Hello and welcome to the latest issue of VFTT, which includes my report from the HEROES 2020 tournament which took place back in March, where I note that I hope the new attendees will be back in the future.

That’s if there is one. The spread of the coronavirus pandemic throughout March and April has already led to the cancellation of many sports and events, including ASL tournaments, around the world, and lock-downs introduced in many countries. When things will begin to revert to normal is anyone’s guess at the moment, and as someone who works in the events industry in Edinburgh I’m not optimistic that we’ll be seeing events resume any time soon. DOUBLE 1, which was due to take place at the end of June, has already been cancelled, and we can only hope that things will be better towards the autumn so that BOUNDING FIRST FIRE is able to go ahead as planned in November.

“Til next issue, roll Low and Prosper.

Pete Phillipps

UK STOCKISTS OF ASL PRODUCTS
LEISURE GAMES, 100 Ballards Lane, Finchley, London, N3 2DN. Telephone (020) 8346 2327, e-mail them at shop@leisuregames.com or go to www.leisuregames.com.
SECOND CHANCE GAMES, 182 Borough Road, Seacombe, The Wirral, L44 6NJ. Telephone (0151) 638 3535, e-mail them at sales@secondchancegames.com, or go to www.secondchancegames.com.
PLAN 9, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen, AB25 1NE. Telephone (01224) 624 467 or e-mail them at plan9@ifb.co.uk.
BATTLEQUEST GAMES, 29 Victory Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2JF. Telephone 01403 242003 or go to www.battlequestgames.com.

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

MMP have placed the Advanced Squad Leader Starter Kit Expansion Pack #2 on pre-order. This new pack will introduce ASLSK players to the Chinese and overlays. It will include two 8” x 22” geomorphic mapboards (k and l) and eight new scenarios in locations such as China, Java, Burma, and New Guinea. Unlike other ASLSK products, it will not be self-contained and owners will need ASLSK #4 as a minimum to use it. It is currently on pre-order for $27.00 and will retail for $36.00.

Although ASLSKEP #2 is likely to hit it’s pre-order number fairly quickly, when it will be printed and shipped is currently unclear, as all non-essential businesses in Maryland (where MMP are based) are closed due to the coronavirus. What impact this will have on MMP’s plans for the rest of the year, which included reprinting For King and Country, releasing a new ASL Journal, and placing the ASL Overlay Pack on pre-order, is not clear at the moment.

Although they are unable to ship physical products, MMP have begun making a range of out of print ASL products available in PDF format via their publisher page at Wargamevault.com. So far all issues of the ASL Annual and the first 10 issues of the ASL Journal have been made available (complete with HASL maps), with more in the pipeline. You can find the full range at https://www.wargamevault.com/browse/pub/16529/Multi-Man-Publishing?fbclid=IwAR0wF7u6Z1q-vAqajihkySRxuhuQ-02kxveZE7yki6rVJMMtrQ4Bxw4dkh.

ADVANCING FIRE

ADVANCE TO PRESS

Both modules being produced by new Italian gaming company Advancing Fire are currently being printed, but work has been delayed due to the Coronavirus lockdown in Italy which has held up printing, particularly of the counters. Work is expected to be completed soon after the lockdown is lifted, although shipping is likely to be slower than normal due to the current reduction in air freight.

Biazza Ridge covers the actions of the Luftwaffe Panzerdivision Hermann Goering counter-offensive in the Gela-Scolgilli sector in Sicily over the period 10-12 July 1943, following the landings of the US 1st and 45th Divisions, while Brevity Assault depicts that battles that took place in May 1941 on the border between Libya and Egypt. Both include numerous historical maps, scenarios and Campaign Games, countersheets and rules; Brevity Assault also includes an operational level game for fighting campaign larger than those covered by other ASL Campaign Games. Biazza Ridge is currently priced at €82.00 (€85 for non-EU customers) including shipping while Brevity Assault is €91.00 ($93.00 for non-EU customers).

MARCH MADNESS FULL-ON

Although the March Madness tournament in Kansas had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the organisers have still been able to release a new scenario pack. The Full Scenario ASL Pack contains 8 new scenarios which make use of some of the lesser-used sections of the ASLRB, including chapters E, F, G and H. Among the rules in use are those for walking wounded, elevated railroads, interrogation, cavalry, and night. It can be ordered for $17.00 from their website at http://kansascityasl.com/html/info_FullRulebookASL.html or from various retailers.

The company are also working on several other projects, including Prokorovka!, which focuses on the fighting around Oktjabrski State Farm and Hill 252.2 on 11 and 12 July 1943 during the Battle of Kursk, and The Battles of Orsogna, which covers the assault by the 2nd New Zealand Division on the village of Orsogna in Italy on 15 and 16 December 1943.

BUNKER BACK

Out now is Dispatches from the Bunker 49, complete with four new scenarios. ‘Saint-Georges’ is a combined arms action set in 1940 France, while ‘Second Try At Ch’amyon-ni’ sees the Americans and Communist Chinese clash in Korea. There are also two parachute actions; ‘Daredevils Desantniks’ sees Soviet paratroopers launch a raid on a German maintenance depot in July 1941, while ‘Green Apples’ sees Nationalist Chinese paratroopers drop to interdict Japanese transport across a Chinese river in July 1945.

To accompany the parachute scenarios, Carl Norgueira continues his look at the parachute rules; the issue also includes more Todd Rezal Line Chatter and the usual look the regional ASL scene and coverage of the local tournaments.

The milestone issue 50 is expected to be available in September 2020 and will probably have a Red October scenario, plus scenarios set in Russia 1941, the West Front in 1944 and one PTO action.

The release of issue 50 will also see a modest price, but until then a four issue subscription is $15.00, while a ‘Digital The WORKS’ order containing PDFs of all prior issues plus a subscription is $60.00. Individual PDF back issues are available for $3.00 each, except for issue 44 which is $6.00 due to the included HASL game, and issues 2-8, 10, 13, 16-19 and 28 which have had their material which was reprinted by MMP replaced and are only $2.00 each. Issue 1 is available for free upon request, by emailing them at aslbunker@aol.com. You can pay by PayPal to PinkFloydFan1954@aol.com.
HEROES 2020 saw Scotland, in the form of Martin Vicca, manage to win to a trophy after years of sporting failure. The feat was accomplished against a larger field than normal for HEROES, though maybe made easier by the fact that no-one could announce the scenario choices in advance, round to be played on Friday morning. As MMP had announced the release of Croix de Guerre 2 at the end of 2019, I had decided that the French would be the focus of the tournament, and all the scenario choices featured either the French or the Vichy French, with six of the eight scenarios from the original Croix de Guerre being among the selections.

As is often the case with a five round tournament that does not have 32 players taking part, it is possible to have a winner at the end of the fourth round as there will be only one undefeated player left at that point. And that was what happened at HEROES 2020, with Martin Vicca, Craig Benn and Ian Morris emerging from the Saturday morning round as the only remaining undefeated players. At this point, the highest Crusader Ladder rated player from the Win-Loss category below (IE a player with a 2:1 W/L ratio) is promoted so there are an even number of players. Pairings are drawn randomly by neutral players, in the manner of the FA Cup, with one person drawing the home player and another the away player :-) The draw left Martin playing Craig, and Ian playing Simon Stanisforth (the promoted player, who had suffered a shock defeat to Neil Brunger in the opening round).

At this point the performance of the promoted player is key. If he wins, then the other game will see someone emerge victorious and be the only remaining undefeated player. If the promoted player loses, then his opponent is still undefeated and needs to play the victor of the other game in the Sunday morning round to determine the tournament champion.

