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COVER: Tanks of the German 24th Panzer Division advance into the outskirts of Stalingrad in September 1942.

THE *ASL* MAILING LIST

The *ASL* Mailing List is devoted to discussion of *Advanced Squad Leader*, and is run by Paul Ferraro via a listserv program at the University of Pittsburgh. To subscribe send email to **majordomo@list.pitt.edu** with the body of the message reading:
subscribe advanced-sl
You MUST use lower case letters!
You will get a message from Majordomo in reply asking for confirmation.
To subscribe to the digest version send the following in the body of a message:
subscribe advanced-sl-digest
The digest is mailed out whenever it has queued 100,000 characters of mailings. You may receive more (or less) than one mailing every 24 hour period. The digest is NOT sent at a certain time each day.

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

Issue 27 should be out towards the end of October.

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

PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to this double issue of *View From The Trenches*. I had hoped to get back on schedule during my time off from work during the July fortnight but ended up busier than expected. It didn't help having some PC problems which took nearly a week to get sorted out either :-(

The one problem with doing this double issue is that I have used up a lot of my reserve of articles. I've got a couple of pieces in the pipeline for the next issue, but after that I've got very little left for *VFTT28*, the first issue of the new millennium (other than the usual the INTENSIVE FIRE '99 report). So if you want to see *VFTT* continue well into the year 2000 you're all gonna have to help me out a bit more.

Until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

This issue is dedicated to the memory of the millions killed and injured in World War Two. While we have fun and enjoy a beer playing wargames, we should never forget the suffering real war causes.

EMOTICONS

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

An emoticon is created with keyboard characters and read with the head tilted to the left. Some typical emoticons are:
   :-) humour or smiley
   ;-) winking
   :-> devious smile
   <g> grin
   :-(sad
   :-o shocked or surprised
   #-(hung-over

INCOMING

MMP GO TO ARNHEM, TARAWA, KAKAZU RIDGE

Work on *Blood Reef: Tarawa* and *The Third Bridge* is progressing at a steady pace. Final play testing is being done on the scenarios, while the counter sheets and scenarios are being laid out and the rules are undergoing final proofs. The maps are being printed, and both modules are on schedule for a release at ASLOK.

Work is also in progress on the *ASL Journal 2*. The Kakazu Ridge map is done and the scenarios are being worked on. Jim Stahler has updated the old *COI* scenario 'The Capture of Balta', while Trial By Combat (GI301) and Sweep For The Boudj Toum Bridge are also set for inclusion.

MMP are on the look-out for articles. In view of the forthcoming releases, they are particularly interested in articles on seaborne assaults, caves, and city-fighting tactics articles.

The first components of the *Doomed Battalions* reprint were printed during the *Action Pack #2* print run. The remaining components will be done during the *BR:T* and *AbtF* print runs and *DB* should be released sometime shortly after those modules.

Although there are no concrete plans for releases next year at the moment, numerous projects are being worked on, including the Axis Minors, Stalingrad, Italy, Guadalcanal and assorted magazines.

The future will also see the former AH game series *The Great Campaigns of the American Civil War* series published under the Hasbro/MMP banner. The first fruits of this collaboration will be the release of *The Skirmisher*, a magazine along the lines of the *ASL Journal*, which will see the publication of the Standard Series rules among other things. It is not expected that this will have any effect on *ASL*.

It has also been reported from American distributors that Hasbro will be dumping its remaining stock of Avalon Hill and Victory Games games in mid-September. It is anticipated that stockists will stock up on supplies in the short term, but that eventually AH/VG games will become harder and harder (and thus more expensive) to find.

CANADIAN HASL

Ortona is a *HASL* module being worked on by members of the Canadian *ASL* Association. Raging from 20 – 27 December 1943, the battle consisted of a rural approach to the town and then some bitter street-fighting in rowhouses in Ortona itself.

Ortona sits atop a promontory jutting into the Adriatic, and the *KGP I* sized map includes proper vineyard artwork, cobblestone, piazzas and a castle.

The main CG is a manageable 15 CG dates with typically around 35-45 Canadian squads battling 25-35 German squads.

Play testing of the scenarios is half complete, 2 CGs are good to go with a third in the works. When all is done, this project will be formally submitted to MMP. Curt Schilling is in contact with Jim on a consistent basis regarding their play test and work on Ortona.

CH's GALORE ON TARGET

Critical Hit have released details of several new products they expect to ship in the coming months.

As the name suggests, *Euro-Pack V: Eastern Front Warfare* contains eight scenarios set during the early stages of the war in the east. The majority are German-Soviet clashes but there is one Finnish-Russian action included.

