy fighters first. If there is only one enemy fighter, attack it with one of your own. Use your other fighter to go after an enemy bomber. When firing, assign two bursts against a previously undamaged fighter. If you've got enough ammo, assign three bursts against an undamaged bomber. It is usually best to down enemy planes as soon as possible, rather than conserving ammo and hoping for another round of combat. (A combat-ending low roll always seems to come up at the most inopportune times.) Use fewer bursts against bombers, if the raid has penetrated far enough inland or is at a particularly low elevation. An enemy bomber with an engine hit will not be able to make it back to France.

Finally, concentrate on creating an RAF ace. Don't try to advance two pilots at the same time. Give your selected pilot all the best kill chances. When he makes ace, advance your other pilot. An ace or two will be one of your most potent weapons in the second half of the game.

THE SECOND HALF

If you've made it to turn 4 (August 16) with no (or maybe one) pilots lost, you are probably eight to twelve Victory Points in the hole. (By the way, keep a running total of the Victory Points.) If this is the case, don't get mad—get a Messerschmitt! From this point on, if you lose a couple of pilots along the way, grin and bear it. That is the price of victory. Your major goal now is nothing less than the destruction of the Luftwaffe, wherever and whenever a Messerschmitt or Stuka flies between your crosshairs.

Now, in face, with your blood up, you will actually hate to see a "No Raid" counter come popping out of your coffee cup—or other opaque container. If you are behind in the VP race, August 17 will become the most important turn of the game. During this turn you need to close to within four VPs of the Luftwaffe, preferably closer. You don't want to have come all this way only to pull a handful of "No Raid" counters on August 18, the last turn of the short scenario. By closing to within four points on August 17, you should be close enough to pull out a victory on the following day— unless the "counter gods" are out to get you.

REBASING

In the latter part of the game, basing is not so critical. If coastal targets have more or less been blown away (likely), rebase your planes at either Gravesend or Rochford. If three or more Home Chain stations have been damaged, you should rebase even further back, at the fields surrounding London (Hornchurch, Biggin Hill, Stapleford Abbots, etc.). As usual, put up patrols only

on the last two phases of the day. With coastal targets already bombed, your patrols are best located in the center of the game board, over Detling, let's say, or West Malling, Rochester or Canewdon. As in everything, however, use your own judgement. If, for example, most of the remaining targets are to the right (northeast) side of the game board, use an airfield that is further to the right.

DAMAGE REPAIR

Concentrate, of course, on keeping those two planes of yours in the air at all times. Second priority is your Home Chain network. However, if a Home Chain station has received a significant amount of damage, say four or more points, don't waste precious repairs on it. Instead, focus on locations with just a few points of bomb damage (three or less). Once completely repaired, these targets will decrease the Luftwaffe Victory Points by two (by three if it's a London hex). There is no use throwing away repairs on targets that have no chance of being completely repaired. Remember that in the short scenario, you will have a total of only twelve repair points.

CLOSING FOR THE KILL

The further you are behind in VPs the more bloodthirsty you need to be and the more Nazi flags you need to get pasted onto the outside of your fuselage. If you catch up with and then surpass Luftwaffe VPs, you can back off on the bloodlust a little bit. In this case, rather than always going for the kill, focus on forcing bombers to break off. Concentrate on keeping British targets safe from German bombs.

In any case, attack almost every raid. (Stay away from those that have four or more fighters.) You will find that getting altitude and angle will be a lot easier, because the raids will have to travel much farther inland in order to reach a target. In fact, I would recommend coming from "out of the sun" on virtually every raid, even if you have to let the Nazi bombers reach a target. In these cases you often can destroy four-points worth of enemy planes in exchange for their two or three points of damaged targets.

If you know a raid has only a single plane as fighter cover, it is often not a bad idea to split up your attack planes. Send one plane "out of the sun" against the single defending fighter, and send the other "head on" against a bomber. This technique is illustrated in the "Example of Play" provided in the *LONDON'S BURNING* Rules of Play. Attacking over water is also no longer out of the question, but you should have a good reason for doing it (i.e., you stand to shoot down a record number of planes, or you are so far behind in VPs that you need to get suicidal.).

As usual, go for the fighters first. At this point in the game I prefer using only one burst versus fighters and two bursts versus bombers. (Quite a few damaged planes won't make it back to the continent.) In this case, you are hoping for more than one combat round. If the raid consists of only four or five enemy planes, try to force the whole raid to break off. In the process, you will most likely succeed in destroying a fair number of planes anyway, and you will succeed at killing two birds with one stone—denying the

Luftwaffe VPs while increasing your own. However, if you are behind in Victory Points, the watch word is "Tallyho!" Shoot at everything that moves—if it's painted with a Swastika.

THE RESTART BUTTON

If you're the type that cheats at solitaire or the kind of person whose hand is always wavering dangerously close to the restart button when playing a computer game, you might consider a completely different tack when playing *LONDON'S BURNING*. Instead of the conservative approach that I have advocated for the first three game turns, throw caution to the wind and overheat your machine-gun barrels against every enemy raid that darkens the sky over England. If things go from bad to worse—first Waters buys the farm and then Richey, then Kowalski—no problem. Dump the board, pull Kowalski out of the Channel, move the Turn Marker back to August 13, and start all over again. Even the best of us may find it hard to face five more days of aerial combat when we are three pilots down. Not all of us, after all, have the tenacity of Churchill. Don't scoff. If Hermann Goering had a restart button back in Karinhall, do you doubt he would have used it?

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Protecting England Strategy Tips for *LONDON'S BURNING*
By Andrew R. Maly
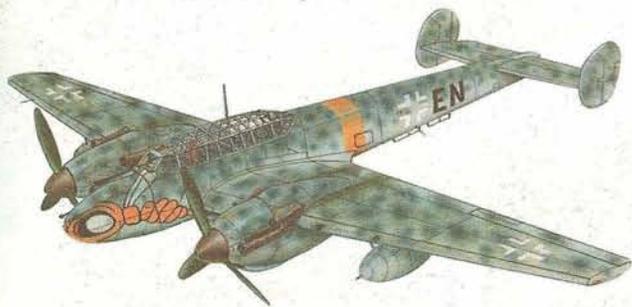
*L*ONDON'S BURNING is a challenging game about the Battle of Britain. The player is faced with a multitude of decisions, and the wrong decisions prove costly. As with any solitaire game, there is a system. However, there is no "best plan" to be discovered, as the situation is constantly evolving. The system punishes failure, leading to more and easier defeats. Thus, the British player must be aggressive, yet logical in the decisions he makes.

This article focuses on the solitaire play of the British (RAF) in the Long Scenario against the game system which runs the Luftwaffe. Some of the following is applicable to two-player games.

VICTORY

In order to understand how to defend England, the British player must understand the victory conditions. The RAF gets victory points from only one source: the downing of German planes. The German player gets points for downing RAF planes, as well as damaging ground targets. Thus, it is imperative that the British player gain the advantage in aircraft at an early and rapid rate, if success is to be achieved.

Several factors combine to determine how to best handle this situation. First, you must understand the vulnerability of the various targets to attack. Next, you need to know what the Luftwaffe can do during a raid, and how to best stop the raids. Finally, you must handle the inevitable setbacks the British player will encounter, by managing your repair points.

TARGET ANALYSIS

Table 1 gives an overview for what parts of southeast England are susceptible to attack. This information is a breakdown of the relative vulnerability of any given target at the start of the game. It should be noted that the odds immediately change as soon as a target is hit. However, a few important facts should be noted.

Although the Chain Home radar stations represent only four of the 28 targets on the board, they represent over 20 per cent of the potential target base for a given raid. Without exception, a raid from any starting location has the opportunity of damaging a Chain Home radar station.

Of the initially available targets, only seven are located within two impulses of the raid starting locations. Yet, these seven targets represent over 60 per cent of the targets, based on odds. Fourteen targets, including all Chain Home radar stations, are located within three impulses of France. These targets represent over 81 per cent of the probable strike points. Thus, it is likely that any raid which does occur will not last very long. This translates into a small window of opportunity for the RAF to respond, and lends credence to having an up front, aggressive defense by the RAF.

However, not all targets can be assigned the same priority for defense. Table 2 is a breakdown of target probability based on the initial start point of a raid. This is useful information in determining how the RAF fighters will approach the raid, and in helping to determine the relative safety of certain targets. If the RAF is keeping its pilots on Stand-by, this information can be very valuable. There are times when the additional pilot fatigue would outweigh the benefit of defending a target, or the benefit of defending a valuable target with a low vulnerability. However, as with the overall target probability, the odds immediately change as soon as a target becomes damaged.

One note: Hornchurch is the only home base which is invulnerable to a raid during the 7am phase of the August 13th turn. A damaged home base is as critical as a damaged Chain Home radar station. The lost pilot fatigue recovery and damage repair requirement necessarily mandate that the home base be defended. I recommend Hornchurch as the RAF home base.

THE RAIDS

The mix of raid markers consists of six "No Raid" markers, one "Remix" marker and two each of "4 Raiders," "5 Raiders" and "6 Raiders" markers. On average, there is a 50 per cent chance of no raid. This presents the British player with the first major challenge of the game, that of judging whether the increase in pilot fatigue from patrolling is worth doing when the patrol may be wasted by a lack of raiders. Passive reaction to the German assault presents its own problems. The astute British player will consider the previous raid marker draws when making the patrol decision.

In the event of a raid, it helps to know the probable composition of the enemy forces in order to assess how to handle it. The German forces are summarized in Table 3. Given that the German player will be able to replace a maximum of 68 planes over the course of a total campaign, it is unrealistic to expect that the Luftwaffe will ever be totally crippled. Yet, this task must be attempted.
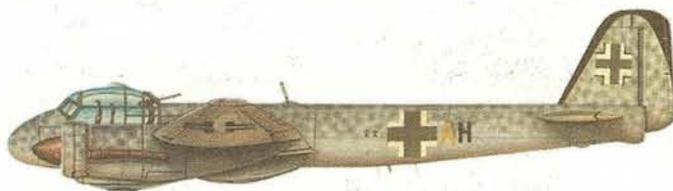
The Ju88 played a larger role in September.

The Magical Pleasures of

CAVEWARS

Race Profile: Namarie

By Mark Simonitch

*T*he pleasures of exploration, city-building and global conquest are taken to new levels—or is that new depths—with Avalon Hill's new computer game, CAVEWARS. *The addition of the third, dirt-encumbered, dimension to an empire-building game makes for a new gaming experience. This addictive game will soon become a favorite among cave-dwelling, computer gamers who delight in making their own passageways through enemy terrain. Here give profile one of the eight races you may lead—SKT*

The Namarie are weak. When I heard that players playing the Namarie race were losing and were commenting on their pathetic abilities, I, naturally, took up the challenge to see if I could win with them. Well, I've found that the Namarie are good. Yes, they are so good that when my sons and I sit down for a game, we must negotiate who gets to be the Namarie.

The advantages that Namaries have are their skill with ranged weapons and their keen use of magic. The ranged weapon skill is nice, but does not come into use in my strategy. What interests me is their ability to learn spells faster than the other races. This advantage, fully applied, can give them an early and decisive lead in the war.

Here is my formula for success with the Namarie.

1. Invest heavily in magic. Concentrate strictly on the power of Summoning until you have reached a level 3 mastery. After that you can diversify a little into other areas of magic (Earth, Transportation and Viewing) but keep working on obtaining the fifth and highest level of Summoning. This is important for your wizards.

2. Don't build Namarie army units (they are pitiful); build wizards. At the start of the game, I build about three Namarie swordsmen (with mounts) for exploration. After that, I never build another Namarie unit again. All other resources will be committed to building wizards, more wizards and armies of wizards. As your research into summoning gets better, your wizards get better. Wizards have ranged fire (those mysterious fire balls) which will

knock out the garrison of a neutral city before they can return fire.

3. Because you are not building armies of soldiers which require metal weapons, you don't need to mine metal—ever! That's right, while other players are enslaving large sections of their population for digging and mining of metal, your Namaries are concentrating on research and wizard upkeep. That means that a bigger percentage of your population is devoted to researching an area in which you already have an advantage. Your Namarie will enjoy an early lead in the research race.

4. Build only one or two engineers, but don't build any until you need to build a new city. You'll need a new city when you find a good spot with lots of food, but more on that later.

5. Forget about city defense altogether. Putting people to work on strengthening your cities is a waste of manpower. Set your global slider in the defense category to zero and lock it there. Send everybody to the research labs. If you are worried that a city may come under attack, then garrison it, but don't rely on defensive works.

6. Balance your production, research and magic commitment carefully. At the start, I set my production to build a wizard every other turn rather than every turn. Even when you capture many cities, don't build a wizard in every city. You need to repel level 5 mastery in Summoning as soon as you can. Too much production and wizard upkeep will slow you down. It is impossible to say exactly how you should set your global sliders in these three categories. Make sure your research is always getting the lion's share.

7. Use your power of summoning wisely and don't waste your magic points. Summoning is best used to reinforce the front lines or as reserves. While wizards and troops have to move from where they were built to reach the area of action, which can take many turns, summoned units can arrive instantaneously. If you capture an enemy city, you can reinforce it the next turn with a summoned army. You
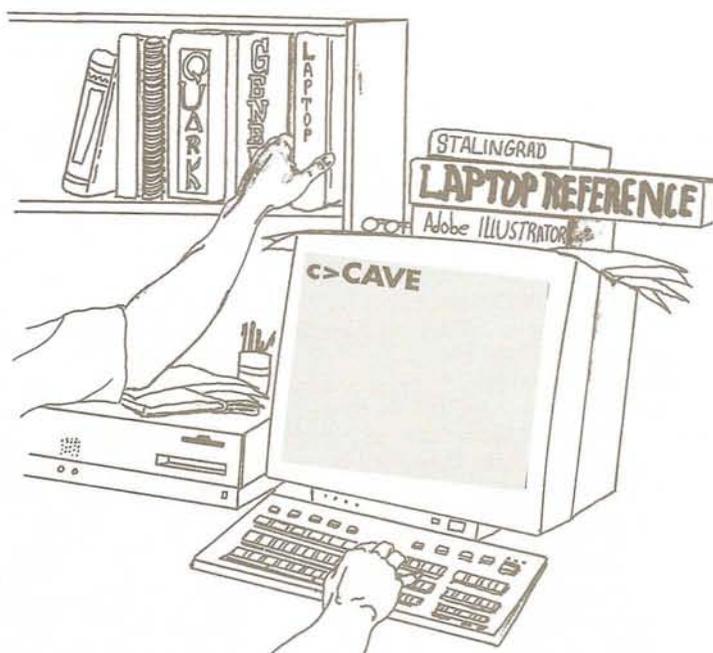
can leave large areas in your rear undefended as long as you have enough magic to summon an army to the hot spot when intruders appear. In *CAVEWARS*, the enemy can appear through walls, ceilings and floors so you always need to worry about your rear.

8. Feed your people. Prevent your population from being devastated by a food shortage. This is what separates the average *CAVEWARS* player from a good player. The key to this is to always have an eye out for food and on your food supply. Those one or two engineers you've built should always be busy building cities near food sources. When those cities are completed, ship to them any population in a city with a poor harvest. If a city is located in a place without any food, then ship everybody out and raze it to the ground.

9. Surprise your enemy. Everybody I play leaves most of their cities undefended. A few units made invisible will wreak havoc in their rear lines.

10. Eat Metal. This becomes a viable tactic for you sinse metal has no value to you. At the cost of 200 magic points I would reserve it only for medium or rich Mithril.

Not only are the Namarie good to play, they are also the most fun. Summoning the many evil and twisted creatures of Ibido and building them into armies to send against your enemies is just plain fun. Also, seeing your armies of wizards marching off to war with their funky hats is a kick. Its also nice to watch them in battle when they mow down Gakkars and Advaries. Watch out for those nasty rocket launchers though. You hope to win before your opponents can build those. So the next time you hear somebody put down the Namarie—challenge them.

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TABLE 1
TARGET VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS

SITE	Impulses to target:				
	1	2	3	4	5
Hawkinge	8.33%				
Dover	16.67%				
Manston	8.33%				
Rye		8.33%			
Lympne		8.33%			
Dunkirk		7.41%			
Convoy (G10)		3.24%			
Pevensey			1.62%		
West Mailing			3.63%		
Detling			5.32%		
Rochester			1.08%		
Eastchurch			2.55%		
Rochford			3.40%		
Canewdon			2.93%		
Biggin Hill				4.42%	
Gravesend				0.85%	
Thameshaven				0.85%	
Croydon					2.51%
Red Hill					2.75%
Kenley					1.86%
London (O5)					0.53%
London (N5)					2.16%
London (N6)					0.58%
North Weald					0.92%
Debden					1.39%
% of Total Strikes	33.33%	27.31%	20.52%	6.12%	12.71%

TABLE 2
TARGET VULNERABILITY BY RAID START AREA

SITE	Raid Start Area					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hawkinge	0.00%	16.67%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Dover	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%
Manston	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%
Rye	27.78%	16.67%	5.56%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Lympne	8.33%	16.67%	16.67%	8.33%	0.00%	0.00%
Dunkirk	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	16.67%	16.67%
Convoy (G10)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.78%	5.56%	11.11%
Pevensey	8.33%	1.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
West Mailing	6.94%	7.41%	4.63%	1.85%	0.46%	0.46%
Detling	9.26%	10.19%	6.48%	3.24%	1.39%	1.39%
Rochester	0.93%	0.93%	0.46%	1.39%	1.39%	1.39%
Eastchurch	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.17%	5.56%	5.56%
Rochford	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.63%	7.41%	8.33%
Canewdon	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.70%	6.02%	7.87%
Biggin Hill	10.57%	8.87%	5.02%	1.77%	0.15%	0.15%
Gravesend	0.46%	0.46%	0.23%	0.93%	1.39%	1.62%
Thameshaven	0.46%	0.46%	0.23%	0.93%	1.39%	1.62%
Croydon	7.25%	4.71%	2.21%	0.77%	0.05%	0.05%
Red Hill	7.72%	5.25%	2.58%	0.89%	0.04%	0.04%
Kenley	4.94%	3.63%	1.89%	0.66%	0.04%	0.04%
London (O5)	1.16%	1.08%	0.64%	0.23%	0.03%	0.03%
London (N5)	4.67%	4.44%	2.66%	0.96%	0.12%	0.12%
London (N6)	1.20%	1.20%	0.73%	0.27%	0.04%	0.04%
North Weald	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.69%	1.16%	3.68%
Debden	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.69%	1.16%	6.51%

Probably the most important information to be extracted from Table 3 is the average number of bomb hits delivered per raid size, based on the date. This information does not take into account the effects of air defense or dive bombing. While this doesn't appear to be a bad situation at first, any target, with the exception of a Chain Home radar station, is likely to be out for several days before a total repair can be achieved, even if the RAF's limited repair resources are devoted strictly to target repairs.

On the positive side, Table 3 reveals that the Luftwaffe doesn't provide as much fighter escort early in the game. If an advantage can be gained early, then it is possible to achieve and maintain air superiority.

Even so, the British player cannot relax during the latter half of the game, approximately from the 28th of August. This twelve day stretch will test the mettle of the RAF. At this time, German reinforcements are primarily fighters. Attacking a raid gets tougher and the RAF is more likely to take casualties, thereby increasing the likelihood that raids will reach their targets. However, average target damage decreases, allowing for speedier repairs. A passive defense becomes both feasible and necessary during this part of the game, especially considering the fatigue factor.

In general, it pays to watch pilot fatigue, the raid chit draws, and the Luftwaffe aircraft available for duty. These factors all must be evaluated by the RAF when determining defensive tactics.

DEFENSE DECISIONS

A stand-by defense does not necessarily work when there is a raid, but, if no raid appears, it pays dividends by keeping your pilots fresh. The flight sequence when pilots are on stand-by is:

Impulse 1: Max. Altitude: Ground Level, 0 Moves,
Impulse 2: Max. Altitude: Angels 10, 2 Moves,
Impulse 3: Max. Altitude: Angels 20, 2 Moves.

The target analysis shows that 80 per cent of the targets are within three impulses of the raid starting locations. Thus, a stand-by defense requires letting an occasional high altitude raid go unintercepted. The potential for successfully intercepting the raid is low, unless the fighters are at the right airfield. A sortie by the RAF which only yields pilot fatigue is a losing proposition. It may be possible for the RAF to intercept a raid at a lower altitude, but this again depends on the starting location of the raid, the starting position of the RAF and existing damaged targets.

For stand-by, select a remote airfield which allows an adequate response time, yet is not itself vulnerable to a raid, lest the RAF be caught in the precarious position of being intercepted by the raid.

In reality, there are only two stand-by airfields which safely allow adequate response times. Most are two far removed for planes on the ground to catch a raid prior to bombing. Manston and Hawkinge are both vulnerable to first impulse raids. Gravesend and Rochford are the best for stand-by, affording a bit more flexibility in terms of response, but the delay in responding may be too great, especially if the Chain Home radar stations have taken damage.

A patrol defense will be costly in terms of fatigue, but the fighters are in the air prior to determining if a raid will occur and can be at an interception altitude from the start. The one movement point cost to descend to any desired altitude is better than having to spend multiple movement points to ascend several altitude levels, if you guess the wrong altitude. No British player can consistently guess the time, altitude and starting location of the raids. Therefore, start at maximum altitude and out of range of potential interception.

When attacking a raid blindly, before the true composition and altitude is known, it is very difficult to get into the optimal attack altitude and aspect to the raid. Potentially nasty

TABLE 3
LUFTWAFFE CAPABILITIES

		August							September		
Date of change:		13	17	19	28	29	30	31	5	6	7
Number of days at this level:		4	2	9	1	1	1	5	1	1	9
Total Luftwaffe capability:											
Planes Flying	25	19	18	16	17	19	20	21	22	23	22
Fighters Available	12	8	8	8	9	11	12	12	12	12	12
Me109 Ace		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Me109		5	5	5	6	8	8	8	8	8	8
Me110		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Bombers Available	13	11	10	8	8	8	8	9	10	11	10
Me110 Divebomber		1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Ju 88		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Do 17		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
He 111		3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Ju 87		2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Bomb Load	19	15	14	12	12	12	12	13	15	17	16
Average Bombs per Plane	0.76	0.79	0.78	0.75	0.71	0.63	0.60	0.62	0.68	0.74	0.73
Average Hits per Raid Size											
4 Raiders	3.04	3.16	3.11	3.00	2.82	2.53	2.40	2.48	2.73	2.96	2.91
5 Raiders	3.8	3.95	3.89	3.75	3.53	3.16	3.00	3.10	3.41	3.70	3.64
6 Raiders	4.56	4.74	4.67	4.50	4.24	3.79	3.60	3.71	4.09	4.43	4.36
7 Raiders	5.32	5.53	5.44	5.25	4.94	4.42	4.20	4.33	4.77	5.17	5.09
8 Raiders	6.08	6.32	6.22	6.00	5.65	5.05	4.80	4.95	5.45	5.91	5.82

TABLE 4
GERMAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE
German Aircraft Performance versus British Aircraft
Average Hits per Attack, at otherwise even modifiers:

	Attacker		
Target:	Me 110	Me 109	Me 109 Ace
Spitfire	0.46	1.15	2.13
Hurricane	0.88	1.70	2.87

problems are associated with attacking blind. Your interception of the raid may be from below the true altitude of the raid. Based on the composition of the raid, discretion then may dictate that the interceptors take the safer course of breaking off, but this wastes a sortie. The discovery of a raid consisting solely of bombers is a pleasant surprise. Interception of a fighter sweep means a short day at the office, yielding only pilot fatigue for your effort. The critical problem is how to deal with potential top cover. Even if that possibility is ignored, the RAF can still waste the sortie if the raid is intercepted from above, and the true altitude is less than reported.

The alternative to blindly intercepting a raid is a strategy which has a different set of risks, yet can yield great reward. This strategy is to allow a raid to attack a target. While this strategy gives a free bombing run to the Germans, it also establishes the composition and exact altitude of the raid. The RAF patrols in close proximity, to achieve optimal attack position once the raid has dropped its bombs and is clearly identified. Armed with this information, the RAF can decide where, when, if and how to attack the raid, thereby maximizing the potential for a decisive victory. This strategy allows the increase of German bomber air combat performance (due to unloading the bombs), but this drawback is insignificant.

Each option has its relative merits and drawbacks. When the chance of a raid is 50 per cent or better, the protection of England warrants a patrol (with a post-bombing interception being the best way to minimize RAF losses). This decision should be balanced against pilot fatigue

and the high cost in victory points, especially in the short scenario. If the odds for a raid decrease well below 50 per cent, more weight should be given to playing a stand-by defense to conserve pilot fatigue.

COMBAT

Combat is inevitable. In fact, the RAF must engage the Luftwaffe when it is reasonable to do so. Rule number one, as was proven historically, is to take out the enemy fighters first. The logic is quite simple. You may preserve a target by eliminating the bombers, but the German fighters will have free reign to attack the Spitfires and Hurricanes. Such a trade may lessen the impact of a raid, but the RAF may be short a plane or a pilot. A British player with only one aircraft is very vulnerable; having none invites disaster.

While it is useful for the RAF to understand the capability of its aircraft versus the Luftwaffe, a more crucial piece of information is understanding these rolls in reverse. The more dangerous enemy fighters should become the number one target of RAF pilots. Table 4 shows the relative strengths of the Me109 and Me110 versus the Spitfire and Hurricane, assuming that there are no modifiers. Certainly, the Me109 Ace is the most dangerous aircraft in the Luftwaffe mix. The bottom line analysis is that although the Me110 has better guns, the performance rating of the Me109 more than makes up for this in terms of average number of expected hits per attack. Given that even a single hit has a 67 per cent chance of forcing a British fighter to break off combat, a good rule of thumb is to go for the Me109s first.

One example of an exception to the rule would be two Hurricanes attacking out of the sun versus two Me110s and one Me109. An attack versus the two Me110s provides better odds that the RAF will face only one plane for a counter-attack. The unattacked wingman will then provide a defensive benefit to the attacked Hurricane to bring down the German odds. This is only one example. The British player will undoubtedly find other reasons for varying from the standard rule of thumb in combat over the course of a campaign.

Table 5 illustrates one bright spot in this situation. Only two hits are required to guarantee putting an Me109 out of action. The two hits will either down the plane, both being placed in the same location, or at least one of the hits will affect the pilot or engine forcing it to withdraw from combat. Thus, the most formidable opponent of the RAF is also the most vulnerable aircraft to your attacks.

Further evaluation of this information shows that all other German planes have a 50 per cent chance of surviving one hit, but less than a 20 per cent probability of surviving two hits. Given that the average burst from a British fighter yields 1.33 hits, it will take two bursts to put a German plane out of commission. One burst may achieve two hits, or one burst may be all that can be taken. However, when given the option to fire two bursts, it should be exercised, lest the gamble result in a return attack. Taking any more than two bursts is most likely a waste of ammunition and invites more than one return shot from a gunner of the target aircraft.

TABLE 5
AIRCRAFT COMBAT DURABILITY

ME109, SPITFIRE			
Hits	Destroyed	Break Off	Fight On
1	0%	67%	33%
2	33%	67%	0%
3	78%	22%	0%
4	100%	0%	0%

HURRICANE			
Hits	Destroyed	Break Off	Fight On
1	0%	67%	33%
2	28%	67%	6%
3	67%	33%	0%
4	93%	7%	0%

JU87			
Hits	Destroyed	Break Off	Fight On
1	0%	50%	50%
2	25%	61%	14%
3	59%	38%	3%
4	84%	16%	1%

ME110, DO17			
Hits	Destroyed	Break Off	Fight On
1	0%	50%	50%
2	19%	67%	14%
3	48%	49%	3%
4	73%	26%	1%

JU88, HE111			
Hits	Destroyed	Break Off	Fight On
1	0%	50%	50%
2	14%	67%	19%
3	37%	57%	6%
4	61%	37%	2%

There are times when the fighters should be ignored. The limited cases are when attacking from below and all fighters are in top cover. Another case for ignoring fighters is when attacking head on, but not out of the sun. In these two latter cases, discretion may be the better part of valor, depending on the type and quantity of fighters present.

For the true numbers junkies, Table 6 provides useful information on the the relative odds of being able to obtain a certain number of bursts, based on modified performance differential, prior to rolling the performance dice. This information is useful in determining when RAF pilots should show discretion and break off combat.

One last comment on combat. The British player should try to dictate the terms of combat—and choose a target inland, such that damaged German aircraft will crash before they can get back across the Channel. Obviously this is not always possible. However, the further a German raid penetrates into England, the greater the odds a damaged plane will not be able to return to France. This decision should be based on tar-

TABLE 6
AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE

Perf. Advantage	No Bursts	1 Burst	2 Bursts	3+ Bursts
−4	97%	3%	0%	0%
−3	92%	6%	3%	0%
−2	83%	8%	6%	3%
−1	72%	11%	8%	8%
0	58%	14%	11%	17%
+1	42%	17%	14%	28%
+2	28%	14%	17%	42%
+3	17%	11%	14%	58%
+4	8%	8%	11%	72%
+5	3%	6%	8%	83%
+6	0%	3%	6%	92%

get vulnerability. Similarly, pay attention to the availability of a friendly airfield. Nothing is more frustrating than losing a fighter to an engine hit because there is nowhere to land.

REPAIR PRIORITY

Despite the best efforts of the British player, some damage will occur, and thought must be given to the priority of repair. With a scant two repair points per turn, you rarely will have enough points to accomplish needed repairs. Though a particular situation may dictate otherwise, the following are the recommended repair priorities:

1. *Planes.* Without planes the RAF cannot fight the Luftwaffe. The RAF needs two fighters to have a decent chance against any German raid. This priority falls out, however, if only one pilot is available and his aircraft is in flying condition. Of course, in this case, the RAF is faring very poorly, and all is probably lost if a replacement pilot is not forthcoming.

2. *Home base and Chain Home radar stations.* While repairing the Chain Home radar stations puts them back into a vulnerable status, the British player cannot afford the delayed reaction time to a raid. Each radar station damaged gives the raid one "free" impulse, thus giving the RAF less time to adequately defend the targets. This becomes a spiraling disadvantage once it is allowed to begin.

Equally devastating is the reduced fatigue recovery from a damaged home base. This increases the chance of having to fly a tired pilot and hitting the maximum fatigue level. Once RAF pilots cannot fly, targets cannot be defended, again leading to a spiraling disadvantage. Neither situation can be allowed.

3. *Based on analysis.* Perhaps the largest perceived hole in the system is being able to reduce targets to a damage status of one. This prevents the target, with the exception of the London hexes, from further attacks. Yet, at some time the target must be repaired, lest it yield victory points to the German player. Here are some examples of the issues which need to be considered. London hexes yield three victory points each, so their repair serves a purpose in the overall plans of the British player. Furthermore, damage to London leads to larger, and, therefore, tougher raids. Yet, the London hexes do not have a limit to the damage they can take. As a result, points spent on repairing a London hex may ultimately lead to no benefit if it is attacked repeatedly.

Dover presents the ultimate paradox. Dover is the most vulnerable target, so returning Dover to the status of a vulnerable target nearly assures it will be bombed again. Yet, having Dover as a vulnerable target means that other, more valuable targets, are protected.

These decisions will necessarily be based on the situation as it develops.

CONCLUSION

No one said that defending England would be easy.

The reader may leave this article with the thought that no definite strategy has been outlined for defending England. To a degree, that is correct. However, the lack of a "best" strategy is the beauty of *LONDON'S BURNING*. The British player is faced with many tough decisions, each with the potential for great reward, yet each decision has its cost. Now, the British player has some tools which can assist with those decisions. Tallyho!

★

Thirty Seconds Over London
Microscenarios for
LONDON'S BURNING
By Charles Bahl

*L*ONDON'S BURNING is in essence a campaign game. As each Luftwaffe raid passes over the green fields of southern England, the RAF player is forced to make a number of difficult decisions—decisions that affect not only the current game turn, but ones which will have repercussions for many turns to come. Should he protect Dover from a particularly heavy concentration of German bombers? Should he save his handful of precious pilots to use against a small, more manageable raid? Should he repair damage to his Chain Home radar stations or bring up badly needed new aircraft? Should he intercept enemy planes over the open ocean or attack them over the British countryside where his pilots will have a better chance of surviving a bail-out? These are the kind of decisions that make *LONDON'S BURNING*

such a demanding and enjoyable game—and one with tremendous replay value.

However, even the game's short scenario can take several hours to play, depending upon the type and concentration of raids the Luftwaffe sends up against you. If your time is at a premium, and yet you can't fight the urge to mix it up with Goering's best, the following microscenarios may be just the ticket. Each one should take no more than fifteen minutes to play (considerably less if a couple of Messerschmitts blow you to pieces). Each represents a single Luftwaffe raid and each presents a unique set of challenges. Though you will not have to make the tough strategic decisions required by the full game, in these scenarios, you will still face plenty of sticky tactical problems. Each scenario is specially constructed to test your best tactical

judgment and to reward good play on the part of the RAF. In addition, a "Par Score" is given for each scenario. This is the average Victory Point score achieved by players of the scenario during playtesting. The Par Score provides a standard against which you can measure your own achievements as an RAF pilot.

HOW TO PLAY THE SCENARIOS
Each of the microscenarios represents a single Luftwaffe raid. Except where noted in the scenario rules, all the rules for *LONDON'S BURNING* apply.

Setup

Chose a scenario and set up the playing pieces as indicated. Place the listed RAF aircraft on the designated base(s) or on patrol in the specified hex at the given altitude. RAF aircraft always begin each scenario with a full load of ammunition (15 seconds of bursts). If specified, pilots may begin the scenario with an ace status or with a fatigue level. If no pilot information is provided, he is considered to be a non-ace at fatigue level 0. Pilots are not carried over from scenario to scenario.

Set up the Luftwaffe raid as indicated. The "Composition" numbers give a list of the individual aircraft (by number) in the raid. Place the

aircraft counters face up at the specified altitude on the Altitude Display. There are no surprises in these scenarios for the RAF player. Place the raid marker on the map in the designated starting hex.

The "Notes" section lists any special circumstances that must be taken into consideration when playing the scenario.

Performing the Raid

Play out the scenario as you would any other raid except as noted here. During the Luftwaffe movement action of the raid procedure do NOT roll for random raid movement. Instead follow the indicated flight path for each move. If the scenario says "Move 2: 6" then on the Luftwaffe's second movement action of the raid, move the raid marker three spaces in direction 6. If all the aircraft in the raid have a movement factor of four, you must move the raid four hexes instead of three.

Each raid has an indicated target. If the raid passes over an undamaged target (or a London hex regardless of bomb damage) during its movement to its listed target, the raid ignores the target it is currently passing over. In these scenarios, only the listed target is bombed. In scenarios that have London as a target, a specific London hex is designated as the target. In this case, other London hexes are ignored as targets.

When a raid is intercepted (or intercepts) or is over its listed target, roll for the true altitude and top cover per the normal rules.

Victory Points

At the end of the scenario, score Victory Points as follows:

Each destroyed Luftwaffe fighter, "two-bomb" bomber or divebomber: +10
Each destroyed Luftwaffe "one-bomb" bomber (excluding divebombers): +5
Each hit on an undestroyed Luftwaffe aircraft: +1
Ea. ammo burst NOT used by RAF aircraft: +1
Each RAF aircraft destroyed: -10
Each point of bomb damage: -5
Each hit on an undestroyed RAF aircraft: -1
Each RAF pilot who dies as a result of a bail out (there is no penalty if a pilot dies for any other reason): -1
Each time the Luftwaffe Raid moves on the map before it is first intercepted (or before it first intercepts): -1

A negative score is considered a Luftwaffe victory; a positive score is an RAF victory; a score of zero is a draw. Regardless of whether or not the scenario is a Luftwaffe or RAF victory, you should consider yourself successful if you score better than the listed par score for the scenario.

[Those of you who quibble with the author's valuation of a pilot's life should remember that these scenarios are meant as training devices for air tactics. In the campaign game, the loss of any aircraft is putting your valuable pilots at risk and therefore the VP costs in these scenarios are piled into that event itself, while the additional bail-out loss is to penalize interceptions over the sea or shore—SKT]

SCENARIO 1 Par: -20

RAF
Stand-by: Hornchurch, M7M
Planes: Spitfire 1, Spitfire 2
RAID
Time: 7 am
Starting Location: 5
Size: 4
Reported Altitude: Angels 15
Composition: 1, 10, 16, 20
Move 1: 6   Move 2: 1   Move 3: 1
Target: Eastchurch

SCENARIO 2 Par: -4

RAF
Stand-by: Biggin Hill, M4
Planes: Hurricane 1, Spitfire 2
RAID
Time: 10 am
Starting Location: 1
Size: 5
Reported Altitude: Angels 10
Composition: 2, 14, 15, 16, 17
Move 1: 2   Move 2: 2   Move 3: 6
Move 4: 5   Move 5: 3
Target: London, O5
Notes: Three Chain Home Stations are considered to be damaged at the start.

SCENARIO 3 Par: 11

RAF
Stand-by: Debden, O11
Planes: Spitfire 1 Ace, Spitfire 2 Ace
RAID
Time: 5 pm
Starting Location: 6
Size: 4
Reported Altitude: Angels 25
Composition: 2, 3, 4, 5
Move 1: 1 Move 2: 1 Move 3: 1   Move 4: 1
Target: Redhill
Notes: Even though this raid is a fighter sweep, the raid must still stop upon reaching Redhill. It moves back toward France during its subsequent movement actions.

SCENARIO 4 Par: 20

RAF
Stand-by: Rochford, J8
Planes: Hurricane 1 Ace, Hurricane 2
RAID
Time: 2 pm
Starting Location: 5
Size: 4
Reported Altitude: Angels 5
Composition: 2, 16, 20, 24
Move 1: 5   Move 2: 6
Target: Convoy

SCENARIO 5 Par: -5

RAF
Stand-by: North Weald, O8
Plane: Spitfire 1
RAID
Time: 7 am
Starting Location: 3
Size: 4
Reported Altitude: Angels 25
Composition: 11, 16, 17, 18
Move 1: 2 Move 2: 6 Move 3: 4 Move 4: 6
Target: Thameshaven

SCENARIO 6 Par: 0

RAF
Stand-by: Gravesend, M7
Plane: Hurricane 1 Ace
Stand-by: Hawkinge, D6
Plane: Spitfire 2 Fatigue Level F4
RAID
Time: 10 am
Starting Location: 1
Size: 6
Reported Altitude: Angels 20
Composition: 13, 14, 16, 17, 24, 25
Move 1: 3   Move 2: 4   Move 3: 4
Move 4: 6   Move 5: 6
Target: London, N6

SCENARIO 7 Par: -11

RAF
Patrol: Lympne, E6 at Angels 15
Plane: Spitfire 1 Ace Fatigue Level F1
Patrol: West Malling at Angels 5
Plane: Spitfire 2 Ace Fatigue Level F1
RAID
Time: 2 pm
Starting Location: 4
Size: 5
Reported Altitude: Angels 20
Composition: 2, 3, 10, 16, 20
Move 1: 3   Move 2: 6   Move 3: 6
Target: Canewdon
Notes: One Chain Home Station is considered to be damaged at the start.

SCENARIO 8 Par: 11

RAF
Patrol: Manston, D9 at Angels 25
Plane: Hurricane 1 Fatigue Level F1
Patrol: Rochester, J6 at Angels 15
Plane: Hurricane 2 Fatigue Level F1
RAID
Time: 10 am
Starting Location: 4
Size: 6
Reported Altitude: Angels 20
Composition: 11, 12, 14, 16, 20, 24
Move 1: 3
Target: Hawkinge

SCENARIO 9 Par: -5

RAF
Patrol: Detling, I6 at Angels 15
Plane: Spitfire 1 Fatigue Level F5
Stand-by: Debden, O11
Plane: Hurricane 2
RAID
Time: 7 am
Starting Location: 5
Size: 5
Reported Altitude: Angels 20
Composition: 1, 2, 13, 14, 16
Move 1: 3   Move 2: 3   Move 3: 4
Target: Eastchurch
Notes: Two Chain Home Stations are considered to be damaged at the start.

SCENARIO 10 Par: 14

RAF
Stand-by: Stapleford Abbots, N7
Plane: Spitfire 1
Stand-by: Kenley, N3
Plane: Spitfire 2
RAID
Time: 5 pm
Starting Location: 2
Size: 5
Reported Altitude: Angels 10
Composition: 2, 10, 16, 20, 23
Move 1: 1   Move 2: 1   Move 3: 1
Target: Pevensey

★

HYPER SNIPER

A SANe look at this threat in *ASL*

By Mark C. Nixon

The length of this article runs a risk of misleading the reader to suspect that I attribute far more importance to sniper activity than is due. After all, in *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER (ASL)* your opponent's Sniper Activation Number (SAN) often appears low enough to warrant little fear, and who needs added worries in an already complex game? However, is the question really one of preparing for the *average* expected enemy sniper activity?