Craig and Martin were done by about 6pm, and the game involving Nick Ranson and Stuart Brant to determine who won the booby prize was done by about 8pm (congrats to Nick on losing, but winning the traditional Monopoly special edition donated by Mike Davies, this year’s edition being ‘Game of Thrones’). At this point all eyes were on Ian and Simon (actually most of them were on the bar!) to see if Martin’s win over Craig in ‘77 Le Herisson’ meant he had won the tournament or would be playing against Ian on Sunday morning to determine who would be top dog.

Thankfully they didn’t keep us waiting all night, as the game of ‘75 Strangers in a Strange Land’ was over by about 10pm, with Simon winning. After that, prizes were handed out, and many beers were consumed for the rest of the evening.

With the tournament winner having been determined on Saturday night, there was no need to play the Sunday morning round, and many people headed home after breakfast rather than play a game and travel back in the afternoon. A few people stayed on and played, either because their travel plans were at fixed times or they were travelling home on Monday. Mark Blackmore probably regretted his decision to play a quick game against Paul Legg, as his rare defeat stopped him from deposing Toby Pilling from the top spot on the Crusaders Ladder!

As usual, everyone had a blast over the weekend, even with the threat of a coronavirus outbreak looming on the horizon (something we seemed to be more aware of than the government), and it was
good to see some new faces in attendance - they seemed to enjoy themselves, so hopefully they’ll be back in future.

HEROES 2021 is scheduled to take place at the Headlands over the weekend of Thursday 4th to Sunday 7th March 2021.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

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The CRUS column is the average Crusader Ladder rating of the opponents beaten.

PLAYER RESULTS

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TOTALS

76 44 32

Martin Vicca makes use of dazzle camouflage to blind Craig Benn on his wait to victory!
The development of a highly contagious global pandemic threw an unexpected monkey wrench into the spanners of the ASL world this spring, causing a number of ASL tournaments and informal get-togethers to be cancelled around the world. While some have resorted to VASL to get their ASL fix in, other players have now found themselves spending more time playing other games with suddenly homebound children. Or other activities altogether, such as finding toilet paper.

While we all ought to be grateful that the pandemic does not have a fatality rate like SARS or, even worse, Ebola, it’s bad enough. As I write, the number of dead in the U.S. in just a few months is 39,115, while the European death toll has surpassed 100,000 (and the true numbers are likely higher still for both). Even for those who survived the coronavirus, all too many people have had to be on respirators, have had trips to the hospital, or have suffered for up to weeks at home. I have one friend who had a “moderate” case of Covid-19 who was in the hospital twice, was extremely sick for weeks, and still has not fully recovered. It’s nasty.

For health and work reasons, I was unable to attend the Winter Offensive ASL tournament in Bowie, Maryland, in January 2020. It was my first no-show in the nearly 20 years I had been going. Naturally, this has made me look forward to the other big tournament I regularly attend, ASLOK, held each year in Cleveland, Ohio, in early October. That’s nearly half a year away, but it’s an open question as to whether or not ASLOK will be held – or whether it should be held, or whether people should attend. And it’s not just ASLOK. From ASL tournament directors to ASL players organizing “play days” with their local friends, the question of the coronavirus should loom heavily over decisions that people make for themselves or others in the coming months.

As the Covid-19 “curve” flattens around the world, and infection and death rates go down, different countries will slowly begin re-opening themselves, gradually emerging from the restrictions imposed to protect people from the pandemic. In the United States, it will be on a state by state basis. In an ideal world, lockdowns would last as long as possible, but we don’t live in an ideal world, and lockdowns put considerable strains on economics and societies. Though there will be variations, and different strategies, generally speaking re-openings will be slow ones. Few societies are going to say, “Well, it’s over, whew, back to normal.”

Societies with widespread testing will be the easiest to reopen. The United States, sadly, is nowhere even close to widespread testing. In Ohio, for example, where I live, less than 1% of the state’s population has currently been tested for the virus. This means that, for practical purposes, we have no idea who in Ohio may or may not have the virus. Thus planners have to assume that anyone may have it. Which means that social distancing guidelines such as staying six feet apart are likely to remain in the workplace, as well as other places such as restaurants. In some areas, temperature checks may be required for people to return to work or engage in certain other activities. Widespread testing would make all of this easier, as would widespread antibody testing, once that is developed, but most places in the U.S., and many other places where ASL is played, are simply not there yet.

And we should remind ourselves that ASL is a game in which people sit facing each other for hours just two to three feet apart, all the time touching the same objects (and Covid-19 can remain active on cardboard for 24 hours). ASL is an activity almost designed to transmit the virus. I, like many ASL tournament goers, have caught colds, sinus infections and other bugs from time to time thanks to playing ASL. I, like many people, have groaned when a sniffing, coughing person has sat down across me at the gaming table to play the next scenario in the mini. “Why would you come to an ASL tournament when you are sick,” I can’t help but silently bemoan, but at the same time I realize that many people plan for months and may travel hundreds or even thousands of mile to go to a tournament like ASLOK, and the thought of giving all that up (including the money spent on air fare, hotel, etc.) because of a last minute cold must be agonizing to people. So some show up. Only now, it might not be just a cold, it might be Covid-19.

We also ought to keep in mind the population that plays ASL. The average age of an ASL player is probably mid-to-late middle age, which means that a substantial number of ASL players fall into the Covid-19 vulnerable category just on the basis of age – leaving aside other conditions, such as diabetes, heart problems, lung problems, etc. The ASL community is, collectively, not exactly the sort of community likely to come through coronavirus infections unscathed. And, of course, every ASLer has other people – family, friends, co-workers – whom they might transmit the disease to, if infected.

So the question for people organizing ASL events is when or even whether to start having them again. In some places, continued social gathering restrictions may not make it possible for some time to come. But given that some states in the U.S. really don’t seem to care if their citizens get the virus, there will no doubt be some states that more or less throw the gates open. But just because someone legally could hold an ASL event, does that mean one should?

Obviously, when and if a vaccine is developed, and people are able to be given it, all such decisions become easier. But experts tell us that’s likely a year away at best. There are currently some promising antiviral treatments in testing that may make it much easier to heal and treat people who become infected. If any of those turn out to truly work, and are able to be cheap and widespread, that may make decisions easier, too. And if antibody testing becomes widespread as well, that would be great, because if people showed up at an ASL event with proof they have antibodies, they are not likely to be infected by anybody, nor to be infected themselves.

In the absence of one or more of these things, the only other option might be to wait until so many people in the population have had the disease that a true herd immunity effect becomes demonstrable, rendering it much less likely that the remaining population are likely to have the
Not Moving or Firing

Getting a few percent more from your cardboard warriors...

Craig Benn

29th Marines. Motobu peninsula, Okinawa.
April 1945. Saturday. About tea time.

Sergeant Pyle looked at his rain soaked, tired and dirty marines and decided to cut them some slack. ‘Ok boys, take five, smoke em if you got em.’

The squad gratefully collapsed into a semicircle and started to light up. There was a buzz of conversation and he could see odd flashes of white in smiles from dirty faces. But then Corporal Hernandez voice sounded with real dread...shit, it’s gunny!

‘YOU MAGGOTS. You are the lowest form of life on earth. Nothing but unorganised grab-ass-tic pieces of amphibian shit. You’re not even disrupted conscripts with ammo shortage...’

He paused before a lanky corporal.

‘You - how tall are you son?’

‘Ehr I'm a half inch counter gunny.’

‘I didn’t know they stacked shit that high. You - where you from?’

‘Ehr...Gung Ho 1st edition...’

‘There's only two things come from Gung Ho 1st edition. That's second line doggies and goddamn chinamen! I don’t see no blue with brown borders so I guess that makes you from the frakkin ARMY. No Marine would goof off like that you second line early war feck up!’

The squad was ashen faced as he continued his tirade.