The map of Jerusalem for *Genesis '48*, CH's forthcoming module on Israel's 1948 War of Independence, is finished, and CH expect it to ship before the end of the year. As well as scenarios and *PL* CGs, the module includes a set of new counters and copious Chapter H-style notes and data about the new combatants, weapons systems and AFV included.

Randy Yeates' *Carnage at Cassino* has grown from the originally announced *Operation Diadem* into the first half of a two part module with linking maps. *Carnage at Cassino* offers several scenarios and two CG covering the Polish, French, American and British assaults against the German 90th Panzer Grenadier Division on the Monte Cassino Massif (just north of the Monte Cassino monastery) in February of 1944. In addition, players may recreate the two Polish Corps attacks against elements of the German 1st Parachute Division in the same area from 12 – 17 May 1944 through additional scenarios and two more CG.

Coming for September is the first part of a third part Okinawa series, *Ordeal Before Shuri*. The culmination of three years of research and development led by designer

Cover artwork for the forthcoming MMP ASL *modules* Blood Reef: Tarawa *(left) and* A Bridge To Far.

Dave 'Ogre' Dally, the large map features numerous terrain features including Nishi Baru Ridge, Kakazu Ridge, Kakazu West, Urasoe Mura Escarpment and three separate villages. The module will include eight scenarios (including some monsters), two CG, play aids, and special rules.

Work is also well underway on the second game in the series, *Item Pocket*, which is slated for a 2000 release.

Darrell Andersen's *Uncommon Valor* covers the USMC actions against the Japanese at Iwo Jima's Motoyama Airfield #2 and surrounding heights. The first part of a two-game Iwo Jima series that will cover the action, the module includes eight scenarios, a CG, and special rules. The map is a standard 22 x 30 size and covers a large portion on the centre of Iwo Jima, including the airfield, and the dominating terrain around it, such as Hill Peter and Hill 199-0.

CH are also releasing an updated version of the old AH game *Tobruk*. The most obvious change is that the firing system has been completely redesigned – now, for each shot, you make one die roll which determines the result, anything from a miss to a burning tank. This single change will speed up play dramatically. Other changes have also been made to speed up play, and the time scale is also a bit longer so there are fewer turns in a game.

The counters and maps have also been re-done to give the players a better feel of moving "tanks that look like tanks on boards that look like desert", to quote CH.

SEVENTH BUNKER MADE

Dispatches From The Bunker 7 is out now and contains two new scenarios, a Scenario Analysis of 'J1 Urban Guerillas', reviews of *Hell On Wheels* and *Action Pack # 2.*

Design, development, and initial in-house play testing for the two scenarios due to appear in *Dispatches From The Bunker 8* is complete. ''Smashing the Semovanti' is the latest in Tom Morin's Tunisian Series and sees a mixed, mobile, armour/infantry force of Italians trying to force their way past a relatively small French defensive position on board 9.

The other scenario is the latest in the Gross Deutschland Series, a fairly large action which sees elements of the division assaulting a Russian blocking position at Kamienka in the early weeks of Barbarossa.

Each scenario is also accompanied by an analysis article and designer notes.

Also due to be included will be a re-view of 'Red Storm' from *Action Pack 2*, the usual tips for veterans and novices, ASL news from around the globe, and a look at the New England ASL scene. Four issue subscriptions are available for $13.00 ($15.00 outside the USA). Issue one is available free with a subscription or an SAE, while other back issues are $3.50 ($4.00 outside the USA). Payments should be payable to Vic Provost and sent to *Dispatches from the Bunker*, 209 Granby Road, Apt: 18, Chicopee, MA 01013. Tel (413)594-4301 (evenings) or email **aslbunker@aol.com**.

SCHWERPUNKT 4

Schwerpunkt Volume 4 is in the final editing stage and is due to be printed soon, ready for release at ASLOK. The format will be similar to previous issues, featuring scenarios SP37-SP48 printed on card stock. Also included is a booklet with an historical article on the French and the usual analyses of the new scenarios.

The final phase of the play-test for *Schwerpunkt Volume 5: The Medal of Honor*, is also underway. Expected to be released early in the New Year the pack contains 12 tournament level scenarios which focus on acts of extraordinary heroism or leadership. Along with the scenarios will be a booklet containing analyses and an article on the Medal of Honor.

Play testing has also begun on *Schwerpunkt Volume 6: The Victoria Cross*. As with the MoH issue the pack will contain 12 scenarios focusing on individual acts of heroism in North Africa, the Mediterranean, Burma, and Northwest Europe). The issue is expected to be out sometime late next year.

Schwerpunkt Volumes 1, *2*, and *3* are still available.

Each issue of *Schwerpunkt* costs $12.00, plus $3.00 shipping and handling ($5.00 outside the U.S.); add $1.00 for each additional copy ordered. Payment should be made out to Sherry Enterprises and sent to Sherry Enterprises, P.O. Box 3, Ruskin, FL 33570. Note that *Schwerpunkt Volume 4* will not be available prior to 12 October 1999.