Many of us can remember games in which, despite a low SAN of 2 or 3, the number seemed to roll more often than was probable and at the most inopportune moments. We can recall games in which these SAN have been followed by a good many more sniper attacks than the average 33 percent (for a die roll of 1 or 2) and by a good many more die rolls of 1 than of 2. With this in mind, perhaps the entire sniper panorama can be better understood if we try to answer the question, "What can be done to protect against the enemy sniper and to enhance our own sniper activity, *without making harmful sacrifices elsewhere?*"

This article divides comments on snipers into four sections: Sniper Abatement, Sniper Attacks, Anti-Sniper and General Principles. Probably all players are aware of tactics which can be used to thwart the enemy sniper (abatement). Some of these are valuable stratagems, while others are extreme to the point of near uselessness—and can even be detrimental by virtue of squandering valuable energy and resources for little or no gain. Less obvious are the methods available to encourage your own sniper to get off his duff and join the battle (sniper attacks), as well as anti-sniper measures and some additional general principles to consider. This article investigates possible tactics in order to make intelligent choices, but knowledge of when and how rigorously to employ sniper procedures is key. Thus, I conclude each of the following sections with a recommendation. At times, this advice can hurt you. Do not follow it blindly. Individual

perspective is part of the beauty of the game. I will be delighted if you consider my recommendations, but when you sit down to play, use your own discretion.

SNIPER ABATEMENT

PILING ON

Most players embark upon a sniper abatement regimen after noticing that any 9-2 or better leader (hereinafter termed "Rambo") seems to suffer a disproportionate number of sniper hits. The ideal countermeasure would be to eradicate the enemy sniper. The best we can usually hope for, though, is keeping our best units from taking a sniper hit while less useful units take the heat instead. Welcome to the world of sniper abatement activity. The initial move is usually to stack extra units with Rambo. This can be an excellent choice for it combats the sniper while also enjoying the other benefits associated with close proximity to -2 and -3 leadership. Piling ever more and more units onto this stack, however, soon loses its effectiveness in helping pro-

TABLE 1. SNIPER POSSIBILITIES
(Expected sniper attacks per 100 SAN-capable dice rolls)

SAN:	2	3	4	5	6	7
SAN Frequency in 100 DR	2.77	5.55	8.33	11.11	13.88	16.66
Chance of Sniper Attack	.92	1.85	2.77	3.70	4.62	5.55
Chance Sniper Attack dr of 1	.46	.92	1.38	1.85	2.31	2.77

The relatively low frequency of actual sniper attacks, especially a sniper 1 attack, is a profound fact to consider before assigning disproportionate significance to SAN considerations. Still, it's just that single sniper attack die roll of 1 which can ruin your plans.

tect Rambo. At the same time, the massive stack is aligning itself to attract a big hit. Beware of figuring that, if two squads help keep the sniper away from Rambo, six half squads, a 7-0 and an 8-0 will do even better. You have overlooked the predicament you will face if Rambo *does* take the hit, despite all this security, bringing down the whole stack in a torrent of Leader Loss Morale Checks (LLMC).

Our Rambo stacked alone suffers 100 percent of the snipers which hit his location. Stacking with one other unit protects him from only 41.7 percent of the hits (since we must expect the enemy to choose Rambo on any Random Selection tie). This leaves Rambo to take 58.3 percent of the hits. Table 2 shows Rambo's diminishing exposure with additional covering units. Note that, no matter the number of units stacked with Rambo, there is always a 16.6 percent chance that he rolls a "6" on his Random Selection die roll and is selected for the hit.

TABLE 2. THE REALITY OF "PILING ON"

Number of units in stack	Percentage of shots hitting Rambo
1(Rambo)	100
2	58.3
3	42.1
4	34.0
5	29.2
6	26.1
7	23.4
...	...
Infinity	16.6

As units pile onto this stack, each lends additional protection to Rambo, yet progressively less than each previous unit. Exactly how many units are ideal to stack with Rambo is a personal decision, but somewhere exists an invisible ceiling above which additional units "piled on" become wasteful—the manpower would surely prove more beneficial elsewhere for some other game tasks. Think also of the enticing target you present the enemy as units pile higher and higher. This is an open invitation for your smiling opponent to throw all available fire at this one location to try to score a major coup (not in a frantic bid to generate a SAN, but in a reasonable attempt to break the stack), the magnitude of which can easily surpass the relatively insubstantial issue of sniper generation.

RECOMMENDATION: Put two units with each -2 and -3 leader when not moving. Use three units sparingly, and only with at least +2 Terrain Effect Modifier protection or when you just "have" to form that one hard hitting firegroup. Avoid three squads stacked together as a general rule and when faced with large enemy firegroups. (This advice is actually geared to utilize that Rambo Dice Roll Modifier more than to safeguard against the sniper.)

SNIPER BAIT

Step number two in the quest for sniper protection is to station units as sniper bait in hexes near or adjacent to Rambo. This does a better job of guarding against the sniper than overloading Rambo's own location, at least on the first sniper attack rolled. In fact, if you properly utilize the TEM and GEO techniques discussed below in conjunction with bait, you can make it impossible for the first sniper to harm Mr. Rambo (so long as you are willing to avoid putting him in certain hexes). Furthermore, you can bar subsequent sniper attacks against him aside from a Direct Hit (when the Sniper Random Location dice roll lands directly on Rambo's hex). Even when a Direct Hit (DH) is possible it should occur on only one of thirty-six Sniper Location dice rolls (DR). The worst case is with a SAN of 7 (16.6 percent probability), followed by the requisite 1 or 2 Activation dr (33 percent probability), and then the sniper still must roll a DH (2.7 percent probability). Gentlemen, we simply are not playing the game to exercise concern over the net 0.15 percent chance of this occurrence.

The most notable aspect of bait is that it provides an ideal use for dummy stacks because a sniper will attack dummies even after the opposing commander has long since deduced the subterfuge at play. Picture Rambo directing a heavy machinegun (HMG) in a level 2 building ready to spew death upon all attackers. During setup, the defender places a stack of seven dummy counters nearby. In his first Movement Phase (MPh), five of these dummy counters move away, one at a time, allowing each to add a concealment counter on top of itself to form five new dummy stacks, leaving two of the original dummies behind to make a total of six dummy stacks totally surrounding Rambo. This accomplishes the equivalent of twelve original dummy counters and now Rambo is completely insulated against any sniper other than a DH—all for the low, low price of seven dummy counters.


Figure 1. Barring a direct hit, the leader has a fairly effective screen of sniper bait.

Let us extend this thought just a bit. Players new to the game are quite often fooled into wasting game time and manpower resources countering dummy stacks. Experienced players, however, are only rarely hindered by dummies, and you may as well abandon all hope that an expert might be inconvenienced by dummy stacks. For the experts, then, the use of dummy counters as sniper bait is actually a more meaningful advantage (because they lack other worthwhile uses for them). New players have a better chance that their dummy stacks might serve the meaningful purpose of deceiving their equally green opponents.

RECOMMENDATION: Use dummy stacks for bait as much as possible. On occasion, use for bait some loose half squads, weak leaders (wounded leaders are great) and maybe even a squad here and there (Conscripts are good). The real troops, however, are usually needed elsewhere.

GEO

GEO is an abbreviation for the geometric characteristics of sniper defense. This tactic exploits the predictable sniper pattern to align Rambo so that a sniper, from its current location, cannot settle directly on him. Figure 2 shows an example. The essential GEO considerations are either linear or proximity. Six hexrows, each six hexes long, radiate from the sniper counter and

demark that which the sniper can strike with a DH (these hexrows are known as kill lanes). Notice the hex with the sniper counter itself is immune to a DH. You are employing GEO technique whenever you deliberately avoid the linear kill lanes or stay further from the six-hex sniper range than other potential sniper targets (avoiding proximity to the sniper).

Unfortunately, GEO techniques can only guard against the *next* sniper attack. Once the sniper's original location is altered by a sniper attack which moves the sniper counter to a new hex, you are facing a whole different sniper geometry. Exercising concern about the impending sniper, however, seems more perceptive than fretting about one or two hits down the line. The GEO techniques may actually be more rewarding with a low enemy SAN than with a high one because you are less likely to see more than one sniper attack with that lower SAN in play. Regulating your GEO/sniper relationship will by itself do absolutely nothing to safeguard Rambo if a sniper attack is rolled and finds him the only unit in play. This means GEO is worthwhile only when used in conjunction with sniper abatement tactics such as TEM and bait. Although you can ensure Rambo is not cleaning his weapons while sitting on a sniper kill lane, unless there is some bait out there, preferably in more vulnerable terrain, the sniper will strike Rambo nonetheless. The tangible value of GEO is that it can prohibit an initial DH and also can be used to help decrease the amount of bait needed to provide Rambo a reasonable sniper cushion.

RECOMMENDATION: Stay off the kill lanes if an equal position is available, but do not give up a +3 TEM for a +2 TEM just to avoid a kill lane.

TEM

The most eloquent sniper abatement tactic happens to be complemented by sniper rules written to guide you exactly where you almost always want to go—high TEM locations. What better place to establish Rambo with that HMG firebase than in a +3 stone building? Assign lesser units like that 8-1 Nixon bum to handle lower TEM positions (acting as a black hole for enemy sniper attacks). In fact, put Rambo in a stone location with merely two dummy bait stacks in adjacent lesser TEM on opposite sides of his hex and he is protected from the next sniper on everything but a DH. Go nuts and station six dummy stacks in lesser TEM all around Rambo as in Figure 3 and the sniper will have to knock out at least three of them before anything other than a DH could get to Rambo on an unbelievable—nay, mythic—fourth sniper attack.

All that aside, let's consider what is most likely in our everyday *ASL* routine. Whether on attack or defense, the most common place to find Rambo will be in a high TEM location. The situation is so basic to good *ASL* play, we often remain oblivious to it in the sniper context. Good tactics put Rambo in the highest TEM and the sniper rules cause most hostile sniper attacks to strike elsewhere. Here is an ongoing, game-generated reward for expert play.


Figure 2. Even though Rambo (the 10-2) is a mere four hexes from the enemy sniper, he cannot possibly suffer a sniper hit on the next attack due to the combined use of GEO and bait.

Figure 3. A complete screen of sniper bait precludes a sniper hit on Rambo (the 9-2) given any Random Location DR other than a Direct Hit. If the SAN is 7, the sniper in this situation should normally strike Rambo only once every 655 SAN-capable DR (SCDR). Since half of these would be a sniper 2, Rambo's location would take a sniper 1 hit only about once every 1310 SCDR! Without that sniper bait in place, Rambo's location would take a hit about every 18 SCDR. If the SAN is 2, Rambo's location is shot at only once every 3,890 SCDR (or once every 7,780 for a sniper 1), whereas the sniper would zero in on his location about once every 109 SCDR with no sniper bait in the way! Even after all of the above, any units "Piled On" to protect Rambo might save him from actually taking the shot himself.
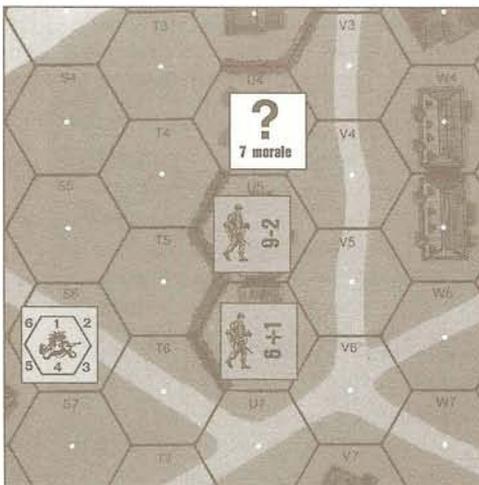
Figure 4. A mere two hexes of bait, coupled with Rambo's stone building TEM, preclude a sniper hit on anything other than a Direct Hit.

ELUSIVE TARGET

At game start and whenever relocated in lieu of attacking, the sniper counter must be placed within six hexes of six targets, if possible. Here is an opportunity to wield as a weapon the exact opposite of everything else sniper abatement has taught us with one tactic which can safeguard Rambo more surely than everything else (short of elimination of the enemy sniper). In any scenario with enough geographic space to permit, position Rambo far enough away from all clusters of six sniper targets to guarantee a sniper-free environment. This is markedly easier to accomplish at scenario start than to maintain as the game progresses.

The tactic should be fairly common practice for specific scenario setups, when the desire is to keep the sniper away from one force, no doubt sporting Rambo. "Point of No Return" (ASL 42) comes to mind because I suggested using this exact tactic in a past *GENERAL* article ("Desert Sands, Part II" Vol. 26, No. 1) to protect the German 10-3 leader, but there are plenty of other examples.

RECOMMENDATION: Give a thought during setup to whether you can create a sniper-free area for safely positioning a key leader.

FAST RAMBO

Whether shooting or moving, Rambo gets first consideration. He may find himself in a good or bad position relative to the enemy sniper. If all else remains equal, Rambo can use the timing of his fire and movement to avoid possible sniper shots. For example, suppose it is the beginning of the Prep Fire Phase (PFPh) and Rambo intends to direct a big attack. If the enemy sniper counter is nearby and Rambo finds himself exposed to sniper attack (it is shocking to consider, but Rambo has been inexplicably ignoring sniper abatement strategies), you may want to take his shot immediately to ensure it occurs before a sniper catastrophe strikes. On the other hand, if Rambo appears secure it might be advisable to fire other important, yet more vulnerable, units first. In the Movement Phase (MPh), it might likewise prove beneficial to move Rambo away from the hostile sniper before Defensive First Fire against other moving units gets a chance to generate a SAN and score a sniper hit. The flip side occurs when Rambo is sniper-secure but plans to move to a more sniper-exposed location. Then it would be better to move lesser units first in order to provide some sniper abatement defense in the area Rambo intends to approach.

RECOMMENDATION: Be attentive to fire and movement sequencing considerations. Remember, however, that the enemy sniper is not the most dangerous thing out there—hostile HMG fire with negative modifier leader direction is still the bigger threat.

SNIPER ATTACKS

FIREFIGHT MECHANICS

I want to make a statistical point without burdening you with a lot of numbers, so the following is a broad generalization. Consider a defender in stone buildings with a SAN 5 facing an attacker in +1 TEM who has a SAN 3. The defender has arranged his troops one per location, whereas the attacker has stacked squads in order to gather firegroups large enough to overcome the +3 TEM of his opponent. At the outset of this firefight, if each player rolls an equal number of SAN-capable DR the defender can expect to benefit from twice as many sniper attacks with his SAN 5 as can the attacker with his SAN 3. His sniper expectation, however, should actually be much higher for several reasons.

Because the attacker has stacked his units, every effective shot at those stacks will entail several SAN-capable DR. Since these stacks are in lower TEM, effective shots should come more frequently than similar effects against the defending units. On the other side of "No Man's Land," with a single unit per location, only one SAN-capable DR per effective shot is rolled against the defense, and because of the +3 TEM such effects should be tougher to obtain. As we can normally expect the attacker to field more squads than the defender, the attacker's stacked squads may be taking more shots than the dispersed defender. Each extra shot adds another SAN-capable DR.

To emphasize the point, consider this example at its extreme. The defender gets double the possible sniper attacks due to his SAN 5 vs. SAN 3 advantage. Double it again due to his stacking advantage and double it a third time due to the TEM differential. In this case, the defender can expect roughly eight times more snipers than his opponent! Of course, he will still be getting just the "face value" double number of snipers per 100 SAN-capable DR, but because of the mechanics of this particular firefight (he rolls little and his opponent rolls a lot) his advantage of *actual* sniper results has geometrically leaped to a very potent strength. Take it one step further and allow our defender a SAN 7 vs. an attacker with SAN 2 in this situation. The face value of six times more snipers doubled for TEM and doubled again for stacking advantage yields an expected twenty four times more snipers! SAN values inherent in the scenario, combined with tactical doctrines employed by these two combatants, have elevated sniper activity to a level the defender might realistically expect to dominate the scenario.

The conclusion to draw from this example, however, is nowhere near as extravagant as this big number might suggest at first glance. The situation of one side wielding a sniper which is 24 or even eight times more potent than the other should probably never occur throughout the duration of an entire scenario. I believe isolated instances of it might occur at isolated times within scenarios. It is, however, specifically when you find yourself in the midst of a scenario facing sniper odds at such high magnitude that you should feel most strongly drawn to the sniper abatement tactics discussed previously.

RECOMMENDATION: Making a lot of small or mid-sized attacks against stacked enemy units (rather than just a few large attacks against single units) is the correct procedure if you want to generate sniper attacks against your opponent. At the same time, the more attack DR we make the more likely our own troops will suffer retaliatory enemy sniper attacks.

SAN INITIATIVE

A player can control his game to the point of gaining SAN initiative only in his own player turn, and can do so during either the PFPh, the MPh or the Advancing Fire Phase (AFPh).

The phasing player controls this initiative because it is his option to either Prep Fire at the enemy or to move. Considered from a tunnel vision perspective of sniper considerations to the exclusion of all else, a player in the PFPh facing enemy units arranged in stacks while his sniper is zeroed in to nail the enemy Rambo might be enticed into firing at those stacks not only to try to break them, but also to reap the ancillary benefit of directing a sniper to dance on the enemy Rambo's head. In this situation, the sniper is another weapon in your arsenal, albeit not a very potent one. On the other hand, when Prep Fire fails to offer such fine SAN opportunity, the moving player might interpret this as some slight enticement to forego Prep Fire in order to move into an alignment more favorable to sniper activity.

At times, the advantage may be so insignificant as to be meaningless in comparison to other game events and the player should not feel compelled to needlessly fault his own play for an exceedingly remote bad stroke of luck which brings a devastating sniper attack upon him. Yet, at other times conscious manipulation of SAN initiative might prove decisive.

RECOMMENDATION: There are more meaningful reasons for Prep Firing or not Prep Firing, moving or not moving, but Sniper Activation most certainly must take its place in the spectrum.

ANTI-SNIPER

SNIPER VS. SNIPER

There are two ways the sniper vs. sniper battle rages. Most obvious is the ability of one sniper to eliminate the other. Obviously, if you knock the enemy sniper out of the game with a KIA, there will be no need to concern yourself with hostile sniper worries for the duration of that scenario. If you Pin him, you will have gained at least a momentary respite from his evil ways.

Much more common, however, is the likelihood that your sniper counter itself will step into the fray and be subjected to enemy sniper attacks. It has happened for and against all of us and can be much more than just a random piece of good (or bad) luck. It is common practice among ASL players to position a sniper counter to purposely disrupt enemy sniper strikes.

The ability of your sniper counter to draw repeated enemy effective sniper attacks with die rolls of 2 can prove a godsend. The risk is that your opponent might generate a die roll of 1 and your sniper is killed. When those enemy sniper die rolls of 1 occur, we must question our decision to locate our sniper as bait. Ineffective as he might be, an active SAN 2 still retains a chance for a major league hit on the enemy Rambo. Losing your sniper to an enemy sniper attack would relinquish this offensive strike capability while possibly doing so little as sparing a HS from breaking or so much as saving the life of

your own Rambo. It could be inconsequential or it could be the game. Making a conscious decision to place a SAN 2 sniper counter in harm's way runs the risk of total loss of sniper potential, while a higher SAN sniper that is killed is reduced but still around. Therefore, it may be wiser to limit yourself to utilizing a higher SAN sniper counter for such a purpose.

That said, it is also true that a sniper counter represents both an uncertain strike capability and a known defensive deterrent for enemy sniper attacks. It is not surprising that common practice among many ASL players is to chose the latter in favor of the former. The thinking here is take a known strength, reduce the luck factor, and try to move closer toward a game which can be decided on skill. With this line of reasoning, use of your sniper counter as bait might be regarded as a conscious, aggressive, defensive tactical move. This makes it easier to categorize as a passive act any decision to leave him floating in space in the hope of a meaningful strike against the enemy.

RECOMMENDATION: This one is a toss-up that must be judged according to the situation and how lucky you feel.

SNIPER ACTIVATION

It should be obvious without too much emphasis here that you should monitor events and know well what does and what does not allow a Sniper Activation attempt. There is no mystery in this; it is simply a matter of reading rule A14.1 (1992 version). Make sure your opponent does not get away with rolling for Sniper Activation on To Kill rolls and other activities such as Excessive Speed Breakdown, Crew survival, sD usage and Bog DR which we have all seen some players *mistakenly* lump into the general "Task Check" category of SAN-capable DR. Look carefully at the definitions; if the activity is not specifically listed as SAN-capable, then you are not susceptible to Sniper Activation.

RECOMMENDATION: Ensure that your opponent does not roll any mistaken Sniper Activations by knowing the rules!

SNIPER CHECK

Rolling a Sniper Check to nail that sniper is an uncommon luxury. A player must have unaffected Good Order units in the location attacked by the sniper. Further, these units must have neither moved nor fired that player turn and (because they will become Temporarily Immobilized) must not be needed for conducting any more meaningful activities the rest of the player turn. It is rare enough for commanders to field such a stack of units, let alone that the enemy sniper selects it as a target. The practice of keeping units dispersed in order to avoid the hazards of stacking plays right into the sniper's hands. He can usually find exactly what he wants—a solitary unit which will be unable to retaliate after the sniper attack. Of course, when the sniper does go after a bigger target, there is the insulating fact that players habitually have bigger and better plans for their killer stacks than to attempt the low odds DR required for a success-

ful Sniper Check. As a final note, beware the unique capability of the Japanese squad to withstand an effective sniper attack die roll of 1 and still roll an immediate Sniper Check!

RECOMMENDATION: Roll 'em when you can, but that will not be very often. Your most likely Sniper Check chances will come during your opponent's player turn when you might have units with no targets. Given the option to move, shoot or roll a Sniper Check, I almost always skip the check.

SAN EROSION

During the playtest of the *RED BARRICADES (RB)* campaign games, playtesters noticed one worthwhile tactic was to eliminate the enemy sniper early in the campaign with a series of Sniper Checks conducted by large stacks of squads (easily assembled into "sniper hunter packs" with the quantity of squads available). Once the enemy SAN was reduced below two, the balance of the campaign could be fought without sniper worries—quite a significant advantage in such a lengthy encounter. Although that flaw was amended to provide a means of rebuilding SAN strength during a *RB* campaign, the lesson is one worth remembering in other long scenarios where your opponent has a relatively low SAN.

RECOMMENDATION: In some long scenarios (such as "The Last Bid"), the tactic of nailing the enemy sniper early can prove quite profound.

LIGHT MORTARS AND OTHER FOOLISH SHOOTING

Short of killing your opponent's sniper, it is impossible to completely eliminate enemy sniper activity. Sniper abatement procedures do nothing to limit enemy sniper operations, they merely hope to diminish the painfulness of results. Avoidance of foolish shooting, however, will curtail the probability of hostile sniper attacks as well as lessen your own frustration over suffering SAN results created by your own ill-advised shots. Of course, if you never shoot you will endure fewer sniper attacks than other ASL players, but you will probably never win a scenario. Somewhere there exists a line separating legitimate shots from foolish shooting, and it is the advanced squad leader's responsibility to identify that frontier.

The definitive example of foolish shooting involves use of Light Mortars against troops in high TEM. Here is a weapon with Rate of Fire (ROF) 2 or 3 which might have been provided to your troops by the enemy sniper school. The enemy *wants* you to shoot these weapons as often as you can, because your results against that squad in a stone building will typically call in a sniper attack on your own Rambo long before any effect is registered against the enemy. Firing such light weapons merely to gain Acquisition is another symptom of the foolish shooting syndrome, especially during Defensive Final Fire when the acquired hex will easily be vacated by advancing enemy troops. (Of course, used in conjunction with Air Bursts, these mortars assume a greatly enhanced battlefield presence.) A foolish shot which hits paydirt, though,

for your efforts and the first will no doubt always hold a special place in your hearts, no matter how many more you get over the years. . . Speaking of which, let's congratulate those players who managed to hit doubles and triples this year. While some of us strive in vane year after year to prove that the first win was not a fluke, others show their range of abilities by capturing more than one in a single year. Congratulations go to: Ken Gutermuth (*BASEBALL STRATEGY, TITLE BOUT, CANDIDATE*), Bruno Sinigaglio (*AFRIKA KORPS, BATTLE OF THE BULGE '81, WATERLOO*), Jon Diminnie (*MARCH MADNESS, SUPERSTAR BASEBALL*), Paul Tsevich (*ROADS TO GETTYSBURG, STONEWALL JACKSON'S WAY*), Bruce Monnin (*AUCTION, CIRCUS MAXIMUS*), Jack Morrell (*BATTLE OF THE BULGE '91, D-DAY '91*), Bruce Reiff (*FOOTBALL STRATEGY, WIN PLACE & SHOW*), and Trevor Bender (*CIVIL WAR, SPEED CIRCUIT*).

Run almost the way you'd imagine a relay race on the internet, the AvalonCon Team tournament is an elusive competition for bragging rights with few spectators and many competitors. Most "team" sports involve some interrelationship between team members. In the case of this team tournament, that relationship is often familial or home-town friendship, but rarely can one team member help another. I enjoyed the camraderie of hearing of my teammates' efforts. I suppose it is akin to tag-team wrestling *if the wrestlers would obey the rule prohibiting their simultaneous occupation of the ring*. Of course, some gamers have been known to jump in the same "ring" with team members, but I haven't yet detected any piggy-backing maneuvers like we used to see in roller derby. More often, that little mark on the participant badge (indicating the game is for team points) becomes the mark of death in a multiplayer game (as is being editor of this magazine perhaps). I wisely chose a game where only the dice could foil me. It does not surprise me that the six top teams this year rarely competed for their teams in multiplayer games:

Points	Name	Team Members
13 (102)	Jerry's Kids	Byron Stingley *TPS*, Michael Arrighi *BKN*, Joe Bellas *HCR*, Jeff Otto *RTG*
9 (168)	Team Doily	D. Greenwood *BKN*, R. Pfeiffer *ADV*, B. Cleary *FBS*, S. Greenwood *FI5*
9 (109)	AHIKS Europe I	H. Gratz *A3R*, M. Cowles *BKN*, N. Frydas *W&P*, T. Oleson *TPS*
9 (81)	Will Game for Food	E. Beach *SIV*, E. Kraska *SOA*, F. Speck *HCR*, R. Rooks *SJW*
8 (281)	Token Female	M. Ehlers *ROR*, L. Ehlers *ACV*, J. Clark *HWD*, O. Loeyendecker *ASL*
8 (186)	Junta	E. Anderson *ATS*, J. Emery *BKB*, B. Young *UPF*, S. Pfeiffer *BRI*

(parentheses indicate the total number of participants in the team's tournaments)

I tip my hat to Michael Ehlers who must have conveniently forgotten his badge while winning one of the most cutthroat games around (*REPUBLIC OF ROME*) to put his team on this esteemed list. It looks like the competition in the Great Campaigns of the American Civil War series games has created friendships and teams among the top players. ...As for the Manly Men (7 points), I don't know how you can ask Ken Gutermuth to win more games for you—it is too bad that he couldn't run more than his fair share of the team's legs to ensure that his multiple victories were not just individual ones.

Although every game master deserves special thanks from us all, we encourage excellence in the performance of these duties by allowing players to rate their GMs. This year the top six ratings went to Dave Terry (*B17*), Neal Schlaffer (*EIS*), Russ Gifford (*ASL*), Greg Mayer (*MOV*), Bruce Monnin (*WAS*) and John Ellman/Ed Okimoto (*MMS*). (For those curious, John has done such a great job of organizing the *MARCH MADNESS* tournament in the past, that this year's substitute, Ed, vocally admits that the thing nearly runs itself now—gee, John, did you get better ratings this year due to your absence from the first few heats? We kid, because we love.)

AvalonCon '96 runs so smoothly that Don Greenwood can relax over a game of *BREAKOUT NORMANDY*.

MOST POPULAR EVENTS

The top tournaments, ranked by number of participants, reveals the rather eclectic interests of our gaming community. Several out-of-print, quick card games competed with weekend-long, all-consuming events for top honors. Two brand new games showed strong interest. Neither multi-player nor two-player games eclipsed each other. Although no computer game tournaments make it into the top events, they did show strong increases over previous years—and even the names of a few grognards appear on their participant lists. Meanwhile, the classics are becoming progressively weaker draws, although their resilience is commendable, considering the lack of entrants on some much more recent game titles. Twelve events gathered 50 or more participants (roughly double the average event size):

Air Baron	118
Advanced Squad Leader	110
History of the World	102
Slapshot	75
Titan	66
Circus Maximus	65
Adel Verpflichtet	59
Hannibal: Rome vs. Carthage	58
Britannia	55
Breakout: Normandy	54
We The People	54
Diplomacy	50

The celebrated, quick-playing *WE THE PEOPLE* system games (including *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE*) make excellent tournament games, as reflected by their place on this list. The Great Campaigns of the American Civil War series games (of which there are now five) jointly drew 93 participants for the individual games and provided an opportunity for participants to vie for crowing rights for their ability with the whole series. Several others from this list also fielded respectable numbers of participants for the sequel games using the same system. Some events are becoming a ritual whose popularity has little to do with player's ownership of the game. *SLAPSHOT* may never gain the top slot, but I dare say the hijinx of the event organizers will keep this late Saturday night event a strong one in future years.

Our summaries begin with the largest events and their sister system games. The number of participants is listed next to the event headings below.

AIR BARON   118

During the development of *AIR BARON*, we envisioned it as an excellent convention game. And so it turned out to be. This best-attended tournament at Avaloncon '96, benefitted from the use of four qualifying rounds to overcome the handicap of being a game that had been on the market for only one month. Most of the players were learning the game on the spot. Fortunately, there were many entrants who already knew the rules, selflessly taught the game, and offered suggestions to the beginners (which cost a notable number of those good sports a chance to advance).

Players found a variety of forms of airline competition during the qualifying rounds. In one six-player game, each player owned one spoke of the JFK hub at the same time. In another, two players were convinced the other was winning. It came down to put-up-or-shut-up, so they agreed to switch airlines in the middle of the game. While most games were finished in the expected hour or hour and a half, some games lasted four hours, with every player close to winning at some point in the game.

The semifinals involved three tables, with the first and second place at each table advancing to the final. Not unexpectedly, the six finalists played the last round quite seriously. Jack Jaeger pursued a defensive LAX strategy, entrenching that hub with jumbos and foreigns before expanding. He eventually won with 220 in market share and $82 in cash. Chuck Foster earned second place with 170, while Jon Kwiatkowski (165), Marvin Birnbaum (123), Robert Taylor (94) and Kenny Rothstein (66) all deserve credit for making it to the final through such a large field.

AVALONCON 1996 ☆ HUNT VALLEY, MD

Across Five Aprils
David Metzger
Pittsburgh, PA
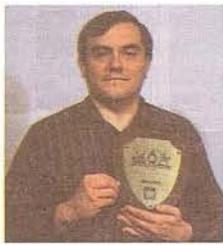
Acquire
Albert Bingaman
Reading, PA
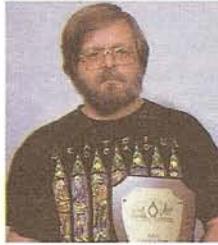
Adel Verpflichtet
Ray Pfeifer
Baltimore, MD

Advanced Civilization
Joe Gunderson
Indianapolis, IN
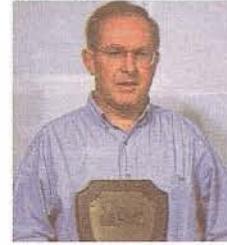
Advanced 3rd Reich
Michael Mitchell
Roswell, GA

Age of Renaissance
Mike May
New York, NY
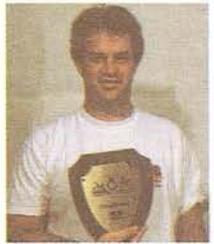
Blackbeard, Road Kill
John Kilbride
Philadelphia, PA

BreakOut Normandy
Hank Buckhalter
McMinnville, TN

Brittania
Scott Pfeiffer
Simpsonville, SC

Candidate, Title Bout, BBS
Ken Gutermuth
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Decathlon
John Weber
Laurel, MD

Dinosaurs of Lost World
Christina Hancock
Amherst, NH

Football Strategy, WP&S
Bruce Reiff
Powell, OH

Greed
Randy Cox
Clemson, SC
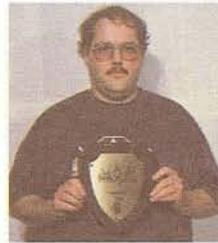
Guerilla
Caleb Cousins
Bangor, ME

Gunslinger
Steve Kulinich
Westford, VT

Hannibal
Tom Drueding
Philadelphia, PA
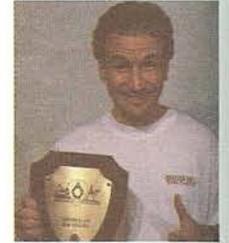
History of the World
Keith Levy
Baltimore, MD

Merchant of Venus
Tom Stokes
Trenton, NJ
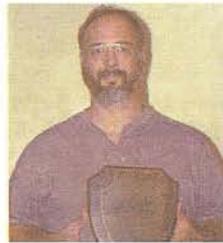
Mustangs
David Chilcote
Pasadena, MD

Naval War
Michael Hart
Crofton, MD

Panzer Leader
Robert Beyma
Pocomoke, MD

Pax Brittanica
Eric Olin
East Haven, CT
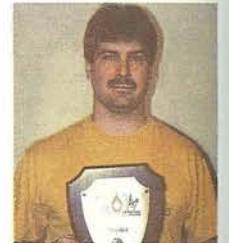
Paydirt
Harry Flawd
Lancaster, PA

Stonewall in the Valley
Ed Beach
Columbia, MD

Stonewall Jackson's Way
Paul Tsevich
Miami Shore, FL

The Russian Campaign
Tom Gregorio
Norristown, PA

Titan
Ben Foy
Alexandria, VA

Titan 2
Brian Sutton
Laurel, MD

TV Wars
Richard Launius
Dayton, OH

96 · CHAMPIONS

Air Baron
Jack Jaeger
Richmond, VA
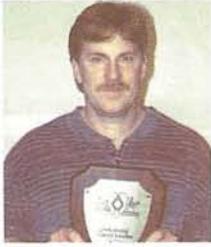
ASL
Tom Morin
Florence, MA
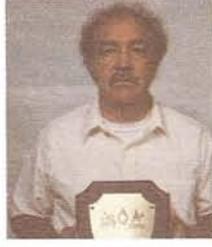
AK, Bulge '81, Waterloo
Bruno Sinigaglio
Delta Junction, AK

Attack Sub
John Emory
Greer, SC
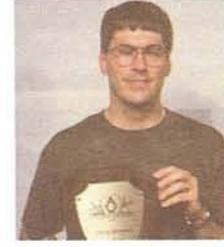
Auction, Circus Maximus
Bruce Monin
Minster, OH

B-17
Robert Hamel
Newington, CT

Diplomacy
Will Wible
Virginia Beach, VA

Dune
Bruce Bernard
Fairview, PA

1830
Christian Goetze
Amherst, NH

Empires in Arms
Jim Chatham
Westland, MI

Enemy In Sight
Fred Gosnell
Vienna, VA
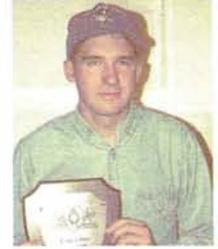
Facts In Five
Luke Kratz
Pocatello, ID

History of World w/bidding
James Pei
Austin, TX

Kingmaker
Justin Thompson
Charlottesville, VA

Kremlin
Sean Cousins
Bangor, ME

Machiavelli
Mark Franceschini
Owings Mills, MD

Maharaja
Dave Gantt
Greenville, SC

March Madness & SSB
John Diminnie
Knoxville, TN

Pro Golf
Tom Pavy
Dayton, OH

Rail Baron
Heikki Thoen
Montreal, QUE

Republic of Rome
Michael Ehlers
Baltimore, MD

Slapshot
Leonard Omolecki, Jr.
Nanticoke, PA

Speed Circuit / Civil War
Trevor Bender
Woodbridge, VA

Stocks & Bonds
Andy Lewis
Lewes, DE

Tyranno Ex
Tom DeMarco
Riverside, NJ
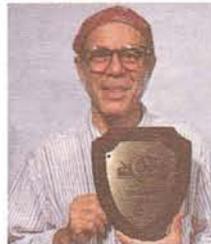
Up Front
Bill Edwards
Richmond, VA

Victory in the Pacific
Bob Kondrack
Reading, PA
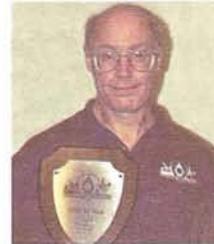
War At Sea
Steve Packwood
Eagan, MN

We the People
George Seary
Endwell, NY
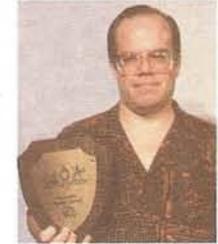
Wrasslin' Battle Royal
Mike Stachowski
Colden, NY

AH Philosophy...*(Continued from pg. 19)*

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER   110

Participants played six rounds to determine a champion and a seventh for tie-breaking purposes among those who fell short of the plaque. For only the second time in six years, neither Gary Fortenberry nor Mike McGrath were in the finals.

In round 4, 1995 ASLOK winner Louie Tokarz took down the number one seed and former champ Mike McGrath in KGP 7. In round 5, Louie was the top undefeated seed left, followed by Eric Givler. But Tom Morin's Chinese defenders held Louie's Japanese attackers for 0-10 in CC's at Totsuguki. Michael Rodgers lost a tough matchup with Eric Givler in Tiger of Tongoo, while Carl Fago ousted newcomer Carl Nogueira from the land of the undefeated. However, Nogueira wasn't done yet— in his round six game he tagged Tokarz with a second loss.

Thus Morin, Fago and Givler became the only undefeated players to reach round six, setting up the final assault on the crown. As the top ranked player with only one loss, Mike McGrath was the chosen eliminator. Givler took his option of challenging McGrath. If Givler were to succeed, he'd play the winner of the Fago vs. Morin battle for the championship. When Mike bested Eric in TOT's Black Friday, Tom Morin and Carl Fago knew they were playing for the the crown. In the early going, it looked as though Carl had the upper hand—but a big shift occurred halfway through the game, and Tom had Carl fighting for his life. In the end, Carl could not deny Tom the victory. After playing more than nine hours of Cold Crocs, Tom Morin went home to New England as the 1996 Avaloncon *ASL* champion.

The top players all agreed that the skill level of unranked *ASL*ers has increased, in line with the number of *ASL* tourneys across the country.

Scenario breakout:

Round 1: Finns/Minors/French
ASL 1:	5-6	ASL 76:	3-5
ASL U:	11-6	ASL A88:	0-3
ASL A81:	5-5	TOT 17:	1-2

Round 2: Russians
ASL 10:	1-3	ASL A68:	3-9
ASL T7:	0-3	ASL A80:	8-7
DASL 3:	3-0	WCW 7:	7-6

Round 3: Japanese/Italians
ASL A82:	8-6	ASL G8:	2-1
ASL A83:	9-3	ASL A72:	7-8
ASL A86:	4-1	DASL ??:	0-0

Round 4: Americans
KGP 5:	3-0	ASL 11:	2-3
KGP 7:	2-4	ASL G25:	5-9
ASL G6:	3-4	CH 44:	5-7

Round 5: Chinese/Partisan
ASL A60:	2-11	ASL 30:	3-2
DASL A10:	2-3	ASL G15:	2-4
CH 25:	7-5	CH 11:	2-1

Round 6: British/Commonwealth
ASL 37:	0-1	BB3:	6-2
ASL A25:	3-10	BB5:	5-4
DASL A12:	6-0	TOT 28:	2-2

Round 7: Germans/Free For All
DASL 1:	2-2	CH 26:	0-2
ASL A:	0-5	ASL A71:	1-0
ASL A70:	3-2	TOT 25:	2-1

All Others:
ASL 27:	1-0	ASL A101:	1-0
ASL A74:	0-1	ASL A104:	2-2
ASL A93:	2-0	RB3:	0-1
ASL A98:	1-0	UG19:	1-0
ASL A99:	1-0	CH 14:	1-0

Russ Gifford organizes another successful ASL tournament.

SQUAD LEADER/CROSS OF IRON   10/9

Both events used the half bid mechanism for scenarios. Due to time constraints; both *COI* and *SQL* were reduced to four rounds of play. The excitement level was high throughout due to bidding, new scenarios, many players in the hunt until the conclusion of the last round and the PLC inclusion.

Chuck Leonard, Bill Thomson, Kevin Welsh ('95 *SQL* champ) and Pete Pollard all advanced their PLCs to a 9-2 rank with Kevin edging into a first place finish at 92(+6) elan and Pete placing second.