‘Didn't your parents show you enough love as a child? Repeat after me - This is my rulebook. There are many others like it, but this is mine. It is my best friend. It is my life. I must master Chapter G as I must master my life. I must roll lower than my enemy who is trying to kill me...’

Sometimes battle hangs on the thinnest of margins. I’ve won a scenario by clearing a roadblock in the final player turn. I’ve also lost when I needed to capture Japanese troops for double CvP and they committed seppuku. Gotta love this game. Most of the time it is better to move or fire but if it isn’t don’t just leave them there relaxing - Gunny will shout. So in the...

Rally Phase
Scrounge a wreck (D10.5) SMC recovery from a broken unit (A4.44) Transfer prisoners (A20.5)

Prep Phase
Entrench (B27.11) Kindle (B25.11) Change CA without firing (C3.22) Deliberately Malfunction a SW/Gun (A9.73) Mop Up (A12.153) Massacre prisoners (A20.4)

Movement Phase
Clear Fire, Wire, Set DC, roadblocks and Rubble (B24.7) also make paths in Jungle/Bamboo (G2.7) Abandon a vehicle and wreck it (D5.411)

Defensive Fire Phase
All the clearance and path making listed above, plus the SW/Gun malfunctioning and Massacring prisoners (A20.4)

Advancing Fire Phase
Change CA if haven’t fired (C3.22) Don’t forget you can massacre prisoners in this phase too (A20.4)

Rout Phase
SMC can immediately recover abandoned SW (A4.4)

Advance Phase
Transfer SW and prisoners at start (A4.431 and 20.5) Drop SW (A4.43) Change CE/BU status (D5.33)

Close Combat
Withdraw from Melee (A11.2) Not attack, retain concealment and not kept in melee (A11.15) Hara-Kiri (G1.641)

Ω
RALLY PHASE
- Wind Change – also is RE DR (2.2)
- Reinforcement S? that are entering the EBE are setup off board on the hex-row/hex-coordinate that they will enter
- Crew will attempt to recover unpossessed Guns (7.3) overstocking applies (6.223)
- SW/Gun recovery attempt by MMC – Gun only if working and has a target (7.3)
- Leader with no other activity recombines HS (7.5)
- Self-rally of 2 MMC (without boxed morale) with best chance of rallying. If ≥ 3 see priority list (7.1)
- Repair attempt on malfunctioned weapon (7.4)
- May retain DM if rally bonus terrain can be reached next RtPh - (best judgement) (7.2 & A10.62)

PREP FIRE PHASE
- Action check for each activated unit: in order from north to south
  * MOVE (automatic – place MOVE counter)
    - FT unit without target within long range (6.306)
    - Motion vehicle – if panic: stop action only (6.309)
    - Vehicle in Melee (6.308)
    - Crew without HW, if unpossessed gun ≤ 6 hexes (6.310)
    - Vehicle crew will if Abandoned vehicle ≤ 6 hexes (6.310)
    - Unarmed MMC (6.301)
    - Flame Location – Move command A4 (6.304)
    - Human Wave (4.321, 4.323-33)
  - FIRE (automatic – Prep Fire)
    - if FRIENDLY ADJACENT or in same Location (not in Melee) - use spraying fire if possible (6.311)
    - MMC in IP with target: If no target: HOLD = no action, ADVANCE = roll for activity (6.312)
    - HW (assembled) with target (6.313)
    - An acquired target (armed vehicle target takes precedence over acquired target) (6.314)
  - * LEADERS (automatic – check in order)
    1. MOVE – if not in a Location with broken (ignoring any self-rally capable) units & broken units ≤ 5 hexes. N/A if broken units could rout to his hex in next RtPh or other leader there on his way (6.317)
    2. NO ACTION - if broken units are adjacent – can still direct fire (6.3171)
    3. NO ACTION - If units in hex have a fire action, leader stays to direct fire (6.3174, 8.3)
    4. MOVE – leader with a negative modifier will move to closest Location where he can direct fire (6.3174)
    5. If ADVANCE ATTITUDE remains with stack (if stack splits remains with best class with HW or with a SW)
    6. NO ACTION - If none of the above (6.3175) otherwise Move Command 6 from Table A4b
  - * OTHER
    - Crew with malfunctioned gun takes no action (6.13)
    - If has target, unassembled HW will assemble
    - HERO with MMC, who can use his FP/HERO DRM, will do same as MMC (8.4)
- * HOLD ATTITUDE – if infantry given FIRE command and no target – then entrench (can if LOS to target is across wall/hedge/bocage hexside (6.241) – if can’t, NO ACTION
- MMC Recover same Location unpossessed weapon or attempt re-enter abandoned vehicle

DURING PPf:
- * FIRE target adjacent/same hex FRIENDLY unit – or roll on Attack Table A3a-d (8.11)
  - Unassembled HW, If it has a target is assembled (6.313)
  - FG - same Location only - one roll on A3a (8.51)
  - Mortar ≤60mm rolls on table A3a (8.2)
  - If SW fire independently then fire before inherent (to avoid cowering penalty) (6.22)
  - ROF maintained attack until target not in Good order – if still has ROF roll for new target (8.13)
  - Coaxial MG will fire with gun unless has an IFT DRM of ≤2 or less (6.314)
- TO HIT weapons: use priorities below in order otherwise roll on Attack Table A3a-c (8.2)
  - A vehicle mounted gun will fire at an acquired target unless a same Location target available (6.3141)
  - Armored vehicle takes priority over acquired non-vehicle/non-armed vehicle (6.3142)
  - Infantry target in order: Gun with highest TK, in-range LATW, acquired infantry, VPO location, A3d (6.3142)
  - PF attempt if AFV if to hit is ≤4 (8.23)
- * To Hit considerations: ADJACENT target - will intensive fire at unbroken MMC or non-shocked vehicle with a weapon in CA that could eliminate them. If 2+ targets see priority (8.21)
  - Deliberate immobilisation attempt if final TK ≤4 (8.24)
  - Special ammo – at players discretion (8.25)

PANIC (6.21)
- Until end of turn or berserk/broken/battle hardened
- Equivalent to TI (A4.8)
- Not Good Order
- Retains concealment
- Motion vehicle in MPH stops (uses 1MP)
- Must use FPF/Intensive/Sustained fire against adjacent FRIENDLY (6.212)
- No panic dr needed for FPF
- +2 DRM to ambush (6.213)
- +1 in CC, -1 against in CC (6.213)
MOBEMENT PHASE