Eric Stranger ('94 *SQL* champ) placed first in *SQL* ahead of Kevin Welsh who captured second. Pete Pollard awed his peers by advancing his PLC to a 10-2(+3) status and surviving to tell the tale. Snipers will be ready next year.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD   102

This large event followed its traditional three-round format with first and second place players plus a few others advancing to the semi-final round. Most games were closely-contested. The final game was decided in the last epoch, in which at least three players still had an excellent chance to win. Local talent and contributor to *The GENERAL* Keith Levy emerged with the victory over the final table of top-notch players: Michael Ehlers, Mark Peters, Stefan Kryzwicki, Kathy Stroh and Paul McCarthy.

1996 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS	
EVENT	**WINNER**
Across Five Aprils 40	David Metzger
Acquire 32	Al Bingaman
Adel Verpflichtet 59	Ray Pfeifer
Advanced Civilization 28	Joe Gunderson
Advanced Third Reich 31	Michael Mitchell
Age of Renaissance 30	Mike May
Air Baron 118	Jack Jaeger
ASL 110	Tom Morin
Attack Sub 40	John Emery
Auction 32	Bruce Monnin
B-17 32	Robert Hamel
Blackbeard 43	John Kilbride ★
Breakout: Normandy 54	Hank Burkhalter
Britannia 55	Scott Pfeiffer
Candidate 30	Ken Gutermuth
Circus Maximus 64	Bruce Monnin
Decathlon 39	John Weber
Dinosaurs of Lost World 22	Christina Hancock
Diplomacy 50	Will Wible
Dune 22	Bruce Bernard
1830 45	Christian Goetze
Empires In Arms 27	Jim Chatham
Enemy In Sight 36	Fred Gosnell
Facts in Five 25	Luke Kratz
Flight Commander II 19	Stan Buck
Football Strategy 30	Bruce Reiff
Greed 23	Randy Cox
Guerilla 30	Caleb Cousins
Gunslinger 22	Steve Kolinich
Hannibal 58	Thomas Drueding
History of the World 102	Keith Levy
History of the World w Bid 35	James Pei
Kingmaker 36	Justin Thompson
Kremlin 20	Sean Cousins ★
Machiavelli 33	Mark Franchiscini
Maharaja 20	David Gantt ★
March Madness 41	Jon Diminnie
Merchant of Venus 48	Tom Stokes
Mustangs 22	David Chilcote
Naval War 24	Michael Hart
Panzer Leader 20	Rob Beyma ★
Pax Britannica 22	Eric Olin
Paydirt 19	Harry Flawd
Pro Golf 43	Tom Pavy
Rail Baron 46	Heikki Thoen ★
Republic of Rome 41	Michael Ehlers ★
Roadkill 25	John Kilbride
Slapshot 75	Leonard Omolecki
Speed Circuit 26	Trevor Bender
Stocks & Bonds 26	Andy Lewis
Stonewall In the Valley 20	Ed Beach
Stonewall Jackson's Way 27	Paul Tsevich
The Russian Campaign 20	Tom Gregorio
Titan 66	Ben Foy
Titan 2 26	Brian Sutton
Title Bout 20	Ken Gutermuth ★
TV Wars 22	Richard Launius
Tyranno Ex 25	Tom DeMarco
Up Front 46	William Edwards III
VITP 46	Robert Kondracki
War At Sea 27	Steve Packwood
We The People 54	George Seary
Wrasslin' 22	Don Greenwood
Wrasslin' Battle Royal 20	Mike Stachowski
Best GM	Dave Terry
Sportsmanship	Jim Matt

Team Tournament: Jerry's Kids – Byron Stingley TPS 6, Michael Arrighi BKN 0, Joe Bellas HCR 7, Jeffrey Otto RTG 0 = 13 [102]
\# is number of entrants   ★ is defending champion

HISTORY OF THE WORLD w/bidding   35

James Pei won this well-attended first-time event based upon a *GENERAL* variant. Jim took a substantial lead on the last turn, bidding 40 victory points for powerful British Empire card *[a nice deal for an empire that can yield as much as 70 points.]* The other finalists were Bruce Bernard, Rob Kircher, John Weber, Greg Courter and Jason Levine.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS   64

Charioteers, driving in ten races, lashed and crashed their way through three preliminary heats of his classic game. Points were scored both for the order of finish and amount of damage inflicted upon opponents' cars, drivers and horses. All preliminary race winners plus the six highest scoring non-winners advanced to the finale. Of the ten preliminary race winners, three drove light cars, six drove normal cars, and one drove a heavy car. William Edwards pleased the Roman Emperor and advanced to the final race by inflicting 44 damage points upon his opponents. He also won the award for inflicting the most damage during the tournament.

In the final race, eight heavy, six normal and two light chariots lined up to do battle. One of the light chariots, driven by Duane Wagner, was quickly reduced to a team speed of 6. The other, driven by Bruce Monnin, was attacked several times by nearly all other players, but Bruce either braked or evaded to avoid the attacks, or the attackers rolled 'no effort' or a low dice roll on the car ram attacks. Bruce was also boxed in on one occasion by John Guyton's chariot but luckily got out by lash attacking John's driver and getting a swerve result. He then had to run the final straightaway gauntlet after he had lapped about half of the field. Still, none of the other players could succeed in either boxing him or in killing one of his horses. Thus, to the amazement of all present, Bruce crossed the finish line first, a full turn ahead of Steve Cameron, who finished second for the second year in a row.

HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE   58

The allure of this game drew a crowd of inexperienced players to test the waters. In order to save time in the single-elimination format, the length and victory conditions were altered and then players had to bid initial PC markers for side. The new requirement was for Carthage to have a two-province advantage and more PCs at the end of turn 4 (a victory condition that greatly favored Hannibal, catching off-guard some players who thought the game imbalanced in Rome's favor). In the end, the players reaching the final rounds did so at the helm of Carthage. In the final round, Karsten Engelmann gambled that his opponent Thomas Drueding would want to play Rome, but found himself playing Rome instead after Drueding bid 4 PCs for Carthage. As the fourth turn neared a close, Engelmann had held Drueding's Carthaginians to an even province count, only to be betrayed by the switch of allegiance of Syracuse. The tie-breaking count of PC markers showed Karsten a few PCs short, giving Drueding the plaque by a slender margin. Orhan Omer and Dennis Culhane were third and fourth.

WE THE PEOPLE   54

Despite competing with its new sister game, *HANNIBAL*, this tournament remained strong. The British won twenty-five games, the Americans twenty-seven, and there were two draws. Players bid pre-game PCs given to the British in order to play the Americans (average winning bid of 2.2 PC). George Washington was a hunted man in this tournament—resulting in almost 70 per cent of British wins. In one game between James Smith and Steve Huskey, Washington was unsuccessfully chased from New England all the way to Charlotte in one year. Excluding British automatic victories and one American automatic victory on turn one, the majority of the games ended with a "War Ends" card in 1780 or 1781. Only four games lasted until 1782 or 1783.

George Seary as the American player prevailed over George Young to win the final match in the 1779 turn. This was remarkable in that the Americans could neither declare their independence nor gain French intervention. Other top players were Michael Arrighi, Steve Huskey, Kirk Harris, Terry Coleman, Dave Tianen and Dewayne Curry.

BRITANNIA   55

Participants played in two or three of the five qualifying heats which produced the 16-player field for the semifinals. Scott Pfeiffer survived the large field and tough competition in the final game (James Jordan, Sean Smallman and David Yoon) to claim the championship.

MAHARAJA   20

In order to circumvent the perceived play imbalance, players competed against the success of the same color faction at other tables. The two-heat format allowed play in either or both heats, with the better single score determining a player's standing. Defending champ David Gantt was proclaimed best green player, Bruce Young took best purple, Phillip Barcafer best yellow and George Ponzoni best blue. Each of their scores was then compared to the average for that faction to determine final ranking, giving Gantt the championship and the supreme title of Chakravatin.

BREAKOUT: NORMANDY   54

BKN started out the weekend with a warm-up, "Mulligan" round. Players could take their Wednesday night results, in place of the regular first round or drop their loss and start fresh. Some Mulligan round players experimented with new tactics, knowing that a loss could be discarded. New to this year's tournament was the use of the bid (to play the Allies) of points to be awarded for a victory, by either side (the points were used as a tiebreaker for people with the same win-loss record). Axis play dominated with 47 wins versus 33 losses.

The field appeared to be much stronger than in previous years, but was won by AvalonCon first-timer Hank Burkhalter, who earned the plaque the hard way with wins over Tim Doughan ('94 *BKN* champion), Don Greenwood ('94 and '95 runner-up) and four other worthy opponents. Second place was taken by Bryan Eshelman who, along with Hank Burkhalter, entered the final game undefeated.

Veteran developer of area-movement games, Don Greenwood, put in a strong bid again this year to earn that coveted championship plaque from one of the area-movement games, which has eluded him since the first Avaloncon. Only the ultimate champion ruined his annual tournament runner-up status by winning a 50-50 die roll on the last throw of the dice.

Thanks go to Jim Doughan for donating a chess clock to the first and second place *BKN* and *TURNING POINT STALINGRAD* finishers, as appreciation for having these events run at Avaloncon.

TURNING POINT: STALINGRAD   14

The pairings of the strong field (including three previous champs) were based on AREA ratings with highest against second highest, etc. Tim Doughon ('95 winner) after winning his first round game was given a bye into the semi-final round. He later withdrew in order to pursue glory in *BREAKOUT NORMANDY* thus allowing Nick Frydas with two victories under his belt to move into the finals against Byron Stingley ('92 champ) who had swept through the other side of the tournament bracket. The final lasted three hours as Nick Frydas (the Russian) conceded early, giving Byron Stingley his second *TPS* crown. In twelve games, wins were split evenly between Germany and Russia.

DIPLOMACY   50

Participants played in both of the first rounds. The top seven scorers in the first two

SERIES REPLAY
HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE

CARTHAGE: Andrew R. Maly
ROME: Jeff Paull
NEUTRAL COMMENTATOR: Stuart K. Tucker
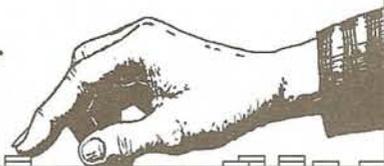
*A*ndy Maly is a well-known player of Avalon Hill games, whose previous articles have been well-received, including his analysis of the sister game, WE THE PEOPLE, *found in vol. 29, no. 2. I met Jeff Paull at Origins this year, where I witnessed his artful play of* WE THE PEOPLE. *While the mechanics of the two games are different enough to matter significantly, the overall discipline of thought required to win is very similar. These veterans of the predecessor should be good competition for this replay. —SKT*

PRE-GAME COMMENTARY

ROME

Andy and I met at the first AvalonCon during the *UP FRONT* tournament. He looks nothing like his card. Against the backdrop of "real life" (each getting married, changing jobs, moving and having kids), we've been able to maintain that friendship. These face-to-face occasions when we can pound each other into cardboard oblivion are like a sea of tranquility in our otherwise hectic lives. Through countless games, I've come to recognize his style as unconventional and aggressive. In other words, he hits 'em hard and where they ain't looking. We're both major fans of *WE THE PEOPLE*, so when *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE (HRC)* became available, we jumped on the chance to do this replay.

We played this game on a Friday night, as a series of games at Andy's house. Rather than stop the game every few minutes to write out comments, we kept a tape recorder going the whole game to record our verbal comments and thoughts. One of us would step out of the room when special interest comments were made. Anyone wishing a transcript of the recording should contact Andy. No adult beverages were spilled during this contest, and no animals were injured during the taping of this replay.

The first thing to recognize in *HRC* is how to win—or rather how to lose. As Rome, I must play for the long game. Scipio Africanus, my best general, arrives on turn 6 in a nine-turn game. While the opportunity for a "sudden death" victory may occur, it's not something for which I'm going to plan. Carthage must come to Italy. A campaign in Iberia or Numidia can offer early distractions and dilemmas for Carthage, but the war will be won or lost in Italy.

The primary mechanic for waging war is the strategy deck. The use of each card depends on a number of factors—board situation, army locations, and province control are but a few. I will develop a plan for the turn based on my entire hand and the game situation. I may have no desire to attack Africa, due to Hannibal's presence in southern Italy. However, if the gods deliver Numidian Revolt, a campaign and the Allies Desert card, I will adapt appropriately and Carthage may have some early invasion worries herself. The map is too big to be adequately defended everywhere. The opportunity to change the tempo of the game and to cause Andy to relinquish the initiative will be predicated based largely upon the deal, rather than a preset plan.

In a nutshell, until the cards offer other opportunities, my plan is to play for the long game, make Hannibal come to me in Italy, but deny control of Italy to Hannibal (not so very easily done). In the word's of my great, great . . . great grandfather Aemilius Paulus, let's kick some Carthaginian butt!

CARTHAGE

Hannibal is a clever adaptation of the *WE THE PEOPLE* system. The myriad of options each hand allows, combined with the lack of junk cards, provides plenty of opportunity for Monday morning quarterbacking. So be it. Jeff and I are oblivious to most critiques of our play and willingly display our moves to you.

I met Jeff at the first AvalonCon. Whether due to our common interest in game genres or our similar, warped senses of humor, we tend to play entertaining games. Maybe it's his incredible luck, or my lack thereof, which provides most of the entertainment, but I won't cry about that, much. We're both from the school of move first, think later, so expect a brutal game. Even though I have more experience with the game, that means about as much as the strategic oil reserve means for the price of gasoline. Our warm up games and aborted replays reveal Jeff is a quick study.

Stuart, the editor, asked us to try and convey the agony over the decisions involved. While not all decisions are that tough, we'll try to do our best to convey our thought processes. My basic game plan is to get to Italy on turn 1 to start the process of influencing the people to the proper way of thinking. Everything else will be evaluated as necessary. I'll react to his moves only when I think I need to do so. I'd rather dictate the tempo of the game. I really need to have a solid position by the time Scipio Africanus comes on board, as that is generally when the game turns in Rome's favor.

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY

This is a game where 20/20 hindsight second-guessing is very easy. The vast array of potentially good moves overwhelms the thought process at times, whereas disaster hits hard and fast and shows up a flawed strategy with brutal clarity. To be fair to the two players, I have chosen to not preview this article before doing my commentary. I know how long it lasts, but not the outcome. I don't see any point in previewing everything in advance and then piecing together how cards should be played, had a player known in advance what lay ahead. Together, the three of us will be commenting "on the spot" during the action. This may go far to showing the reader the variety of strategic options and the depth of planning necessary, but admittedly may give you more a sense of "my" strategic beliefs, than of "the best" plays. Readers and authors alike will have to forgive me for any enthusiastic remarks or warnings of possible events that turn out to be more ghosts than reality.

Jeff has certainly captured the essence of the game. You must plan for the use of most, if not all, of your hand at the start of a turn. The Roman must, therefore, adapt to each deal and await opportunities, while trying to distract Hannibal from the central focus of the early game: control of Italy. Unfortunately, your opponent may play a series of cards that dictate abandonment of your turn's plan. As in any war, you should highly prize concealment of your intentions, without rushing wildly into ill-prepared ground. This game has much of the feel of chess, in that each of your moves must be designed to counter the enemy's move while opening up your own threat upon him. Jeff does not claim to have a plan to hunt down Hannibal or sack Carthage for an instant victory, but many a game will end this way in Roman victory—often due to overambition by Carthage, rather than deliberate planning by Rome. Early perceptions are that Rome has the advantage in this game, but early tournament results seem to belie this. Certainly, the Roman may make more mistakes without succumbing to defeat, while the margin of error for Carthage is finer. Yet, with experience, players are finding the game to be finely balanced. I would guess that early perceptions are based upon the very visible assets of Rome but miss the subtle advantages of Carthage. The fact that the more experienced

player. Andy, is taking Carthage should help balance this particular playing of the game.

TURN 1 (218 BC)

The game begins at the point in time in which the Carthaginian general, Hannibal, has just finished putting down a rebellion by the people of Saguntum (which, by treaty with Rome, is in the Carthaginian Republic). Rome's meddling and support for the resistance becomes the catalyst for this, the Second Punic War.

NOTE: The card number is followed by the encircled operation number of a card (white background ①②③ indicating that Carthage may use the event, black background ❶❷❸ indicating that Rome may use the event) and the name of the event (even when not usable, an enemy event is information on what the opponent can't do).

CARTHAGE'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 14. ②Ligurian Recruits, 15. ①Iberian Recruits, 18. ②Traitor in Tarentum, 38. ③Minor Campaign, 52. ②Pestilence, 55. ③Messenger Intercepted, 63. ③Force March.

I have a decent hand for the early game. I should be able to control Idubeda, which I believe to be important, and also get Hannibal over the Alps. Starting at a disadvantage in provinces, I need to get across the Alps and into Italy on turn one. I've got the two recruit cards which should help out in case Jeff tries to come onto my turf, and some cards which are obvious Operations rather than Events. The card with the best potential is Messenger Intercepted. Timing will be key, but I have no complaints.

How sweet a deal! Nearly every card gives Andy the choice of use as either an event or an operation (the Pestilence is unlikely to be usable this turn). The Messenger Intercepted, Force March and Ligurian Recruits is practically a Senatorial invitation to dine in Italy this winter. Hannibal can make his crossing after Rome's hand is depleted, leaving him with the initiative next turn. On top of that extremely good deal, Andy also gets a minor campaign and the Tarentum card which gives him an option—which I'd find hard to ignore—to get aggressive with Mago in southern Italy (remember that even bad news is good news since a sunk Mago comes back where you need him most, in Carthage). The Iberian recruits can replace some of what sails with Mago from New Carthage, while any ② moves Mago down to the port. Whatever is stolen from Rome is but icing on the cake. The only mystery here is the appropriate timing for the steal, so as to mess up Roman plans. The downside is ignoring politics in Idubeda. I'd suggest starting with 2 PCs in Idubeda and hoping to draw a ② or better operation card from Rome with the Intercept. A less aggressive Carthaginian should still relish all those PCs he can quickly place with this beautiful hand.

ROME'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 6. ❶Marharbal's Cavalry, 35. ❷Diplomacy, 40. ❸Minor Campaign, 44. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Apulia), 46. ❸Allied Auxiliaries (Samnium), 53. ❶Tribal Resistance, 60. ❶Storms at Sea.

Looking at my hand, I have a lot of reinforcements coming. I hold Tribal Resistance which means he doesn't. An effort to subjugate one of those Carthaginian loving tribes might be in order. Getting to the Boii would make controlling Gallia Cisalpinia easier. So, there's the plan, get strong with the Auxiliaries, attempt to control Gallia Cisalpinia, and dig in against Hannibal.

This is a very typical, perhaps better than average, first-turn deal for Rome. It contains several ❶/① cards that will neither be playable as events nor usable to move Rome's strategically-challenged Generals. Their only function will be for PC placement (which Rome must get in the habit of doing, since every battlefield defeat is likely to cost her politically). Marharbal and Tribal Resistance should be devoted to placement of PCs in Massilia or Idubeda.

Fortunately, Jeff has received an extremely valuable card for the first turn: a campaign card, which allows him to seize the first card play of the game. Usually the only manner in which Rome can make headway in Spain without a good General, is by getting the jump on Carthage with the first PC placement. I'd suggest playing the campaign card as an operation card, not as an event, and thereby place three PCs in Idubeda. The Diplomacy card gives Rome a good chance to control the province and set the stage for an invasion of Spain next turn.

The Auxiliaries are comforting, but Hannibal would walk into Italy unchallenged if P. Scipio and T. Longus both sit in their camps. These should be used as operations to move one or both of them into better defensive positions (in Northern Italy). A gratuitous invasion of Spain could be launched this turn with the sole purpose of trying to slowdown Hannibal from the rear. This usually leads to disaster, but Rome has plenty of men and must burn some of Hannibal's time. The safest play is to send P. Scipio into Cisalpine Gaul and reinforce him with Apulian auxiliaries while devoting the rest of the hand to politics in Spain and Massilia. The more daring move of T. Longus to the Spanish theater after Hannibal starts moving is only for Romans with aggressive spirits willing to let Italy suffer under Hannibal's heal. Again, Rome has such leeway of decision in this game—but only if PCs are being regularly placed to cover the political backlash of failures by daring raids. I advise against such an early invasion of Spain, unless you feel you will be particularly lucky in replacing your Consul, should he survive the year.

Chalk up this turn's deal to Carthage and expect Rome to be pressed early.

STRATEGY PHASE

Carthage decides which player moves first, unless Rome uses a campaign card as the first play to seize the move. Rome keeps quiet this turn.

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE A: 63. ③Force March as an Operation for PC placement in Mutina, Tarraco and Dertosa. I call this decision an easy one to make, yet it could come

back to bite me later. A force march is nice on turn 1 in that it allows Hannibal to get into Italy in just two moves. I still believe that securing Spain and Gallia Cisalpinia first are keys. No need to get ahead of myself.

It is hard to argue against this PC placement, although a subtle trick is to place in Ilerda instead of Tarraco, thereby isolating six other spaces in Idubeda and freeing Carthage from having to counter Roman PC placement supplied through Emporiae and Ilerda.

TURN 1 ROMAN MOVE A: That seems to be a pretty solid first play for Carthage. I should challenge him for Idubeda, just on principle, but it might tip my plans on vacationing there later in the year. Time to bulk up, and make him commit. 44. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Apulia) as an Event to reinforce P. Scipio with two combat units (CUs), bringing his army up to 10 CUs (the maximum he may move).

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE B: 18. ②Traitor in Tarentum as an Operation to place PCs in Ilerda and Azaila. Another "easy" call. I'll claim possession of Idubeda. I don't realistically expect to get over there with any type of force capable of taking the city, and he's letting me have Spain without a fight.

TURN 1 ROMAN MOVE B: 6. ①Marharbal's Cavalry as an Operation to place PC in Verona. I want to make a play for Gallia Cisalpinia, but I don't want to burn my good operations cards, which I'll need later in the turn.

It appears that Jeff is planning to move P. Scipio to Cisalpine Gaul, for otherwise the Verona PC will be isolated—except that Andy doesn't know that Paul has one of the two Diplomacy cards. Of course, the Diplomacy card can only deny Gallia Cisalpinia to Carthage, not swing it to Rome. By throwing out the Force March card, Andy seems to be saying, "go ahead and do what you can there this year, Hannibal is in no hurry to join his Gallic allies." Both players may be disguising their end turn intentions at the cost of underutilizing some of their cards—however, it is more likely that each card play will give a big hint as to what remains in a player's hand.

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE C: Verona? Is he going to try for the tribes? That would make sense since he's built Skippy up as a more dangerous force. Well, Spain is secure, so it's time to get Hannibal in gear. 52. ②Pestilence as an Operation to move Hannibal (with Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Narbo. Pestilence seems like the logical alternative. I really don't think Jeff is going to be coming into the heart of Carthage this early in the game, so there is no point in saving it for play as an event.

Andy seems to be a little overreactive to his opponent's threat. If he had planned to march into Gallia this year, why throw away the Force March, which would have saved him one strategy card play? Also, if he really intends to be in Cisalpine Gaul this year, fighting Skippy, he certainly should secure the allies for the battle, by placing PC in Taurini before the Romans show up to force loyalty in Mutina. A good rule of thumb in this game is to play PC on open spaces early in the year, while reserving military moves or revolts for the end of the year. Certainly, Andy cannot fear a subjugation of his

Operations/Events

Carthaginian/ Roman

THE 218 BC CAMPAIGN

A. 63. ③: Place PCs in Dertosa, Tarraco, Mutina.

A. 44. Allied Auxiliaries (Apulia): Place 2 CUs in Rome.

B. 18. ②: Place PCs in Ilerda, Azalla.

B. 6. ①: Place PC in Verona.

C. 52. ②: Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Narbo.

C. 60. ⓪: Place PC in Taurini.

D. 15. ①: Move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Druentia.

D. 35. Diplomacy: Convert the PC in Mutina.

E. 55. Messenger Intercepted: Steal card (53. ①Tribal Resistance).

E. 40. Minor Campaign: Move P. Scipio (10 CUs) to Boii, subjugation fails. Move T. Longus (8 CUs) by sea to Emporiae.

F. 53. ①: Move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Insubrians (Alps attrition is 3 CUs) P. Scipio's interception attempts in Taurini and Insubrians fail.

F. 46. Allied Auxiliaries (Samnium): Place 2 CUs with P. Scipio in Boii.

G. 14. Ligurian Recruits: Place 2 CUs with Hannibal in Insubrians.

H. 38. ③: Place PCs in Numantia, Iberus, Bilbilis.

Z = PC removals for end-of-turn province count.

allied tribes, since he knows that he'll be robbing Rome of a strategy card this year. Finally, Andy should have left behind at least one general (Mago usually), as Carthage needs an extra general to shuttle around reinforcements and rarely needs two subordinates with Hannibal to assist as flank guards in Italy.

TURN 1 ROMAN MOVE C: <u>60. ❶Storms at Sea as an Operation to place PC in Taurini.</u> Hey, things aren't so bad after all. I should be able to get Gallia Cisalpinia, even without the tribes. I hope he doesn't have a second force march card.

Mago's move with Hannibal to Narbo also makes a sea voyage very unlikely this turn, so the card is free for this use.

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE D: I know that he's probably hoarding some decent cards, but how many? I'd like to ruin his plans, but I think that holding out a play on the messenger is the way to go. Besides, he's making a big push on Gallia Cisalpinia, meaning he's planning a warm reception for Hannibal and I'd rather not have to fight for all the Italian provinces. The card I should use to move Hannibal is Iberian Recruits, but I don't expect Jeff to just adopt a home defense strategy. That's not his style, and it's way too boring. But, as soon as I let go of the Iberian recruits, that puts me at a real disadvantage in Spain. Soon, Hannibal will no longer be available to counter any threat there. Well, I can't protect everything. <u>15. ①Iberian Recruits as an Operation to move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Druentia.</u>

TURN 1 ROMAN MOVE D: I'm glad I didn't go to Spain earlier. I bet he's thinking I'm going to hit the tribes. Sorry, Andy, that's not what I have in mind. <u>35. ❷Diplomacy as an Event to convert the PC in Mutina.</u>

Right about now Andy may be wincing that he did not use the Messenger Intercepted earlier possibly to swipe that Diplomacy card, but I can't argue with his decision to wait as long as possible to steal an even better card.

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE E: I overlooked that possibility. Still, he's got to get rid of the Boii, or he'll lose control of that Province come the end of the turn, due to Taurini being isolated. He must have some decent expectations for his remaining three cards, which means they must be pretty good. Fine, I'll take one of them. <u>55. ③Messenger Intercepted as an Event to draw one strategy card from the Roman hand (netting card 53. ①Tribal Resistance).</u>

It is the worst of luck for Andy to draw this card, although it may ease his mind about the vulnerability of his tribal allies. The big benefit, however, is having the final two card plays of the turn without worrying about Rome's response.

TURN 1 ROMAN MOVE E: What a cheese bucket! At least he didn't take the cards I really need, but he's going to hit Scipio as soon as I hit the tribes. That's where the reinforcements come into play. But it is now time to force him to make a decision. <u>40. ❸Minor Campaign as an Event to activate two Generals: P. Scipio (10 CUs) moves to Boii and attempts subjugation (die roll of two on siege table has no effect); T. Longus (8 CUs) moves by sea to Emporiae.</u>

For a man whose armies are entering winter quarters early this year, Paul is certainly being

aggressive. Normally, this double move would put Hannibal in a bind, because he would have to choose to ignore the plight of his friends in either Spain or Gaul. With his extra cards, however, Andy has the option to trounce Longus' army before moving into Italy. Alternatively, he can move into Italy and has plenty of time to march all the way south into Lucania or to convert Etruria or to swing around to P. Scipio's rear, thereby avoiding possible interception as he crosses the Alps. Having lost the initiative with the messenger, I'd have played more conservatively with the Roman armies, which are both quite beatable when separate, should Hannibal seek an engagement. Furthermore, P. Scipio's army will be facing winter attrition unless he chooses to march back to friendly territory (which is probably where he should be now); that Tribal Resistance card is now available to Andy if Jeff chooses to subjugate again.

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE F: Where is Greenwood when you need him? That guy has a knack for picking the Campaign card out of my hand. I shouldn't complain, as I now have an extra card to use. Since Skippy seems intent on destruction of the Boii, I could keep "Tribal Resistance" for that purpose. However, I've got Hannibal in a less than desirable position right now. Forward to Italy or back to defend Spain? Delay the offensive, or risk getting trapped against the Alps? No guts, no glory.

Ahh! Say it isn't so. Don't cross the Alps in the face of the enemy, when you could have planned to do it safely with a force march card! Hannibal is not a general who needs to prove his guts and all of Italy awaits him—the Boii villages can take care of themselves quite nicely.

<u>53. ①Tribal Resistance as an Operation to move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Taurini (attrition over the Alps takes its usual nasty toll as a die roll of four kills 3 CUs). P. Scipio attempts interception, but fails, allowing Hannibal to continue movement to Insubrians, where P. Scipio again fails his interception attempt.</u>

I assume that Andy is making this move because he wants to fight or scare away P. Scipio. If so, then he should consider going to Verona with his unused fourth movement point so that he will be in a position to convert the province and gain the allies. As a defensive precaution, he should end his turn on a Roman PC next to the Insubrians so that he will have a place for retreat/withdrawal in case of a battle disaster.

TURN 1 ROMAN MOVE F: Do I try to hit the Boii again and risk the winter attrition? Do I reinforce Scipio? Do I try to put the hurt on Hannibal? Campaign in Spain? I'll take it easy and deal with the coming Winter. I hope Andy doesn't have any really good cards left in his hand. <u>46. ❻Allied Auxiliaries (Samnium) as an Event to place 2 CUs with P. Scipio in Boii.</u>

TURN 1 CARTHAGINIAN MOVES G AND H: Woah! He's willing to trade off the Winter Attrition to keep Scipio at full strength. That means I definitely have to reinforce Hannibal because the normal 1 CU reinforcement at the start of next turn won't be enough. He's forcing my moves already! <u>14. ②Ligurian Recruits as an Event to place 2 CUs with Hannibal in Insubrians.</u>

The Minor Campaign isn't the most welcome card for Carthage on turn one. Realistically, there are few opportunities to use the card, and it could be taken from your hand. Anyway, I can't reach Longus and I'm not about to risk a winter attrition die roll with Hannibal at this stage of the game. <u>38. ③Minor Campaign as an Operation to place PCs in Numantia, Iberus and Bilbilis.</u> I'll be happy with the situation, and place three PC markers. All will go into Spain. One is placed to provide a bit more strength to my claim, the other two will equal my loss due to my province deficit during the Political Control phase. At least I'm able to plan that choice. Not a powerful or dynamic turn one, but then there isn't a whole lot of damage to worry about, either.

Andy blew his chance to balance the provincial count and bolster his military position with Italian allies (and of course move on the path towards victory through capture of all Italian provinces). Hannibal's army had better hope that P. Scipio is not replaced by a more capable general, because he has not prepared the political ground for military victory in Italy. The turn ends with little more than a secure Spain to show for his superior strategy hand. Meanwhile the Romans get away with the daring landing at Emporiae, leaving an intact army to await next year's consul.

TURN 1 END PHASES

Winter Attrition: P. Scipio (Boii) loses 1 CU (11 CUs remain) due to an attrition die roll of one.

Political Isolation: None.

Victory Check: The provincial count favors Rome ten to eight, resulting in the loss of two Carthage PCs (Numantia, Iberus).

ROMAN POST-TURN COMMENTARY

The move against the Boii, after he stole my Tribal resistance card, was to allow the PC in Taurini to exist, giving me control of the province. Sailing Longus to Emporiae was a risk, but I wanted to give Carthage an early headache. He had the option of moving against Longus and not getting into Italy, or allowing a Roman Army to campaign in Iberia. I've got 11 CUs facing Hannibal in a Roman controlled Italy, and 8 CUs poised to strike Iberia. I've got my options open going into turn 2.

TURN 2 (217 BC)

REINFORCEMENTS

Carthage:
1 CU for Hanno (5 CU total)
2 CUs for Hasdrubal (4 CU total)
1 CU for Hannibal (10 CU total)

Rome:
5 CUs in Rome
P. Scipio designated Proconsul
Remove T. Longus
New Consuls: Marcellus in Emporiae, Varro in Rome.

THE 217 BC CAMPAIGN

A. 12. ②: **Place PCs in Numantia and Iberus.**

A. 9. Philip V of Macedon: Rome discards 56. ②Grain Shortage.

B. 16. ②: **Move Marcellus (8 CU) to Azaila.**

B. 45. ②: Move Hasdrubal (4 CUs) to Bilbilis, where Marcellus successfully intercepts. Battle losses: 1 Carthaginian CU, 8 Roman CUs, Marcellus displaced, 4 Roman PCs (Numantia, Iberus in Spain Nuoro, Aleria in Corsica/Sardinia).

C. 17. ①: **Move Varro (5 CUs) to Bruttium, subjugation fails, eliminate 1 CU.**

C. 58. ①: Move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Ariminum, drops off Mago with 1 CU, then moves to Mutina. P. Scipio attempts interception at each opportunity and fails.

D. 54. ②: **Move Varro (4 CU) to Sena.**

D. 4. ③: Place PC in Aleria, Convert PCs in Mutina and Ariminum.

E. 64. Truce.

E. 34. Major Campaign: Move Hasdrubal (3 CUs) to New Carthage, Mago (1 CU) to Tarquini, Hannibal (Gisgo, 9 CUs) to Falerii.

F. 3. Numidia Revolts (Western).

F. 24. ③: Place PC in Saldae, Convert PC in Tarquini and Falerii.

G. 1. Corsica and Sardinia Revolt.

BATTLE OF BILBILIS

Marcellus 8

Hasdrubal 4

C: Mago, 1 CU Dropped Off

The Roman reinforcements go to Rome, in anticipation of needing a refuge for a bad Consul, but it would certainly be valid to put two consuls in Emporiae if neither were better than P. Scipio. I would strongly urge building a mega-army in Boii or at least building up the Spanish force with the maximum possible (two of the CUs). Since it takes a 3-point strategy card to activate P. Scipio, I would certainly advise against leaving him in command of his army. With Hannibal around, Roman forces must be more mobile in Italy. Since Marcellus with a big army is a pretty good match for Hannibal's smaller army, I'd have put him in charge at Boii and sent Varro to the Spanish theater, where his only saving grace (his strategic rating which makes him very mobile) can be put to use to arm twist a few Iberian villages into supporting Rome. Jeff is opting to distract Hannibal rather than confront him—a very valid strategy. Andy should plan on pressing the Italian campaign while largely ignoring Marcellus until Hasdrubal absolutely has no other choice.

CARTHAGE'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 1. ③Corsica and Sardinia Revolt, 4. ③Celtiberia Revolts, 9. ③Philip V of Macedon, 24. ③Sophonisba, 34. ③Major Campaign, 45. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Etruria), 58. ①Cato Counsels Rome.

Strong cards. Very nice to see that the Macedonians have shown up early, and I'll use that in combination with forcing a Roman first play, to get myself a second turn of having the last two plays. I hope to use the last moves to gain a benefit in the Province count. Another goal for the turn is to start taking control of Italy. My biggest concern is how many cards I'm going to have to burn in order to deal with the problem in Spain. At least I know Celtiberia will remain an ally.

Another fine hand for Carthage. The plethora of 3-pt. cards will allow Andy to take excellent advantage of the Corsica/Sardinia Revolt card. Sophonisba and Celtiberia Revolts are reassurance that the home provinces are somewhat safe from Roman PC manipulations. Thus, Andy is correct in fearing the Spanish military campaign the most. However, the major campaign gives him plenty of ability to prosecute a two-front war (. . . alas, if only Mago were in Southern Italy, Sicily or Carthage now, Andy would have no trouble keeping Rome on the defensive).

ROME'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 3. ❸Numidia Revolts, 12. ❷African Reinforcements, 16. ❷Gallic Recruits, 17. ❶Surprise Sortie, 54. ❷Treachery within City, 56. ❷Grain Shortage, 64. ❷Truce.

I put my best Consul in Emporiae because I want to make some significant gains in Spain. I drew three events that only Carthage can use! At least I can use them as Operations cards, so that lessens a few decisions. Unfortunately, I have only one card which will allow me to move Scipio, and it's one I want to use as an Event (Numidian Revolt). I must look for an Interception of Hannibal as he moves past Scipio. On a

brighter note, Marcellus should be able to move in Spain rather easily.

Here we see a number of pro-Carthaginian cards, like usual. We'd rather see some of the nastier Carthaginian events, but it is always nice to see that the Gauls and Elephants won't be arriving. The Treachery card comes in handy for the Spanish campaign, which should focus on maneuvering toward a siege of New Carthage, because Jeff lacks enough 3-pt. cards to make a political year profitable. A truce is rarely long-lasting, since any event will break it. Jeff has been dealt a hand for Marcellus' use. Unfortunately, P. Scipio will not be able to maneuver—as the Numidia Revolt is too strong not to be an event.

STRATEGY PHASE

Carthage forces Rome to play first.

TURN 2 ROMAN MOVE A: What trick does he have up his sleeve in making me go first? Hannibal seems to be trapped, yet I can't use my sole good card this early, so I'll start my Spanish expedition. 12. ❷African Reinforcements as an Operation to place PCs in Numantia and Iberus.

TURN 2 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE A: Great. He's making a move on Spain, and he's going to try to make me come to him. Except, he's too far out of range for me to do anything about it. I don't want to be battling for PCs, when I play Philip because it could give him a pseudo double move and the current odds are pretty low to claim a good card from Jeff's hand. 9. ③Philip V of Macedon as an Event to force the random discard of 56. ❷Grain Shortage. I don't get to keep the card like the messenger, but it does give me an end of turn double move. Yet, it's a lost opportunity for Hannibal. Consider us gunfighters. Which one will blink first?

This sort of bad news for Rome is best sprung late in the year, unless you need the naval movement modifiers now. However, I don't see any Carthaginian fleets leaving port this year.

TURN 2 ROMAN MOVE B: Hey, quit stealing my cards! Since Scipio is pretty much a lame duck, I'm forced to focus on Marcellus, which really isn't that bad. I'm going to move on Spain, but I want to be able to protect my conquests as I go. 16. ❷Gallic Recruits as an Operation to move Marcellus (8 CUs) to Azaila. I'm stronger than he is, so there's no need to take any needless risk. Maybe he'll have to send Hannibal back across the Alps, although I doubt it.

This should lead to some action soon. Jeff, looks can be deceiving. Marcellus with 8 CUs will get 11 battle cards, while currently Hasdrubal with 4 CUs, plus 4 allied provinces in Spain will also get 11 battle cards. Marcellus will actually be weaker if intercepted to initiate battle, until he takes away Spanish provinces. Hasdrubal is sitting in one of the few spaces in Spain that is in normal movement range of all other spaces in Spain. In other words, there really is only one relatively safe place for a Roman army—next to a Roman PC into which Hasdrubal cannot move (always embark on a military move with a path in mind for avoiding battle/withdrawal/retreat)—and Marcellus is in one.

TURN 2 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE B: Okay, I'll blink. He hasn't learned the finer trick of PC droppings. If I'm going to devote any effort to stopping Marcellus, I'd rather do it early. It will do me no good to stop him after he's already done the damage, and if he's going to have the advantage in Spain, I'd like to know that fact as well. 45. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Etruria) as an Operation to move Hasdrubal (4 CUs) to Bilbilis, where Marcellus successfully intercepts (die roll of 2). Still, I'm waiting for him to make me pay for keeping Hannibal idle.

Since Hasdrubal may only have to move once this turn, I'd have used the Major Campaign to move Hannibal simultaneously. It is likely that a later play of the card may only move one General. Campaign cards are generally more useful for the Roman, except that Carthage needs the ability to ship troops by sea every so often. Rather than wasting the card's ability, I like to keep my enemy facing a dilemma about which thrust he can blunt, especially if a two-theater war is in progress such as now.

THE BATTLE OF BILBILIS, 217 BC

Carthage: 4 CUs + 4 Spanish Allies + 3 General = 11 Battle Cards (BCs): 4 Frontal Assaults (FA), 1 Flank Left (FL), 1 Flank Right (FR), 1 Probe (P), 2 Double Envelopment (DE), 2 Reserve (R).

Rome: 8 CUs + 3 General + 1 for Interception = 12 BCs: 3 FA, 3 FL, 2 FR, 3 P, 1 R.

Uh-oh, the Roman void in Double Envelopment could hurt. Carthage's Reserves and Double Envelopments make for a killer hand. If Jeff continues after the first play of a Double Envelopment (in this system, the side with the initiative can attempt to withdraw), he'll be banking on Hasdrubal failing a disproportionate number of counterattack die rolls before breaking through with a Flanking or Probe card.

Although Marcellus moved to intercept, Hasdrubal is the original attacker, having chosen to continue into Bilbilis instead of backing off one space.