- Enter all ENEMY RE units along EBE (2.6)
  - Vehicles enter on road with shortest contagious path to FBE. If no path, then on road that extends furthest, then following shortest non-bog/obstacle route to FBE (9.32)
- Vehicles have ADVANCE ATTITUDE until it (or its platoon) has a target – next MP adopts prevailing attitude (9.321)
- Berserk units (6.301, A15.43) move first followed by Human Wave (4.3), unless panicked
- S? in ADVANCE ATTITUDE: 6MP towards FBE, may use +1 road. No: Assault move, CX, Bypass (3.321)
- Vehicles of same type use platoon movement until a target seen – it must stop using ESB if necessary. Other vehicles attempt to move to see a target and then stop - will not enter another vehicle hex & only enter bog hex if only move possible. When stopped, any delay MP spent on bounding fire (9.33, 9.331)
- Remaining ENEMY unit/stack/hero/vehicle/platoon move in order from north to south (multiple units in hexes
- MOVE units roll on movement table (A4a-c) randomly determine move order (6.12 9.2)
- ADVANCE ATTITUDE
  - Activated infantry use same command from A4b (9.2)
  - If activated, S? stops (vehicles remain in motion)
  - Vehicles have individual commands (shared if using platoon movement)
- HOLD ATTITUDE
  - Units in odd/even hexes have different command from A4a (9.2)
  - Vehicles have individual commands (shared if using platoon movement)
- VPO
  - Move to VPO - if no VPO on map or all in ENEMY control, then move towards closest FRIENDLY unit in MF/MP with priority of: in LOS, not stacked with other unit, in Good Order (9.25)
  - In VPO and ordered to VPO, ignore current VPO and move in priority to VPO that is: FRIENDLY controlled, fewest FRIENDLY units in (US#), LOS, highest TEM (9.251)
- LEADERS
  - Within 5 hexes of a broken unit, move safest route towards. CX if could reach this turn - inc. APh move (6.3171 if multiple options 6.3172)
  - With a negative modifier, if no broken units in range and has not directed fire - move to closest Location where he can direct fire (6.3174)
- VEHICLES
  - BU after LOS to FRIENDLY unit within 12 hexes or within normal range of MMG/HMG (9.31)
    - Player may otherwise choose BU/CE status (9.31)
  - Radioless AFV not in platoon formation requires a TC to move (9.332)
  - Bypass used to avoid bog or prohibited Location (9.37)
  - Road intersection take road with most direct path to FBE (9.35)
  - Bog hex entered only if no other route – excluding the hex last exited (9.36 - if secret DR required 9.361)
  - Bounding First Fire at vehicular target – choose easiest to kill (9.341)
  - End of movement turn MA CA cover, in priority:
    - Closest vehicle that could destroy it, Closest known FRIENDLY target, Closest concealed FRIENDLY target (9.34)
  - End of movement turn MG CA cover, in priority:
    - Closest target with AT weapon, Closest Location with most infantry/PRC targets, Unarmoured vehicle Target in VPO Location, Target with least TEM (9.34)
- MOVE considerations (if unit could exit see 9.4)
  - No move into (move around it – taking route with most cover/least Bog Locations) (9.26):
    - FFE, known minefield, 2+ Enemy units, 4+ residual (unless adjacent to friendly controlled VPO), water
    - HW will not move into a Location it may not fire from (6.3131) obstacle or offboard (9.26)
    - Overstacked hex, unless no other route (6.223)
  - When moving, choose safest route (6.317, 9.2)
  - Enemy unit moving 1 hex uses Assault Movement (n/a if min move)
  - Crew without HW move towards unpossessed gun ≤ 6 hexes (6.310) Recover if possible (6.315)
  - Vehicle crew move towards Abandoned vehicle gun ≤ 6 hexes (6.310) Enter if possible (6.315, D5.42)
  - FT unit with target in long range – assault move to best cover if LOS of armed FRIENDLY (6.306)
  - MMC with SMOKE exponent, use smoke if entering OG with a FFMO modifier (6.316)
  - IN Depression, with assault move or gain better TEM order, gain crest status if target is seen from there (9.28)
  - Hero on his own should try to move to stack with an MMC (8.4)
  - Overstacked Location – use Random dr to determine which units leave hex (6.307)
  - Panicked motion vehicle – stops and take no other action (6.309)
  - IP in same location but not receiving IP TEM - if Target could be seen from IP – assault/advance into (6.3121)
  - Stairwell – taken if only possible move (9.27)
  - Infantry unable to move marked as Opportunity Fire (9.2)
- S? activated by FRIENDLY movement – check after all already activated units have fired at triggering unit and then only if unit is still Good Order – then roll for AC for most likely to activate (5.2, 8.61):
  - First Fire – no panic check (if cant/i/doesn’t need to fire place under a “?”) (5.3)
  - ROF/SFF if 2+ MF/MP used & target still Good Order (5.3, 8.61)
  - If more S? to activate & target still in Good Order then roll to activate another S? (5.31)

- Long range activation of S? – all must be met (5.32):
  - Moving unit is not a vehicle, if S? fired at it IFT DRM ≤ -2, within ≤ 16 hexes
  - If above met DR 2 activates S?. S? is not removed if not activated.

- S? activated as vehicle ends movement but remains in Motion (3.321)
  - Units with a target must roll for Panic first (6.12, 6.13)
  - Used minimum MP to enter current hex for FRIENDLY defensive fire purposes (3.321)
  - Activated stack/AFV/Gun with a target must roll for Panic first (6.12, 6.13)
- First Fire vs non-vehicular targets
  - Fire if target would have caused a S? check (8.61)
  - HW First and Subsequent First Fire if within a weapon’s long range and IFT ≤ 0 (8.611)
  - FG – same Location only (8.53)
  - If SW firing separately, then fire before inherent (to avoid cowering penalties)
  - ROF continues attack until target not in Good Order (8.13)
  - If target expended ≥ 2 MF/MP then SFF may occur (8.61)

- First Fire against vehicles
  - Player’s discretion – best shot (range/facing) and/or before leaving weapons LOS (8.612)
  - HW First and Subsequent First Fire if within weapons long range and TH ≤ 0 (8.611)
  - CC Reaction Fire or Street Fighting – when possible (8.612)

- Final Protective Fire - TC (n/a if panicked), modify using target’s TEM and any FFMO/FFNAM (8.613)
- Final Fire – Activated unit will Final fire – Automatic action or roll on Attack Table A3 (8.62)
- TO HIT weapons
  - Intensive fire at adjacent target:
    - if unbroken MMC or non-shocked vehicle with a weapon in CA which could eliminate them - if 2+ targets see (priority 8.21)
  - Acquired target tracked: if ≥ 2 track largest US# (2+ first seen Random dr to determine target (6.3143)
  - Deliberate immobilisation attempt if final TK ≤4
  - Coaxial MG fire with gun unless has an IFT DRM of 2 or less.
  - Special ammo – at players discretion
  - PF attempt if AFV to hit is ≤4

**DEFENSIVE FIRE PHASE**
- Units with a target roll on A3, unless automatic action (see list under Prep Fire)

**ADVANCING FIRE PHASE**
- S? activated by FRIENDLY DF receive auto Fire command unless panic is rolled (5.5)
- Multi-Location FG used to maximise – one roll on A3 (do not roll for panic) (8.53)
- VEHICLES - Bounding First Fire if target (not if B# ≤10) (9.342)

**ROUT PHASE**
- DM unit will always rout if:
  - could end its rout in/ADJACENT to Good Order leader (10.3)
  - could end in rally bonus terrain further away or out of LOS of FRIENDLY units without using Low Crawl or interdiction (10.3)
- Voluntary break at players discretion (10.5)
- LEADER
  - always routs with routing unit – unless could be interdicted and Good Order MMC is in original hex
- Rout route priority, in order – Low Crawl if would be interdicted (10.1, 10.2):
  - Location with Good Order leader
  - Out of LOS of all FRIENDLY units
  - Out of range of FRIENDLY units
  - Into rally bonus terrain
  - Location with highest TEM
  - Into VPO Location
ADVANCE PHASE
- S? activation check after advancing (5.2)
- Activated unit in a depression advance to crest status if would have a target (11.3)
- Crew without HW advance towards unpossessed gun if ≤ 6 hexes
- S? in ADVANCE ATTITUDE make rosette dr - if can’t advance reroll (depression may claim crest) (3.322)
- S? in HOLD – do not advance (3.31, 11.11)
- HOLD – activated non-crew infantry
  - Advance into CC if TC passed (see DRMs S11.4) or PAATC if AFV – (11.1, priority list 11.4)
    otherwise
  - Has a target only advance if Not leaving VPO location, TEM > than current TEM, Could still see target after advance, would not drop HW (11.1):
  - Has no target, only advance if adjacent hex has TEM ≥ TEM and a target could be seen (11.1)
  - Otherwise no advance (11.1)
- ADVANCE ATTITUDE –
  - No advance if: HW assembled/functioning with target, or in VPO (11.2)
  - Activated non-crew infantry advance into CC if TC passed (see DRMs 11.4) or PAATC if AFV (priority 11.4)
    otherwise
  - Closer to nearest FRIENDLY controlled VPO. (11.2 Priority list):
    o FRIENDLY occupied VPO
    o Highest inherent TEM
    o Highest hexside TEM
    o Towards most targets
    o Towards most unpossessed weapons
  - If no VPO on map, dr on Advance rosette – reroll if move direction impossible (11.2)
- LEADER
  - Into CC if TC passed and with at least 1 MMC (11.41)
  - Into MELEE if TC passed and would improve odds (11.41)
  - Towards broken units within 5 hexes (6.3171)
  - In hex with broken units – advance into accessible adjacent hex if has more broken units (in US#) (6.3173)
- No advance into:
  - FFE, known minefield, 2+ Enemy units, 4+ residual (unless adjacent to friendly controlled VPO), water
    HW will not advance into a Location it may not fire from (3.323) obstacle or offboard (9.26)
  - Overstacked hex, unless no other route (6.223)
- Overstacked Location – use Random dr to determine which units leave hex (6.307)