1. Hasdrubal DE matched by Marcellus R, counterattack (CA) is automatic.
2. Marcellus P matched by Hasdrubal P, CA die roll (dr) 5 fails.
3. Marcellus P matched by Hasdrubal R, CA dr 3 succeeds.
4. Hasdrubal DE wins.

Battle casualty dr 1 causes each army to lose 1 CU.

Retreat dr 5 (+2 due to Double Envelopment) eliminates Roman army (8 CUs), displacing the Consul Marcellus.

Political Consequences: 4 PCs lost (Numantia, Iberus in Spain, Nuoro, Aleria in Corsica/Sardinia).

Each general has an excellent battle rating of three, allowing each to regain the initiative 50% of the time after an opponent's play. Both players chose to risk continued battle after playing Reserve cards. In this battle, Hasdrubal gets back the initiative from Marcellus and hammers him with a double envelopment and an excellent retreat die roll for a spectacular victory. While Rome will miss the Consul and CUs this turn, Rome's reinforcement advantage will generally

CONTEST #179—MERGER MENAGERIE

In a four-player game of *ACQUIRE*, it is your turn at a crucial point in the middle of the game. You must decide how best to achieve the advantage over your opponents. Through careful counting, you know that each of them have equal shares of stock in the hotel chains shown on the diagram. Furthermore, they each have the same amount of cash on hand as you: $400. A glance at the situation reveals that you have a wide-range of options:

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	Cont.	Imp.	Lux.	Tow.	WW
Your Shares:	6	5	3	3	3
Unbought Shares:	10	8	16	10	13

Your Tiles: 6F, 7D, 7G, 8C, 9E, 10D

Make the best move to put you ahead of the competition:

Tile Play _____

Merger Transactions _____

_____

Stock Buys _____

_____

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5C		7C	8C	L
5D		7D	T	9D	10D
5E	I	7E		9E	10E
5F	6F		8F		10F
	W	7G	C	
5H	6H	7H	8H	9H

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3. Clubs are encouraged to announce regular meetings.
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Across Five Aprils—A5A, Advanced Squad Leader—ASL/SL, Afrika Korps—AFK, Age of Renaissance—REN, Air Baron—ABN, Air Force/Dauntless—AFD, Assassin—ASN, Battle of the Bulge—B(yr.), Blackbeard—BKB, Blitzkrieg—BZK, Breakout Normandy—BKG, Britannia—BRI, Circus Maximus—CMS, (Advanced) Civilization—ACV/CIV, Colonial Diplomacy—CDP, D-Day—D(yr.), Diplomacy—DIP, DUNE, 1830, Empires in Arms—EIA, Empire of the Rising Sun—ERS, Enemy in Sight—EIS, Firepower—FPR, Flat Top—FTP, Fleet Series—#FT, Flight Leader—FL, Gangsters—GSR, Geronimo—GER, Gettysburg—GBG, Gladiator—GLD, Guadalcanal—GDC, Guerilla—GUE, Hannibal: Rome vs. Carthage—HRC, Here Come the Rebels—HCR, History of the World—HWD, Hitler's War—HWR, Kremlin—KRM, Kingmaker—KGM, Knights of the Air—KTA, London's Burning—LBG, Luftwaffe—LFW, Machiavelli—MAC, Maharaja—MAH, Magic Realm—MRM, MBT, Merchant of Venus—MOV, Midway—M(yr.), Napoleon's Battles—NPB, PanzerBlitz—PZB, Panzergruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzer Leader—PZL, Rail Baron—RBN, Republic of Rome—ROR, Richthofen's War—RFN, Roadkill—RKL, Roads to Gettysburg—RTG, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Russian Front—RFT, 1776, Siege of Jerusalem—SOJ, Starship Troopers—SST, Stellar Conquest—STC, Stonewall's Last Battle—SLB, Stonewall in the Valley—SIV, Stonewall Jackson's Way—SJW, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Tac Air—TCA, Advanced Third Reich—A3R, Thunder At Cassino—TAC, Titan—TTN, Trireme—TRI, Turning Point: Stalingrad—TPS, Tyranno Ex—TYX, Up Front—UPF, Victory In The Pacific—VIP, War and Peace—W&P, We The People—WTP, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM, Wrasslin'—WRS.

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Games Played in December: _____

_____

GOING TO CHURCH

ASL SCENARIO G35
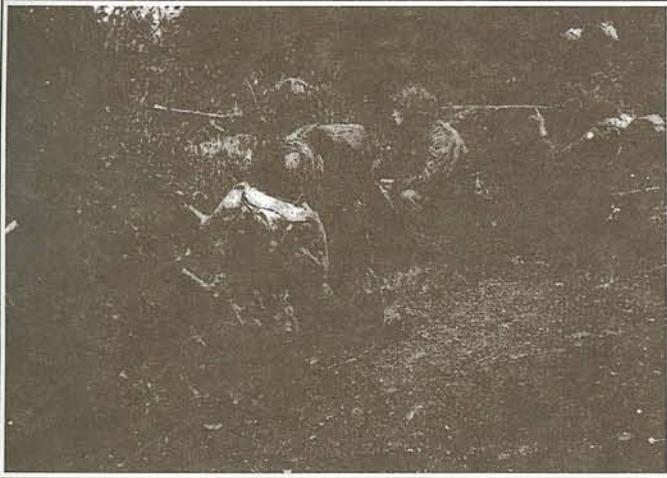
ST. MARTIN-DE-FONTENAY, FRANCE, 1 August 1944: In the days following Operation Spring, the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division conducted several short but sharp actions to improve their positions. One of the positions was the two adjoining villages of St. Andre-sur-Orne and St. Martin-de-Fontenay. The Canadians held the southeast portion of St. Andre and all of St. Martin except the church on the southern outskirts. Brigadier H. A. Young wanted the church taken. Several attacks by Le Regiment de Maisonneuve failed. Les Fusiliers Mount-Royal relieved them and took up the attack. Young believed the objective could be taken by a company of infantry, supported by engineers.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Canadians win immediately when there are no unbroken German MMC in building 23F3.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✠ Add six "?" to the German OB and decrease the game length to 5 1/2 turns.

◉ Add one 2-4-8 and one British MMG to the Canadian OB.

N 23

TURN RECORD CHART

Only Hexrows A-P are Playable

		1	2	3	4	5	6	END
✠ **GERMAN Sets Up First**		1	2	3	4	5	6	END
◉ **CANADIAN Moves First**								

Elements of SS-Panzer Division 9 [ELR: 4] set up ≤ 3 hexes from 23E4: {SAN: 4}

6²-5-8	3-4-8	9-1	8-0	1-4-9	MMG SFP 2 5-12	LMG SFP 1 3-8
4						2

Elements of Les Fusiliers Mount-Royal [ELR: 4] set up on/north of hexrow L: {SAN: 2}

4²-5-8 E	2-4-8 E	9-2	9-1	8-0	HMG SFP 3 6-14	LMG VFP 1 2-7	MTR 4FP 2 51 [2-11]	DC SFP △ X12 30-1
8	2					2		

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. Kindling attempts are NA.

2. All hedges are treated as walls.

3. Treat all canal/river hexes as open ground. Bridges do not exist, but the road depictions in all Bridge hexes do.

4. German squads may Deploy freely during setup.

AFTERMATH: Careful planning for the attack paid off. The sappers moved on the church about an hour before dawn and were driven back by German machine gun fire. The Fusiliers, led by Major J. A. Dextraze, had an alternate plan ready and promptly reacted to this minor set back. Sweeping around to the side of the church and then over the wall, the company poured into the churchyard with guns blazing. Resorting to grenades and bayonets at close range, the assault was over in about an hour. Most of the defenders were killed, with a half dozen taken prisoner and some ten managing to escape across the fields. The Germans showered the church with mortar and artillery fire, but the Fusiliers held on and used the church as a base for future operations.

HILL OF DEATH

ASL SCENARIO G36

Scenario Design: Vince Lewonski

HILL 112, FRANCE, 11 July 1944: Hill 112 had a commanding view over the surrounding fields and several small villages, which made it a key position. It also dominated the area south of Caen, and thus attracted the best units of both combatants. Since June 27th, it had been the focus of repeated attacks and counterattacks, with such heavy shelling that trees became shattered stumps. On July 10th, a British combined tank-infantry force had wrested the hill from the SS defenders. After anti-tank guns were brought up and emplaced, the tanks withdrew for the night. That same night, the hill was subjected to an intense bombardment, then a counterattack by *SS-panzergrenadiers*, but the SS were driven back by pointblank fire. No one is sure how many German assaults were repulsed; some say fourteen. With daylight, Tigers joined the fray. The weary defenders quickly discovered that their hellish nightmare was not yet over.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win at game end if they have more Victory Points (calculated as Exit VP, but excluding Broken/Immobile units and Prisoners) on Level 2 hexes than the British.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:
BALANCE:

✠ In the German OB, add one 6-5-8, add one LMG, and replace one 9-1 armor leader with one 9-2 armor leader.

◉ Add one Churchill IV to the British reinforcement group and delete the last sentence of SSR 6.

TURN RECORD CHART

		1	2 ◉	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
✠ GERMAN Sets Up and Moves First [179]										
◉ BRITISH [224]										

Elements of SS-Panzer Divisions 9 and 10 [ELR: 5] set up on whole/half hexes of board 16: {SAN: 4}

6²-5-8	3-4-8	6-1	8-0	MMG 5-12	LMG 3-8	PSK 12-4	? 7 morale
11	2	2	2	4		22	
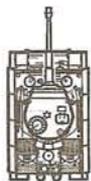
Kompanie 1, Schwere SS-Panzer Abteilung 102 enters on Turn 1 along the east edge of board 16:

9-1 2nd Lt	88L 3/5/2
2	6

Elements of the 5th Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, 214th Brigade, 43rd Wessex Division [ELR: 3] set up on board 9: {SAN: 4}

4²-5-8	4²-5-7	2-2-8	9-2	8-1	8-0	7-0	HMG 6-14	MMG 4-12	LMG 2-7	PIAT 8-3	MTR 51 [2-11]	? 7 morale
6	13	2		2			2	3	3	2	12
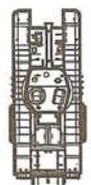
57L AT M10	Foxhole 5 1S OVR, OBA: +4 Other: +2
2	17

Squadron A, 7th Royal Tank Regiment, 31st Tank Brigade, 11th Armoured Division and anti-tank elements of the Wessex Division enter on Turn 2 along the west edge of board 33:

2-2-8	75 2/4	57L 2/4	30 T6 9PP	76LL AT M6
2	4	3	2	2

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with a Mild Breeze from the northwest at start. Kindling attempts are NA.

2. All building hexes are Rubble of the appropriate type. All Level 3 and 4 hill depictions are treated as Grain depictions at Level 2 [EXC: woods/building hexes contain no Grain]. All Crags are shellholes. All hedge and Cliff hexsides are Bocage (B9.5; F10); no Cliffs exist (they are treated as Double-Crest hexsides where applicable).

3. Place a shellhole counter in each of the following board 9 hexes: B3, F7, G6, H7, I7, N4, R5, T2, U7, W9, and BB5. Place one Burnt-Out-Wreck (O11.4 RB SSR CG7) in each of the following board 9 hexes:M1, N2, T7, X6, CC5 and CC7.

4. The British AT Guns may not use HIP, but may set up Emplaced.

5. The concealment counters given in each OB may be set up in non-Concealment Terrain.

6. The British receive one module of 80+mm OBA (HE and Smoke) directed by an Aerial Observer (E7.6). Radio contact may not be rolled for prior to Turn 5.

AFTERMATH: The Tigers rolled up the hill, clearing a triangular wooded area of anti-tank guns. The Churchills broke formation and drove for the hill. They were no match for the Tigers, however, and it was a sadly uneven fight. The remaining *SS-panzergrenadiers* had gone to ground when the British artillery had begun shelling the area. But the impervious Tigers continued on alone and began butchering the infantry in their foxholes. In desperation, the British called down smoke to cover them as they pulled back, but the Tigers drove through it and decimated the withdrawing troops. One Tiger was lost, but the hill was once again in German hands. The DCLI was relieved at the end of the day, having lost all of its anti-tank guns and 50 per cent of its men. This was not the end of the Hill 112 saga, however, as it continued to be the scene of bitter fighting until August 2nd.

SERIES REPLAY...
(Continued from pg. 30)

make such a loss minor. The bigger consequence is the loss of 4 PCs (one for every two CUs lost in battle). Jeff wisely abandons PCs in Spain that are now isolated and insupportable. However, the other losses hurt more, showing how important it is for Rome to place PCs in Massilia and even Gallia Transalpinia in the first turn.

TURN 2 ROMAN MOVE C: Hey, Andy, quit using the loaded dice! What a disaster! My entire expeditionary force is crushed. I could handle some casualties, but all of them? I've got to start sacrificing more chickens to Mars. I'm happy with the standoff in northern Italy, so Varro moves against the tribes. 17. ❶: Move Varro (5 CUs) to Bruttium, subjugation dr = 1, eliminate 1 CU.

Varro's army is not likely to stop Hannibal, so the Bruttium subjugation plan is reasonable, but backfires. I guess the lesson is to never underestimate the heart of tribes and wall-enclosed citizens. For the siege/subjugation process to run its full course, three attacking CUs must survive to make the final roll to gain the three siege/subjugation points. It should take an average of 3.3 rolls and cause 1.0 lost CUs. Jeff is now owed two favors from Lady Die Roll Luck. Varro could find himself still attempting subjugation when winter arrives.

TURN 2 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE C: I think that last battle was a fair trade. Now I can focus entirely on operating with Hannibal. I've got to leave and head south, as the operating quarters are a bit too tight for my liking. He gets two interception rolls, so I'll probably have to do battle. At least I'll be in range of one of the Tribes in case things go sour. Once I leave the area, he can easily cut them off from my access, leaving me vulnerable. Still, it is Hannibal, and while he could go down, I can't get preoccupied with that possibility. 58. ①Cato Counsels Rome as an Operation to move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 10 CUs) to Ariminum (P. Scipio fails with interception attempts at Verona [dr = 4] and Mutina [dr = 5]), drops off Mago with 1 CU, then moves to Mutina (P. Scipio fails with interception attempt Mutina [dr = 3]).

TURN 2 ROMAN MOVE D: I can't make a dent in the enemy tribes in Italy. Five interception rolls (over two turns) against Hannibal yield no effect. Enough whining, I must take the fight to Hannibal. 54. ❷: Treachery within City as an Operation to move Varro (4 CUs) to Sena.

Varro (remember him—his historical claim to fame was losing the battle of Cannae) is going to get swatted aside by Hannibal. I don't see the point of this, when subjugation of Bruttium is still a valid policy. Heck, running in the opposite direction, to say Sicily or a port for movement to southern Spain would at least preserve the army and next turn's chances for mayhem.

TURN 2 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE D: Trying to bait me with Varro? Nice try, as my reward could be equal to my intended play. Of course, ignoring him does leave a second Roman Army in the field, but it's fairly weak. No, I need the guaranteed PC conversions. 4.

③Cetiberia Revolts as an Operation to place PC in Aleria and convert PCs in Mutina and Ariminum.

TURN 2 ROMAN MOVE E: 64. ❷Truce as an Event. I hadn't counted on playing the Truce as an Event, but it's as good as any other card in my hand. It's about the only way I can stop him.

TURN 2 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE E: No Truce for you! 34. ③Major Campaign to move Hasdrubal (3 CUs) to New Carthage, Mago (1 CU) to Tarquini, Hannibal (Gisgo, 9 CUs) to Falerii. Time to move on. I'd like to claim Samnium, but moving to Etruria offers me the ability to protect my gains and the Alps guard my flank. I could split off Gisgo as well, but I don't see being able to convert all those PCs by the end of the turn. Hasdrubal goes back to New Carthage so he can pick up reinforcements next turn, and, if necessary, provide resupply. No need to take any risks right now.

It is hard to discern in his hand the shortage of operations points that Andy perceives. Furthermore, Jeff could attack Hannibal in such a manner that he has no retreat (although with only a small chance of victory). I would have sent Hannibal all the way to the Etrurian port of Cosa, leaving Gisgo in Falerii. The conversion would have isolated the remaining Roman PCs in Etruria. Gisgo's special interception ability makes him a better flank guard than Mago. By missing this opportunity, Andy allows Rome to retain three extra PCs and a province, while Hannibal foregoes the chance to gain the provincial advantage and the allied troops for battles in Italy.

NOTE TO PLAYERS: Subsequent to the play of this game, it has been ruled that a Truce may not be broken by a Campaign or Forced March or Traitor/Treachery or counter card, nor may a card be played as an event if its conditions do not permit the event (such as allied auxiliaries with no army to receive them). Further clarifications of the game's rules will appear in the next issue of The GENERAL. *You may write for a copy of these by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor at 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214.*

TURN 2 ROMAN MOVE F: Hannibal or Numidia? 3. ❸Numidia Revolts as an Event to remove all PCs in Western Numidia. Attacking Hannibal is dangerous, because I've got to either cross the Alps, or come through Carthaginian PC markers. A potential disaster if I lose, or Hannibal makes an Interception. Numidia is a case of whether I want to suffer less losses with no gain, or no losses with his gain. Anything I can do to distract him seems to be to my benefit.

TURN 2 CARTHAGINIAN MOVES F and G: 24. ③Sophonisba as an Operation to place PC in Saldae and convert PCs in Tarquini and Falerii. Priority number one is the conversion of PC under Hannibal and Mago to avoid winter attrition. My next struggle is whether to reclaim Numidia or to revolt in Corsica. Either move won't change the net Province control, but my choice is to get rid of Roman PCs. 1. ③Corsica and Sardinia Revolt as an Event to cause the revolt and remove Roman PCs from Corsica and Sardinia. Still, this move leaves Africa vulnerable. I hope Hanno will be up to the task.

Though the Numidian allies are sorely needed to defend Africa, Andy is on the offensive right now and correctly goes for softening up Roman political control. Jeff's PC position is dangerously thin now. He almost cannot afford a strategy of fighting losing battles with Hannibal for attrition purposes.

TURN 2 END PHASES

Winter Attrition: P. Scipio (Boii) loses 3 CUs (8 CUs remain) on an attrition dr of 6.
Political Isolation: None.
Victory Check: The provincial count is even at eight each. No PC removals.

ROMAN POST TURN COMMENTARY

This has been a dark turn for Rome. I'm reduced to fighting in Italy, without the 8 CUs that Marcellus commanded, nor the distraction they offered to Carthage. I've got to get some cards that will allow me to chase after Hannibal, and bring the provinces he converts back under my control. I can't afford another major defeat next turn, but I've got to reduce Hannibal's strength faster than he can replace it.

TURN 3 (216 BC)

REINFORCEMENTS

Carthage:
1 CU to Hanno (6 CUs total)
2 CU to Hasdrubal (5 CUs total)
1 CU to Hannibal (10 CUs total)

Rome:
5 CUs in Sena (9 CUs total)
P. Scipio designated Proconsul, Remove Varro. Consuls Marcellus and Fabius to Sena.

Again, the lesson of last turn is that P. Scipio is only worth keeping when in Spain. At least, Marcellus should be placed in command of the army in Gallia Cisalpinia so that it can do something this turn. Now with both Consuls together, the army in Sena will be unable to drop off troops anywhere. Had Varro been the Proconsul under Fabius, Jeff would have more options this turn.

STRATEGY DEAL

The deck was reshuffled because of the play of the Truce card.

CARTHAGE'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 7. ①Hostile Tribes, 8. ①Hostile Tribes, 28. ②Hannibal Charms Italy, 35. ②Diplomacy, 38. ③Minor Campaign, 43. ❸Two Legions of Slaves Raised, 44. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Apulia).

A lot of Events I can't or won't use. I'm going to campaign for PCs. My hand supports what I should be doing at this stage of the game.

This is an average deal of Operations points, plus some useful PC-related cards. At this stage, Andy is correctly interested in converting as much of Italy as possible. Thus, the ① cards move Hannibal and the ②/③ cards place the PCs. He should expect Jeff to hammer Hannibal if possible, but Andy's military position is best

bolstered by political moves in Italy to gain more allied battle cards.

ROME'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 19. ❶Senate Dismisses Proconsul, 24. ❸Sophonisba, 29. ❷Carthaginian Naval Victory, 37. ❸Minor Campaign, 41. ❶Bad Weather, 46. ❸Allied Auxiliaries (Samnium), 60. ❶Storms at Sea.

The gods look favorably upon my empire. I've drawn the Operations cards I need to move my armies. Not much in the way of Events, although the Auxiliaries may be a necessity. With this freedom, I intend to fight Hannibal in an effort to cause at least two CUs of casualties. With a reinforcement rate of one, I want him to be more concerned with survival than with converting my PCs.

Amen to that, Jeff. That little old Senate Dismisses Proconsul card is also very valuable—replace P. Scipio with Nero and, voila, suddenly you have a very mobile army in Cisalpine Gaul. The Bad Weather and Storms cards are better in years when you know the enemy is going to be sailing in reinforcements, but if Nero is placed on the board, they come in handy no matter how Carthage moves. This is the first really balanced deal of the game. Outnumbered 17-11 combat units, and with Roman leadership at its best (short of the arrival of Scipio Africanus), Hannibal is now facing his toughest year. The struggle for control of allied provinces may prove pivotal for the tactical battles that lay ahead.

STRATEGY PHASE

This would be a good turn for Carthage to move first, given the number of vacant spaces that can take PCs (particularly in Sardinia, where Carthage has no army to assist conversions and in Icosium to isolate the Numidian interior).

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE A: 35. ❷Diplomacy as an Event to convert Cosa. I'll claim my first Italian Province. Turn three, and it's my first Province. Not a good sign, but its better than a total disaster.

TURN 3 ROMAN MOVE A: If he wants me to have Corsica back, how can I decline the offer? 24. ❸Sophonisba as an Operation to place PCs in Sassari, Oristano, and Carales.

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE B: 43. ❸Two Legions of Slaves Raised as an Operation to place PCs in Icosium, Zuccabar and Tupusuctu. Fatigue sets in for both of us. I'm lucky to get back Numidia, as my first two moves should have been done in reverse order. Of course, Jeff might not have the cards to take advantage of having claimed a foothold in Africa. Or, he's more afraid of Hannibal, or Hanno. Interesting.

Jeff has gotten the better of Andy by getting back one of the two provinces vacated at the end of last turn. Andy's Diplomacy was played out of fear of being attacked immediately, but way too soon, considering the opportunities for PC placement in empty spaces.

TURN 3 ROMAN MOVE B: Time to spring a little surprise on him. 19. ❶Senate Dismisses Proconsul as an Event to have G. Nero replace P. Scipio as Proconsul. I need some more mobility to go after Hannibal.

. . . or to get the Roman CUs together. Excellent move.

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE C: Dirt bag. Should I take on Nero, or try to convert more PCs? 38. ❸Minor Campaign to move Hannibal (Gisgo, 10 CUs) to Paestium (dropping off Gisgo, 1 CU in Beneventum), Mago (1 CU) to Heraclea. It's a lose-lose situation, because he's just going to offset everything I'm about to claim. All I can hope is that my Operation cards are a bit stronger in that respect, and maybe he'll come after me. Such is the life of Hannibal.

Some people love to castle in Chess; I love to post Gisgo in Beneventum. I see that Andy and I think alike about leaving this general in the bottleneck. The move south is well-executed, as now he has time to create another allied province before the Roman army catches up with Hannibal. However, attacking Nero would be better. Nero on his own will have no trouble converting two provinces while Hannibal gets only one.

TURN 3 ROMAN MOVE C: Well, it doesn't appear that the Carthaginian Navy will sail, even though Philip has shown. Thus, I'm going to use Storms at Sea. 60. ❶Storms at Sea as an Operation to move Nero (8 CUs) to Falerii (dropping 1 CU in each of Mutina and Ariminum. How much territory can I try to get back, without leaving Nero hanging in the wind?

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE D: Jeff learns the drop-off trick real quickly. 44. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Apulia) as an Operation to convert Rome PCs in Heraclea and Paestium. I'm committed to this course of action. Going to fight him will play right into his hands.

TURN 3 ROMAN MOVE D: Sure, we can play this game for a while. I need to match him PC for PC. Time to play one of those useless Carthaginian Event cards. 29. ❷Carthaginian Naval Victory as an Operation to convert PCs in Falerii and Mutina.

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE E: I'm in it for the duration. 7. ❶Hostile Tribes as an Operation to convert PC in Beneventum.

TURN 3 ROMAN MOVE E: Not that I can count on it, but I'd like to get one or both of Hannibal's henchmen. Even if Hannibal intercepts, I get a chance at knocking him down a few CUs. I can't see a better time to try. 37. ❸Minor Campaign to move Marcellus (Fabius, 9 CUs) to Heraclea, where Gisgo fails interception (dr = 5) and Hannibal succeeds (dr = 3).

I am surprised that Jeff did not move Nero first to get rid of the Gisgo interception force. As it turns out, such was not necessary. Andy's failure to try interception with Gisgo earlier in the movement of Marcellus indicates that he seeks battle with Marcellus. This seems foolhardy when the Minor Campaign allows Nero to follow-up any successes or major attrition accomplished by Marcellus.

BATTLE OF HERACLEA, 216BC

As both Consuls have the same battle rating, Carthage has no need to attempt to fight on a day in which Fabius is in charge.

Rome: 9 CUs + 2 Allied Italian Provinces + 3 General (Hannibal's elephants fail to affect battle, dr = 2) = 14 BCs: 3 FA, 2 FL, 3 FR, 2 P, 3 DE, 1 R.

Carthage: 10 CUs + 1 Allied Italian Province + 4 General + 1 for Interception = 16 BCs: 6 FA, 4 FL, 2 FR, 1 P, 1 DE, 2 R.

Marcellus is blessed with Double Envelopments, while Hannibal has deep Reserves. With Rome on the attack, it is always a good idea to lead with Probes against Hannibal, unless you plan to Frontal Assault him. Hannibal's special ability is to use one Probe as a Flanking or Enveloping maneuver, making Rome's even life more difficult than his high battle rating already does. Jeff doesn't know it yet, but he will not win this battle (the best chance of victory is P, P, DE, DE, DE, which will give Hannibal the initiative automatically two straight times, by which time the Roman army will have collapsed). In any case, Jeff should try to extend the battle to increase battle casualties to Hannibal's army.

1. Marcellus DE matched by Hannibal DE, automatic CA.
2. Hannibal FL matched by Marcellus FL, CA dr 2 succeeds.
3. Marcellus P matched by Hannibal P, CA dr 1 succeeds.
4. Hannibal FL matched by Marcellus FL, CA dr 5 fails.
5. Hannibal FL matched by Marcellus R, CA dr 6 fails.
6. Hannibal FL wins.

Battle Casualty dr 2 causes loss of 1 CU from each army.

Retreat dr 2 causes Roman army to lose 2 CUs more.

Marcellus retreats army to Cannae.

Political Consequences: 1 PC lost (Croton).

In the second part of the Minor Campaign, G. Nero (6 CUs) moves to Beneventum, where Hannibal's interception attempt fails [dr = 6], leaving Gisgo on his own.

BATTLE IN BENEVENTUM, 216 BC

Rome: 6 CUs + 2 Allies + 2 General = 10 BCs: 2 FA, 1 FL, 3 FR, 2 P, 2 DE.

This should be walkover, but Jeff should lead with the Flank Right. He need kill only 1 CU and a non-Probe victory is all that is required. The DE could backfire if Gisgo has DE, FL, FL.

Carthage: 1 CU + 1 Ally + 1 General = 3 BCs: 1 FL, 1 P, 1 DE.

1. Nero DE matched by Gisgo DE, automatic CA.
2. Gisgo P matched by Nero P, CA dr 6 fails. Gisgo withdrawal attempt dr 3 fails.
3. Nero FR wins.

Battle casualty dr 1 causes no losses.

Retreat dr 4 eliminates Carthaginian CU and displaces Gisgo.

No political consequences.

It appears that Jeff favors switching battle tactics to find voids rather than persisting with a strong tactic. This is likely to get him in hot water in a bigger battle.

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE F: These Romans aren't really gracious hosts. Well, I'm going to get out of the south and do an end run back to the north. That should put him out of position for next turn, and I should be able

THE 216 BC CAMPAIGN

A. 35. Diplomacy: Convert PC in Cosa.

A. 24. ③: Place PCs in Sassari, Oristano, and Carales.

B. 43. ⑥: Place PCs in Icosium, Zuccabar, Tupusuctu.

B. 19. Senate Dismisses Proconsul: Nero replaces P. Scipio.

G. Nero replaces P. Scipio as Proconsul.

C. 38. Minor Campaign: Move Hannibal (Gisco, 10 CUs) to Paestium (dropping Gisco, 1 CU in Beneventum) and move Mago (1 CU) to Heraclea.

C. 60. ⓪: Move Nero (8 CUs) to Falerii (dropping 1 CU in each of Mutina and Ariminum).

D. 44. ⑫: Convert PCs in Heraclea and Paestium.

D. 29. ②: Convert PCs in Falerii and Mutina.

E. 7. ①: Convert PC in Beneventum.

E. 37. Minor Campaign: Move Marcellus (Fabius, 9 CUs) to Heraclea, where Gisco fails interception and Hannibal succeeds. Battle losses: 1 Carthaginian CU, 3 Roman CUs, Marcellus retreats to Cannae, Rome loses PC in Croton. Nero (6 CUs) moves to Beneventum, where Hannibal's interception attempt fails. Battle with Gisco. Losses: 1 Carthaginian CU, Gisgo displaced.

F. 8. ①: Move Hannibal (Mago, 9 CUs) to Capua.

F. 46. Allied Auxiliaries (Samnium): 2 CUs for Nero.

G. 28. ②Hannibal Charms Italy: Attempts to move Hannibal (Mago, 9 CUs) to Sena via Falerii, but is countered by 41. Bad Weather, ending move in Falerii, PC removed.

Y = Isolated PCs removed.

Z = PC removals for end-of-turn province count.

BATTLE OF BENEVENTUM

Nero

H. Gisgo

BATTLE OF HERACLEA

Marcellus

Hannibal

C: 1 CU Dropped in Each

B: Nero replaces P. Scipio

C: Gisco, 1 CU Dropped Off

to secure the northern provinces. His own aggressiveness allows me this. 8. ①Hostile Tribes as an Operation to move Hannibal (Mago, 9 CUs) to Capua. My one problem is where to end this move. Rome isn't a real cool proposition since it will definitely lead to another battle. Any space short of Rome keeps me farther away from a friendly PC marker, and it also means fewer Roman PCs removed with my last card. Yet, every move is a potential interception, but I doubt he'll be that bold with Nero in a weakened state. Then again, Nero is in a weakened state, but Marcellus is at a supporting spot. Onward.

At this point, any battle with Nero and without Marcellus is welcome. Jeff does not try interception, though his attrition goals suggest he could give it a try. Andy ends in a great place to begin his Charming of Italy at the end of the turn.

TURN 3 ROMAN MOVE F: Well, another battle and I'm the one forced to rebuild my Army. I could hit Hannibal with one full Army, but I don't like the odds. I know I need to attrition Hannibal, but if I hold off, I'll have two armies to fight against him next turn. 46. ❸Allied Auxiliaries (Samnium) as an Event to place 2 CUs with G. Nero in Beneventum (8 CUs total).

If Jeff had another ❷ he could have tried to hit Hannibal with Marcellus and 10 CUs. His political markers are still too thin for my comfort. Andy's best chance for victory would appear to be through the sudden death victory afforded him when Jeff cannot take off any more PCs to cover political consequences of battle or the province discrepancy at the end of a year. Many nasty political events still await Jeff (such as the Capua, Syracuse and Sicily Revolts cards). I am not certain he needs the CUs more than 3 PC markers.

TURN 3 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE G: Which way to go? I guess I'll neutralize Etruria and Samnium. I could take out those two stray Roman CUs, as I shouldn't allow him to reclaim them. The Samnium move, though, provides something of a buffer. This move appears to leave me in a good position for next turn. He's going to lose some PCs to isolation, and I'll have an advantage in the province count. Things have definitely turned around from the slow start. 28. Hannibal Charms Italy as a dual use Operation/Event to move Hannibal (Mago, 9 CUs) to Sena via Falerii.

ROMAN COUNTER: 41. ①Bad Weather played as counter card to end Hannibal's move in Falerii. Roman PC removed from Falerii. Do I stop Hannibal and suffer winter attrition or move Nero and lose provinces? I'm about to get reinforcements, and I'm behind in the province count, so I'd better stop the bleeding. I didn't cause Hannibal the casualties I wanted, but my armies are relatively intact. I believe that I can take back Lucania with one army, while pushing north with the other. Unfortunately, two neutral provinces are within easy grasp of Hannibal. Nero's mobility will make him an easy choice for Proconsul. I'm still looking to cause casualties without losing an entire Army. There is plenty of time left.

Well that was a disappointing failure for Carthage. The Charms Italy card should be used

to move through four non-walled PCs to maximize the effect of the card. After bad weather this would have give him two empty spaces instead of just one. I thought he had stopped in Capua last move so that he could go to Falerii via Samnium (in which case he'd now be in Sena, and Rome would have lost Samnium instead of Etruria, but Carthage would be worse off for losing Ariminum). Of course, had there been no bad weather, ending in Falerii would have been superior to ending in Sena. I agree with Jeff's decision to use the bad weather instead of moving Nero (or better yet, flipping Beneventum). He lucks out with having such an opportune moment to spring it on Andy.*

TURN 3 END PHASES

Winter Attrition: G. Nero (Beneventum) loses 1 CU on an attrition dr 2 (7 CUs remain). Attrition in Ariminum has no effect (dr 3).

Political Isolation: Rome's PCs removed from Taurini, Pisae, Faesulae.

Victory Check: Carthage 9, Rome 7. Remove Rome PC from Enna, Brundisium.

TURN 4 (215-214 BC)

REINFORCEMENTS

Carthage:
1 CU to Hanno (7 CUs total)
2 CUs to Hasdrubal (7 CUs total)
1 CU to Hannibal (10 CUs total)
Gisgo placed with Hannibal

Andy appears content to fight in Italy without significant reinforcements. Gisgo should be in Carthage.

Rome:
4 CUs to Cannae (10 CUs total)
1 CU in Beneventum (8 CUs total)
G. Nero designated Proconsul
Consuls Marcellus and P. Scipio to Cannae

Jeff foregoes the option of building up a Consular army in the north to slow down Hannibal's reconquests there.

CARTHAGE'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 3. ❸Numidia Revolts, 23. ❸Numidian Ally, 26. ❸Syracuse Allies with Carthage, 27. ❷Hannibal "I have come. . .", 30. ❸Carthaginian Siege Train, 32. ①Numidian Allies Desert, 58. ①Cato Counsels Rome, 62. ❷Force March 2.

Sweet! I really have no complaints about this hand. I should be able to reinforce my position by claiming a few more provinces. I get Syracuse, and, if I so desire, the Siege Train. I expect him to keep coming after me, since I've got the position to claim and protect northern Italy. Depending on what happens, after securing the north, I will either head south, or go for the grand prize. Priority one, though, is to get some more Allies.

As expected, Carthage has received her Syracusean allies. I doubt Jeff will want to send an army to Sicily to stamp out these fellows while Hannibal is still running rampant, so the Roman political pain will be felt for several turns. The Siege Train is a great option, especially since Jeff is not stockpiling CUs on top of

Rome, but it is still a costly gamble to use (besieging Rome with the Train will take about six siege rolls and cost 3 CUs, giving Rome plenty of opportunities to trap a weakened Hannibal or pursue alternative action prior to relieving the siege with one of those nice event cards that lengthen sieges. Essentially, Andy has a hand full of high high-point Operation cards that will help his political campaign, if Rome lets up with the attacks (doubtful). At least the ❸/❸ cards can be used for reinforcements in dire emergencies.*

ROME'S HAND

Strategy Cards: 10. ❷Macedonian Reinforcements, 17. ①Surprise Sortie, 25. ❷Capua Sides with Carthage, 34. ❸Major Campaign, 42. ①Elephant Fright, 45. ❷Allied Auxiliaries (Etruria), 52. ❷Pestilence, 64. ❷Truce.

I've got my best generals in play. I've got Elephant Fright and a Major Campaign. This is a definite sign from Mars to seize the initiative. If I can cause Hannibal some casualties, he may spend the turn reinforcing and ducking, instead of converting PCs. If not, look out.

STRATEGY PHASE

Rome chooses to go first, by playing a campaign card.

TURN 4 ROMAN MOVE A: The troops are in high morale, the virgin was sacrificed, and the gods smile upon us! Onward! I pass the river Rubicon! The die will be cast, after the play of battle cards! Okay, so that was Caesar. Excuuuuuse me. 34. ❸Major Campaign to move Nero (8 CUs) to Falerii via Firmum Picenum, causing Battle in Falerii.

When Hannibal didn't take the bait to intercept himself into range of Marcellus, Jeff should have continued north. This army can't scare Hannibal and is being squandered, with little chance of high attrition.

BATTLE OF FALERII, 215 BC

Rome: 8 CUs + 2 Allies + 2 General - 2 for Elephant Charge = 10 BCs: 3 FA, 2 FL, 2 FR, 2 P, 1 R. *Nothing to write home about, this battle is lost.*

Carthage: 10 CUs + 1 Ally + 4 General = 15 BCs: 3 FA, 4 FL, 3 FR, 2 P, 2 DE, 1 R.
1. Nero P matched by Hannibal P, CA dr 4 succeeds.
2. Hannibal DE matched by Nero R, CA automatic.
3. Nero P matched by Hannibal P, CA dr 2 succeeds.
4. Hannibal DE wins.

All so easy. You can't fault Jeff for trying, after all there are more Romans where these came from, but this was a pretty pathetic hand for this. I might have taken a shot at the 11 per cent chance of withdrawal before the first arrow was launched.

No battle casualties on dr 2.

Retreat dr 2 (+2 for DE) yields Roman loss of 3 CUs.

Nero retreats to Firmum Picenum.

Political consequences: Rome loses PC in Panormus.

The second part of the major campaign operation moves Marcellus (P. Scipio, 10 CUs) to Falerii via Rome.

SECOND BATTLE OF FALERII, 215 BC

Carthage calls for the Consular die roll to switch command in the co-led army, but Marcellus commands on the day of battle. Battle event: 42. ❶Elephant Fright negates Hannibal's elephant charge and costs Hannibal two battle cards.

Rome: 10 CUs + 2 Allies + 3 General = 15 BCs: 4 FA, 3 FL, 2 FR, 2 P, 3 DE, 1 R.

Looking better this time, but never underestimate Hannibal's abilities.

Carthage: 10 CUs + 1 Ally + 4 General - 2 for Elephant Fright = 13 BCs: 3 FA, 2 FL, 3 FR, 1 P, 1 DE, 3 R.

1. Marcellus P matched by Hannibal P, CA dr 6 fails.
2. Marcellus P matched by Hannibal R, CA dr 5 fails.

Note that Hannibal could choose to run and fight another day (accepting defeat by a Probe), and losses at this point would average only 2.3 CUs, but the deep Reserves are too good to give up so quickly. Hannibal rarely fails two CAs in a row, so perhaps Andy has gotten that bad luck out of his system and can take control of this battle. Marcellus is smelling blood now and goes for the jugular.

3. Marcellus DE matched by Hannibal DE, automatic CA.
4. Hannibal FR matched by Marcellus FR, CA dr 4 fails.
5. Hannibal FR matched by Marcellus FR, CA dr 2 succeeds.
6. Marcellus DE matched by Hannibal R, automatic CA.

Andy loses heart just as he is one failed Marcellan CA from victory. With two Reserves left, and Jeff giving him CAs via DE, this is a little early to panic.

Hannibal withdrawal attempt dr 6 fails.

When it rains, it pours.

7. Marcellus DE matched by Hannibal R, automatic CA.
8. Hannibal withdrawal attempt dr 1 succeeds, Marcellus attempt to prevent withdrawal dr 4 fails.

Battle casualty dr 3 causes loss of 1 CU from each army.

This is a draw that could easily have been a Carthaginian victory, but it is always wise to play cautious with Hannibal.

TURN 4 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE A: How 'bout Da Bul! Jeff burned two cards in the process. Twice lucky, I shouldn't count on luck alone to carry me through. I need to reinforce myself with some additional Allies. I could crush one of his armies, but claiming an empire will be meaningless without an army of my own. I need to maneuver, not fight. The Numidian Allies can still serve my purpose. 23. ❸Numidian Ally as an Operation to place PCs in Taurini, Faesulae and Panormus.

Excellent PC play, netting two allied provinces for coming battles while chipping away at Sicily.

TURN 4 ROMAN MOVE B: I guess Andy is paying me back for that seven rate of fire from

a previous *ASL* game. I got one CU, but I really need to hit him again. But, if I fail, he can get his choice of Nero or Marcellus. Discretion being the better part of valor, Nero has to seek safety. 17. ❶Surprise Sortie as an Operation to move Nero (5 CUs) to Rome.

Rome doesn't have time to be so discrete. Hannibal is running out of retreat room and Jeff needs to weaken his army to have any chance at all. Send in Marcellus again. Have a killer instinct. Sooner or later Hannibal will not be dealt three Reserve cards. I'm not sure that Jeff should be so confident that Hannibal will not besiege a city this turn so as to throw out the Surprise Sortie either. Finally, the move to Rome risks interception by Hannibal and even the militia of Rome wouldn't save Nero's army (the BCs would have been 17-11). Despite all of this mistaken thinking, however, Andy lets himself get cornered anyway, making Jeff's move look brilliant. Now, Hannibal will have to attack his way out of Etruria against mutually-supporting armies. Things could get ugly.

TURN 4 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE B: Runnin' away are ya?! I've seven cards left, so I feel a little more comfortable with taking my time to claim these provinces. If he wants to throw his troops my way, I'll make him pay, but I am not eager to start the fight. 27. ❷"I have come to Italy, not to fight Italians, but to fight for the liberty of the Italians against Rome"— Hannibal as an event to convert PCs in Arpi and Cannae.

TURN 4 ROMAN MOVE C: Yes, Andy puts the BULL in Hannibal. I'm already in this thing too deep, and, again, I'm going to watch him move twice at the end. I've got to make him think twice about heading south. Equal attrition. Equal attrition. 25. ❷Capua Sides with Carthage as an Operation to move Marcellus (P. Scipio, 9 CUs) to Tarquini.

BATTLE TARQUINI, 215 BC

This time Hannibal succeeds with the change of command die roll and P. Scipio heads the Roman consular army on this day.

Rome: 9 CUs + 2 Allies + 2 General - 2 for Elephant Charge = 11 BCs: 3 FA, 4 FL, 1 FR, 1 P, 1 DE, 1 R. *What little hope there is for P. Scipio is on the left flank, but he should still lead with the Probe.*

Carthage: 9 CUs + 4 Allies + 4 General = 17 BCs: 4 FA, 3 FL, 4 FR, 3 P, 2 DE, 1 R. *Such balance is unfortunate; this should become a FR or P victory after too many rounds.*

1. P. Scipio FL matched by Hannibal FL, CA dr 3 succeeds.
2. Hannibal P as a DE matched by P. Scipio DE, automatic CA.
3. P. Scipio P matched by Hannibal P, CA dr 2 succeeds.
4. Hannibal DE matched by P. Scipio R, automatic CA.
5. P. Scipio FL matched by Hannibal FL, CA dr 3 succeeds.
6. Hannibal DE wins.

Battle casualty dr 1 causes no losses.
Retreat dr 1 (+2 for DE) causes Rome to lose 3 CUs, 1 PC in Brundisium. P. Scipio retreats to Falerii.

Andy confidently pushes ahead with the DE only to be rewarded with a bad retreat die roll for all his bravery. This time Hannibal never missed a beat getting back the initiative, but he should not so confidently play DEs with only 1 R.

TURN 4 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE C: I could probably fight Marcellus, and he'd be more than happy to do so, even though it could cost him an army. His next move would be to move Nero out the back door and try to reclaim the lost northern provinces. I'm not really in the mood for a game of cat and mouse, which plays into his hands. It seems to be time to end this thing, one way or another. Besides, in Rome's weakened condition, a siege and the Siege Train should be safe. 30. ❸Siege Train as an Event to place the siege train with Hannibal.

I think Andy is getting ahead of himself here. He still has to blow back the Roman army in Latium before he can even initiate a siege.

TURN 4 ROMAN MOVE D: What is he going to do with that thing? I can still give him a fight with Nero in Rome, so I've got to block him from going south to the other cities. Marcellus becomes a sacrificial lamb, so at least I should stick him in a useful spot. I'm in real trouble. 10. ❷Macedonian Reinforcements as an Operation to move Marcellus (P. Scipio, 6 CUs) to Beneventum.

Oooh, Rome is threatened by the siege train and all of Rome's armies should now be in Latium to face the threat! Let Hannibal intercept his way into Latium, Jeff, but get your whole force there now! Andy has two unanswered operations at the end of the turn, so Jeff will not be able to answer the call for help then, should Rome enter siege. This could be the critical failure for the Roman cause. Jeff's repeated failures to attrition Hannibal down are now going to come to haunt him.

TURN 4 CARTHAGINIAN MOVE D: Yes, it's a crap shoot, but I don't see a better situation for trying to take Rome. The alternative would be to pound that speed bump and remove a few more Roman PCs. If I head south, I'm still going to have to fight his armies or conduct sieges, so why not go for the win? The Romans might like those long, protracted fights between the Christians and the lions, but I'll opt for the quick kill. 58. ①Cato Counsels Rome as an Operation to move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 9 CUs, Siege Train) to Rome, where the siege die roll of 4 eliminates 1 Carthagingian CU, but places one of three siege markers necessary to sack Rome.

TURN 4 ROMAN MOVE E: Do I have any choice? At least Nero can sortie. If I can get him to retreat, that should be enough to save Rome, for now. 52. ❷Pestilence as an Operation to move Marcellus (P. Scipio, 6 CUs) to Rome. Hannibal's interception attempt in Praeneste fails [dr = 6], leading to Battle of Rome.

The moment of truth for Rome has arrived— virtually every CU under arms is called to Rome to relieve the siege. Had Marcellus hung around in or next to Rome for interception, the waste of two Roman strategy cards could have been saved. What I find intriguing is that Andy was willing to lift the siege to intercept Marcellus. I have seen sieges that were meant only to draw the Romans into favorable battle, but this does not appear to have been Andy's purpose.

THE PLAY IS THE THING?
Juniors Events At AvalonCon '96
By Stuart K. Tucker

AVALONCON 1996 ★ HUNT VALLEY, MD

Nay, winning is the only thing for some of these seasoned veterans of AvalonCon. As is our custom, we here make special mention of the up-and-coming stars of the gaming hobby: our children who compete in the Juniors events of AvalonCon. These events are geared to kids under the age of 14. However, make no mistake about this—they have often gained expertise on their home turf which makes them formidable foes in any crowd. Competitiveness in this group of rivals has been brewing for years at home and at AvalonCon. Fortunately for the rest of us it will be a few years before these girls and guys storm the league of ancients. . . . Yet, soon we may have to create an oldtimers bracket to avoid the public embarrassment of no longer being the masters within our own homes.

ADEL VERFLICHTET 21
In this single-elimination multi-round tournament. Seth Kirchner took top honors over finalists Erica Poniske, Russell Chilcote, Brian Kirchner and Jessi Wagner.

CANDIDATE 7
Two boards of candidates fought for their party's nomination. Scott Garmon triumphed over Courtney Foster and Lauren Vessey in the final.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS 18
Three six-chariot races reduced the field to eight for the final. Possibly the youngest AvalonCon competitor of all time, Chrissey Frattalli earned second place in her preliminary heat to gain a spot in the finals. Brendan Crowe, Tina Snarski and Mark Yingling each won the preliminary heats, but again faced stiff competition in the final from those that had come in second and third during the preliminaries. Ultimately, Mark Yingling outran Brendan Crowe for first, while Mark's brother David earned third and Tina Snarski captured fourth, foiling the bids of Brooks Beyma, Jonas Borra, Chrissey Frattali and Kim Cresswell.

DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD 22
John Poniske, Brad Garmen, Erica Kirchner and Evan Hitchings survived two rounds on the lost plateau to compete in the final round. There Poniske proved again his adventurous acumen and won the plaque.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD 21
Twenty-one enthusiastic kids of age nine to fourteen showed up. Five preliminary games of six epochs each were played. Brian Kirchner, Lauren Hickok, Stephen Crenshaw, Richard Beyma and George Ponzoni won these preliminary games to advance to the final. Jonas Borra had the high second place score to also advance. Defending champion Josh Johnson and his sister Katie Johnson were both in the running but came up a little short.

Lauren Hickok rode the GM's favorite color (blue) to first place finishing with 174 points. George Ponzoni beat out the other players in a close race for second place with 155 points. Brian Kirchner finished third with 151 points and Richard Beyma was fourth with 144 points. Lauren was later observed testing her skill in the adult HISTORY OF THE WORLD tournament. Look out world—these kids are good!

LEGENDS OF ROBIN HOOD 18
The Kirchner clan continued their domination of the juniors events. Jeff Ribiera and Michael Fellin met a pair of Kirchners (Brian and Seth) at Robinhood's Sherwood Forrest camp in the four-person final. Brian stole the show to earn the championship plaque.

MERCHANT OF VENUS 12
A strong field of contestants used a wide variety of trading strategies. Brooks Beyma, Abby Cocke, Kim Cresswell, Courtney Foster and Stephen Crenshaw advanced to the final. The game was tight to the finish, when Stephen zoomed his hot yellow-drive Clipper into a port with two demand markers, adding $100 to his payoff and putting him over the top. Courtney got caught with a hold full of valuable Voll Silk, but finished a strong second. She was a cool, calm and quiet contestant throughout the game (NOT!). Congratulations to everyone for some excellent play.

PRINCESS RYAN'S STAR MARINES 21
The three demonstrations (in but five hours) of this soon-to-be-released game successfully reeled in players ranging from eight years old to fourteen to brave the tongue-in-cheek futuristic assault mission to rescue the princess.

In the first game, the marines fought a series of see-saw battles, with many retreats, regroups and ballistic insertions. The commander (Tim Kirchner) kept urging the use of promotion points for more time chips and option cards which gave them one last regroup for the successful final push into the royal suite to save the Princess.

In the second game, the marines lost every one of their four ballistic insertion battles. The girl in charge (Alison Brown), having led them to the holding tanks four times, REFUSED to go for a

Seth Kirchner

Scott Garmon

Mark Yingling

John Poniske

Lauren Hickok
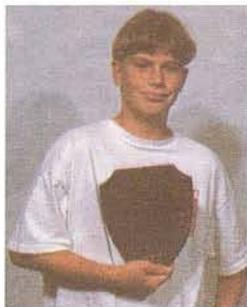
Stephen Crenshaw

Ian Lange

Brian Kirchner

Victor Ziegler

"Do or Die" assault, preferring to rest on her lead in promotion points. She remarked, "I don't want to die. I want to WIN ONE GAME this weekend!" Plodding forward at a safer pace, Alison suffered from the lack of confidence of her marines, who managed to engineer her Sergeant Major into the focal point of Black Guard's deadly firepower. The new commander and three other marine players screamed "Do or Die! Do or Die! Do or Die!" Courtney Foster and Alison, climbed begrudgingly into the assault shuttle. The next card was drawn and the next sound was a large SPRAAAANG as the General Electric Armed Freighter Schnectady crashed into the planetary shields and folded up like a cheap accordian, followed quickly by the louder sound of Alison screaming "I DIED! Nooooo!"

Game three was a much more sedate game…at first. The marines (led by Brooks Beyma) advanced into a series of traps the Black Guard (run by Bryan Dodd) had set up for them. Then the Marines decided to try to outflank him in a series of leapfrogs into friendly locations. They hit the Bank. They hit the Resistance Fighter Base. They hit the MALL! They fought right down to their last time chip and hit THE DOOMSDAY BOMB! Their hearts sank. They already had lost the card to defuse it—the 332nd Underwater Messkit Unit. THEN ALISON GOT HER REVENGE on the Black Guard with the game-saving play of the Mechanized Martinets to take the hit and allow the marines to move on to the next battle. The Black Guard had run out of tricks and the marines coasted into the suite to save the Princess.

First place in the Tourney went to Ian Lange, the Black Guard commander in game two. Second place went to Bryan Dodd, as the Marine commander in game one. Third place went to Brooks Beyma, the Marine commander in game three.

SPEED CIRCUIT   12
Brian Kirchner mastered the course to win against his eleven swift opponents. Brooks Beyma captured second place, with Jeffry Ribeiro and Harrison Anderson finishing third and fourth.

TYRANNO EX   6
Brian Kirchner defeated Scot Garmon, Evan Hutchins and the Chilcote clan (Russell, Michael and Philip) in this two-round survival of the fittest.

WIZARD'S QUEST   15
John Poniske's quest for another plaque was rewarded again. Mary Kratz claimed second place.

WRASSLIN'   2
The two entrants played a best two out of three falls with a different wrestler for each match. One kid picked the two wrestlers, the other chose which one he wanted to play (switching order for the second match. The first match was resolved by a special ability "automatic victory." The second was a grueling grind 'em down, get back up duel. A lot of credit goes to second-place Seth Kirchner who showed a lot of grit before succumbing to Victor Ziegler .

★

REBUILDING WESTERN CIVILIZATION
First Look at
AGE OF RENAISSANCE

AGE OF RENAISSANCE is one of those games which are best described through visual presentations. Having been involved in playtesting the game, I have repeatedly tried to explain the essence of the game with only words—and have generally not succeeded in conveying the basis of my enthusiasm for the game. Yet, when I put the same matter before a group of gamers with the components in full use, the response is most enthusiastically different. It helps that the components are extremely beautiful, but the key to understanding the appeal of this game is most elusive. You can look at cards, counters and maps and still not see what drives the game. Play experience quickly reveals the subtle beauties of the mechanics of the game.

Certainly, I could describe this game as derivative of CIVILIZATION, a well-known, long-time favorite of many. I could say that unlike CIVILIZATION, AGE OF RENAISSANCE allows for more direct conflict (albeit under the guise of economic competition for markets). The ease of play and the historical epochs for events remind me a great deal of HISTORY OF THE WORLD, but each player has only one identity (one city-state) throughout the game. Without doubt, one can classify this as an empire-building kind of game, but territorial borders are not contiguous—in fact "territory" is defined in terms of control of scattered commodity sources. Success is not defined by this temporary territorial control, but by the permanent Advances that are purchased by your state. As each advance allows yet another deviation from the basic rules, a player seeks to amalgamate a winning combination of these Advances which will propel his civilization ahead of the others.

In the end, players will only truly fathom the appeal of this game by experiencing it. Once the game begins, however, players are slowly drawn into the dynamics of the game and find themselves unable to put it down. I usually introduce a new game to my friends with the idea of teaching the mechanics and playing the first few turns and then starting over the next time we meet. I thought surely this would be the same this time around as well—especially for a game which clearly punishes the unenlightened newcomer. Certainly, with the mechanics understood, my friends would want to stop and get a fresh start. However, to my surprise recently, I found my friends saying, "let's keep playing this one" and "I have Plans for this coming turn and want to carry on." In the end, we played the game to completion in one evening, ending at two a.m. (on a work night). They could not put the game down. (Indeed, they wanted to play it again the next time we met.) It seems that the intricacies of the many interdependent decisions in this game makes time pass rapidly. Each player has plenty of thinking to do during the time when other players are taking their actions. Each decision must be implemented over a series of actions spanning several turns. Opportunities arise at unusual moments. Plans can be foiled by the actions of others, but the building blocks of your Renaissance (the Advances) cannot be taken away.

Whereas CIVILIZATION may involve too little conflictual interaction among the players and HISTORY OF THE WORLD may have too much "down time" during other players' turns, AGE OF RENAISSANCE offers players a fully interactive, thinking experience which (due to card play) does not fall into boring patterns. Believe me, I say this from the standpoint of being an enthusiastic player of both of the other games.

On the next few pages, we print the beginning turns of a sample three-player game of AGE OF RENAISSANCE to provide insight into some of the early decisions players must make.

—SKT

Age of Renaissance
A Sample Game

A three-player game of *AGE OF RENAISSANCE* has just begun. Let's observe the opening turns for a few strategy hints.

Initial Deal:

Don - Wool   Ben - Crusades   Bill - Silk

The capitals go up for bid. Don and Bill bid $3 each for the first choice, with Bill winning the tie-breaking die roll. He chooses Venice with an eye towards a rapid eastward expansion and pays $3 to the bank. "Yellow" is written in the Choice 1 box of each player's Turn Log.

Don also pays $3 for the second choice. Wanting to avoid Genoa so he can get off to a fast start with his Wool card, he settles for Barcelona/Blue. Ben, knowing that his Crusades card will cure all opening position ills, bids 0. Ben gets Genoa for nothing. "Blue" is written in the Choice 2 box and "Purple" in the Choice 3 box. Each player places a ● in his capital.

Each player records his "Total", Tokens" and "Cash" outlays on the Turn 1 section of his Game Log as follows:

Blue:	$37	14	$23
Purple:	$40	17	$23
Yellow:	$37	20	$17

Once all are finished, they announce their allocations and pay $14, $17 and $20 respectively to the bank and move that many tokens to the Expansion side of their mats. The broker places one yellow and one purple marker on the "1" Cloth space and one blue marker on the "1" Wine space of the Commodity Log. The blue Turn marker is placed in the "2nd" box of the Order of Play Display, followed in order by the purple and yellow markers in "4th" and "6th".

1. Draw Cards Phase:

Blue draws Rashid ad Din.   Purple draws Papal Decree.
Yellow draws Wool.

There is no Buy Cards Phase since none of the players has acquired Urban Ascendancy, so play proceeds to:

3. Play Cards Phase:

Blue passes. He could play Rashid ad Din now with an eye towards buying Written Record in the coming Purchase Phase, but that would leave him without enough money to buy his initial Ship Upgrade which he decides is his first priority.

Purple plays the Crusades card which allows him to place a ● in any province of his choice in Area VI. He chooses Acre. The broker places a purple marker on the "1" space of the Spice row of the Commodity Log and moves the purple Misery marker to the 10 box of the Misery Index.

Yellow plays his Wool card which triggers no payments since no player yet controls a Wool province. Yellow's plans are for eastward expansion where Wool is scarce and he fully expects Barcelona to command the early lion's share of Wool so he decides to play it now before Barcelona can benefit from it rather than pay Stabilization costs for it later.

4. Purchase Phase:

Blue pays $10 for a Galley 2 and $3 for Stabilization for his two-card hand, leaving him with $10.

Purple pays $20 for Caravan and $1 for Stabilization for his one-card hand, leaving him with $2.

Yellow pays $10 for a Galley 2 and $1 for Stabilization of his one-card hand, leaving him with $6.

5. Expansion Phase:

Blue places his 14 tokens as follows:
Montpelier: 2 ◻s = 1 ○.   Basque: 2 ◻s = 1 ○.
Valencia: 2 ◻s = 1 ○.   Granada: 2 ◻s = 1 ○.
Toledo: 3 ◻s = 1 ○.   Marseilles, Toulouse, Palma: 1 ◻ each.

Purple goes next. He places his 17 tokens as follows:
Bordeaux: 4 ◻s = 1 ○. (Caravan pays early dividend.)
Lyons: 4 ◻s = 1 ○.   Milan: 3 ◻s = 1 ○.   Florence: 4 ◻s = 1 ○.
Suez, Aleppo: 1 ◻ each (again aided by Caravan).

Yellow then places his 20 tokens as follows:
Dubrovnik: 2 ◻s = 1 ○.Belgrade: 2 ◻s = 1 ○.   Rome: 2 ◻s.
Florence: 8 ◻s vs 1 ○. [Attack dice roll: black 5, white 3. Attacker wins.] Place one ○. Return the eight ◻s and the ○ to their respective Stocks.

Yellow pauses. He has six tokens left which is just enough to attack the last remaining province he can reach this turn: Milan. However, if he does so, he will have nothing left with which to buy an Expansion card and it is rare to be able to buy one for only three tokens while moving last. Yet, in this case, the cost in real terms is actually six tokens since he can do nothing with his three remaining tokens and they will be returned to Stock if unused. That, coupled with his jealousy over Purple's good fortune in penetrating Area VI so fast with the Crusades, decides the issue. He attacks Purple in Milan.

Milan: 6 ◻s vs ○. [Attack dice roll: black 3, white 3. Defender wins.] The six ◻s are returned to Stock since the attacker's die roll failed to beat the defender's die roll. The red die wasn't even thrown since Yellow can't possibly win with the red die from the 6th position until he buys Proselytism.

The broker counts the ○s on the board and announces that Blue (with five) has earned a free History card for having the most new markets in Expansion. Blue draws Civil War. All ◻s and ○s are flipped to their colored side.

6. Income Phase:

By checking the last uncovered circle of their Income Tracks, the players discover they are due the following income for the coming turn to add to their existing cash:
Blue: $33 for six ●s.   Purple: $30 for five ●s.
Yellow: $27 for four ●s.

The Surplus/Shortage dice rolls are a red 4, white 1, and black 2 yielding a Wool Surplus, and a red 5, white 2, black 5 which creates a Wine Surplus. Barcelona is the majority holder of both surplus commodities and pays $3 to the bank - $2 for his two Wool provinces and $1 for his sole Wine province.

7. Order of Play Phase:

Each player secretly records his Token expenditures for Turn 2 as follows:

Blue:	$40	23	$17
Purple:	$32	19	$13
Yellow:	$33	20	$13

The expenditures are announced and paid as the broker rearranges the Turn markers to put Purple in "2nd," Yellow in "4th" and Blue in "6th."

Turn 2
1. Draw Cards Phase:

Purple draws Mysticism Abounds.
Yellow draws Armor.
Blue draws Wine/Cloth.

Board position at end of Turn 1

There is no Buy Cards Phase since none of the players has acquired Urban Ascendancy, so play proceeds to:
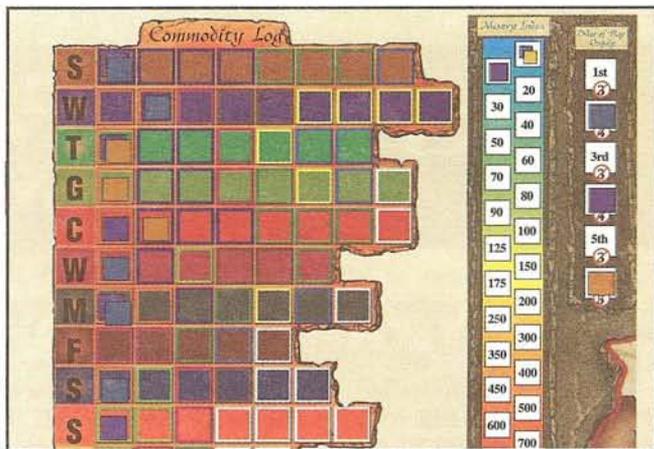
3. Play Cards Phase:

Purple passes. The Mysticism card is not one he cares for, but he decides to hold it until he buys at least one Science in hopes of gaining less Misery than the others.

Yellow passes. There are too many vacant provinces to waste his Armor card in combat now.

Blue, jealous of Genoa's fast start in Area VI, hits Purple with Civil War. He decides to bide his time with the Wool card since the Wool of Algiers is now within his reach. By weakening Purple, he can even improve his chances of taking Marseilles to further his Wine interests which will make his Wine/Cloth card a very profitable acquisition. Genoa is reduced to a ■ and a Purple Cloth is lost on the Commodity Log. Purple also gains another space on the Misery Index and will be dropped to last in the Expansion Phase with Yellow and Blue moving up to 2nd and 4th respectively. Faced with the loss of $7 in cash or ten tokens, Purple curses Blue as he pays the bank $7 and laments his lost Galley build. Were it not for his favorable headstart in the east due to the Crusades, Purple would be in a very difficult position - pinched between two greedy neighbors with no shipping. Fortunately, there is room for expansion in the east which does not require shipping at the moment.

4. Purchase Phase:

Purple laments his fate as he pays half of his remaining $6 for Stabilization of his two-card hand and falls further behind in the shipping race. Balance: $3

Yellow pays $10 for an upgrade to Galley 4 and $3 for Stabilization of his two-card hand. Balance: $0.

Blue follows suit except that his Stabilization bill is $6 for a three-card hand. Balance: $1.

5. Expansion Phase:

Yellow expands fully to the south and east as far as his Galley 4 will reach. With his remaining three tokens he buys an Expansion card which turns out to be War.

Rome: 2 ☐s + 2 ■s = 1 ◯.
Sicily: 2 ☐s = 1 ◯.
Tunis: 4 ☐s = 1 ◯.
Salonika: 2 ☐s = 1 ◯.
Crete: 3 ☐s = 1 ◯.
Bari, Durazzo, Corfu, Athens: 1 ☐ each.

Blue also expands to fill a vacuum. He'd like to attack Tunis, both to blunt Yellow's southern penetration and to deprive him of his third Cloth province, but lacks the necessary shipping to make an eight-token attack without an adjacent prior presence. He decides to forego a six-token Expansion card purchase and instead uses his last seven tokens to attack the Civil War-stricken Genoa.

Leon: 1 ☐.

Lisbon: 3 □s = 1 ○.
Marseilles: 4 □s + 1 ■ = 1 ○.
Fez: 2 □s = 1 ○.
Algiers: 2 □s = 1 ○.
Naples: 4 □s (lacks shipping for necessary five tokens).
Genoa: 7 □s vs 1 ■ (doubled) [Attack dice roll: red 3, black 5, white 2] = 1 ○.

Purple laments the scavenging tendencies of his neighbors and completes his infestation of Area VI without opposition. Without shipping, Genoa cannot reach Cyprus and has no place for its last token which must be forfeited.

Alexandria: 5 □s = 1 ○.
Cairo: 4 □s = 1 ○.
Suez: 2 □s + 1 ■ = 1 ○.
Aleppo: 3 □s + 1 ■ = 1 ○.
Tarsus, Levant, Adalia, Jerusalem: 1 □ each.

Yellow is awarded the free bonus card for most Expansion (Stone) although it tied Blue with five new markets. Yellow wins the tie for having moved before Blue in the turn order.

6. Income Phase:

By checking the last uncovered circle of their Income Tracks, the players discover they are due the following income for the coming turn to add to their existing cash:

Blue: $48 for 11 ●s.
Purple: $39 for eight ●s.
Yellow: $42 for nine ●s.

The Commodity dice rolls (red 2, black 5, white 1 and red 1, black 6, white 1) create a shortage of Wine and Cloth. Barcelona is the Majority holder of Wine and gets a free card (Furs). Venice is the Majority holder of Cloth and also draws a free card (Stone).

7. Order of Play Phase:

Each player secretly records his Expansion expenditures for Turn 3 as follows:

Blue: $49   1 $48
Purple: $42   14 $28
Yellow: $42   32 $10

The expenditures are announced and paid as the broker rearranges the Turn markers to put Blue in "2nd," Purple in "4th" and Yellow in "6th." Blue, relieved that his low ball Expansion bid has allowed him to go first as planned to protect the Wine Shortage, announces that the Market Shortage in Cloth has been corrected. He pays the bank $5 to influence the market and the broker removes the Cloth Shortage marker from the Commodity Log.
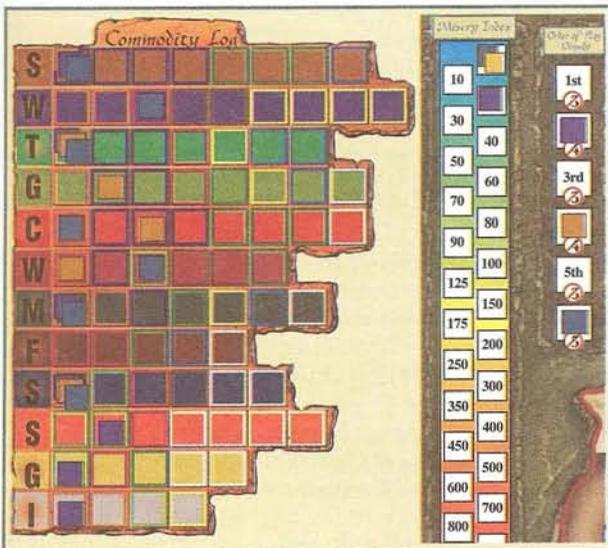
Turn 3

1. Draw Cards Phase:

Blue draws Timber.

Purple draws Spice.

Yellow draws Dionysus Exiguus.

There is no Buy Cards Phase since none of the players has acquired Urban Ascendancy [V], so play proceeds to:

3. Play Cards Phase:

The reason for Blue's low Expansion bid is soon evident. He positively beams as he plays the Wine/Cloth card as a payout for Wine. His three dominated Wine provinces increased by the Shortage pay him $80. Yellow also benefits to the tune of $20 for his domination of Crete thanks to the Shortage. Blue follows that play with his Wool card for another $18 for his three Wool provinces, rationalizing that someone else will beat him to Smyrna and that now is the best time to trigger the payment while neither of his adversaries can benefit. Now flush with cash, he plays Rashid ad Din as the first Leader card of the turn to guarantee his safety from Patronage claims.

Purple resists the urge to play his Spice card for a badly needed $36. He decides to hold onto it in hopes of a Spice Shortage developing which will increase his payout to $81 since his two current Spice provinces seem secure for the time being. However, he decides to ruin Blue's day in the meantime by playing Papal Decree and banning all Exploration purchases in this turn. If nothing else, it guarantees that Blue has lost the $10 credit for Overland East provided by Rashid ad Din.

Yellow plays Armor, War, Dionysus Exiguus and both Stone cards. All three players have one Stone province and therefore collect $2 each. However, wary of Blue's ability to buy Patronage and claim Exiguus' credits for free, he reluctantly spends $10 to set the Patronage price on Exiguus at $10. Yellow declares War on Blue. His die roll is a 5 which is increased to a 6 due to his +1 modifier for Armor. However, his elation quickly subsides when Blue rolls a 6 to tie him. Although Yellow still wins the war due to his Armor Advantage which wins ties and has saved him from a protracted struggle in the following turn, no provinces change hands because the modified die rolls were tied. His Misery marker is advanced one space and Blue's Misery marker is advanced two spaces.

4. Purchase Phase:

Blue's smile has faded along with his vision of an early purchase of Overland East and Seaworthy Vessels for an unfettered exploitation of Area V. The Papal Decree against Exploration Advances has squashed that plan. Rather than wait a turn to put it into effect and risk getting hit by Alchemy, he goes on a spending spree in another direction. $10 buys a shipping upgrade to Galley 6. $30 buys Patronage. That plus $10 to Yellow earns the $20 credit for Exiguus which, when coupled with his own $10 credit for Rashid ad Din, buys Written Record with no further expenditure. Another $60 buys Holy Indulgence. Blue loses the $20 credit for Patronage by buying two Religions in the same turn (since Advance credits cannot be used in the same turn they are acquired), but decides it is worth it to slow down the coming Armor-fueled onslaught of Yellow. The broker advances the Blue Misery marker two spaces to "40" for the two Religion acquisitions. $20 buys Urban Ascendancy, and he completes his purchases with $3 for Stabilization of his two-card hand. Balance: $10.

Purple spends $3 for Stabilization of his two-card hand. This sets off much table talk about the shipless wonders of Genoa who doubtless will return their profits in a wheelbarrow since they have no shipping. Purple takes their teasing in good humor, knowing that, barring a Spice surplus, he will be able to purchase Seaworthy Vessels next turn and thus skip needless expenditures on Galleys. Balance: $27.

Yellow, with $32, has more cash than he had anticipated at the outset of the turn. Before his windfall in Wine, he had intended only to upgrade his shipping to fuel his Armor-aided Expansion plans with the maximum tokens he could field. Now, he upgrades his shipping to Galley 6 ($10) and pays another $10 coupled with the $20 Exiguus credit to buy Written Record. With the remainder, he purchases Stabilization for his one-card hand with $1. Balance: $11.

5. Expansion Phase:

Due to being in sole possession of Holy Indulgence, Blue gains four tokens while Yellow and Purple lose two apiece. Nevertheless, Blue must now pay the price for going first as he looks at his meager force of five tokens. He places them as far east as possible, hoping that they will survive as a stepping off point in the next turn.

Tripoli: 2 ❑s = 1 ○.

Naples: 1 ❑ + 4 ∎s = 1 ○.

Libya, Gallipoli: 1 ❑ each.

Purple's options without any shipping aren't much better, but Caravan allows him to fulfill his potential in the east as he gobbles up everything he can reach without shipping - even passing through the ❑ in Libya to occupy Barca. His last five tokens are just enough, thanks to the doubling factor of attacking one's own Capital, for some payback against Blue as he reclaims Genoa.

Constantinople: 4 ❑s = 1 ○.

Smyrna: 2 ❑s = 1 ○.

Genoa: 5 ❑s (doubling all 5) vs ● [Attack dice roll: red 6, black 1, white 6] = 1 ○. Broker removes one Blue Cloth.

Barca: 1 ❑.

Aside from Cyprus which the shipping-poor Genoans could not reach, there are no freebies left for Yellow as the allowable board area at this point has been saturated. It matters little. Yellow is loaded for bear with 30 tokens and Armor and has the wherewithal to take what he wants. Unfortunately, he doesn't have a fleet whose prowess matches his army. With a shipping capacity of only six, Yellow cannot land in Aleppo which defends with 10 due to its two supporting Satellites. Even the new Purple domination of Metals at Constantinople with a defense of 8 is temporarily beyond Yellow's means. Yellow shows no interest in Gold but notes that Armor plus his shipping capacity of 6 is enough to deliver a 7-strength attack against the 7 defense of Suez and its Satellite in Jeruasalem. However, Yellow must look westward for fulfillment of its Silk ambitions - at least for this turn. He decides to take some Satellites to pave the way for his eastward ambitions on turn 4. Sensing Blue is presently the main threat, he will attempt to nullify Blue's progress in the rich provinces of the East.

Tripoli: 3 ❑s (Armor +1) vs ○ [Attack dice roll: black 3, white 2] = 1 ○.

Smyrna: 3 ❑s (Armor +1) vs ○ [Attack dice roll: black 5, white 5] = 1 ○. (Armor wins ties)

Cyprus: 3 ❑s = 1 ○.

Valencia: 4 ❑s (Armor +1) vs ● +1 (for Palma ∎) [Attack dice roll: black 6, white 4] = 1 ○.

Granada: 3 ❑s (Armor +1) vs ● [Attack dice roll: black 2, white 2] = 1 ○ (tie won by Military).

Gallipoli: 1 ❑ (Armor +1) vs ❑ [Attack dice roll: black 3, white 4] = Loss.

Gallipoli: 1 ❑ (Armor +1) vs ❑ [Attack: black 2, white 5] = Loss.

Gallipoli: 1 ❑ (Armor +1) vs ❑ [Attack: black 1, white 4] = Loss.

Gallipoli: 1 ❑ (Armor +1) vs ❑ [Attack: black 3, white 3] = 1 ❑. (Armor wins ties)

Libya: 1 ❑ (Armor +1) vs ❑ [Attack: black 2, white 3] = 1 ❑.

Fez: 3 ❑s (Armor +1) vs ● [Attack: black 2, white 3] = Loss.

Fez: 3 ❑s (Armor +1) vs ● [Attack: black 5, white 4] = 1 ○.

Seville: 3 ❑s = 1 ○.

Opponents Wanted

AL: ASL in Alabama: Huntsville, Athens, Decatur. Tate Rogers, 27134 Harvest Rd., Athens, AL 35813. Phone: (205) 232-5667.

AR: Rookie crew looking for veteran bomber group to fly PBM B17 missions with and to compare raid results with. Andrew Fraize, P.O. Box 395, St. Charles, AR 72140.

CA: ASL FTF DYO. Wil also consider published scenarios if you are still at that level. Also have 4" hexes for playing super deluxe ASL DYO. Earl Ryan, P.O. Box 0398, Corona, CA 91718, (909) 736-RYAN.

CO: Experienced gamer seeks opponents for ftf play in the Denver area. I play almost anything. David Newport, 9521 W. Vassar Way, Lakewood, CO 80227, (303) 987-0738.

DE: Looking for Eastern Shore opponents for family style games like MOV, Air Baron, Slapshot, Stocks & Bonds. Andy & Carrie Lewis, 16 Gosling Dr., Lewes, DE 19958, (302) 644-1984.

DE: Looking for FTF opponents for most any game on Eastern Shore especially WTP, Hannibal, and A5A even ASL. Andy Lewis, 16 Gosling Dr., Lewes, DE 19958, (302) 644-1984.

DE: Adult gamer seeks FTF A5A, BRI, ACV/CIV, Cival War, GDC, HRC, HCR, RTG, 1776, SIV, SJW, VIP, W&P, WTP, SWIM, SLB (Stonewall's Last Battle). Tim Hitchings, 330 Kemper Dr., Newark, DE 19702, (302) 836-3088.

GA: New in this area. Looking for wargamers to play EIA, ASL, Civil War. Contact Jason Johns, 2515 Center West Parkway, Apt. 10-L, Augusta, GA 30909, (706) 736-3494.

IA: Still playing after 15 years. Opponents wanted for PBM A3R, W&P, SL, ASL. Tim Fuhrmeister, 942 Iowa Ave. #3, Iowa City, IA 52245.

ID: ASL, KM, RB, SUB, UF, WSIM, know many more. Prefer ASL. Kevin Knoell, 506 Chestnut St., Mtn. Home, ID 83647, (208) 587-2354.

MD: FTF opponents wanted in the Eastern Shore area of MD and VA. Like to play A3R, ERS, BKN, W&P, 1776, and HWD. Rob Beyma, 109 Brentwood Cir., Pocomoke, MD 21851.

NC: PBM for TRC and especially VIP. Want to learn TPS, so are there any players in Charlotte area. Please contact me! Bill Deaton, 5200 Pine Dr., Charlotte, NC 28269, (704) 597-7956.

NJ: Adult gamer seeks FTF GOA, TRC and PGG, especially GOA. Jim Chambers, 87 Candace La., Chatham, NJ 07928, (201) 635-2096.

NY: PBM/FTF FRED/STC. GMaster seeking players for PBM 1980/1996 Machiavelli 8/9-player variants. Subscribe to AHIK's Premiere PBM multi-player magazine. BlutUndEisen. FTF 1776, MA. Stuart Schoenberger, P.O. Box 104, Jamaica, NY 11435-0510, (718) 262-3402.

NY: TPS opponent wanted by 28 year old novice. Anthony Burnet, Box 1472, Mass., NY 11758, (516) 731-4354.

NY: Opponent wanted for AH World War II era historical simulations for Rochester, NY area. Ray Joel, 30 Gemini Cir., Rochester, NY 14606, (716) 247-6943.

NY: Adult FTF opponents wanted for HCR, A3R, TRC, 1776, HWD or other games. Jim Loman, 206 Regent St., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866, (518) 580-1798.

NY: Need FTT opponent for A5A, SJW, HCR, RTG. Looking for group for RKL, GSR. William Voll, 2810 Moreland St., Yorktown Hts., NY 10598, (914) 245-4636.

OH: Novice gamer seeks FTF opponents for ASL, SJW, HCR, RTG, SIV. I'm also willing to learn others. Call anytime and leave a message. Ron Dawson, 4283 Beverly Hills Dr., #243, Brunswick, OH 44212, (330) 220-4193.

OK: Looking for two players for a PBM game of B81. Willingness to use fax or phone preferred. Slightly modified rules for simulation value. Jeff Horger, 2845 Indianola Ave., Columbus, OH 43202, (614) 268-0549.

OK: Vet gamer seeks FTF 3R4 opponents in central Oklahoma. John Michalski, 10705 Cecilia Dr., Oklahoma City, OK 73162.

PA: Adult gamers wanted for FTF in PB, PL, RF, TRC, TPS, and many more. Keith Althouse, 519 Bickel Dr., Hamburg, PA 19526, (610) 562-2089.

TX: PBM opponent for TRC, AK, Waterloo, Midway. e-mail hollern@hasting.com or Hasting BMV@AOL.COM any WWII. Larry Hollern, 4452 Ridgecrest Cir., Amarillo, TX 79109.

TX: Diplomacy World is the flagship 'zine of the PBM DIP hobby. For info, write Douglas Kent, 10214 Black Hickory Rd., Dallas, TX 75243 or e-mail 73567.1414@compuserve.com.

TX: Play DIP by mail! For a sample of Maniac's Paradise, write Douglas Kent, 10214 Black Hickory Rd., Dallas, TX 75243 or e-mail 73567.1414@compuserve.com.

TX: Seeking opponent(s) for ftf A3R, ABN, D-Day, Dune, EIA, KOM, MRM, W&P and WTP. Paul Toro, 520 E. Greenwood, Del Rio, TX 78840, (210) 774-1442.

TX: Interested in amateur multi-player play-by-mail gaming? Send a SASE for a sample of Pontevedria; the listing of North American 'zines and GMs. W. Andrew York, POB 2307, Universal City, TX 78143.

TX: Hill County opponents for ftf with ASL or other TAHGC games. Contact Carl Kusch, 1145 Junction Highway, Kerrville, TX 78028, (210) 896-5000.

UT: Will buy: Bulge '81, G-Burg '77, Bull Run, Panzer Armee Afrika, Chancellorsville, Fortress Europa, Fury in the West. Kevin Thomason, 261 E. 300 South, Suite 325, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.