CLOSE COMBAT PHASE
- Use Hand-to-Hand CC if eligible: if successful Ambush: if CC odds ≥ 1-2 (11.52)
- vs. Infantry
  - If ≥ 2 FRIENDLY MMC use A3e to determine targets (11.5)
  - Lone SMC attacks smallest target – US# (11.5)
- vs. Vehicle and Infantry (11.5):
  1. Personnel with smallest FP
  2. Personnel with highest morale
  3. AFV with functioning armament
  4. Vehicle with functioning armament
- FRIENDLY original CC DR 12 – non-Japanese will withdraw if (11.5, 11.53):
  - Unbroken US# of ENEMY < Unbroken US# of FRIENDLY
- Withdrawal hex priority:
  1. highest TEM;
  2. with ENEMY units;
  3. LOS to FRIENDLY target;
  4. nearest to FBE.
- Broken guards – ENEMY units always try to escape (11.6, A20.55)

TARGET
- In-LOS non-HIP FRIENDLY unit or Gun within long range of ENEMY unit

HW
- SW ≤ 3 PP (assembled)
- Gun

Sniper (8.8)
- Priority: VOP, best leader, CE AFV, highest stack, most HW, most leaders, most SW.
- Always make sniper check (A14.4)
Sadly, owing to the Covid-19 crisis, Writtle University College will not be able to host DOUBLE ONE this year.

In lieu of DOUBLE ONE taking place at the college, we will be running a truncated version of the tournament on VASL instead, running from the 26th to the 28th of June, which is open to anyone who can play during UK Summertime hours. We will run the standard four player group tournament as follows:

Friday 26th:  Game 1 (Usual choice of 3 scenarios - including shorter ones to allow evening play after work)
Saturday 27th: Blind Scenario
Sunday 28th:  Game 3 (Usual choice of 3 scenarios)

If you are interested in joining in, then let us know by emailing lasl.double.one@gmail.com or by registering over at View From The Trenches (http://vftt.co.uk/uktournaments.asp?type=DOUBLE%202020) BY THE END OF MAY. Scenarios and VASL setups will be issued for the scenarios to all those registered in Early June, as will the group listings.

We will be issuing a refund to all those who have paid their attendance fee, and if you have already booked your accommodation at Writtle, please write to Jo Hasnip (jo.hasnip@writtle.ac.uk) who will arrange your refund for you.

Sorry again, but never fear - we'll be back next year!

You can keep up to date with developments by visiting the tournament’s website at https://londonasl.siterubix.com/
ASL Infantry Tactics I:
The American Infantry Assault

Joey Sabin

This was originally posted to Boardgamegeek [link] and is reprinted here with permission of the author Pete

The first thing to realize in gaining knowledge, is the fact that we are in need of it. Players can and often do simply push counters in the direction of their opponents and think that by utilizing the best terrain features, they are employing their forces with maximum effectiveness but nothing could be further from the truth. The fact of the matter is that there are huge amounts of data accumulated on this very subject by those who actually had to engage in, and succeed in combat utilizing their infantry forces and equipment. As a result, we now have a treasure trove of data to utilize in our desire to be as effective as we can be in our lobby. As we endeavor to be as effective as we can be in ASL, why reinvent the wheel? Why not simply tap into the wealth of knowledge, is the fact that we are in need of it?

After completing a career and finally retiring, I sought out games I used to enjoy playing in my youth. Among them was ASL, and I began reacquainting what is now a new and revised set of game modules. Among my purchases was the latest YANKS module version 3a, and its Scenario 12, “Confusion Reigns,” in this game module we’ll use as our prop as we explore American infantry assault tactics together. I chose this scenario because it utilizes the ideal formations for both sides, relatively equal in size and strength, give-or-take.

Generally speaking (there are always exceptions) but in the 1940’s, the number 3 was the magic number in a military formation’s composition. That is, there were 3 fire teams to a squad, 3 squads to a platoon, 3 platoons to a company, and the list goes all the way out until it reaches 3 army groups to a theatre of war. Armed with this knowledge we can clearly see that in our scenario, both sides will receive a reinforced company or Company (+) in infantry forces. Looking into the available forces a little deeper, we can identify heavy weapons made available as well. This then better refines our knowledge of available forces indicating we each get an infantry company with a heavy weapons platoon assigned or attached from battalion, as the terminology of the day would dictate. This generous allotment of weaponry means that all eyes are upon us as we carry out the battalion’s main effort we be attacking or defending.

Looking strictly from the American G.I.’s perspective (German Tactics require a whole different posting), this allotment of supporting arms generally denotes a local commander’s tactical level of offensive planning. Anything larger like OBA for example, and we might be just a small part of a much larger regimental effort. Regardless, we must now deploy our American forces but the question begs to be asked, how? And to answer that question we must first understand that we DO NOT deploy our forces solely based on our opponent’s deployment, but rather based on our initial objective, and upon the general standards of American infantry deployment. That is, we first need to select our initial objective based upon the scenario’s victory conditions.

In this case our victory conditions are based upon the elimination of our opponents’ units based on 12 or better CVP plus double the CVP of our opponent. This is essentially orders to eliminate the enemy. Based on those orders, we will be relying on maximizing our firepower and eliminating the enemy in vulnerable positions as much as possible. Looking at our time allotted I’d say we have plenty of time to accomplish the task but there can be few delays due to poor SW results.

The extra time will allow us to properly manoeuvre in order to maximize our firepower while keeping our own losses at a minimum.

First, let up examine out opponents supporting arms, not for our setup but so we have an idea just how committed he or she is likely to be. In this case I’m pleased to report that our enemy is not totally committed to hanging on to their real estate based on a lack of supporting arms and SSRs, but is committed to taking American counters if carelessly given.

Next, we need to decide on an initial objective based upon the terrain laid out before us, and this looks like the best objective to begin our assault. It provides the most cover getting there and provides cover itself once taken. It also cuts half the map from our opponents use as now open observed terrain. With our initial objective selected, it’s now time to deploy our forces. Like you see here.

The American standard deployment is a tried, true and well tested deployment method that has served American commanders well. Whether it be 3 squads or 3 platoons the deployment is always the same. That is one Manoeuvre Element, one Support Element, and one Reserve Element. Of the three, the Support and Reserve elements are kept the busiest, while the Manoeuvre Element concentrates on infiltration and reaching its objective. You may have noticed there is no actual attack element, this is because initially at least, closing in on a barraged and fired upon enemy will yield the safest and most productive results.