VA: Experienced gamer wants FTF opponents in Fredericksburg, Orange, Charlottesville, Culpepper area. Most AH/VG games. Prefer AREA. Write first, please! Rod Coffey, 16201 Monrovia Rd., Orange, VA 22960.

CLUBS

CO: Denver area wargamers: The Colorado Commisars are looking to fill its glorious ranks with anyone interested in playing fun wargames. Sense of humor required. Contact Scott Johnson, 2039 Shiloh Dr., Castle Rock, CO 80104, (303) 660-2029.

CT: The Connecticut Game Club is looking for players and GMs to attend our monthly meetings, held the second Saturday of every month from noon to midnight, at the Ramada Inn of Norwalk, CT. All types of games are played, especially board games, card games and miniatures. For club info and complimentary newsletter contact the CGC POB 403, Fairfield, CT 06430-0403 or email CGCSBS@aol.com.

FL: Join our growing gaming group in Sarasota, FL. For more info call Mike Bakken at (941) 355-3429, e-mail: M.BAKKEN@GENIE.GEIS.COM. 5016 Medalist Rd., Sarasota, FL 34243.

MA: Reinforcements needed! Squad-equivalent of ASL fanatics looking for more AREA rated competition. We play most Saturdays, Veterans/novices welcome. New England ASL Players Association. Vic Provost, 1454 Northampton St., Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 536-9661.

NC: PAW, The Piedmont Area Wargamers is recruiting ASL players in the NC Triad area. All levels of play welcome. Call for more information. Contact Doug Maston, 4 Three Meadows Ct., Greensboro, NC 27455, (910) 282-0552.

NY: We need wargamers! The Binghamton Area Gaming Society is expanding. We play most AH games and many others. Weekly meetings, beginners welcome. For info. contact Scott Sirianna, 106 Conklin Ave., Binghamton, NY 13903, (607) 724-7300.

NY: Mid-Hudson Area Wargaming Society (MAWS). We meet monthly in the Poughkeepsie, NY area and play many different wargames (no RPG's). Beginners are welcome. Contact Barry Smith at (914) 778-5440. 104676.1161@compuserve.com, or 9E Squire Vlg., Walden, NY 12586.

PA: Central PA Strategists Club. Meetings are held 9:30 to 5 on the 2nd and 4th Sat. of every month at the East Shore (Colonial Park) branch of the Dauphin County Library just outside Harrisburg. Call Charles Hickok at (717) 599-5603.

TX: New club: Looking to start a game club in the Del Rio area. Contact Paul Toro at (210) 774-1442 or clq@del-rio.com. Paul Toro, 520 E. Greenwood, Del Rio, TX 78840.

VA: N. Va., MD, DC! FTF gamers wanted for serious fun and competition in board game football league. Tim Walthall, 4908 N. 17th St., Arlington, VA 22207, (703) 525-6245.

FOREIGN

Canada: Seeking good condition AF/Dauntless expansion kit. Willing to pay good price. Gaston Marty, 1 Place of Bretagne, Hull, Quebec, Canada J8Z 1E2, (819) 770-2875.

Italy: We are (beginners) DIP players and looking for opponents PBM (no Col. DIP). Besides send us (by letter!) your best recipes, cocktails, funny stories and experiences of your game parties for our coming up free fanzine. Further information about playing DIP: e-mail mciccione@ab.infocomm.it. Volpi G. and Ciccione F., Corso Adriano 38, 41100 Modena, Italy.

Japan: Japans international gamers guild PBM games: CDP, CWR, DIP, Junta, Samurai, 1812, 1759, GER Kevin Burns, 2659-4 Tsukahara, Minami, Ashigara Shi, Kanagawa, Japan 250-01.

Japan: Opponents wanted: PBM Col. Dip., Quebec Libre, Canadian Civil War, Indianomacy Dip Variant, United Nations and others: Kevin Burns, 2659-4 Tsukahara, Minami Ashigara, Kanagawa 250-01 Japan.

The Natherlands: Gaming organization "Het Duivelsei". Srecko Suznjevic. My Email is ssuznjev@wi.leidenuniv.nl. Our Homepage is at: http://www.wi.leidenuniv.nl/~ssuznjev/DuivelsEI.html

Spain: Looking for people to assist to AvalonCon '97 from Europe. No limits for AH gamers! Contact: David Alvar, P.O. Box 43, 18230, Atarfe, Granada, Spain. Phone: 958-436786.

FOR SALE

ID: Relative left me several boxes of wargames: PZB, PZL & Variant, G88, Bulge 2nd Ed., TPS, FPR and others. Warren R. Hallum, PO Box 51965, Idaho Falls, ID 83405-1965.

NY: AH and other games for sale. Most at $10. Send SASE for list. Zev Shlasinger, 1458 E. 100th St., Brooklyn, NY 11236.

NY: Orig. Guad. unpunched, Kriegspiel unpunched. To highest bidder at 2nd highest bid. Albert H. Thomas, 120 Kimberly Dr., W., Syracus, NY 13219-2743, (315) 488-1943

NY: More than 3,000 board games, card games. The collection spans pre-1900 to date. I wish to dispose of the entire collection housed near Medford, NJ. Charles Clayberger, 3 Peter Cooper Rd., New York, NY 10010, (212) 228-2307 or (908) 341-0160.

PA: Wargames for sale, including AH games and Generals. Reasonable prices. Send SASE. Fred Sassin, 7156 Olde Scotland Rd., Shippensburg, PA 17257, (717) 532-7964.

VA: Tobruk in absolutely Mint condition (unpunched counters and all!). $200 firm. First come, first served. Contact J. McNutt, Esq., P.O. Box 2994, Merrifield, VA 22116. jmcnutt@gslink.com.

Although his initial attack on Fez was repulsed, Yellow had enough shipping capacity (6) to repeat the attack once since his Armor advantage allowed him to attack with only three tokens. Had the second attack been repulsed as well, Fez would have remained Blue since Yellow lacked an adjacent overland presence from which to mount another attack. The strike at Gallipoli, on the other hand, was repulsed three times, but because it used only one token each time (due to the +1 Armor advantage), it could have been repeated five times by shipping alone or many more times from its adjacent prior presence in Salonika.

Yellow is awarded the free Expansion card for most new markets and draws Ivory/Gold.

6. Income Phase:

By checking the last uncovered circle of their Income Tracks, the players discover they are due the following income for the coming turn to add to their existing cash:

Blue: $39 for eight ⚫s.
Purple: $45 for ten 🟣s.
Yellow: $63 for 16 🟠s.

The commodity dice rolls yield shortages of Spice and Fur which earns Purple a free card as the Majority holder of Spice. There is no Majority holder of Furs so the Furs Shortage has no effect.

7. Order of Play Phase:

Each player secretly records their Expansion expenditures for Turn 4 as follows:

Blue: $49	28	$21
Purple: $72	3	$69
Yellow: $74	3	$71

Purple and Yellow both wanted to go first in a bad way and tied for the low bid at $3. Fortunately for Purple, he wins all Expansion bid ties and goes first. He spends $5 to remove the Cloth shortage and looks forward to the Purchase Phase when the shipping jokes will soon be aimed in the other direction!

Space limitations preclude us from taking this further, but you get the idea. Turns of fortune can be cruel and frequent. Two such surprises struck our friends immedi-

ately in Turn 4. Purple drew Alchemist's Gold and decided to relieve Yellow of $36 from his warchest. Not, to be outdone, Yellow drew Famine and was only too happy to play it since with three Grain provinces he gained but one Misery while both Blue and Purple gained four!
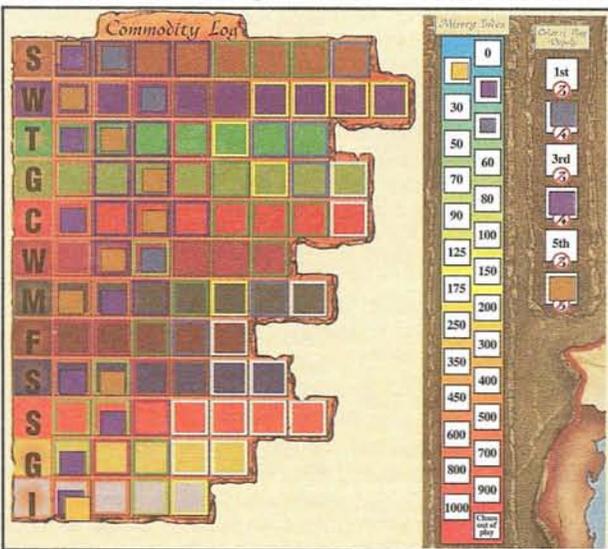
DESIGN ANALYSIS

```
PzKwVIa                                    15  A  12
AB 5 3.2"   12                        8  Wt 60.5t  HPWt 11.6
AB F 4.0"                             GUN 88mm  L56  EffRng 3000m
GPres 14                              AMMO 92  PEN 4.9"  2 MG 34
```

Artificial Intelligence for PC THIRD REICH

By David Hiller

I have had about a year of time to create the "Computer Opponent," or artificial intelligence (AI) for *THIRD REICH for PC*. Mine was the third effort at creating an AI for this game. The first happened before the game was anywhere near complete, and never got anywhere. The second attempt at an AI was entirely inadequate when the game was ready to go into beta testing in October 1995. I had made a number of suggestions about how to finish the AI, so when it was decided to start anew I was given the opportunity to do the job. I found that I had to begin from scratch. All of the ideas are mine, though I had a great deal of help from Jamie Nash in the coding.

PC THIRD REICH was a difficult AI to create. The AI plays by the same rules, using the same keyboard and mouse clicks as does a human player. A great deal of effort went into ensuring that the AI knows how to play the game correctly without violating the rules. The only rule that was changed to make things easier for the AI is the number of breakdown counters for air units. It was much easier for the AI to work with one factor air units during movement and combat, and then to recombine them for strategic redeployment. All of the other rule changes would have been made even if there had been no AI. Not only does the AI play the same way that a human player does, but it does not cheat in any way either. If the AI wins, it does so honestly.

You might find that the AI takes a few minutes to finish some phases, such as strategic redeployment. However, in general, the AI needs far less time to finish a turn (10 to 20 minutes) than a human requires, especially when playing the boardgame (where a turn can take hours). This should cut down playing time considerably for solitaire and hotseat play.

The AI starts a turn by choosing a grand strategy, such as "Conquer Russia." It uses its grand strategy, together with the current situation on the board, to decide its long-term goals. For each goal, the AI guesses what enemy units are trying to act on the same goal and, then, based on the priority of that goal, assigns units to achieve the goal. If the AI has sufficient forces to attack to achieve a goal, the AI will use an offensive option on the front of the goal. If none of the goals require an offensive option, the AI will use an attrition option instead. During movement, all of the units assigned to a goal will move in coordination with each other, and during combat they will attack together. The long-term goals are also used to decide what units to build, and where to strategically redeploy units.

During an opponent's turn, the long-term goals are used to decide where to send defensive air support. Hence the AI will act with a coordinated strategy throughout the turn. The long-term goals are also adjusted in response to enemy actions and the achievement of goals.

If you are new to *THIRD REICH*, a good way to start is by watching the AI play itself for awhile. The NOVICE level will be quite challenging to players unfamiliar with the mechanics of play. (You may even want to acquire the *Third Reich Gamer's Guide* ($8.00) that Avalon Hill created for the boardgame several years ago.) After that, you might try the 1944 scenario, which is the simplest. The Axis has the advantage in this scenario, so start by playing the Axis. Later, switch to the Allies once you are comfortable with the mechanics of the game.

Once you've mastered the mechanics of the game, you can tackle the higher settings of the AI. The EXPERT level is the same as NORMAL except that you adjust the Basic Resource Point bases and growth rates at the start of the scenario. The CHALLENGING and DIFFICULT levels have a few code tweaks to take advantage of the extra BRPs and force pool units.

I began sending my design on paper to Alpha testers before a single line of code was written. Right from the beginning, I have been responding to suggestions and comments on the AI. I have done my best to implement suggestions that I have received during Beta testing. I plan to tweak and support the *PC THIRD REICH* AI for years to come, so please send any comments or suggestions to AHDavid@AOL.com or to David Hiller, The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Now that the game is released, I hope to continue to improve the AI. So please do send comments!

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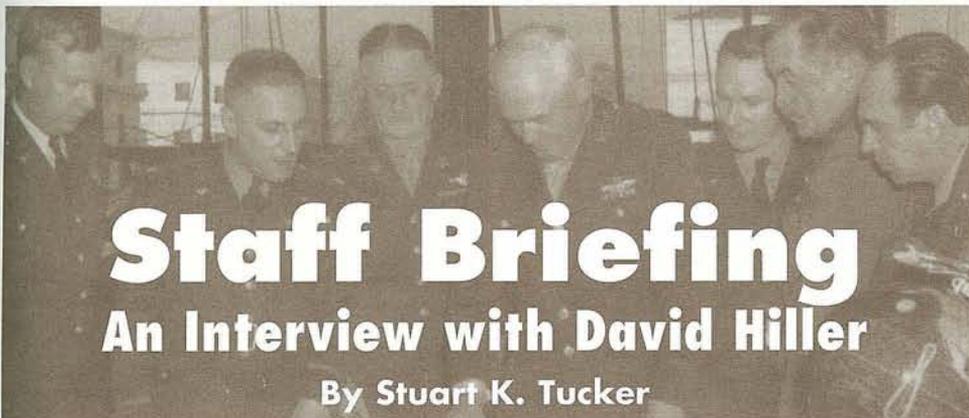
Staff Briefing
An Interview with David Hiller
By Stuart K. Tucker

Vital Statistics:
Name: David Halsey Hiller
Birth date: December 8, 1965
Childhood home: Buffalo, New York
Started employment at Avalon Hill in June, 1996

SK: When did you begin wargaming?
DH: I got my first wargame when I was eight years old from my uncle, Louis C. Jones, author and historian. It was the 1965 edition of Gettysburg.

SKT: Where did you live prior to moving to the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan area? What brought you here?
DH: I was getting my Master's degree in Mathematics at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. I moved to Washington four years ago when I got a job as a computer programmer at the Bureau of the Census in Suitland, Maryland.

SKT: What are your favorite wargames to play?
DH: *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER, EMPIRES IN ARMS, THIRD REICH, REPUBLIC OF ROME, CIVIL WAR, FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY, SIEGE OF JERUSALEM, HANNIBAL, HISTORY OF THE WORLD, BRITANNIA, PACIFIC WAR, THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, RUSSIAN FRONT, PANZERBLITZ, STARSHIP TROOPERS, TOBRUK, AMBUSH, CONQUISTADOR, DOWN WITH THE KING, Europa Universalis, The Great Battles of History, Great Battles of the American Civil War, GREAT CAMPAIGNS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, Europa, Tactical Combat Series, Operational Combat Series, Civil War Brigade Series, Star Fleet Battles, Swords & Sorcery.*

SKT: What got you interested in military history?
DH: Actually, wargaming was what got me interested in military history—so much so that, as an undergraduate, one of my majors was history.

SKT: What is your favorite period for wargaming and why?

DH: Actually, I care more about the system than the period. I buy and play games from all periods of history, as well as non-historical games. If I had to choose, I would pick Ancients. After all, most of history happened before the American Revolution.

SKT: Do you get much time to game outside the office?

DH: Recently I have had very little time to play games outside of work. I had been playing *THIRD REICH* at home all of the time, of course. Now that *THIRD REICH for PC* is out, I hope to find more time for other games.

SKT: What is your favorite non-wargame?

DH: *AIR BARON*.

SKT: Do you have any interests outside the hobby?

DH: Reading science fiction, fantasy, history, and technothrillers, tennis and artificial intelligence. Besides wargames, I enjoy all types of computer games, role-playing games, card games, chess and go.

SKT: What did you do prior to being hired by Avalon Hill?

DH: I worked at the Bureau of the Census for three years. I started as a computer programmer, and ended as a database administrator.

SKT: What was it like to work at the Census Bureau? How is the environment at Avalon Hill different?

DH: Working at the Bureau of the Census was great, except that the work was rather boring. I always wanted to work on artificial intelligence for games, so at Avalon Hill I get to do work that is extremely interesting all of the time. Even if I did not have to work at all, I would want to do the work that I am doing now.

SKT: What part of programming is most time-consuming? Most difficult?

DH: Debugging is the most time-consuming part of programming. The most difficult part is finding a bug that happens only some of the time under fixed, controlled conditions.

SKT: I imagine that one of the chief advantages of programming the AI to 4th edition *THIRD REICH* is your familiarity with the boardgame and the thought processes that are necessary for making the key decisions. How did this mesh with the rule changes (minimal though they be) that the computer necessitated? Did these rule deviations usually facilitate AI programming or make things more difficult?

DH: Even though getting the AI to understand all of the rules took time, it was not truly difficult. The only rule that was changed to make it easier to program the AI was adding unlimited air breakdown counters. No rules were left out because of the AI. *THIRD REICH* has something of a chesslike quality to it, which has allowed me to develop the AI far beyond the point of simply guessing the right moves. For players new to the game and many familiar with the boardgame, the AI is a competent opponent. However, the real experts in *THIRD REICH* will find strategies and tactics that the AI can not handle. I can only suggest that they tell me about them, so that I can incorporate a fix in a later patch to turn this good AI into a great one.

SKT: The computer AI does seem to adopt conservative, but efficient strategies. (Of course, it is usually hard to argue against the grinding efficiency of the AI's methods.)

DH: I had to program a fairly conservative AI because the AI is less able to adapt to a fluid situation than a human.

SKT: If I play you face-to-face, are you likely as the Allies to go for the early flip-flop and takeout of Italy? What about the Axis risking the German airborne in unsupplied hexes of Britain? Does Spain figure highly in your Axis plans often? Do you heartlessly run the Allies over the lowland neutrals? Do the British launch a "thousand Dieppes." I know you have a few "reckless 1-1" bones in you and I want to know what to expect (assuming you are not sick of staring at the *THIRD REICH* board by now).

DH: I always try to do whatever my opponent is least expecting me to do. Sometimes that might mean doing the obvious, while my opponent is waiting for the other shoe to drop. If I have an opponent who has big plans for Italy, and has too few troops on defense, then, yes, I will try to take out Italy in a flip-flop. In the same way, as the Axis, I will try to see if the British are weak in Britain or Egypt. If they are strong in both places, perhaps I'll take out Spain and go for Gibraltar in the hopes of either taking Gibraltar or straining the British elsewhere. As the Allies, I will launch an offensive and/or attack neutrals if I can gain some advantage and throw the Axis off of their timetable.

SKT: What do you think is the most important aspect of a computer game that the programming team must consider for today's gaming market?

DH: In today's market, I would say that the computer opponent is the most important aspect to consider. However, as more people get connected by modem, by networks, and through the internet, connectivity will become the most important aspect. Personally, though, I'll still be mainly interested in the AI.

SKT: How do you view the evolution of the wargame market? Is there going to be a comfortable division of labor between computer games and boardgames? Do you think the hobby is adapting well to changing consumer demands?

DH: I think that boardgames will have a place in the market for a long time to come. Since board wargames have low costs, it is possible to make a complicated game, or a game with an obscure topic, and still make a small profit. However, the expenses of computer games are so great that I see most computer wargames as being simple and on popular topics. If *THIRD REICH* were not one of the most popular wargames ever, it would have been too complex to even contemplate for conversion to the computer. Avalon Hill will be in the unique position of introducing people to wargames through our computer games, and then being able to follow up with a much wider variety of board wargames.

SKT: What do you see as the most worrisome trend in computer gaming?

DH: Very little information is shared among computer companies. With boardgames, everything is right there to be seen, so a designer has no problem with taking everything that has come before and moving beyond that with a new design. With a computer game, no one outside of the companies working on it sees the actual code, so each company has to learn its lessons on its own. This especially hurts the development of Artificial Intelligence. The AI in computer games today is hardly better than it was in the 1980s.

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side of the ship. Also, before executing the move, make sure you specifically target the ship you want them to fire at. Many times they will target a ship that is out of range or at a bad angle, and you need to direct them to the proper ship.

Current Versions
Here are the current versions and updates available for all our games.

KINGMAKER —IBM PC
3.5" Disk
Original Version 1.50
Current Version 1.52
Available upgrade v1.50 to v1.52

OPERATION CRUSADER —IBM PC & Mac
Original Version 3.5" Disk
Current Version CD-ROM
Original v1.0 Mac 3.5" Disk
    v1.1 PC 3.5" Disk
Current v2.35 (Mac and PC CD-ROM)
Available upgrade v1.x to v2.35

5TH FLEET —IBM PC
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v1.2
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.2

FLIGHT COMMANDER 2 —IBM PC & Mac
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v1.04
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.04

STALINGRAD —IBM PC & Mac
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v2.0 for PC; v1.9 for Mac
Available upgrades v1.85 to v2.0 or v1.9

1830 RAILROADS & ROBBER BARONS —IBM PC
3.5" Disk and CD-ROM
Original v1.0
Current v1.2
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.2

D-DAY AMERICA INVADES —IBM PC & Mac
CD-ROM only
Original v1.0
Current v1.0
Available upgrade(1) IBM PC only

ADVANCED CIVILIZATION —IBM PC
CD-ROM only
Original v1.0
Current v1.01
Available upgrade v1.0 to v1.01

THIRD REICH —IBM PC
CD-ROM only
Original v1.1
Current v1.21
Available upgrade v1.1 to 1.21

WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN —IBM PC
CD-ROM only
Original v1.0
Current v1.0

Check us out Online!
You can obtain demos, updates, screen shots and online technical assistance through email by accessing our areas on Compuserve and America Online. Just "GO" keyword "Avalon Hill" on either service. You can email us directly at AHGAMES@AOL.COM, or 72662,1207 on Compuserve.

AT THE KIOSK
By Glenn E. L. Petroski

A.R.E.A.
(Avalon Hill Reliability, Experience and Ability)
RATING SYSTEM

A player enters the system with a rating of 1500 for a given game title. For AREA-rated games the rating goes up with win and down with a loss (with the exact number of points lost or gained being somewhat proportional to the relative rating of the opponents). The rating change formula is:

$$35 + 5\% \text{ of (losing player's minus victor's rating)}$$

Thus, the higher-rated player will gain less from a victory than the lower-rated player. The maximum change is 70 and the minimum is one.

The AREA qualifiers identify the frequency of play for the AREA-rated player. The four letters (in order) stand for frequency of play, number of opponents, number of PBM/PBEM games rated and number of AREA-rated tournaments attended. The final single digit indicates the last digit of the year of latest reported AREA activity for that player. No qualifier is indicated with a dash (-).

The meaning of the letters is as follows:

Qualifier	Frequency	Opponents	PBM/Tournaments
A	1-5	1	1
B	6-10	2-3	2
C	11-15	4-5	3
D	16-20	6-7	4
E	21-25	8-10	5-6
F	26-30	11-13	7-8
G	31-40	14-16	9-10
H	41-50	17-20	11-12
I	51-60	21-25	13-15
J	61-70	26-29	16-18
K	71-80	30-34	19-21
L	81-90	35-39	22-24
M	91-105	40-44	25-28
N	106-120	45-50	29-32
O	121-135	51-55	33-36
P	136-150	56-60	37-40
Q	151-165	61-66	41-45
R	166-180	67-73	46-50
S	181-200	74-80	51-55
T	201-220	81-87	56-60
U	221-240	88-95	61-66
V	241-260	96-103	67-73
W	261-280	104-111	74-80
X	281-300	112-120	81-86
Y	301-350	121-128	87-93
Z	351+	129+	94+

LADDERS REPORTING IN:

AFRIKA KORPS: GM: Joe Beard, 3822 E. Sahuaro Dr., Phoenix, AZ 95028-3442.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE ('81): GM: Mark Poulson, 204 E. Cannon, Lafayette, CO 80026. Ph# 303-604-2562.

BREAKOUT NORMANDY: GM: Thomas N. Pavy, 619 Gainsborough Rd. #4, Dayton, OH 45419. Ph# 937-299-0267. TPavy@GEnie.com@inet#

FLAT TOP: No known PBM competition in progress, but players seek one. Group in Scotland seeks to correspond with west side of Atlantic. Contact: Glenn Petroski (see below).

STALINGRAD: GM: John B. Grant, Jr., 198 Brookdale Rd., Stamford, CT 06903. Ph# 203-329-7837. JBGrantJr@aol.com

THIRD REICH, 4th Edition: GM now setting up two more boards. GM: Bruce Hatter, #206753 Box 316, Fort Madison, IA 52627-0316.

Glenn E.L. Petroski
6829 23rd Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53143-1233

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A.R.E.A. RATINGS

AFRIKA KORPS
Players on List: 65 Active Players: 34
Date of Standings: November 5, 1996

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Randy Heller	1975	GGLA6
2	Vince Meconi	1867	DHEA5
3	Michael S. Crowe	1812	BDCA5
4	Joseph C. Beard, III	1740	BDED6
5	Michael R. Reffue	1730	CEFA6
6	Phillip Evans	1668	AC-A5
7	Thomas J. Delaney	1643	DFJA5
8	Gregory Smith	1629	BEBB5
9	Barry L. Smith	1627	BEABS
10	Frank Piercel	1600	AA--5
11	Mark J. Gutfreund	1543	BCBA6
12	Michael Matthews	1538	AB-A5
13	Robert Hahn	1535	AA-A5
14	Scott Sianno	1505	AB-A5
15	Neil Moran	1501	ACC-6

BATTLE OF THE BULGE ('81)
Players on List: 30 Active Players: 18
Date of Standings: November 5, 1996

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Randy Heller	1928	EHCC6
2	John B. Grant, Jr.	1714	AB-B5
3	Daniel Tierney	1650	ABA-6
4	Bruno Sinigaglio	1593	AC-A6
5	Phillip Evans	1561	AB-B5
6	Alan Libuszowski	1535	AAA-6
7	Henry Lowood	1531	AAA-6

1776
Players on List: 27 Active Players: 17
Date of Standings: November 5, 1996

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Steven Packwood	2011	EG-C6
2	Michael Sincavage	1863	DE-C6
3	Mark S. Miklos	1821	EF-D6
4	Rod Coffey	1648	AB-A6
5	James McAden	1570	ABA-5
6	Nathan Kilbert	1515	AB-A6
7	Robert Jamelli	1504	AC-B6
8	John Barrett	1501	AA-A6

WATERLOO
Players on List: 37 Active Players: 17
Date of Standings: November 5, 1996

Rank	Name	Rating	Qualifiers
1	Kevin McCarthy	1866	CC--5
2	Larry L. Lingle	1744	AC-A5
3	Joseph C. Beard, III	1635	BDCC6
4	Eric Kirchner	1572	BC-A6
5	James R. Penick	1555	ABE-6
6	Scott E. Goehring	1515	AAB-5
7	John Ellsworth	1514	ON-6
8	Carl Adamec	1512	AB-A5

Qualifiers refer to quantities of Games played, Opponents played, PBM games, Tournament participation, and Year of last activity with later letters indicating greater quantitites and the number being the last digit of a year. For more information on the A.R.E.A. rating system, contact:

Glenn Petroski
210 W. Hunt
Twin Lakes, WI 53181-9786

GENERAL Scenarios for *ASL*

The following are all *ASL* scenarios which have appeared in the pages (usually on the insert) of The *GENERAL* to date.

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GEN-B	The Tractor Works	22-6
GEN-C	The Streets of Stalingrad	22-6
GEN-D	The Hedgehog of Piepsk	23-2
GEN-E	Hill 621	23-2
GEN-F	The Paw of the Tiger	23-5
GEN-G	Hube's Pocket	23-5
GEN-H	Escape from Velikiye Luki	24-1
GEN-I	Buchholz Station	24-4
GEN-J	The Bitche Salient	24-4
GEN-K	The Cannes Strongpoint	25-2
GEN-L	Hitdorf on the Rhine	25-2
GEN-M	First Crisis at AG North	25-3
GEN-N	Soldiers of Destruction	25-6
GEN-O	The St. Goar Assault	26-1
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GEN-G16	Alligator Creek	28-5
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GEN-G18	Goya	29-2
GEN-G19	A Tough Nut To Crack	29-3
GEN-G20	Camp Nibejwa	29-3
GEN-G21	Cat's Kill	29-4
GEN-G22	A Day By the Shore	29-4
GEN-G23	Habbaniya Heights	29-5
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The Old Way to Win the New *ACQUIRE*

By Michael Anchors

ichael is the 1991 AvalonCon champion of ACQUIRE *and recently ran the AvalonCon '96 tournament. He draws upon this experience to provide expert insight into the play of this refurbished classic. Each player of this game buys stock in growing hotel chains which will either merge into larger chains or survive safely to the end of the game. Each turn you place a tile on the board, representing the building of additional hotels in a chain. Though elegantly simple in mechanics, winning strategy often eludes players.—SKT*

ACQUIRE is a consistently popular game drawing about forty players at AvalonCon each year. I have been playing the game since it was first published by the 3M Company in 1966. Avalon Hill acquired the game and reissued it in its original form. In 1995, the game was given a facelift adding a colorful mapboard, tile racks and some new rules. Traditionalists should not fear; the basic game of new *ACQUIRE* is the same game we have loved for thirty years, but the new rules add some variety. The "Special Powers Variant" gives each player a set of five markers to play at his option. Each counter may be used only once. The markers are "3 Free (shares)," "Buy 5 (shares)," "Trade 2 (shares)," "Take 5 Tiles," and "Place 4 Tiles."

The purpose of the Special Powers Variant is to give players stuck in midgame with no money something to do. Players stuck in this way have usually invested all their cash in chains that are unlikely to merge. The paupers are prone to bleat and complain while the rest of us buy up the board. Their wretched whining ruins the game.

Great players of the game always have cash in the middle game. You will, too, after you read this article.

Principle No. 1. Chains in the middle of the board grow faster and merge more often than chains elsewhere. The reason is that chains in the center can grow on four sides, whereas chains on the side can grow on only three sides, and chains in the corner grow slowest of all. In *ACQUIRE*, the early battles are fought in the center of the board. The action spreads to the sides, reaching the corners last. You might open an expensive chain in the corner to grab the free share of stock, but you wouldn't want to fight a takeover war there. If some fool wants to spend his cash to acquire your corner chain, let him have it. You should focus on the center of the board.

Principle No. 2. Open chains and invest in chains in areas of the board where you have many tiles in your hand. There you will be able to make your chain grow faster. Alternatively, you have greater ability to halt the growth of your chain to keep it from going safe, if that is to your advantage. You have a greater chance to open chains adjacent to the target chain, or keep them from opening. If adjacent chains do open up, you are more likely to have the merger tiles in your hand.

Principle No. 3. Don't tie up cash in chains destined to go safe (eleven hotels or more). The money invested in safe chains is frozen until the end of the game. Certainly, the value of the stock appreciates as the chain grows, but stock value increases faster in smaller chains and equity in safe chains cannot garner majority holder bonuses for use during the game.

Which chains are likely to become giants? Low and medium-priced chains in the center of the board, especially if there are lots of little cousins nearby waiting to be gobbled up. You should invest in the cousins, not the giant, unless you stand a good chance to assume ownership of the giant.

Principle No. 4. Don't buy expensive shares of stock. In the beginning when all the chains are small, you can buy shares at will, but after the chains have started to grow and stock prices climb, you must be more judicious. If you are buying fistfuls of $700 shares, you are either very rich or going to lose. The best way to buy stock in Imperial after it goes safe is not to use your credit card. Rather, open Tower next door, buy up cheap Tower stock and merge Tower into Imperial, trading your Tower stock for Imperial. Of course, if you need an eleventh share to guarantee control of Imperial and there is a single share left in the bank, you must buy it regardless of the price.

Principle No. 5. Invest in chains where many players own stock, especially if you can get first or second majority holder status. Chains whose stock is widely held grow more rapidly since more players have an interest in seeing them grow, and these chains are easier to control. If everyone in a four-player game has at least six shares of Luxor, you can control the chain with seven shares. If only one other player has shares in the chain, you need 13 shares to guarantee control.

Principle No. 6. Invest in chains where only one other player owns stock, but buy only one share. Your single share prevents the founding player from collecting both first and second majority holder bonuses on a quick merger. Besides, if you can earn the second majority holder bonus with a single share, you should feel lucky.

Principle No. 7. Buy odd lots of stock to confuse the opposition. The new rules make it clear that you do NOT have to reveal your stock holdings, and the tournament event has always been played that way. The best players always keep a running account in their minds of who owns what stock. You can throw off your opposition by buying one of this and one of that, instead of three of one chain. For instance, if you see you will need three shares of Festival and three of Continental, don't buy three shares of Festival one turn and three of Continental the next. Instead, buy two shares of Festival and one share of Continental on one turn and one share of Festival and two of Continental the next.

Principle No. 8. Dispose of your stock in a defunct chain wisely. If there is any chance the chain will reopen, keep some. If the chain reopens, you will already be the majority holder, poised to rake in another bonus. On the other hand, if the defunct chain had grown since you first bought it and other players are waiting in line to dispose of their stock after you, you might as well sell or trade, to make a profit, because other players, disposing after you, can hold onto more shares than you. If you are last in the order to dispose of stock, you are in the best position to decide how much stock to keep.

Principle No. 9. Keep track of how many shares of stock your opponents buy in the chains in which you have an interest. This is easy to say, but hard to do. However, bridge players keep track of 52 cards. In a four-player game, you are asked to keep track of the holdings of three players in four or five chains. You can do it, and with practice you'll get better.

Principle No. 10. Don't help players with better prospects than you. Getting the second majority holder bonus when merging Worldwide out of business might earn you a bundle, but if it helps someone else win the game, don't do it. The object in *ACQUIRE* is not to just make money, but to make *more* money than your opponents. It is essential to keep track of the game leader(s).

If you follow these ten principles, you will nearly always have money in the middle game. Even with the Special Powers Variant, players who don't know these principles won't beat you. It is the tried-and-true way to win the new *ACQUIRE* as well as the old.

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HISTORICAL CONQUEST IN
WAR & PEACE

By Charles E. Duke

The Napoleonic Wars may have been a particularly bloody moment in human military history, but they were not without their political intrigues. Whereas EMPIRES IN ARMS portrays this rich diplomatic history in a multi-player format, WAR & PEACE allows for an enjoyable two-player experience. For those of you wishing to go beyond the scenarios and into the full campaign, this variant article provides more political realism in the victory conditions.

—SKT

After many years in which the hobby's focus was centered on World War II, we have seen a shift of player interest towards older times. Jumping over World War I (which hardly sparkles any interest), the attention now is placed on the American Civil War and the Napoleonic era.

For the Napoleonic Wars, the gaming world has a spectrum of simulations which spans tactical scales from the micro-detailed to the great battle. However, for a chance to repeat all of Napoleon's battles at a scale which encompasses Europe with elegance and simplicity, try *WAR & PEACE*. It can be considered a sort of nineteenth-century *THIRD REICH*.

The battle scenarios neatly capture the feel of Napoleon's individual campaigns. However, the grand campaign victory conditions suffer from the fact that the French player can't lose unless he commits some big blunder. After defeating Austria, France can eventually "roll" every Major Power to its side (using Alliance diplomatic rolls), conquer Portugal, and sit back until the end of the game staving off English raids. If the French wants a shorter game, after Prussia, Russia and Austria are made pro-French, he can mass everything in Iberia and conquer Spain.

This article speaks to this flaw in the political system. The game will follow a more historical course. Some players may feel that the variant proposed puts too much constraint on them; if you value freedom of choice above all, then this isn't for you. However, I believe that those interested in historical authenticity and anti-French players who want to have a chance to win will appreciate these new victory conditions and rules.

RULE CHANGES

a) A state may not be rolled for on the Alliance Phase if there are enemy units within its borders, since this is an invasion causing an automatic state of war. This does not apply to units that are currently neutral to the state in question (such as garrisons of a previous conqueror).

b) An invasion of a neutral satellite amounts to a declaration of war on its patron state.

c) After the conquest of Austria it loses all its territory on mapboard 2: Innsbruck becomes Bavarian, Venice becomes part of Northern Italy, and Trieste becomes the capital of Dalmatia. Either side may enter these territories without violating Austrian neutrality. Austria recovers its cities and land by retaking them while being anti-French. Trieste merely returns to Austria—there is no such thing as an anti-French Dalmatia.

d) Upon the French conquest of Prussia, Poland is created. Warsaw and all hexes within two of it (including those in Austria) become part of the state of Poland. There is no such thing as an anti-French Poland. Units of both sides may enter Poland without violating Prussian (or Austrian) neutrality. An anti-French Prussia may reconquer Warsaw—returning Polish territory to its original state.

e) Only anti-French states may receive lent English production points.

FRANCE

This power wins an automatic victory by conquering Russia or England. France may also win by having an unbesieged unit in Paris at game's end, but only if Spain was invaded by France prior to 1809 *and* Russia was invaded prior to 1813.

SPAIN

Once attacked by France, Spain remains anti-French for the rest of the game. It ignores Alliance die rolls. Anti-French Spaniards may enter Portugal freely, but to go elsewhere the English player must requisition them (as per X.K.4). However, unlike French requisition, the English player may replace the losses this force suffers or substitute them with other Spanish units present on the mapboard.

AUSTRIA

Austria is immune to Alliance die rolls until conquered twice. After Austria is conquered for the first time and rebuilds its Force Pool, it will declare war on France in the Neutral Alliance Phase that follows. After being conquered a second time, upon reconstruction of its Force Pool (again) it will be subject to normal Alliance Phase rules (but see Russia below).

PRUSSIA

This country may not become pro-French by Alliance die rolls until after it has been conquered by France. A die roll may cause it to become anti-French, in which case another roll could return it to neutrality.

Beginning in the third turn after the first conquest of Austria or May 1806, whichever comes first, Prussia will roll two dice in each Alliance Phase. The first time, a result of 2 will cause it to declare war on France; for the second dice roll, a 3 or less causes war; for the third time, 4 or less causes war; and so on until war is declared. This roll is made even if Prussia is currently anti-French for some other reason. After the occurrence of this special declaration of war, Prussia is immune to Alliance die rolls until conquered by France.

Upon reconstruction of its Force Pool after being conquered for the first time, Prussia will be subject to Alliance die rolls normally (but see Russia below).

RUSSIA

This country is immune to Alliance Phase die rolls until both Austria and Prussia are simultaneously in a conquered state. Thereafter Russia is subject to those die rolls normally.

Once invaded by France, Russia remains anti-French for the rest of the game. After Russia has been invaded, if no pro-French unit remains on Russian soil, Austria and Prussia will become neutral if currently pro-French. Thereafter they are immune to Alliance die rolls. Austria is absolutely neutral—units of both sides must leave or declare war. Prussia is neutral but both sides may enter it freely. Prussian units are ignored by both sides. Whenever Berlin, Konigsberg and Warsaw are all controlled by the anti-French, Prussia will declare war on France and remain anti-French until the end of the game. The turn after this happens, Austria will begin to roll 2 dice each Alliance Phase: a result of 2 on the first turn (a roll of 3 or less on the second turn, 4 or less on the third turn, and so on) causes it to declare war on France and remain anti-French for the rest of the game.

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DESTALIZATION

A 1953 Variant for KREMLIN

By Ed Ericson III

*N*ow that one of the most boring US elections is done, perhaps you'd like to spice up your winter with a refreshing play of the political game, KREMLIN. *Fortunately for Americans, our periods of lame-duck leadership are less bloody than was the case in the Soviet Union. The Revolution variant cards and rules necessary to play this variant are available for $8 directly from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. —SKT*

In 1953, a 74-year-old Stalin died of apparently natural causes (although many have suspected foul play). The death of the Soviet dictator started a power struggle that led to the demise of heir presumptive Malenkov within ten days. The power struggle lasted for another five years, ending in complete consolidation of victory by Khrushchev.

With a few modifications to the basic *KREMLIN* game and the *Revolution* variant (which deals with the 1923 party congress), you can try your hand at sorting out the political mess left in the wake of Stalin's departure.

Use the rules from the normal game and the character cards from the *Revolution* variant. Use the nonhistorical side (the regular game's cast of characters) except for the following people who should have the ages in parentheses put on them: Muranov (79), Stassova (78), Stalin (74), Voroshilov (67), Molotov (65), Khrushchev (55), Mikoyan (55), Bulganin (53), Beria (52) and Malenkov (50). For historical flavor, these should be among the initial twelve politburo members and candidates, but for play variety a completely random deal of all politicians may be used (remember to add the correct ages to the above characters when they enter the "people" pool.

In addition to the basic and advanced rules, the following special rules should be in force. First, factions may put points on Party Chief Stalin at the beginning, but he has two crosses. As with Lenin in the *Revolution* game, he cannot recover nor go to the sanitarium (he was hatching the doctor's plot at the time and wouldn't trust himself to any physician).