The manoeuvre element moves to within one hex of its target, and if available uses its BARs (Assault Fire) capabilities.
to dislodge any remaining threats from its objective hexes. The Support Element provides local small arms fire and as a result is generally found somewhere near the manoeuvre element. The Support Element is also a source of replacement units for the manoeuvre element as it takes casualties and or broken units fade back and fresh units are sent forward as replacements. The Reserve Element is generally found behind the other two elements in the rear. These are your firemen. These are your security element ready to move so as to protect both flanks as well as provide protection for the heavy weapons platoon. The Reserve element also provides litter bearers, ammo deliveries, shuttles POWs to the rear, and anything else to and from the rear area as needed. In this particular I have taken the liberty to adjust my reserve elements location to coincide with the westerly leaning deployment of the opposing forces. I am fully aware that should activity occur on the right or eastern flank, the reserve force will be responsible for moving east in a hurry to deal with any threat there. The Reserve element rely’s heavily on military intel to stay on top of the enemy’s activities (ie, keeps an eye on all enemy movements and potential treats on the flanks.

Finally, there is the Support Element. This element is initially positioned in such a way so as to eliminate, rout or at the very least, pin the enemy in the objective location. If your opponent has supporting arms in close proximity to the objective, the heaviest of heavy weapons puts it out of commission as well, otherwise unless there is an overwhelming threat (like an 88 or something), distant opposing elements are virtually ignored by a weapons platoon. The mission of a Heavy Weapons platoon is a higher concentration of firepower in support of the objective saving lives as well as accomplishing the mission.

As you can see, this initial layout of forces allows you to accomplish your missions one right after another in succession. When you accomplish the seizure of your first objective, and have selected your second objective, the Support element now becomes the manoeuvre element, the Reserve element now becomes the Support element, and the Manoeuvre element becomes the Reserve element. This is of course dependent as to what condition each element is in at the time. This allows for the most effective recovery and replacement available, and in the hands of a skilled player this rotation can plow through the enemy like crap through a Goose.
I have a confession to make. A dirty little secret that a majority of ASL players will exorcise for me. I like the Off Board Artillery rules. Please wipe the spit from your computer screen and the foam from your mouth, and I will explain why: in short, OBA is a powerful tool in your arsenal, but wielding that weapon is a dicey proposition, and the increased ‘Fog of War’ is, in my opinion, a good thing in our game.

It has been discussed many times in the past regarding Advanced Squad Leader being a company/battalion level simulation/game and the degree of control the players have on the units they command. I think our game is a good representation of tactical level combat (by no means perfect, but fun and playable in a complex fashion), however, the amount of omniscience of the players can somewhat mar the ability of the game to really convey the chaos of battle. In any typical scenario, we know the terrain, the opposition’s force composition, even when and where their reinforcements will arrive, as well as being able to guide our own forces across the battlefield with effortless command and control. To counter this, I believe the game designers incorporated lots of randomisation factors based around the bell-curve of two 6-side dice results. I also think that there are far more negative factors built into the randomisation processes than positive outcomes, and that this was deliberately done so as to stymie the ability of the player’s units to do exactly their bidding (let’s face it, it would be a fairly boring game if all we did was move our pieces about the boards and straight-up shoot). For example, not only are there more numerous ‘bad’ results on the Boxcars table than ‘good’ outcomes on the Snake-eyes table, but there are inherent troubles for your cardboard warriors in ‘normal’ rolls: rolling doubles cowards most leaderless squads; you can pass a Morale Check, yet still not move forward (Pin results); the Sniper, etc. To this end, I believe the ASL OBA rules have been purposely abstracted to represent the chance of overwhelming firepower descending on your particular sector of the battlefield.

In the original Squad Leader game, OBA was introduced in the fourth scenario (along with “Rural Terrain Types”) as a new type of firepower and, in the section introduction, as a balancing factor in scenarios: “Should either player feel the provided scenarios are inhabitable [sic] he is free to choose the type and number of artillery Fire Missions to add to the weaker side”. Apart from the ASL rules being a lot more complex (and more variety in OBA fire mission usage, e.g. [1-3 engagements, harassing fire, etc], the crux of the SL rules have remained into the present (hence the “ugly stepchild” of the title), in regards to radio contact, battery access, AR and SR placement, and so on. However, the ASL rules made the use of OBA a little bit harder (both in rules complexity and in predictability) and it is the, frustrating to some, fickle nature of OBA that I think adds more realism to ASL, even though it is one of the least realistic aspects of the game.

I believe the designers of ASL made it harder to obtain the desired result for the players by decreasing the control they have over the OBA process: for example, slightly above average radio contact numbers means that, even with -1 maintenance DRM, radio communication can frequently drop out [a 1-in-6 chance for an 8 contact radio maintenance roll], leading to inability to adjust SR/FFE when desired; the dreaded black/red chit ratio means that (unlike the SL designated number of Fire Missions between 1 and 4), ASL OBA can be removed without a stoning being fired; having to draw 2 black chits for concealed/unknown targets; having a different FFE resolution DR in each of the 7 hexes of the OBA Blast Area.

Now, the mere mention of all this is leading to gnashing of teeth and wringing of hands, but I can’t remember the last Tourney-sized scenario I played that included OBA*, most current designers of small scenarios steer clear of including OBA (if they do include OBA, they provide an SSR for “first chit draw is Black”), so that most scenarios that do feature OBA are either substantial in size or length, or are Historical ASL games; and it’s the bigger scenarios, bigger board area, bigger TOandE that allows OBA to be what is intended to be in real life, i.e. a massive aid to the attacker to obtain their goal, or large defensive counter-measure against an aggressive enemy. I don’t believe the very valuable Artillery Corps Forward Observation Officer was sent out to the front too often to halt a platoon sized enemy foray; he was sent out to do a job at the battalion/regimental/divisional level to facilitate (usually)

set plans on attack or call in pre-plotted defensive fire zones. Therefore, I think the current OBA rules adequately represent the randomness of obtaining artillery support on a slender part of the frontline i.e. your couple of boards.

But enough of my blathering… I won’t go through a ‘How-To’ of the ASL OBA rules, as there are lots of step-by-step examples on the internet via podcasts, blogs, forum pages, etc. just type in “advanced squad leader OBA” and take your pick of tutorials. The one must-have is the OBA flowchart, originally released in Action Pack 1 and also with the 2nd Edition ASL Rulebook, the Hakkaa Päälle! module, and LFT’s’ Rat Charts; it’s a great play aid, if somewhat convoluted, over 3 pages, that gets you the desired results in the end (a relatively pain free run-through the OBA process).

But ASL OBA isn’t as mind-bogglingly complex as the 4 pages of rules appear. To begin with, the play of the OBA rules are only implemented at the beginning of one Phase per player turn: either the radio/battery owner’s Prep Fire Phase; or the Defensive Fire Phase in their opponent’s player turn. The rest of the OBA activity through the turn phases are simply dicing for results due to unit movement through current FFE blast areas (in the Movement, Route or Advance Phases and very rarely, the CC Phase). The owning player’s involvement in the initial OBA process can be boiled down to: a Dice Roll, a Chit/Card draw, a Die roll and possibly another Dice Roll; not that much bother for the possible payoff.

At the start of the OBA module owner’s Prep Fire Phase or the opponent’s Defensive Fire Phase, and if there are no SR or FFE counters onboard:

1. roll a DR for radio contact (Yes/No): if Yes, continue to step 2.; if No, stop.
2. draw a Battery Access chit or card (Black/Red): if Black, continue to step 3.; if Red, stop.
3. [after placing an AR counter] roll a dr for initial accuracy (accurate/not accurate), if accurate, replace AR with SR & stop.
4. [if the AR is not accurate] roll a DR for direction & extent of error, place SR in defensive Fire Phase, and if there are no SR or FFE resolution DR in each of the 7 hexes of the OBA Blast Area.

That’s all the owning player does until the next player turn.

Once an SR or FFE counter is onboard, the OBA player has 7 choices next Prep or Defensive Fire Phase, and most are
pretty simple, after a DR for radio contact maintenance:

a) Do nothing – cancel an FFE
b) Start again – cancel an SR & place a new AR (follow step 1, above)
c) Call down fire – convert an SR into an FFE & resolve effects (must have LOS to base of SR hex, or LOS to blast height and known enemy unit adjacent to SR counter)
d) Let it ride – leave an FFE in place & resolve effects (must have LOS to base of SR hex, or LOS to blast height and known enemy unit adjacent to SR counter)
e) Mandatory correction – if no LOS to SR or FFE (or LOS to a known enemy unit adjacent to the counter) then the SR or FFE must be corrected or cancelled
f) Near enough fire – may declare moving an SR and converting to an FFE & resolve effects (must have LOS to SR blast height and requires an accuracy dr)
g) Stay or go – leave an SR in place or correct an SR or FFE (must have LOS to SR or FFE blast height)

In four of these options [a, b, c, and d], the SR or FFE counter doesn’t move position (or is removed).
In two cases [e and f] the SR or FFE will need correcting, i.e. it will be moving from its current hex.
In the last case [g] there is the option to correct the SR or FFE.

So, to use an ASL analogy, the initial OBA process and the subsequent Fire Phase activity are basically the To Hit procedure for Off Board Artillery. Once a FFE counter is on the board, the rest of the of the OBA activity (resolution of the FFE:1 or FFE:2, and resolution against moving units) is the To Kill effects using the Infantry Firepower Table.

Now that I have called OBA simple, I’ll complicate things by reminding players of some of the rules potentially missed when using their OBA:

- Ordnance Smoke must be fired before any OBA operations begin in the Prep Fire Phase.
- A leader with Radio Contact and a current SR or FFE onboard cannot move in the Movement Phase (as Radio Contact/Maintenance is a Prep Fire activity), but he may Advance in the Advance Phase.
- Drawing a Red chit/card removes all AR/SR/FFE counters from the board, cancels the Fire Mission and all OBA activity for that current Phase (but Radio contact is not broken).
- If the initial AR hex chosen by the OBA player (upon checking) has no locations in the Observers LOS, then the player’s OBA actions for the Phase are completed, and, at the opponent’s option, the current Fire Mission is cancelled i.e. an AR hex SR counter.
- The height of a SpOTTing Round rises from the base hex, through the next two levels and can be seen over the top of (comparative) Level-2 obstacles without being obstructed or hindered.
- If drawing two chits/cards for Battery Access for an enemy unit not Known to the OBA Observer, the second chit (whether Black or Red) is replaced back into the chit/card pile.
- A Smoke FFE produces a +3 hindrance in every hex of the Blast area, whereas, a HE Blast area only produces a +1 hindrance for the whole 7-hex Blast area (not each hex).
- During your opponent’s Player Turn, a FFE:2 already on board will attack any enemy units moving through the Blast area during the Movement Phase, then, during the Defensive Fire Phase the same FFE:2 will attack all units in the 7-hex Blast area, before being flipped to its FFE:C side. It’s very dangerous to run into Artillery fire.
- For every Level above a unit in a building, a +1 DRM is added to the TEM of the building hex e.g. an enemy squad on the Ground Level of a stone multi-storey building will have a +5 DRM against HE OBA resolution (+3 for the stone building, +1 for the Level-1 above the squad, and +1 for the Level-2 above the squad).
- OBA resolution is not halved versus Concealed units.
- ‘Empty’ hexes within a HE Blast area should be rolled for resolution effects if:
  - the opponent has HIP capabilities in the scenario;
  - or the larger OBA calibres can cause rubble to buildings, or shellholes to Open

Ground, Woods, etc.
- Resolving OBA against units in Woods hexes has a TEM of -1 (indirect fire Air Bursts) just like Mortars.
- AFV turret strength or weakness (or ○) is relevant when calculating Armour Factor strength for OBA resolution i.e. all factors ≤ 4, or ≥ 8. For example, the increased turret strength on a French R35 tank’s 4 AF will negate the -1 DRM, as not all factors or ≤ 4.
- Units in the Close Combat Phase (friendly or enemy) that Withdraw into an OBA Blast area are attacked by that Fire Mission (even FFE:C).

The list could go on; it’s not surprising in our game that 4 pages of the ASL Rule Book can turn up a long list of Q and A, confusions, internet debate, and how-to-play examples, but at the heart of the matter, the Off Board Artillery is an integral part of ASL (inherited from the Squad Leader days) included in the rules set to represent the ‘King of Battle’ which no modern army can do without.

I will finish with a couple of pieces of OBA use that took me years of playing ASL, and reading tactical advice articles, to incorporate into my game:

On attack, don’t use your 80mm OBA module to try and kill that pesky MG nest in the stone building (+3 DRM or more [remember upper level cover]); another hit in Smoke, if the SR lands on the enemy units, the following FFE will lead to a +4 DRM for firing from their Smoke hex, added to another +3 DRM from an adjacent Smoke hex in the Blast area, this will literally blind the enemy with 6+ LOS hindrance DRM’s.

On defence, it is often the threat of OBA that can hold up an opponent’s forward movement; a SR hovering around a tree line that enemy units have to advance through can be enough to push units wide of the area and expend extra MFs; or use Harassing Fire (a 19-half, half strength OBA attack, declared before the FFE:1 is brought down) to cover the Open Ground/Grain area that the enemy may run across (if your defending an area 2 boards wide, this Fire Mission can cover a quarter of the ground, i.e. 5 hexes wide, in your defensive sector).

Good luck with your F.O.O. in the field, and remember to try and keep him under wraps, as he can operate his radio set and call down Fire Missions whilst retaining Concealment.
“THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!”

This is the latest edition of the ASL Players Directory, and includes all UK ASLers whose information has been confirmed within the last ten years (as shown by the date [in dd mm yyyy] format at the end of each entry). It is broken down by country and then by postal code region.

**England**

Dean Smith, 24 Chestnut Rise, Bar Hill, Cambs (20 Apr 2020)
Craig Ambler, 5 Amberton Way, Queensbury, Bradford, W. Yorks., BD13 2ZD (10 May 2017)
Wee Hope, 16 Wakesley Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH11 9EE (15 Jul 2017)
Matt Rainey, 84 Fairclough Road, Bordeaux, 12010 (20 Oct 2019)
Dave Schofield, 11 Longfield Lane, West Parley, Fordingdon, Dorset, BH22 8YT (31 Oct 2014)
Shaan Carter, 3 Arnside Grove, Brightleigh, Bolton, Lancs., BL2 4LQ (02 Nov 2019)
Paul Jones, 11 Littlefield Road, Fareham, BN5 9NQ (19 Mar 2021)
Mike Standbridge, 11 Hunston Lane, Bury, Lancs., BL3 1EG (10 Sep 2012)
Bernie Flinn, 58 Font Street, Salford, M5 3PH (15 Mar 2019)
Ian Kenney, 53 Withdean Crescent, Brighton, W. Sussex, BN2 1AG (02 Dec 2018)
Marc Hanna, 17 The Lawns, St. Marys Close, Earlsdon, B'ham, West Mids, B90 4BP (10 Sep 2018)
Gregory Smith, 58 North Road, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 8SP (15 Mar 2020)
Martin Barker, Tradewinds, Warden Rd, Halesowen, B'ham, B62 2DX (11 Jun 2018)
Ken Watson, 18 Arendale Road, Halesowen, B'ham, B62 1QP (18 Apr 2011)

Brandon Banks, 5 Hatfield Road, Little Sutton, Wirral, Merseyside, CH66 1AJ (25 Oct 2019)
Ian Ainsworth, 23 Lyneal Avenue, Great Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH66 2HX (15 Mar 2020)
Brendan Hussy, 5 Clifton Road, Haslemere, Surrey, GU27 2RB (19 Sep 2015)

**Scotland**

ASL
for informing me that Klas is always right. Any errors remaining are
Thanks to Klas M. for correcting my mistakes, and Perry C.
Continued from page 17

**Wales**

Chris Dalgety, 4 Library Street, Canton, Cardiff, CF1 5DQ (30 Dec 2014)
Nick Rijke, Anseddla, Cilfynydd, Creigiau, SA19 6HT (06 Sep 2020)

If there are any mistakes, please let me know so I can correct them for the next edition. If you have Internet access you can also correct your details on the
VFTT web site at www.vftt.co.uk/my-
account.asp.