Second, if Beria is head of KGB, he may purge using the *Revolution* rules instead of the normal game rules. On the other hand, any purges carried out against Beria use the *Revolution* rules as well. Beria worked closely with Ezhov in the purges of the 1930's and then ran the show himself in the 1940's and early 1950's. His bid for power was an all-or-nothing affair. If he had succeeded Stalin, he would have executed most of the competing leadership. As it was, the other leaders banded together to arrest and execute Beria.

Third, add five new cards (*see insert between pages 32 and 33*) to reflect the political situation of the 1950's—or any others that may seem appropriate.

There you have it. With a few minor changes, you can try out yet another round of historical intrigue in the Kremlin.

WHO ARE THESE GUYS?
By Ed Ericson III

*P*icking up where Wayne Ingall's article on the 12th Party Congress left off in volume 27, number 1, we now provide the mini-bios for the rest of the historical figures in the Revolution variant for KREMLIN, *many of whom survived the revolutionary era and Stalin's purges of the 1930s to witness the beginning of the post-Stalin era. —SKT*

One of the better features of the Kremlin game is the short fictional histories on the back of the politician cards. They provide the extra bits of spice that distinguish a great game from a good one. Unfortunately, the *Revolution* variant lacks this element. These real histories were left out in order to provide "followers" for the historical actors when (notice I did not say "if") they are killed. This omission piqued my curiosity, so I compiled mini-biographies of the key participants in the Bolshevik power struggles (listed in order of age on Politician card).

Mikhail (Matvei) Muranov (1873-1959): An editor of *Pravda* and party functionary from 1907-39. Your basic apparatchik.

Elena Stassova (1873-1966): Joined the Communists in 1898 and worked with Lenin on *Iskra* (Spark) after 1901. While remaining an important literary figure, she was also a key member of the Comintern.

Alexsandr Bogdanov (1873-1928): Important pre-war Russian political theorist who tangled with Lenin on occasion but eventually joined forces with him and helped develop the ideas of the new Proletarian Culture (Proletcult) in the early 1920's.

Anatoli Lunacharsky (1875-1933): Another early Communist theorist who helped develop and implement the concept of Socialist Realism and the Soviet system of education. His tenure as head of the Commissariat of the Enlightenment saw a good deal of creativity until Stalin tightened the screws in the early 1930's.

Maxim Litvinov (1876-1951): His primary involvement was in Soviet foreign affairs and he served as foreign minister in the 1930's until his policy of Collective Security was overturned by the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939 (Litvinov was half Jewish) and he was replaced by Molotov.

Alexandra Kollontay (1872-1952): A follower of Elena Stassova, Kollontay wrote for various Soviet papers and worked extensively with Soviet internationalist agencies such as the Comintern. She was also an adamant feminist who advocated free love and denounced the traditional family.

Kliment Voroshilov (1881-1969): A long-standing party member and military leader, he sided with Stalin during the 1920's and thereby managed to avoid the purges of the late 1930's. He was promoted to Marshall in 1935, but his performance in WWII showed he was more a political "yes-man" than a competent general.

Semen Uritskii (1895-1937): He served well in the Russian and Spanish civil wars, but ultimately fell victim to the military purges of the late 1930's.

Adolf Joffe: He was essentially a non-entity who served as the Soviet representative to Berlin where he tried unsuccessfully to foment the "inevitable" revolution in Germany. The Jewish Joffe was no friend to Stalin, instead siding with Trotsky.

Georgi Sokolnikov (1888-1939): Involved in all the key events of the teens and twenties, he continually sided with the moderates. His alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev in 1925 led to his political downfall, and he eventually fell victim to the purges.

Sergei Kirov (1886-1934): The head of the Leningrad Soviet after Zinoviev, Kirov provided valuable aid to Stalin in the power struggle of the 1920's, but was later assassinated at Stalin's order in 1934. His murder was used to start a wave of show trials and purges in the years preceding WWII.

Vyacheslav Molotov (1890-1986): Among his various activities for the Bolsheviks, Molotov is best known for his service as Foreign Minister in the 1940's and 1950's and his ill-fated political alliances after Stalin's death. He was a loyal disciple of Stalin from 1917 on.

Nikita Khrushchev (1894-1971): He spent most of the 1920's working in industrial administration, but became a high-ranking party member in the 1930's and 1940's and eventually Party Chief by 1955.

Anastas Mikoyan (1895-1978): A Bolshevik agitator in the Caucasus during the Revolutionary and Civil War periods, Mikoyan became a key economic minister in WWII and a prominent member of the Brezhnev oligarchy in the 1960's.

Nikolai Bulganin (1895-1975): A Cheka member during the 1920's, he became a Colonel General during WWII, a Marshal shortly after the war and premier in the 1950's. He was ousted in 1958 for siding with Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich against Khrushchev.

Laurenti Beria (1899-1953): Became head of the NKVD (later KGB) in 1938 and looked to be heading for succession of Stalin when a coalition of party members (including Khrushchev) had Beria arrested, tried and shot.

Georgi Malenkov (1902-1988): He played little role in the 1920's, but worked with Ezhov in carrying out the purges in the 1930's and served as a key economics minister in the 1940's. He appeared to be the likely candidate to replace Stalin, but was outmatched by Khrushchev and lasted only ten days as party secretary after the death of Stalin.

★

becomes a brilliant attack. No matter what I write here, someone will eventually roll a light mortar Critical Hit (CH) on your stone building location and KIA the Randomly Selected Rambo with the resulting 12(-3) Infantry Fire Table (IFT) DR. *ASL* is simply a great game!

Other foolish shooting typically includes many Advancing Fire attacks we may roll "just to see what happens" when there is practically no chance of anything happening. Granted, a leader-directed 4(+4) shot at Rambo or that one key enemy position might be worth the risk, but in most average situations there would not be much point in such an attack. One of the best times to avoid foolish shooting arises when the enemy target is already in such bad shape that its demise is assured. Maybe it is Pinned and nearly surrounded. You know your opponent will deliberately break and rout away, so why shoot? A Pinned, Counter Exhausted (CX), surrounded enemy unit is facing Close Combat (CC) from your concealed and leader-led overpowering force. Avoid the shot (and any possibility of a sniper). Instead, use your Ambush advantage to nail the unit in CC and withdraw into a more advantageous location.

On the other hand, there are also activities you can explore which might actually generate friendly SAN at no risk of enemy SAN opportunity, such as tossing White Phosphorus (WP) grenades on broken enemy units (heh, heh!). In this case, you make no SAN-capable DR but your opponent does.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Watch your shots; avoid needless headaches caused by foolish shooting.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

NON-TARGETS

Just as it is vital to guard against mistaken enemy Sniper Activations, you must also be alert to disallow sniper attacks against non-targets. This one is easy. Just read rule A14.22. Some things simply are not vulnerable to the sniper.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Read and stick to the rules.

MOBILE SNIPER

Think how many times you or your opponent have rolled up an effective sniper attack and then immediately, without really giving it another thought, automatically rolled the Random Location DR. This is potentially wasteful, for as the tides of battle fluctuate across the playing area your sniper may find himself positioned to hit only enemy units of low value. Perhaps there is a slim chance he could hit something worthwhile ("Please, oh please, oh spirits of the dice, let me roll a '6,6'!!!"), but just how often will that slim chance occur? Would it not be better to move the sniper counter?

It is much easier to convince yourself to move your sniper counter when: 1) you have rolled a "2" sniper attack, 2) your SAN is 6 or 7, 3) it is early in the scenario, 4) it is a large scenario or 5) your sniper has no worthwhile targets.

Careful consideration of these five characteristics of your sniper environment will usually

help you decide whether you should move your sniper counter. This need not be a process which requires more than a few seconds either, but the point is to *take* the casual glance and the time to consider rather than automatically rolling that Random Location DR.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Plain and simple— take a quick look before you roll.

SCENARIO SIZE AND DURATION

The size of a scenario often warrants special sniper attention. Consider two extremes: one six-turn scenario with only a few units per side (a small scenario) and a scenario of ten turns with twenty or more squads per side (a large scenario). Because we can expect more SAN activity in the large scenario, most aspects of this sniper analysis assume greater significance there than in the small scenario. In short, there should be more SAN-capable DR in the large scenario and, therefore, more sniper attacks. Also, the large scenario is more likely than the small scenario to contain Ramboesque units, so a single sniper attack might be more likely to nail one of those guys in that encounter.

All is not safe on board the small scenario either, though, for a single sniper attack may nail the *only* valuable unit in your OB. Rambo may be off in another part of the war and not even on board for this small engagement, which only means some poor 9-1 or 8-1 or such is in charge and assuming, by default, attendant Ramboesque attributes. The demise of this Ersatz Rambo at the hands of enemy sniper activity might be an even more severe blow than the loss of True Blue Rambo in a large scenario, simply because Ersatz Rambo is more desperately needed here. Meanwhile, in the larger scenario another Ersatz Rambo might be available to fill the void created by the death of old True Blue.

Furthermore, the sniper abatement tactics of "piling on" and bait might be less useful in the small encounter because your few units are already stretched with other commitments. In this case, GEO and TEM assume greater significance while Elusive Target and Fast (Ersatz) Rambo attain paramount importance.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** By all means, if you are going to pay any attention at all to snipers, some of the most vital criteria are scenario size as well as the game situation of the moment.

CE OR BU—TO DARE OR TO HIDE?

Armored Fighting Vehicles (AFV) deserve special sniper consideration because they can be so valuable and, when Crew Exposed (CE), so vulnerable to sniper activity. Some players will simply *never* fight CE, preferring the invulnerability of being Buttoned Up (BU), and for them the following considerations may have no meaning. However, those of us who wish to eke out every last possible advantage will often employ our AFV in CE mode.

As I have said, sniper considerations are not very often the most meaningful circumstances which will determine our action, and the same holds true for CE/BU status of properly utilized AFV. There are times when the benefits of CE are great enough to offset all sniper thoughts and other times when a general lack of meaningful

CE benefits ordains that the only profound result of fighting CE in close proximity to the enemy sniper counter could be a Recalled, or at least Stunned, AFV.

One of the most influential ingredients in my CE/BU decision-making process is the number of available AFV. In a scenario which fields six or seven AFV for my force, I will not hesitate to fight CE. Potential loss of one AFV due to CE status is far outweighed by the advantages gained from six CE AFV. This will be most true in a strong armor-to-armor confrontation in which there is less chance that infantry fire might harm the CE commander. It is also more true if the AFV in question has a good Anti-Aircraft Machine Gun (AAMG) as we see on many American tanks. Against the Japanese who offer light firepower but like to swarm or Banzai AFV, the "all-around" protection of that AAMG demands its use.

With all that said, and notice none of it so far even considers sniper activity, there will be times when those few AFV closest to the enemy sniper might opt to BU. Rare, solitary or highly valuable AFV in particular warrant extra caution when in the vicinity of enemy sniper activity.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Be aware of the enemy SAN and the location of the enemy sniper counter when you have CE AFV. CE advantages can be tremendous, but they are usually not worth undue sniper risk. Screen any such CE AFV with some sniper abatement.

FINAL REMARKS

At this point, I think we would all agree that there are a great many ways to suppress enemy sniper activity and to enhance our own. Much of what has been discussed above at some length approaches the absurd. It is certainly not my intention to endorse, merely by their mention, every tactic described in this article. I merely wish to present as complete an account of sniper concerns as possible.

The most important matter to decide is just exactly which techniques should be used and which ignored, and at what times. Like so much in the game, the answer will vary according to specific game situations. For example, I cannot affirm that a 10-3 directing a HMG-topped, 24 Firepower stack in a large scenario is always more valuable than a 7-0 leading a lone half squad in a small encounter. *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* is so very complex that any unit at any certain time can emerge as the game winner, thus assuming, even if only momentarily, importance far beyond any other Ramboesque pretender.

The entire panorama of snipers in *ASL* can be a bit involved and a most intriguing aspect of play. Yet, it is a segment of the game which does not actually require much playing time, and usually not very much thought either. Though I believe it is vital for players to comprehend and practice winning sniper techniques, these procedures should become second nature, once learned.

★

BATTLE OF ROME, 214 BC

Nero sorties with 5 CUs to join the battle. Change of command die roll leaves Marcellus in charge of the Roman army. The Elephant charge failed (dr = 3).

Rome: 11 CUs + 2 Italian Allies + 2 Latium Militia + 3 General = 18 BCs: 6 FA, 4 FL, 2 FR, 3 P, 2 DE, 1 R.

This is a decent, but not spectacular battle hand due to the thin Reserves. Purists would appreciate a Roman preference for Probes and Frontal Assaults in this battle.

Carthage: 8 CUs + 4 Allies + 4 General = 16 BCs: 4 FA, 3 FL, 7 FR, 1 P, 1 R.

Ouch, this deal hurts, big time. With only a single Probe and one Reserve to fend off Double Envelopment, Hannibal should think hard about withdrawal. The Flank Rights are winners, but Marcellus' battle rating will yank away the initiative too often to expect victory here. Hannibal can come back at Rome some other day and he is winning the war, so withdrawal is no defeat.

1. Marcellus P matched by Hannibal P, CA dr 3 succeeds.
2. Hannibal FR matched by Marcellus FR, CA dr 1 succeeds.
3. Marcellus P matched by Hannibal R, CA fails.
4. Marcellus DE wins.

Excellent switch of tactics by Jeff. This illustrates the safest way to seek a Double Envelopment victory—not a direct approach, but rather a draining down of the enemy's cards in another tactic until down to his reserves and then switching to DEs. Hannibal now pays bitterly for his failure to assess his own battle line's weakness.

Battle casualty dr 4 causes each army to lose 1 CU (having lost the battle, Carthage's elephants must be the first to die).

Retreat dr 6 (+2 for DE) eliminates the Carthaginian army, displaces Mago and kills Hannibal! (Quite incidentally, the siege point is removed.)

Rome has won a sudden death victory by killing Hannibal. A dispirited Republic of Carthage sues for peace.

FINAL COMMENTS

Jeff Paull (Rome)

Having just convinced Andy not to burn his copy of the game, I'd say that hitting Hannibal out of the gate this turn was a mistake. After the failed Major Campaign, I saw disaster looming. I guess the gates of Rome must have proved too great a temptation. To be honest, I just wanted to break the siege, although the Pestilence Event may have been a valid play to soften up Hannibal's army first, I was just too excited. Additionally, he could have had the traitor card. Clearly, battles in this game are exceedingly risky. Relative parity in battle cards can still result in disaster. A solid lesson which should be taken away is that the threat of battle can be an extremely potent weapon.

Conceptually, I had the right idea in playing for the long game. PC markers and Province control are key. Did I execute according to those concepts? No, not entirely. In the immortal words of the great Greg Courter, aka Mr. Up Front, "I'd rather be lucky than good."

Andy Maly (Carthage)

I'm sorry, but I really hate when Jeff whistles "The Gambler." I never thought that my battle card distribution would have been that bad, and should have tried to bail out in round 2, giving up the siege. However, trying to withdraw that early probably would have tipped off how bad my hand was. With Marcellus having a 50 per cent chance of successfully blocking my withdrawal, I though it a bit too risky. Besides, I had an overwhelming number of flank right cards. It just proves that nothing is certain. I can't complain, since I dealt Jeff the same type of setback on turn 2, and everything until the last battle seemed to be going my way. At least I can take solace that it wasn't Consul Paulus that dealt the final blow. I'd never have heard the end of that story.

While fatigue (we finished just shy of 1 am) showed in some of our decisions, I think that we both played a good game, and didn't make too many mistakes. Certainly, in hindsight, I had the opportunity to claim a lot of territory in southern Italy, but he practically begged me to assault Rome. I thought I had enough strategy cards and battle strength to make it viable. What I didn't count on was Jeff dealing off the bottom of the battle deck. Given the same situation again, I'd probably try again for the sudden death victory through capture of Rome. If I were a sadist, I would have sat Jeff and you, the reader, through the longer, more methodical approach.

Actually, in my opinion, a more methodical approach is a much better Carthiginian strategy, given the positions and cards at the start of turn 4. My biggest mistake, in retrospect, was ignoring the tremendous assets that Hasdrubal and Hanno could have provided. Hannibal was just a bit too successful, such that I was lulled into a sense of invulnerability. This is a huge mistake for the Carthaginian player. Just as an example, a nice flanking move with Hasdrubal and 7 CU into Lucania would have really put Rome on the horns of a dilemma.

I think it important to discuss some aspects of the game that we didn't cover. We never commented about the battles, but we provided them in a round by round manner, so the reader can hopefully understand our philosophies. Maybe we've revealed a few tricks. Naval movement and the Roman options in Spain or Africa never really developed during the course of the game. These are just a few aspects left for reflection at another time.

I believe that this replay shows that there is a fine line between success and failure in *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE.* Players have to constantly take into account not only their own capabilities, but the potential capabilities of their opponent. It's a game of many wonderful elements: second-guessing, prioritization, risk taking and multiple strategies, all of which provide for much excitement and nearly limitless replay. I hope we were able to provide the readers some

of the decision-making struggles involved, and to convey a little bit of the excitement of the live game.

COMMENTATOR'S CONCLUSION

How doth God console the fallen? I haven't a clue. Andy came very close to victory, but HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE *is not hand grenades or horseshoes. In ancient times, defeat had little counterbalancing news and so it does in this game as well.*

My comments here and above should be seen as useful tips on nuances, not harsh judgements of their play. Andy and Jeff played pretty well and illustrated much about the game and the strategic thinking it requires.

Andy loses the game while having a 12-6 advantage in provinces and the ability to remove 14 PCs without altering provincial control or abandoning positions in Roman-controlled provinces. The Roman army is smaller than Carthage's, even after the pivotal Battle for Rome. Rome has but 12 non-walled PCs on the board for removal after each turn or each battle loss. In short, turn 4 had turned the tide greatly in Andy's favor. It is doubtful that Scipio Africanus' turn 6 arrival would have tipped the political tide in Jeff's favor in time. Jeff's early battle failures in turn 4 left him no choice but to seek some sort of sudden death victory eventually—it just happened before actually being planned.

I have always been an advocate of a patient Carthaginian policy once the political advantage is so extreme, but, like Andy, I find it hard to resist going for the quicker victory. It takes a player with ice in his veins to walk Hannibal back over the Alps to New Carthage and to sail him home to Africa for the final battles with Africanus' armies, while leaving Hasdrubal in charge of diversionary maneuvers in Spain and Italy to keep the province count from crashing down. Yet, Hannibal is living on borrowed time and each battle card deal gives Rome yet another one of its remote chances of claiming dramatic victory like was illustrated in this game. I cannot fault Andy for staying in Italy with such huge advantages as parity in armies plus four Italian provincial armies. He was well-positioned for the easiest way to Carthaginian victory: threatening to capture all six non-Latium Italian provinces, but winning by virtue of Rome running out of PCs in a losing battle. Yet, he only moved once his most valuable general (because he is expendable): Hasdrubal. He did not leave Mago where he could help ship reinforcements to Hannibal's army or even bring to bear a full, second invasion of Italy.

In seven battles, Gisgo lost once, Hasdrubal won once, and within the span of seven Roman strategy card plays Hannibal fought five times (winning three times, withdrawing successfully once and losing once). It is unusual for Hannibal's first battle failure to be his last. However, it is also true that Hannibal cannot expect to win five out of five. He must expect a bad deal every so often. In his five battles combined, Hannibal had slightly below the average number of Double Envelopments, but way above the average

THE 215-214 BC CAMPAIGN

A. 34. Major Campaign: Move Nero (8 CUs) to Falerii via Firmum Picenum. Battle Losses: 3 Roman CUs, PC in Panormus, Nero to Firmum Picenum. Move Marcellus (P. Scipio, 10 CUs) to Falerii via Rome. 42. Elephant Fright. Battle losses: 1 Carthaginian CU, 1 Roman CU, Hannibal retreats to Tarquini.

A. 23. ⑥: Place PCs in Taurini, Faesulae and Panormus.

B. 17. ⓿: Move Nero (5 CUs) to Rome.

B. 27. ⓿ "I have come . . .": Converts PCs in Arpi and Cannae.

C. 25. ②: Move Marcellus (P.Scipio, 9 CUs) to Tarquini. Battle losses: 3 Roman CUs, PC in Verona, P. Scipio retreats to Falerii.

C. 30. Carthaginian Siege Train placed with Hannibal.

D. 10. ②: Move Marcellus (P. Scipio, 6 CU) to Beneventum.

D. 58. ①: Move Hannibal (Gisgo, Mago, 9 CUs, Siege Train) to Rome, Nero cowers inside wall, siege dr 4 eliminates 1 Carthagingian CU, places 1 siege marker.

E. 52. ⑨: Move Marcellus (P. Scipio, 6 CUs) to Rome (failed interception in Praeneste). Battle losses: 1 Roman CU, 8 Carthaginian CUs, Mago Displaced, siege point removed, Hannibal is killed, giving Rome a sudden death victory.

Unplayed at end of game:
Rome: 45. ②Allied Auxiliaries (Etruria), 64. ⓿Truce.

Carthage: 3. ③Numidia Revolts, 26. ③Syracuse Allies with Carthage, 30. ③Carthaginian Siege Train, 32. ①Numidian Allies Desert, 62. ②Force March 2.

SERIES REPLAY...
(Continued from pg. 57)

number of Reserves that he deserved. The Roman generals had slightly above the average number of Double Envelopments and slightly below the average number of Reserves they deserved. Given the choice of such fates, I'd prefer Hannibal's total card distribution over Rome's. Where Andy may have an argument in court with Lady Luck is over the low number of Probes he received.

Hannibal is a heavyweight champion, but he cannot lead the fight with his jaw all the time. Avoid battle unless you must fight. Have flanking generals intercept Romans before they start battles with Hannibal. Hover near friendly tribes. Open up secondary threats on Roman possessions in Sicily. These are all important methods of lessening the number of opportunities that Rome gets to nail Hannibal. Take a page from history: Hannibal did not command every battle in southern Italy in which Carthage fought. At least the historical general made it back to Africa alive (even if his army was depleted by then). You, too, can claim victory through judicious use of Hannibal's NEARLY invincible abilities.

★

AH PHILOSOPHY...(*Continued from pg. 23*)

rounds advanced to the final. Will Wible (also Best Turkey) emerged as champion ahead of Web Agnew, Vince Galarneu and Justin Thompson.

This year three special awards applied jointly to *DIPLOMACY, COLONIAL DIPLOMACY* and *MACHIAVELLI*. The "Silver Sword" award for best stab of the three tournaments went to *DIP* champion Will Wible. The "I Got Hammered" award was given to Hudson Defoe, who despite his best efforts got beaten the worst and yet had the guts to show up and try again. The "Tri-Diplomatic" award went to Chris Trout for scoring the best in all three of the diplomatic games.

COLONIAL DIPLOMACY   14
The seven "best countries" from the initial round advanced to the championship. Brian Ecton (Best Russia) claimed the championship, ahead of Mike Sims, Tom Pasko and Dan Mathias.

MACHIAVELLI   33
The best scorers from play of two heats advanced to the Championship. Mark Franchiscini won the final over Ed Rothenberber, Doug Faust, Steve Koehler, Frank Muscharella, Hudson Defoe, Dan Mathias and Rob Hassard.

UP FRONT   46
Stamina as well as skill played a part in this event which lasted twelve rounds. Initial play was conducted as four-player league round robins with random seeding. Contestants took that record with them into the Swiss-style elimination rounds, which matched players with similar records against each other (thereby having the weak eliminate the weak). Three losses in any combination eliminated a participant from

advancing to the next round. Surprisingly, a group of three good players went 0-3 and were eliminated by the round robin play.

Mike Stachowski was the only player with an initial 1-2 record to survive until the end of round six. Will Miner leapt out as the early favorite with a 6-0 record. Former editor Don Hawthorne saw his fortunes reversed after emerging 3-0 from round robin play only to never win again. After years of frustration, Bill Edwards inflicted revenge upon perennial antagonist Jeff Paull. Round seven began the attrition of the true contenders.

Round ten eliminated regular contenders John Emery and Jeff Paull, as well as Bruce Maxwell, leaving just three players. Bill Edwards had one loss, Ray Stakenas had two, and Will Miner had two-and-one-half losses. Ray and Will stated they wanted to go *mano-a-mano* for the right to challenge Bill. Will Miner won, but then in the final found Bill Edwards fresh troops were too much for him. Edwards posted an incredible 10-1 record to claim the championship.

Patrols was the favorite scenario, followed by City Fight. Although some games were not playable here due to their length, a variety of scenarios were played: A-44, B-26, C-2, D-6, E-6, F-3, L-9, M-13, N-11, O-2, R-2, U-2, X-5.

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC   46
This year followed the usual format of asking players to play in seven rounds. The Open Swiss scoring system was used to break ties among players with the same record.

Bob Kondracki (with six wins and one round defaulted to attend church) became the champ. Ray Freeman, Alan Applebaum and Mike Kaye (all 5-2) were second, third and fourth. Youngster Patrick Richardson (11 years old) deserves special mention for weighing his talents against the competition and managing to teach a few of the rules to his elders while winning twice and pushing his opponents to the wall in his other games.

Bidding points of control for side was down a bit this year and half the games lasted at least seven turns, showing that it is getting harder to get a three-turn knockout these days. GM Petroski's statistics for this game at 16 tournaments show that 47 per cent of the time players bid POCs to be the IJN and the IJN has won 53 per cent of the games including adjustment for POC bids. Among those bidding for the IJN, two POCs is the most common winning bid. The average game takes three and one-half hours.

WAR AT SEA   27
In order to win this tourney, you had to survive five preliminary rounds and accumulate a record among the top four to enter the semifinals. Many familiar faces, including former champions Ray Freeman and Bruce Monnin, tried and came up short.

Steve Packwood opened the first semifinal with an Allied "Barents on One" strategy which Gary Moody challenged, but Allied airstrikes disabled two ships and sunk another. Gary was never able to overcome this early disadvantage. The other semifinal was a tight game marked by cautious play. Phil Rennert (entering the semifinals with the only perfect 5-0 record) bid 1 POC to play the Allied side and also used a "Barents on One" strategy, but Robert Mull chose to contest the North Sea. On turn 7, a decisive victory in the North Sea by the Axis fleet was enough to force Phil to concede.

The finals were marked by ultra-conservative play as neither player wanted to be the first to make a big mistake. Robert chose to go with a "Barents on Two" strategy as the Allied player. A slight Axis gamble worked on turn 2 as the 4 U-boats broke control of the North Sea against 9 ASW. On turn 3, the Allies retreated to cover the hole, leaving the Axis with a 4 POC advantage. The Allies moved to re-establish the blockade of Germany on turn 4 and got a convoy through to Russia. However, the Italian cruisers with U-boat support took the South Atlantic Ocean and sunk a carrier. Turn 6 saw the Allies strike a major blow as 13 ASW in the North Atlantic not only held control against seven U-boats, but sank five, thus crippling the U-boat force for the remainder of the game. Turn 7 saw 3 POC for the convoy tie the game at 0 POC. Just as momentum seemed to be with Robert's allies, two battleships failed speed rolls into the Barents Sea. Axis airstrikes disabled two British ships and sank two others. The British never recovered, as the Axis won control of the Barents Sea and sank the British convoy to secure the 1 POC victory and the title.

Half the games were played with no bids, a quarter with POC bids to play the Allied side and a quarter for the Axis. The Axis won 30 games, the Allies won 23, and five games were draws.

GREAT CAMPAIGNS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR
More than half of the players of the individual games participated in the overall tournament. Joe Bellas won the overall championship
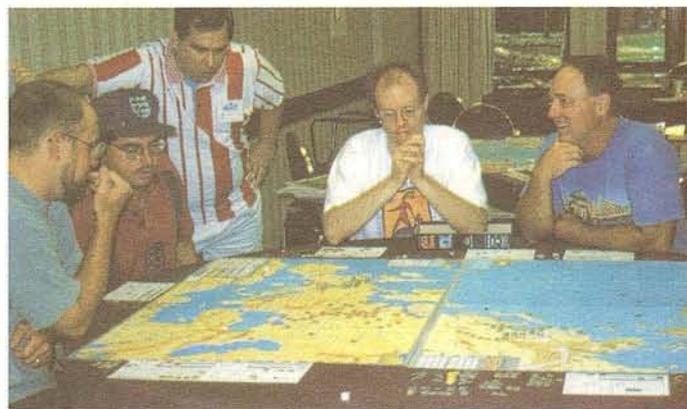
ADVANCED THIRD REICH and *EMPIRE OF THE RISING SUN* are combined into one game of Global War.

The maps of the enitre series of Great Campaigns of the America Civil War games are linked together for the "grand campaign" which recreated the 1863 campaign in Pennsylvania.

for this series of five games. He amassed a record of four decisive victories, five substantive victories, six marginal victories and only one defeat (decisive). Second place went to first-timer Paul Tisevich who won two of the individual tournaments this year. These were followed by Forrest Speck, John Clere and Bruno Passacantando ('95 champ).

Additionally, the "grand campaign" linking the maps together was also conducted, under the overall commands of Steve Katz (Union) and Ken Lee with subcommanders rotating in and out as their convention time permitted. Lee (Ken as R.E.) planned to recreate the 1863 campaign in Pennsylvania, but aggressive play by Katz made this difficult, resulting in circuitous maneuvers in the Blue Ridge mountains. Lee eventually turned on the Union troops in his rear in the Shenandoah valley and moved toward Snicker's Ferry and an open path to Alexandria. In the ensuing mad dash, the Confederate troops captured Alexandria, but failed to get across the Potomac to take Washington.

This left Ewell's troops cutoff and they surrendered in York, Pennsylvania. Although the Union capital was saved, the thrashing handed out by Jackson and Longstreet along the way gave the Confederacy a substantive victory. The grand campaign lasted 39 turns in the same number of hours.

STONEWALL JACKSON'S WAY   27
Drawing quite a number of newcomers, this event saw long-distance traveller Paul Tisevich emerge as champion.

HERE COME THE REBELS   18
Forrest Speck defeated Bruno Passacantando in one semifinal, while Joe Bellas slipped by Ray Rooks in the other. In the final battle ("The Battle for Washington"), Joe took advantage of several early initiatives to swarm Stuart's cavalry over a number of Union garrison units to overcome his 7 VP bid to play the Confederate side.

ROADS TO GETTYSBURG   16
With exhaustion setting in, this late-starting tournament saw a number of defections from the ranks of the pre-registered. The tournament used a points system, allowing all to play more than once. When the smoke cleared from the event,

Paul Tisevich had captured his second Great Campaign individual event championship. Mark Giddings (second), Steve Katz (third) and Steve Brooks (fourth) also did well.

STONEWALL IN THE VALLEY   20
This event was run as a beginner event with a special short scenario (Jackson's January 1862 attack on the B&O rail near Bath) to help new players. Participants played this scenario twice against the same opponent. The top eight contestants advanced to play the "Cross Keys and Port Republic" scenario (resulting in two Confederate decisive and two Union marginal victories). In the semifinal playing of "McDowell," Ed Beach gained a Union marginal victory over Jeff Otto, while Bruno Passacantando won a Confederate substantive victory over Trevor Bender. The finalists played "Winchester." Ed's Confederates were hampered by weather and impassable fords. While Rappahannock Department Union troops were stopped cold by a pair of brigades in forts, Ed concentrated the full weight of Jackson's army against Union forces in the Shenandoah to gain a marginal victory. Thus, Ed got sweet revenge for his 1995 loss to Bruno in the *SJW* final.

STONEWALL'S LAST BATTLE   12
Though listed as a demo in the program, this tournament was given full status at the last minute. The first two rounds involved play of the Salem Church scenario, which proved to be balanced with an average score of 8.4 points (Union minimum victory requires 9). The semifinals involved Brandy Station, which led to one-point defeats of Mark Bailey and David Cross' Confederates. Forrest Speck emerged as champion with a victory in the final (The Great Flank March) over John Clere. Forrest required a hot streak of six initiatives in a row to occupy Chancellorsville. This was poetic revenge for the champion, who lost two ancestors in the actual battle.

OTHER NEW GAMES

LONDON'S BURNING   16
This new release drew players to a two-round tournament, in which players had to play the British in one round and the Germans in another and summed their points from each. They played to September 3 (three weeks) on the calendar using historical weather to minimize deviations between games.

Michael Sims won both of his games and finished with a total score of 53 for first place. Rick Manns earned second with 48. Mike Metcalf finished third with 47, having earned the highest German score in the tournament (33). He beat Chris "sans parachute" Villeneuve in that game, whose dice repeatedly failed him on the Bail Out Table—even over land. John Coussis won fourth place with 43.

On a side note, Ted Racier reported that he played *LONDON'S BURNING* in open gaming at the convention and came in *third* in a two-player game. Ted explained that he and a buddy played as British wingmates and the system-run Germans won the game with his score being the lowest British score.

Next year, entrants will play the short scenario (Eagle Week) only.

AGE OF RENAISSANCE   30
The demonstration tournament of this latest multi-player release received an enthusiastic reception, despite the components being of playtest quality. Each of two heats sported three six-player games, while the final was accompanied by two pickup games of eager wheeler-dealers furthering the mercantile interests of London, Paris, Hamburg, Barcelona, Genoa and Venice.

In the final, bids for position were as high as 10 (Paul Harold, Venice). By turn 3, Kathy Stroh's Genoa had purchased the notorious Holy Indulgence advance, sapping expansion markers from those without it. Joel Tamburo had managed to advance in each of the six different categories (Science, Religion, Commerce, Communication, Exploration and Civics) and began buying off the misery of London's poor. Meanwhile, Venice had acquired The Heavens and was therefore able to navigate the waters of the Black Sea. During turn 4, Kathy was responsible for The Black Death in Kenny Rothenstein's home area (Spain), while Barcelona was further crippled with a Civil War.

Halfway through the game Charles Hickok's Paris led with 330 in advance purchases, followed closely by Mike May's Hamburg. In turn 5, Hamburg was first to reach the Far East's rich sources of Silk and Spice, and compounded his success by playing the Papal Decree card, thus prohibiting London and Barcelona from pursuing the development of Ocean Navigation to follow in his footsteps. London's ire found expression in the War card. But even against Gunpowder and Nationalism, Hamburg prevailed. This forced London to cede Bergen's Fur market.

During the eighth and final turn, Hamburg played the Enlightened Ruler, effectively thwarting the venomous plans of jealous city-states. Paris sold the false allure of Alchemist's Gold to the cash-rich Venetians. A frenzied assault on Silk provinces took place, as players realized all three silk commodity cards were being hoarded for the final card play phase. However, the lower odds of competition success for the late-moving players foiled their attempts and Mike May (Hamburg) held on for the victory, having acquired all but three of the 26 advances, for a 1875 total. Kenny Rothenstein just edged Charles Hickok for second, with Kathy Stroh close behind them. The two players who were not playtesters for the game pulled up the rear, illustrating the decided advantages of knowing the nuances of this subtle game.

The pre-publication display of the game's card art will no doubt generate a large field for the next AvalonCon.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

HISTORY OF THE WORLD

This popular multi-player empire-building game has been our most sought-after boardgame property. Colorado Computer Creations won the contract for converting the game to the computer age and took only two years to bring it to cyberspace! Now PC gamers with Windows and a CD reader can enjoy the panoramic spectacle of the rise and fall of the world's greatest civilizations from the ancient Sumerians to the start of World War I against computer opponents and/or one-to-six other players—either live or by email. The game's standard operating procedure lends itself to a convenient form for relatively quick email games.
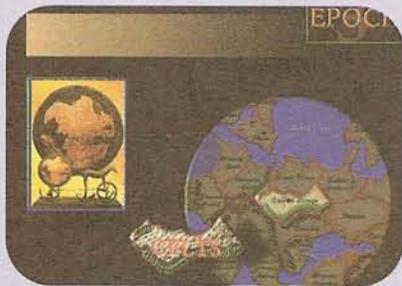
The computer version adds diversity to its award-winning predecessor while remaining largely faithful to the original. Not restricted by the physical constraints of playing pieces and cards, the player base has been expanded to allow seven players to participate instead of the original six by restoring the Sumerians to full empire status. The spectacle of 49 rising empires taking their turn upon the world stage is accompanied by luxurious images of each Empire's creations.

Along the way, all the usual events such as plague, civil war, barbarian incursions, earthquakes, floods and holy wars are announced in animated splendor to decide the fate of nations. Only the Trade card has been deleted from the boardgame to streamline the operations for email games.

The computer version proves its worth by automatically doing the accounting chores of its boardgame predecessor and alerting players to the scoring consequences of each placement. In addition, detailed histories of game progress plus relative strength comparisons throughout play document each game's actions with its own particular history of the world. Of course, a player need not gather five friends with five hours to kill in order to play, because AI opponents, saved games and e-mail play supply an endless string of opposition and opportunity.

Hardware requirements:
- 486-DX2 50 MHz processor
- 10 Megabytes of free space on hard disk
- 2x speed CD-Rom drive
- 640 x 480 256-color graphics display
- Mouse
- Sound Card optional

—Don Greenwood

CONVENTION CALENDAR

LEGENDS & LEGIONS '97
February 14-16, 1997, Tallahassee, FL
Held at the Collegiate Village Inn, this event includes RPG, card, board and miniature gaming, plus painting contests, dealers and auction. $40 registration. Write NFGA-CON, 217 Columbia Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32304 or call (904) 575-6722.

TOTAL CONFUSION XI
February 20-23, 1997, Andover, MA
Held at Rolling Green Inn, this event includes *DIP*, role-playing, card, miniature and board gaming. $40 registration; pre-registration is $30. Write Total Confusion, PO Box 403, N. Chelmsford, MA 01863-0403 or call (508) 251-9321.

JAXCON '97
February 21-23, 1997, Jacksonville, FL
The South's longest-running gaming convention is held at the Ramada Inn, 5865 Arlington Expressway, and features fantasy RPG, miniatures, *ACV, DIP, TRC, SQL*, including the Florida championships in the latter two. Write Jaxcon, PO Box 14218, Jacksonville, FL 32228-4218 or call (904) 724-7086 or email jaxcon@aol.com.

JOHN CON '97
February 21-23, 1997, Baltimore, MD
This sci-fi and fantasy convention features RPGs, live-action RPGs, demos, films, anime, art and dealers. Contact JohnCon c/o HopSFA, Office of Student Activities, 122 Merryman Hall, Johns Hopkins University, 3400 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218 or call Karl at (410) 235-3659 or check http://hops.cs.jhu.edu/~marcus_d/johncon.html.

THE 1997 MIDWEST OPEN
March 1-2, 1997, Kenosha, WI
This *VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC* tournament, held at the Days Inn at Interstate 94 and Wisconsin Highway 50 is a six-round, open swiss competition (play every round, win or lose) with seeding based upon A.R.E.A. rating (free ratings provided to the needy). Awards include five plaques and $190 in prize money. Pre-registration fee is $20 by February 15; Registration is $25 at door. Write Glenn E. L. Petroski, 6829 23rd Ave., Kenosha, WI 53143-1233 or call (414) 654-5044.

PREZCON '97
March 6-9, 1997, Charlottesville, VA
This fourth annual boardgaming convention will be at the Best Western Mount Vernon Hotel at routes 29 and 250 by-pass and will feature a large dose of Avalon Hill boardgames, plus some card games and SF miniatures, plus demos, game sale and dealers. Registration is $25 and pre-registration by February 15 gains a T-shirt or hat. Contact PrezCon, Inc., PO Box 4661, Charlottesville, VA 22905 or call (804) 977-1962.

COASTCON XX
March 20-23, 1997, Biloxi, MS
Features dealers, movies, live-action RP, miniatures, computer gaming, art, painting and writing contests and an auction. Pre-registraiton is $30 by January 1, $35 by March 1 and Regsitraiton is $40 at door. Contact PO Box 1423, Biloxi, MS 3953-1423 or call (601) 435-5217 or email coastcon@aol.com.

EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN 1997 • March 28-30, 1997, Cardondale, IL
This tenth annual convention attracted over 650 participants in 1996. Held on the campus of Southern Illinois University, it features RPG, card games, boardgames and miniatures. Registration is $12 at the door; $10 for pre-registration. Contact S.I.U.C. Strategic Games Society, Office of Student Development, 3rd Floor Student Center, Cardondale, IL 62901-4425 or call Joel Nadler at (618) 529-4630 or email ecgamcon@aol.com or http://www.siu.edu/departments/rso/gamesoc.

SPRING OFFENSIVE VII
April 11-13, 1997, East Peoria, IL
Presented by the Tri-County Gaming Association, this convention at Illinois Central College features historical and fantasy miniatures, boardgames, cards and fantasy role-playing as well as dealers and concessions. Write the association at 1293 Peoria St., Washington, IL 61571 or call (309) 444-4640.

1997 ASL OPEN IN CHICAGO
April 18-20, 1997, Burr Ridge, IL
The 1997 format for this *ASL* con expands to seven rounds over three days. Pre-registration is $15; $18 after March 1. Write Louie Tokarz, 5724 W. 106th St., #2E, Chicago Ridge, IL 60415 or call (708) 857-7060.