Ω

**IN DEFENCE OF THE UGLY STEPCHILD**

Continued from page 17

* I lied, I remember playing AP 115 ‘Mook Point’ with OBA and it is a great little scenario.

Thanks to Klas M. for correcting my mistakes, and Perry C. for informing me that Klas is always right. Any errors remaining are wholly my own.

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

### JUNE

#### DOUBLE ONE 2020

**When:** 26 – 28 June.

**Where:** Due to the Coronavirus this will not take place at Writtle College as normal but will instead be run as an online tournament using VASL. The tournament will be open to anyone who can play during normal UK Summertime hours. If you wish to take part you MUST inform the organisers by the end of May.

**Fee:** None.

**Format:** A day tournament with one round on Friday (featuring the usual choice of three scenarios, including shorter ones to allow evening play after work), a Blind scenario round on Saturday and one on Sunday with the usual choice of three scenarios). Players will be placed into four player groups as normal. Scenarios and VASL setups will be provided by the organisers to everyone who has registered.

**Contact:** To register your interest in taking part email the organisers at lnsd.double.one@gmail.com. Check out the web site at https://londonasl.org/double-one-2020/ for the latest details.

### OCTOBER

#### ASLOK XXXV

**When:** 4 – 11 October.

**Where:** Points Four by Sheraton, 4181 W. 150th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44135, phone 216-252-7700, fax 216-252-3850.

**Fee:** To be confirmed, but in 2019 it was $30.00 before 28 September, $40.00 thereafter and on the door.

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

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

**Contact:** Bret Hildebrand, 17810 Geauga Lake Rd, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023-2208 or by email damav@att.net. Check out the web site at www.aslok.org for the latest details.

### NOVEMBER

#### BOUNDING FIRST FIRE 2020

**When:** 19 – 22 November.

**Where:** Headlands Hotel, 611 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NJ. Tel 01253 341 179. Room rates start at £30.00 for a single room or £42.50 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee:** £20.00.

**Format:** To be confirmed but expected to be similar to previous years, if a five round tournament beginning Friday morning, with an unpublished scenario in use in each round. Players will be expected to have knowledge of the first half of the Chapter G rules to play in the tournament. A mini tournament will run throughout the Thursday, and there will be similar minis throughout the weekend for later arrivals who cannot make the main tournament but would like a structured tournament setting. There’ll be plenty of opportunities for friendly play for those who would prefer it, and Starter Kit mentoring sessions/refereeing for anyone interested in attending who is relatively new to the game.

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact Martin Mayers or Simon Staniforth by email at boundingfirstfire@gmail.com. For up to date information check out the web site at https://boundingfireblackpool.co.uk/.

### DECEMBER

#### NEW YORK STATE ASL CHAMPIONSHIP

**When:** 3 – 6 December.

**Where:** The Best Western Albany Airport Hotel, 200 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205, phone 518-458-1000. Room rates in 2018 were $80 per night including breakfast. The hotel has a free shuttle to and from the airport (5 minute ride). The shuttle also picks up at Amtrak station (10-15 minute ride).

**Fee:** To be confirmed but in 2019 it was $50 for the weekend or $30 for a single day.

**Format:** Six round tournament beginning Thursday morning, with three scenarios to choose from in each round. All scenarios will make use of the Pleva Bidding System. There will also be a three player mini tournament on Saturday and Sunday.

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact Joe Leece, 39 Ashton Drive, Staten Island, NY 10312 or email asl726@aol.com. For up to date information check out the web site at http://nys-asl.com/.

### GRENADIER 2020

**When:** 9 - 13 December.

**Where:** Nationalpark-Gästehaus, Hergarten. Hergarten is a little town in the German part of the Eifel. It is 10 Km to Zülpich and around 40 Km to Cologne. There is a railway station in Heimbach which is the neighbouring town and you can reach it from Cologne by train, which goes every hour. From Heimbach you need to take a taxi to Hergarten which is about six kilometres. Rooms are mostly three and four bed rooms with shower and costs €51 per night – single rooms are €6.50 extra.

**Fee:** €5 per day.

**Format:** The main tournament is a Swiss style five Round tournament running from Friday to Sunday. There will also be a series of mini tournaments taking place on the Thursday.

**Contact:** Check out the Grenadier web site at https://www.ada-germany.de/ for up to date information.

### 2021

#### FEBRUARY

#### SCANDANAVIAN ASL OPEN

**When:** 25 – 28 February (TO BE CONFIRMED).

**Where:** Probably as the same venue as 2020, the Danhostel Copenhagen Amager, Vejlands Allé 200, 2300København S, Denmark. In 2020 accommodation was available at a cost ranging from 510 Danish Kroner (about €70) per person for a single room to 210 Danish Kroner (about €28) per person sharing a four person bedroom including breakfast, lunch and dinner – contact the organisers for a price.

**Format:** Similar to 2020, which was 200 Danish Kroner (about €27).

**Contact:** Michael Hastrup-Leth, Toftboievej 14, 3650 Olstykke, Denmark, or email at hastrupleth@gmail.com. For the latest information visit the website at http://www.asl-so.dk/.

#### MARCH

#### HEROES 2020

**When:** 4 – 7 March.

**Where:** Headlands Hotel, 611 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NJ. Tel 01253 341 179. Room rates start at £30.00 for a shared room or £42.50 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee:** £15.00 if registering with the organisers by 21 February, £20.00 thereafter and on the door (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). In addition to a discount on the entry fee, players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in January.

**Format:** Four round tournament beginning Friday morning, with three scenarios to choose from in each round. There will be an additional round on Friday after if the number of participants warrants it. Players will be expected to have knowledge of the first half of the Chapter G rules to play in the tournament. Opportunities for CG and friendly games can also be found throughout the weekend. There will also be opportunities for new players to learn the game and friendly games available.

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact Pete Philippis, 19 Main Street, Kirkliston, Scotland, EH29 9AE. Phone (1031) 629 1260 (evenings only) or email dfj@vftf.co.uk. For up to date information check out the UK ASL tournament web site at www.vftf.co.uk.
Bounding (First) Fire Blackpool
The UK’s newest ASL Tournament
ESTD 2018

Bounding First Fire Blackpool is a new UK ASL event where the main tournament will be played using unpublished scenarios.....

The scenarios to be used in the main tourney have been supplied by BFP, fully play tested, from upcoming releases.

The tournament will be run with 2 rounds on Friday, 2 rounds on Saturday and a Final on Sunday.

Time limits for play will be generous but also enforced to be fair to all participants.

Regular visitors to the existing Blackpool tournament, HEROES, will know our welcoming host Charles and his staff.

Now relocated to The Headlands Hotel, this venue offers a large gaming area with separate restaurant and bar.

The hotel is easily accessible from the M55 and the train station is a 10 minute walk away.

BFP have been a strong supporter of the ASL scene for many years and we gratefully acknowledge their support of this event.

Further information on BFP and their products is available on their website: http://www.boundingfire.com/

Contact Us
Do you have questions about the Tournament? Send us a message to boundingfirstfire@gmail, and we'll get back to you asap.

Thank you for your interest.