POINTCON XX
April 18-20, 1997, West Point, NY
Sponsored by the The Cadet Wargames Committee, this convention will be held at the historic West Point Academy in Eisenhower Hall and features boardgames, cards and miniatures, including fantasy and sci-fi as well as historical games, plus an auction and dealer exhibits. Contact the committee at PO Box 62, West Point, NY 10996 or "B" Company, PO Box 4163, Clifton, NJ 07012 or call (201) 473-2900.

GAMECON 10
April 19, 1997, Tyson's Corner, VA
This day-long (8am-8pm) con at the Westpark Hotel on Rte. 7 near Dulles Airport is sponsored by NOVAG and features historical and science fiction miniature wargaming, flea market and vendors. Admission $5; $3 for NOVAG members. For more information write NOVAG, PO Box 223660, Chantilly, VA 20153 or email novag@mail.com or fax (703) 421-7524 or visit http://www.mail.com/novag.

ASL SOUTHERN CROSS
May 23-25, 1997, Knoxville, TN
This convention features a five-round main event and a three-round Saturday only event. Write John Skillman, PO Box 277, Greeneville, TN 37744 or call (423) 638-4256.

BORDEN ASL TOURNAMENT
May 23-25, 1997, Borden, Ontario, Canada
Held at Canadian Forces Base Borden (north of Toronto) is a first annual tournament with five rounds of ASL action. Registration is Cdn$20. On-site accomodation is available. Contact Base Borden Wargamers Club, 207 Saskatchewan Blvd., Borden, Ontario, Canada, L0M 1C0 or acooke@interhop.net or Blair Bellamy at (705) 737-0783.

GAMEX 12
May 23-26, 1997, Los Angeles, CA
Held at the LA Airport Wyndham Hotel, this features all types of family, strategy, adventure, card, role-playing, miniature and computer gaming, plus flea markets, auction, exhibit hall, seminars, demonstrations and special guests. Write Strategicon, 333 N. San Fernando Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502 or call (818) 848-1748.

Gaming an overall rating of 3.3, volume 30, number 6 was the most popular of the year. The historical variety, new game coverage, historical maps and bonus variant counters all contributed significantly to reader pleasure. World War II buffs missed their favorites, but did not upbraid the editor much on that account. Votes for Lawler's article on an old Napoleonic game show very strong support for this period of history. The articles on *HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE* also showed reader interest in ancient history and highly-playable games. The return of the Design Analysis column with the wisdom of veteran game-designer Richard Berg also pleased many.

Among the games you are playing these days, computer wargames are a small, but growing share, although old, WWII favorites, such as *ASL, PANZER LEADER* and *UP FRONT*, continue to fill gaming hours for many. Newer games *HANNIBAL, LONDON'S BURNING* and *STONEWALL'S LAST BATTLE* are being adopted quickly.

Unfortunately, I still am not receiving as much timely reader feedback as I'd like. Some of you also tend to send the "rate the issue" and "contest" entries to me a little late. Perhaps the problem is the age old "what's in it for me" syndrome. Well, here it is: from hence forward I will conduct a random drawing from among the submissions of "rate the issue" responses and the selected one will receive a free one-year subscription or renewal to *The GENERAL*. This may present a stumbling block to people who prefer to remain anonymous with their comments, but I will only look at the name of the drawn winner (and of course the drawing will be random and unrelated to the tenor of your remarks and ratings). Of course, anonymous ratings still will be accepted and compiled with the others. For the contest winners, we will increase the reward to $15 effective with Contest #179.

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Games magazine (December issue) has come out with their list of the top games from 1996 and Avalon Hill plays a prominent role again. The latest addition to their Games Hall of Fame is *CIVILIZATION*, credited for exerting a powerful influence on the games industry, including the empire-building craze in computer games (by the way, the licensed French edition is now available). Already on the list of 20 inductees are *ACQUIRE, DIPLOMACY* and *TWIXT*. On this year's list of the top 100 games are: *STONEWALL'S LAST BATTLE, MACHIAVELLI, HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE* and *GERONIMO* (four of eight Strategy and Conflict games cited).

The Infiltrator's Report

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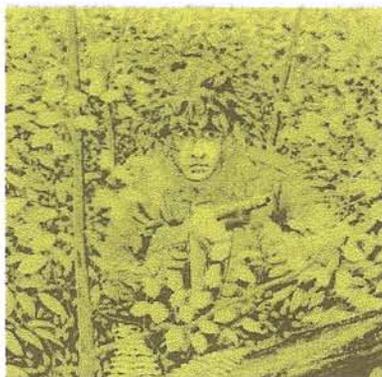
Our congratulations go out to Pitt Crandlemire of Brookline, Massachusetts, for winning the *DIPLOMACY* tournament at World Dipcon VI (held at Origins '96) and to Team Sweden for taking the honors in the team tournament. Those "newcomers" interested in information about the ever-popular play-by-mail *DIPLOMACY* hobby can contact W. Andrew York, P.O. Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307 or wandrew@aol.com. For email game information, contact manus.hand@evolving.com.

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Let's applaud the arduous efforts of wargame club officers for their time-consuming efforts. The expanding Games Club of Maryland is helping the hobby by pushing publicity for Prez-Con '97 and sponsoring TNT '97 (contact Keith Levy, 7310 Kathydale Rd., Baltimore, MD 21207 for tips on club creation). Meanwhile, the Windy City Wargamers continue their excellent service to the hobby with the spiffy newsletter *Intelligence Report* and annual *ASL* convention (contact Louie Tokarz, 5724 W. 106th St., Chicago Ridge, IL 60415).

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Contest #177 (Does it Matter if London's Burning?) dealt with a relatively new game (perhaps too new for doing a contest so soon—I guess I'll hold off on the *HANNIBAL* contest for awhile). The contestant submissions showed a surprising facility to recognize *almost* all of the crucial aspects of the interception problem. Nobody hit all the elements exactly correct, however. Thus, I resorted to the age-old method of blind grading the responses (a "minus two" here and a "minus one-half" there and shake it all about). I marked

down the most points for failing to recognize that you did not have time to stand-by on the tarmac or could not take on the fighters first, but I was more forgiving of the assumption of some that "out-of-the-sun" was better than coming "head-on." As a result the winner is—oh, is this true?—Andrew R. Maly of Bel Air, Maryland, showing us all that he knows his stuff and that his tips on pages 7-12 are well worth noting. Mr. Maly earns a $10 merchandise certificate and the Prime Minister's gratitude.

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Contest #178 (The Return to Paris) challenged contestants' knowledge of combined operations in *THIRD REICH* in an operation to liberate Paris. The situation severely restricted British options. The goal of linking a liberated Paris to a port meant that an offensive could not be launched from St. Nazaire (the German armor south of the Loire and the infantry in Rennes and Caen would block the needed line of communication). Therefore, the armor in St. Nazaire would have to be in supply so that it could be used in a breakthrough/exploitation operation at either Caen or Calais. Hence, one of the four British fleets must first run supply to St. Nazaire. This, then presents a problem for the British. The remaining three fleets, no matter how they rebase, could not possibly carry both armored units to an invasion hex (ruling out an attack on Calais). By process of elimination, only one hope remains: sea transport into Cherbourg and an armored breakthrough attack at Caen followed by an exploitation attack on Paris.

The two armor must be sea transported to Cherbourg. From Cherbourg, one armor will attack Caen with air support. The best allocation of the air factors will be two for ground support at Caen and six for ground support at Paris. The two and six could be swapped with no effect on the odds, but committing fewer to the first attack veils intentions and keeps a larger air force ready for other duties, should the whole operation collapse somewhere before the attack on Paris.

The Germans, realizing the threat, will try to intercept the three fleets carrying the armor units from St. Nazaire and Portsmouth to Cherbourg (at an 11-18 hex range). As shown in the table below, the aggregate probability of both British armor units successfully transporting past the German navy is 88.9 per cent. The attack on Caen at 6-6 has a 35.3 per cent chance of gaining the breakthrough hex. The attack on Paris at 10-6 has an 83.3 per cent chance of liberating Paris. The cumulative chance of success is the multiplication of those three probabilities: 26.1 per cent.

Coming Up Next Issue:
HANNIBAL: ROME VS. CARTHAGE,
CAVEWARS and SOLITAIRE ASL

	Occurrence Probability		GE Saves Paris
GER Naval Moves:			
GER Fails interception	33.3%		0.0%
GER Interception is defeated	55.6%		0.0%
GER Interception succeeds	11.1%	=	11.1%
		Total	11.1%

A rock

Food

An assault buggy

Pointed sticks

Six, two-ton worms

Half-a-dozen Gakkar in flex body armor

Eight cities, **slightly scorched**

A few **vampires**

Gigantic bats

Pain

Fourteen really pissed off, six foot rats

A cannon wielding magician

Eighteen feet of firespouting devil

A siege craft or two

Earthquakes

Arrow toting dwarves on giant armored turtles

Every conceivable danger

Engineers training day and night

Spying on you from afar

Fear

Several mean and scary things

Beetle plagues

CAVEWARS

(410) 254 - 9200

(410) 254 - 0991-FAX

The Avalon Hill Game Company, a division of Monarch Avalon Inc. 4517 Harford Road., Baltimore MD. 21214   1-800-999-3222

http://users.aol.com/ahgames/avalon.html

National Arrivals in *MAHARAJA*

Nations	Army Max	Submit?	Origin	On Board At Start	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	On Board Short Game	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Main Goals
Pandyas	8	south-2	(Ganges)	2									4									Karnatak, Mysore
Greeks	6		Afg, Persia					6L-2	3													Gandhara, Punjab
Afghans	6		Afghanistan																	6L-2		Delhi, Lahore, Punjab
Marathas	12	south-2	Maharashtra						6										L	2L		Mahar., Bija., Andhra
Cholas	12		(Ganges)	2									4									Karn., Mys., Ceylon
Mauryans	27		Afg, Asia		M:12	6		4	L	-6.P	>Guptas Replace			2L	.P							Ganges
Harappans	9		(Indus)	9																		Kill Maur.; Survive
Sinhalese	5	Ceylon-1	Lanka					3					2									Ceylon; Survive
Sikhs	6	north-1	Lahore																			Lahore, Punjab
Rajputs	12	north-2	Asia, China						M:10	4	2		6		—		L	4				Center; Kill Muslims
Guptas	27		(Mauryan)					From Mauyra>					10	-8*		.S						Ganges
Muslims	22	south-2	Persia, Afg								M:L	-8.P	2	-8*	8							Dividing Line
Mughals	22	n-2, s-1	Asia									4		4	M:8L	6L-2	M:14L	L	L	.S		Delhi, Agra, Andhra
Portugese	3		Arabian Sea													2	2					Fact.; Kill Muslims
Dutch	2		Indian Oc.													2	2	2L				Factories
French	3		Indian Oc.																2L			Factories
British	8		Arab./Ind.															4	4	B.L	M:B	Factories, Alliance

KEY: L=Leader M:=Major Invasion

*=Except in Short Game B:=Minimum of 6 British Armies .P=End Population Growth .S=Population Growth in South only *Italics (Guptas)=Raj pts. possible* Underline=boats

BACK ISSUES

Only the following back issues of The *GENERAL* remain in stock; price is $5.00 per issue (plus the usual shipping and handling charges). Due to the low quantities of some back issues, if ordering, please specify alternative selections. Below is a listing of each in–stock back issue by subject matter; game abbreviations are italicized and standard (a partial listing may be found on the "Opponent's Wanted" form on the insert of any issue). Article type is indicated by the following abbreviations: A–Analytical, DN–Designer's Notes, H–Historical, Q–Questions, P–PBM (postal), S–Strategy, Sc–Scenarios, SR–Series Replay, V–Variant. The featured game for each issue is always the first one listed.

14–5: *SQL*–DN, A, Q; *WSM*–A, V; *TRC*–A; *M64*–S; *SST*–A; *3R1*–A; *Games Guide*

16–1: *ANZ*–S, Sc, V, DN; *3R1*–S; *NAP*–S; *PZB*–SR; *176*–S, A; *DIP*–S, *SQL*–Q
16–4: *MRM*–DN, A, S, V, Q; *SQL*–A; *3R1*–S, A; *TRC*–SR

17–4: *FSE*–S, P, DN, V; *MD*–V, Q; *SQL*– SR; *VIP*–S; *176*–Sc; *WZQ*–A; *SST*–V; *NAP*–S
17–5: *CMS*–S, V, Q; *RFN*–V; *SQL*–V; *SGD*–V; *PZL*–S; *3R2*–S, SR; *CAE*–V; *KGM*–S; *MRM*–S
17–6: *SGD*–S; *WSM*–V, Sc; *WAS*–V; *3R2*–SR; *SQL*–S; *CSL*–S; *VIP*–S; *TRC*–S

18–1: *FIW*–A, Q; *BM7*–S; *SQL*–S; *DUN*–V; *DIP*–S; *AFK*–A; *PZB*–SR; *ALX*–S; *W&P*–S
18–2: *AFD*–A, Sc, Q; *AFK*–V; *3R3*–DN; *TOB*–V; *SQL*–S; *AIW*–V; *VIP*–S; *DIP*–S, *D77*–S
18–3: *GOA*–S, DN, V, Q; *AOC*–V, Sc; *AFK*–S; *VIP*–V; *SQL*–S; *WSM*–SR, P; *DIP*–S
18–4: *GLD*–H, V, A, Q; *SQL*–A; *LFW*–V; *W&P*–SR; *AOC*–S, P; *FSE*–V; *WAS*–S; *AFK*–S
18–5: *3R3*–S, A, V, DN, Q; *SQL*–S, A; *TRC*–V; *TOB*–V; *RFN*–V; *CSL*–A; *DUN*–V
18–6: *FTP*–A, Sc; V, DN; *VIP*–V, Q; *M64*–S, Q; *SNL*–A; Q; *SUB*–Sc; *BZK*–V

19–2: *B81*–H, Sc, S, DN; *TLD*–A, Q; *SQL*–V; *3R3*–S; *SOA*–SR
19–3: *GSL*–A, Sc, V, SR, Q; *DIP*–A; *RFN*–Sc; *G77*–V; *176*–Sc; *LRT*–V, Q; *SQL*–A
19–5: *SON*–A, S, H, Q; *W&P*–S, Q; *DIP*–A; *WAT*–V; *WSM*–Sc; *SQL*–A
19–6: *VIP*–P, SR; *3R3*–V, Q; *DIP*–A; *FTP*–V; *BM7*–V; *NVW*–A; *SQL*–A, Sc; *SUB*–V, Sc

20–1: *SQL*–S, A, DN, V, Q; *VIP*–SR
20–2: *TTN*–A, DN, S, Q; *MRM*–V; *RHD*–A; *SQL*–Sc; *W&P*–V; *GOA*–S, Q; *DIP*–A; *PZL*–V
20–3: *FRG*–S, V, Sc, Q; *PZB*–A; *176*–Sc; *DWK*–S, V, Q; *DIP*–A; *CQD*–V, S
20–4: *FIG*–A, Q&A; *SST*–V; *AMW*–A; *DUNE*–V; *DIP*–V; *SL*–S, *BL*–S,A; *KGM*–V
20–5: *BRN*–SR, S, H, Q; *LRT*–S; *DIP*–A; *GSL*–Sc; *G77*–A; *WSM*–Sc
20–6: *B17*–A, V, SR, Q; *AFD*–V; *LFW*–S; *AFD*–S; *FSE*–S; *DIP*–A; *M64*–S; *BRN*–SR; *GOA*–Sc; *SQL*–A; *PZL*–Q

21–1: *UPF*–S, A, SR, DN, Q; *SOA*–S; *SQL*–H, S; *TRC*–S; *D77*–S
21–2: *NAB*–S, DN; *W&P*–S, A, Q; *NAP*–S, Q; *DIP*–A; *FR4*–S; *FSE*–S; *3R3*–S; *BFI*–S; *176*–S; *SQL*–A
21–4: *PGG*–S; SR; *PZB*–A; *3R3*–S; *TRC*–S, V, Q; *DIP*–A; *SGD*–V, S; *SQL*–Sc
21–5: *HWR*–S, V, A; *MRM*–S, Q; *OW2*–A; *DIP*–A; *3R3*–S; *RBN*–S; *CQD*–V; *CIV*–S; *SQL*–A
21–6: *FPR*–H, V, SR; *AIW*–S, Sc; *BZK*–V; *TAC*–V; *SQL*–A

22–1: *PAA*–A, S, Q; *TB*–A, V; *DWK*–DN; *TRI*–V; *GSL*–P; *DIP*–A; *AOC*–S; *WAS*–S, Q; *AFK*–V; *CIV*–S; *3R3*–S, Q
22–2: *UPF/BNZ*–A, SR, Q; *FTP*–A, S; *SUB*–Sc; *VIP*–S, Q
22–3: *PZB*–SR; *PZL*–Sc, V, Q; *SOA*–S; *3R3*–V; *DIP*–A; *CIV*–A; *UPF*–Sc, Q; *AIW*–S; *GOA*–A, Q; *TLD*–A
22–4: *RFT*–A, V, S; *TRC*–V; *PZK*–S, Q; *DIP*–A; *3R3*–V; *SUB*–V; *PGG*–S
22–5: *DEV*–S, A, Q; *GSL*–Sc; *BRN*–S; *DIP*–P, A; *SC*–V; *FIG*–A; *SQL*–Sc, Q

23–1: *FLD*–A, V; *AFD*–V, *B17*–V, DN; *HWR*–S, Q; *VIP*–V; *3R4*–V; *TTN*–V; *LFW*–V; *SST*–V; *RFN*–V
23–2: *ASL/BEYOND VALOR*–A, S, Sc, Q, SR; *UPF*–S; *DIP*–A; *PZL*–A
23–3: *SUB*–V, Sc; *ASL*–S, SR; *HWR*–V; *BZK*–V, Q; *B81*–A
23–4: *EIA*–S, DN; *W&P*–V, S; *WSM*–Sc; *SC*–V; *NAP*–S; *YLW*–S; *3R4*–S, Q
23–5: *KTA*–DN, Sc, Q; *WAT*–V, *B17*–V, Q; *3R4*–S; *RFN*–V; *ASL*–S; *VIP*–S
23–6: *183*–DN, S, V, Q; *FPR*–Sc; *RBN*–S; *TRC*–S; *DEV*–P; *PXB*–S; *CIV*–S; *MRM*–S

25–3: *PTB*–S, H, V, Sc; *TPS*–DN; *AFK*–V; *3R4*–Sc, Q; *ASL*–S; *PGG*–P; *PZB*–A; *UPF*–V; *SOA*–V; *PZL*–S; *B81*–S
25–4: *EIS*–S, H, V, Sc; *WSM*–V, P, Sc; *EIA*–V, Q; *VIP*–S; *NPB*–DN; *176*–V
25–5: *GBG*–SR, V, H, Q; *176*–S; *ASL*–H; *FPR*–Sc; *RBN*–V; *ODS*–V; *DEV*–S; *GOA*–DN, Q; *W&P*–S, Q; *BRN*–DN; *LVG*–Sc
25–6: *ASL/WEST OF ALAMEIN*–H, S, V, A, Sc, Q; *PAA*–S; *RSN*–V; *UPF*–S; *FPR*–Sc; *SPF*–A

26–1: *MOV*–S, DN, V, SR, Q; *DKE*–V; *DUN*–V; *DLW*–S; *KGM*–S; *STC*–S; *ASL*–A, Q; *KRM*–V, Q; *ROR*–DN; *CIV*–V
26–2: *TPS*–S, DN, SR, Q; *PZB*–Sc; *ASL*–H, A; *3R4*–S, Q; *HWR*–S, Q; *UPF*–V; *RFT*–S
26–3: *MBT*–H, S, SR, Q; *FLD*–V, Sc; *FPR*–Sc; *ACQ*–S; *TCA*–S
26–4: *SOJ*–H, DN, S, Sc, Q; *KGM*–V; *TTN*–V; *CIV*–S; *DIP*–S; *MRM*–A; *ASL*–A
26–5: *UPF*–S, V, SR; *AFD*–V; *FTP*–Sc; *B17*–V; *FPR*–V; *ASL*–H, Q
26–6: *NPB*–DN, S, H, Sc, Q; *EIA*–Sc, V; *183*–S; *WSM*–Sc; *DEV*–S; *W&P*–Sc

27–1: *TRC*–S, H, V; *ASL*–H, Q; *KRM*–V, Q; *RFT*–S; *TPS*–S
27–2: *3FT*–V, Sc, A; *6FT*–S; *2FT*–V; *EIA*–S, Q; *ASL*–S, D, Q; *WSM*–V; *FTP*–V; *VIP*–S
27–3: *3R4*–S, DN; *TLD*–S, V; *ASL*–S, DN, Q; *FSE*–S
27–4: *ROR*–A, SR, DN, Q; *CIV*–DN; *KRM*–V; *EIA*–S; *DIP*–P
27–5: *B91*–A, S, V; *B81*–DN; *ASL*–H; *DIP*–P; *TCA*–A; *ROR*–SR, Q; *D77*–S
27–6: *BKB*–SR, S, DN, A; *SCT*–V; *GSR*–S; *MOV*–V; *ATS*–A; *W&P*–V, *NWD*–V; *WRS*–S; *S&B*–S; *CRR*–Sc; *WSM*–V

28–1: *PPW*–SR, S, DN, H, Q; *ASL*–Sc, *FPG*–DN; *PCW*–V, Sc; *CIV*–V, S; *Game Rating System*
28–2: *ASL/GUNG HO!*–A, Sc, H, DN; *ROR*–A; *FPG*–A, Sc; *B17*–Sc, –Q; *ACV*–V, Q; *SPF*–V; *AvalonCon II*
28–3: *RFT*–A, S; *PZB/PZL*–V; *PZB*–Sc; *ASL*–A, Sc; *TRC*–A, S; *UPF*–Sc, Q; *RBN*–V; *GOX*–A; *AFD*–V; *TPS*–Q; *SPF*–V
28–4: *B17*–V; *D91*–A, Q; *PZL*–Sc, P; *ACV*–V; *ASL*–A, Sc; *UPF*–H, Sc; *WAS*–A, S; *LRH*–V; *ACQ*–A, S
28–5: *M92/GDC*–V, Q; *TOX*–V; *MUS*–V; *VIP*–SR, V; *AFD*–Sc; *UPF*–H, C, Sc; *SAM*–R; *HOW*–R
28–6: *A3R*–A, S, V; *ASL*–A, Sc; *GOA*–V; *UPF*–Sc, Q; *3R4*–V, S; *CIV*–A; *RSN*–R; *BKN*–R

29–1: *AVC '93*–A; *HOW*–Vx3, Preview, Q; *WTP*–Preview; *RKL*–S; *ASL*–V, Sc; *ASN*–Preview
29–2: *WTP*–A, SR, DN; Q; *Marquis de Lafayette*–H, *ACQ*–V; *ASL*–Sc, DN; *BKN*–Preview; *KGM*, PC Preview; *UPF*–V
29–3: *BKN*–A, S, SR, Q; *GUR*–Preview; *ASN*–V; *HOW*–V; *CIV*–V; *OC*–PC–S; *ASL*–Sc, A, DN
29–4: *SJW*–S, V; *WaW*; *ST*–Preview; *MAH*–Preview; *5h Fleet*–Preview; *GBG '88*–V, *BKN*–SR; *ASL*–Sc, A
29–5: *NWD*–A, V; *SJW*–S,V; *EIA*–S, V; *TTN*–V; Myths of Pearl Harbor Attack–H; *AVC '94* Report; *OC*–SR; *BB '91*–S; *CDIP*–Preview; *FC2*–Preview; *ASL*–Sc
29–6: *RKL*–V; *GUE*–V; *The American Military*–H; *TYX*–V; *HWD*–V; *UPF*–V; *FC2*–V; *WRS*–V; *ATS*–V; *5th FLEET*–SR; *KRM*–V; *ASL*–Sc, S

30–1: *PPW*–S; Civil War–A; Tokyo Express–V; *MMS*–V; *ASL*–Sc, S; *1830* PC–preview; *ACV* PC–preview; *5th FLEET*–SR; *A5A*–SR; *FC 2*–DN; *FPG*–V; Stalingrad–S
30–2: *MAH*–S,Q,SR; *BRI*–V; *ASL*–H,Sc; *183*–S; *EIS*–V; *KTA*–Sc
30–3: *RTG*–S,Q,A,V; *A3R*–S; AC'95 Reports; *ASL*–H,Sc,V; *MAH*–SR(cont.); *SJW*–S; *PZL*–S; *HWD*–Aid,V
30–4: *CDP*–S,Q; *PZL*–A; *HWD*–A; *SGD*–SR; *WPS*–V; *ASL*–Sc,S; Staff Briefing; AC'95 (cont.); *DIP*–S
30–5: *MUS*–A,Sc,V; *MAC*–SR; *LBG*–A; *MMS*–cards; *HWD*–V; Staff Briefing; *ASL*–A,Sc
30–6: *GER*–S,DN,V,Q; *HRC*–H,A; *ABN*–A,SR; Staff Briefing; *EIA*–V,Sc; *CIV*–S; *ACV*–S; *ASL*–Sc
31–1: *ERS*–S,Q; *EIA*–Sc; *LBG*–V,SR; *PZL*–S; *ASL*–S,Sc; *DAI*–S; *BBD*–V; *A3R*–V

68. STALIN DENOUNCED:
Stalin's excesses are denounced at the Party Congress. Everyone with a strength in KGB ages 1 SP. Not playable when Stalin is alive.

69. SPUTNIK:
The launch of Sputnik enhances the international image of the Soviet Union. The defense minister may not be purged in this turn.

70. HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION:
Hungarian Marxists seek to redefine revolution. Soviet tanks correct their thinking. Defense Minister ages 1 SP. The first purge attempt must be versus the Foreign Minister at -2 to the die roll.

71. SIBERIAN EXPERIMENT:
The opening up of Siberian steppes to wheat production creates dust bowl. The first purge must be versus the Economy Minister at -2 to the die roll.

72. OPENNESS TO THE WEST:
New openness allows Solzhenitsyn to publish works exposing the horrors of the Gulag. The first purge attempt must be versus the KGB head by the head of Ideology at a -2 to the die roll.

ENCLOSE (WITH PAYMENT)
INSIDE ENVELOPE

ENCLOSE (WITH PAYMENT)
INSIDE ENVELOPE

ENCLOSE (WITH PAYMENT)
INSIDE ENVELOPE

Since 1979, I have played *SQL* then *ASL* 99% of the time. I have everything put out by AH on *SQL/ASL* and more is better! I do read every issue of *The GENERAL* cover to cover though.

—Texas

Cut back AvalonCon coverage, more military game coverage, more Victory Game coverage, each new game should get some attention, each issue should have something for each interest, more scenarios and variants.

—Wisconsin

More articles on AH games and future games and AH Philosophy. Series replays are great. Talk about other companies is okay and maybe other games, but concentrate on AH products. Less on AvalonCon—seems like over 50 per cent of most issues.

—Indiana

I play more of the older games that do not get much coverage in recent issues. I understand the hobby and *The GENERAL* must move forward and that I may be left behind. At that time, the magazine loses its value and I will not renew. My favorite games are *PANZER LEADER/PANZERBLITZ*, *RICHTHOFEN'S WAR* and *MIDWAY* (old version). I would like to see variants and scenarios on these games.

—Colorado

Avalon Hill needs a Web page. Delivery of *The GENERAL* needs to be closer to every two months.

—California

Our web site is http://users.aol.com/ahgames/avalon.html

I would like to see alot more sale ads on second-hand games or even old issues of *The GENERAL.*

—Ohio

I presently own ≥ 70 AH/VG games. However, lately, very little in the magazine interests me. My line is war/sf boardgames. You are devoting too little to these.

—Florida

Include more ads to reduce the cost of subscription.

—Alabama

The GENERAL keeps telling me computers are "in" and boardgames are on their way out. *[The former does not imply the latter at all.]* I would jump up and click my heels *and* dance a jig if you banned computer, sports and leisure games.

—New York

Thank you for your survey and interest in readers. First of all, I love AH games and will probably always subscribe to *The GENERAL.* Though some of the articles are of no use to me, I understand the direction both the magazine and company are taking. Having no children myself, I asked my teenage cousin his interests. He shies away from complexity, which I like, and cut his teeth on D&D, which I have outgrown. We find a middle ground in easy-to-set-up, easy-to-learn, quick-playing games like *GETTYSBURG* or independent rail games. Though computer games have all the advantages where record-keeping is a bore, I'm one who still doesn't mind setting up counters on the kitchen table and working through

the complexity with a fair-minded opponent. Anyway, the short of it is, I agree with you that the young are the future, and yes, probably computer games will appeal to them more. As for *The GENERAL*, I like variety and the best ad space for a game is an article about it. I have bought a dozen of your games that I otherwise would not have, after reading an article on its tactics or design. I really appreciated the occasional insert of a counter sheet for variants for subscribers.

—Colorado

I would like more design theory, introduction of new counters in *ASL, AIR FORCE, DAUNTLESS.* A complex game of WWII naval warfare would be great, one where you really get into the characteristics of each ship and sub and their relationships to aircraft and shore batteries.

—Alaska

The GENERAL should focus more on strategy games. I am really disappointed in all the attention to leisure games and "historical" games. As the name "the General" implies, it must be more focused on wargames. That is the reason why I subscribe to it.

—Sweden

Too much emphasis on leisure or light-weight games. I want *A3R, RISING SUN, ASL* and oldies. I prefer "shot-gun" issues.

—Connecticut

Although I don't own a computer with CD-ROM at the present, I intend to get one as soon as possible.

—Arkansas

The selection of computer games in the Avalon Hill collection is limited. All boardgames are going to computer. *UNDER FIRE* was one of the best military games I have ever played to date.

—Illinois

You might try articles that combine history and a game to better demonstrate how the games give you a feel of actually being there. It's what I do to talk my daughters into trying one of Dad's games.

—Arizona

Computer games appear to be taking over (especially with the younger generation in my observation). I was an avid boardgamer (own over 70 titles), but find computer play the best, perhaps because of difficulty finding opponents for boardgames (and more rapid setup and play). I suggest your magazine increase its computer game coverage.

—Michigan

It's been a little over a year since I allowed my subscription to expire. I felt the time had come to switch my gaming interests to computers. Now, however, I feel differently. In my opinion, no computer game can equal that bit of excitement I feel when I pop open a boxed wargame, examine the pieces and can take in the gameboard all at once and even start to plan little tactics based on this overview. Again, what computer game can compare to an historic boardgame that is set up in my den showing off in full color its artwork and practically begging you to do better than history? I'm switching back to 65%-35% boardgames over computer games. It's good to be home again.

—Missouri

I don't expect to renew, because very little is devoted to computer games.

—Indiana

When I buy a computer game, my kids will read *The GENERAL* articles covering that game. Until then, they are just not interested.

—Oklahoma

I would like an informational example of play article on new games, such as *GERONIMO* and *LONDON'S BURNING* soon after or even prior to their release.

—South Dakota

Good work by all! Keep it the same good product—don't ignore either board or computer games.

—Pennsylvania

Good magazine, but sometimes devoted too much to *ASL* and other WWII games.

      —Texas

I prefer more coverage of AvalonCon and hobby news.

      —Pennsylvania

I especially like articles which expand the scope of an existing game, especially adding additional planes or rules (for example, flak or bomber rules to *MUSTANGS*). Good luck, I'll keep reading.

      —Washington

I like the historical background on the games. I have been disappointed that you have never touched the final western German offensive in WWII called Northwind against the US 7th army.

      —Mississippi

Do not forget the company's roots.

      —Kentucky

I plan to buy some of your World at War computer games. I own a Macintosh and would like to see more available for this machine. More articles on *UP FRONT/BANZAI/DESERT WAR*, please.

      —California

I'm angry that you want to phase out boardgames in favor of computer versions. Boardgames feel more nostalgic, more personal. In our rapid, technological world, simplicity and a player's physical presence (or a quiet solitaire game) provide much more enjoyment than an impersonal screen. Please keep standard boardgames in circulation.

      —California

Produce more games like *HISTORY OF THE WORLD*—easy to play, very fun.

      —New York

Don't reduce boardgame coverage. Go monthly, if necessary. Is it possible to print tutorials on the more complex games in the hope of increasing the pool of players for those games? I can't find opponents for *3R, A3R, ASL, GULF STRIKE, PACIFIC WAR* . . . Here's an idea: a GM service to facilitate play by mail.

      —California

My time is spent playing multi-player family games like *MERCHANT OF VENUS, CIVILIZATION* and *MAHARAJA*.

      – Oregon

I don't play *ASL* or computer games. With all the space devoted to them, to AvalonCon, and to historical articles or humor, not so many pages remain for strategy articles on games I might actually play.

      —Pennsylvania

The graphics quality of *The GENERAL* has improved immensely in recent past, and that is good. However, I did not much care for the content changes. In particular, I felt there has been too much coverage of computer games, too much pointless stuff like "Rhetoric of Games" and paper planes, unfunny cartoons.

      —cyberspace

I like the computer game articles and Series Replays. I like an issue which has a little something for everyone. It's a great magazine!

      —Canada

If I don't see much more computer stuff, I'll not renew again. Run a tutorial series on basic military strategy and tactics from the Civil War forward.

      —West Virginia

AVALONCON 1996 ☆ HUNT VALLEY, MD

TEAM TOURNAMENT STANDINGS

1. Jerry's Kids: Byron Stingley TPS 6, Michael Arrighi BKN 0, Joe Bellas HCR 7, Jeffrey Otto RTG 0 = 13 [102]

2. Team Doily: D. Greenwood BKN 1, R. Pfeiffer ADV 8, B. Cleary FBS 0, S. Greenwood FI5 0 = 9 [168]

3. AHIKS Europe I: H. Gratz A3R 1, M. Cowles BKN 2, N. Frydas W&P 6, T. Oleson TPS 0 = 9 [109]

4. Will Game for Food: E. Beach SIV 7, E. Kraska SOA 0, F. Speck HCR 2, R. Rooks SJW 0 = 9 [81]

5. Token Female: M. Ehlers ROR 8, L. Ehlers ACV 0, J. Clark HWD 0, O. Loeyendecker ASL 0 = 8 [281]

6. Junta: E. Anderson ATS 0, J. Emery BKB 0, B. Young UPF 0, S. Pfeiffer BRI 8 = 8 [186]

7. Manly Men: B. Reiff FBS 7, K. Gutermuth MMS 0, J. O'Donnell SCT 0, K. Good ABN 0 = 7 [217]

8. Game Gangstas: M. Nagel UPF 0, J. Matt ATS 3, M. Stackhowski HWD, R. Schoenen MBT 4 = 7 [194]

9. Idaho Non-Militia: C. Kratz ADV 0, L. Kratz RBN 0, Lu Kratz FI5 7, J. Kratz AUC 0 = 7 [162]

10. NOVA: T. Bender SCT 7, C. Hansen CVW 0, G. Clay A3R 0, S. Munchak 830 0 = 7 [150]

11. Band of Fools: R. Freeman WAS 0, M. Gutfreund BKN 0, T. Gregorio TRC 7 , T. Greene B17 0 = 7 [133]

12. Last Good Warriors: M. Crowe GBL 0, M. Ussery VIP 1, M. Sincavage ANZ 6, M. Bacho BKN 0 = 7 [125]

13. Old Guard: R. Heller B91 0, J. Grant RFT 0, J. Beard WAT 0, R. Beyma PZL 7 = 7 [39]

14. Game Knights I: T. DeMarco ADV 2, T. Stokes CMS 3, R. Destro ABN 0, D. Wagner BRI 0 = 5 [241]

15. Koleszar Plot: S. Koleszar TTN 3, L. Koleszar MOV 0, J. Koleszar GUE 0, M. Koleszar AUC 2 = 5 [176]

16. Dudley's Do Rights: T. Proksch VIP 0, D. Tianen WTP 2, J. Zollitsch PZL 2, G. Dudley BKN 0 = 4 [174]

17. Klingon Delegation: C. Ackman TTN 1, K. Stroh HWD 2, B. Navolis MOV 0, S. Squibb GUE 0 = 3 [246]

18. Da Pretzelboys: P. Pomerantz ASL 0, J. Paull UPF 2, G. Courter HWB 1, A. Maly WRS 0 = 3 [213]

19. Corn Tippers: D. Long EIA 0, B. Eshelman BKN 3, J. Miner MUS 0, D. Brooks ACQ 0 = 3 [135]

20. Game Knights II: C. DeMarco ADV 0, W. DeMarco DLW 0, M. Destro TVW 2, K. Welsh SQL 1 = 3 [113]

21. Sakr-el-Bahr: C. Severance BKB 1, M. Arnold GER 1, S. Katz RTG 1, P. Wamsley ACQ 0 = 3 [99]

22. Ghosts: C. Hickok ACV 2, L. Lingle WAT 0, D. Culhane CVW 1, L. Hess 183 0 = 3 [91]

23. Vanguard Victors: B. Romaniecki ROR 0, M. Kaye VIP 2, M. Romaniecki HWD 0, M. Lescault CMS 0 = 2 [253]

24. Boys on the Hill: S. Tucker MMS 0, B. Knight TYX 1, M. Simonitch WTP 0, B. Levay ABN 1 = 2 [230]

25. Reservoir Dogs: J. Doughan BKN 2, J. Tracy ASL 0, P. Barcafer MAJ 0, M. Fagan A5A 0 = 2 [224]

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61 teams took part in the Team Tournament. The scores for the remaining 36 teams not shown above ranged from 2 to 0 points. Ties were broken by number of entrants which are listed in brackets. Recruiting reliable teammates who will honor their obligation to pre-register is as important as their playing skills. On-site substitutions are not allowed. Group picture Team Plaques will be presented to all the winners of the winning contingent.

1996 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

EVENT	WINNER
Across Five Aprils 40	David Metzger
Acquire 32	Al Bingaman
Adel Verpflichtet 59	Ray Pfeifer
Advanced Civilization 28	Joe Gunderson
Advanced Third Reich 31	Michael Mitchell
Age of Renaissance 30	Mike May
Air Baron 118	Jack Jaeger
ASL 110	Tom Morin
Attack Sub 40	John Emery
Auction 32	Bruce Monnin
B-17 32	Robert Hamel
Blackbeard 43	John Kilbride ★
Breakout: Normandy 54	Hank Burkhalter
Britannia 55	Scott Pfeiffer
Candidate 30	Ken Gutermuth
Circus Maximus 64	Bruce Monnin
Decathlon 39	John Weber
Dinosaurs of Lost World 22	Christina Hancock
Diplomacy 50	Will Wible
Dune 22	Bruce Bernard
1830 45	Christian Goetze
Empires In Arms 27	Jim Chatham
Enemy In Sight 36	Fred Gosnell
Facts in Five 25	Luke Kratz
Flight Commander II 19	Stan Buck
Football Strategy 30	Bruce Reiff
Greed 23	Randy Cox
Guerilla 30	Caleb Cousins
Gunslinger 22	Steve Kolinich
Hannibal 58	Thomas Drueding
History of the World 102	Keith Levy
History of the World w Bid 35	James Pei
Kingmaker 36	Justin Thompson
Kremlin 20	Sean Cousins ★
Machiavelli 33	Mark Franchiscini
Maharaja 20	David Gantt ★
March Madness 41	Jon Diminnie
Merchant of Venus 48	Tom Stokes
Mustangs 22	David Chilcote
Naval War 24	Michael Hart
Panzer Leader 20	Rob Beyma ★
Pax Britannica 22	Eric Olin
Paydirt 19	Harry Flawd
Pro Golf 43	Tom Pavy
Rail Baron 46	Heikki Thoen
Republic of Rome 41	Michael Ehlers ★
Roadkill 25	John Kilbride
Slapshot 75	Leonard Omolecki
Speed Circuit 26	Trevor Bender
Stocks & Bonds 26	Andy Lewis
Stonewall In the Valley 20	Ed Beach
Stonewall Jackson's Way 27	Paul Tsevich
The Russian Campaign 20	Tom Gregorio
Titan 66	Ben Foy
Titan 2 26	Brian Sutton
Title Bout 20	Ken Gutermuth ★
TV Wars 22	Richard Launius
Tyranno Ex 25	Tom DeMarco
Up Front 46	William Edwards III
VITP 46	Robert Kondracki
War At Sea 27	Steve Packwood
We The People 54	George Seary
Wrasslin' 22	Don Greenwood
Wrasslin' Battle Royal 20	Mike Stachowski
Best GM	Dave Terry
Sportsmanship	Jim Matt

Team Tournament: **Jerry's Kids** – Byron Stingley TPS 6, Michael Arrighi BKN 0, Joe Bellas HCR 7, Jeffrey Otto RTG 0 = 13 [102]

\# is number of entrants ★ is defending champion