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ASL, SIMULATION, REALISM, AND THE WAY AHEAD

Random thoughts on a the state of board wargaming

Lee Brimmicombe-Wood

I once read that most board gamers' use of the term 'simulation' is not 'reality-to-game' but 'less detailed/complex game to more complex game'. This is a very astute observation that sums up one of the essential games design quandaries far more succinctly than I ever could.

COMPLEXITY = REALISM?

In my various careers in many different media, I've encountered an increasing tendency to either misappropriate or misuse the technical language of other disciplines. For example, in my days as a comic-book artist, terms such as "shot" and "scene" were stolen from movies and TV, and incorporated into the technical language of comics, regardless of how appropriate they were. In some cases, the use of these words in relation to comics actually became a perversion of their original sense, and could cause confusion for someone moving from one media to another. It is only in recent years that a comics vocabulary has been established that is independent of the jargon of other media.

We see something similar happening in wargaming between simulations and games. An epiphenomenon of applying misappropriated terms like "simulation" and "realism" to games is that many players have begun to equate detail with fidelity of simulation. Sadly, there is no established or well-defined games vocabulary anywhere which could be used to correct these perceptions. In the sim business, "simulation" and "realism" are terms that are more closely related to statistical analysis (output of results within anticipated norms; reproducibility, etc). than games. Real simulation design is far removed from the freewheeling "design for effect" formula that is applied to a wargame like *ASL*.

The ill-usage of the term "realism" can be very frustrating. In the PC sim business, abuse of the word is rife. Here, "realism" is all too frequently equated with graphic detail and its misuse is perpetrated by people at all levels of the industry. I remember one games producer — a self-professed "sim-head" and "detail freak" — came into the office to examine the helicopter sim that myself and my team were developing for a publisher. When I explained to the gentleman the work

we'd done on modelling the difference between first- and second-generation Explosive Reactive Armour he just nodded blankly. He didn't become at all animated or excited until we showed him the new graphic flourishes, such as an animated tank commander, at which point the producer declared how "real" the game looked. This absurd attitude, which has nothing to do with fidelity of simulation, is common in the industry. One of the best and most authentic flight sims currently on the market is consistently underrated by magazine reviewers simply because it isn't pretty enough. It makes one want to pick these people up and shake them until their eyeballs drop out.

The fanbase can be worse, and after a while one's patience with them wears as thin as a bachelor's underwear. As a defence mechanism, as much as anything else, one begins to develop a healthy contempt for the fanboys. Here, "complexity = realism" is taken as an article of faith, and I have seen self-important "propellor-heads" argue that a particular flight model could not be accurate simply because it was not difficult enough for them (in that instance, the aircraft in question was an Apache helicopter that we had painstakingly modelled the physics for. It did not occur to them that, as our army aviation adviser pointed out, the AH-64 is packed with flight software designed to make the aircraft simple enough even for "dumb coneheads" like him — a Desert Storm veteran — to fly).

So, if one problem with the fans is that they wouldn't recognise realism if it came up and spat in their eye, another is that if you deliver them realism, they sometimes decide they don't want it. As an example, in our recent game release, "Team Apache", we originally built in some quite sophisticated artificial intelligence handling the player's wingmen. They would display more initiative in battle, and would show the effects of morale if things got hairy. Our playtesters, to a man, hated this. Their complaint was that their wingmen didn't unhesitatingly do everything they were ordered to, however suicidal. We suddenly twigged that the players would not accept any level of "realism" that reduced their level of control over the game. Gamers play wargames to

control, not be controlled by events or factors out of their direct influence. As a result, we had to rip their AI out of the game and 'dumb down' the wingmen to acceptable levels.

(As an aside, I wonder how many players would appreciate it if *ASL* was turned into real C2 modelling tool? Would they really enjoy the very real loss of control and influence over the behaviour of units in the lowest echelons? Or the limited decision making that would prevent them micromanaging the battle as they do in *ASL*? I'll leave the answer blank).

BOARD GAME DESIGN

The "complexity = realism" assumption also passes over into board wargaming. In my spare time I work with a very talented designer, Tony Valle, on developing *Birds of Prey* (*BoP*), a next-generation air combat game. Generally, we have aimed to nudge *BoP* closer to the "sim" end of the scale than the "game" end.

BoP has been a difficult project to manage, in part because of the complexity of the subject matter and also because we have had to sell some fairly radical new concepts to the customer base on the list. For example, because we are having to model flight physics as realistically as we can get away with on paper, there was absolutely no way that we could design the game without getting players to do some math. Predictably, there has been a lot of resistance to this, despite the fact that we have managed to limit the math to four functions and no more than two decimal places (all the calculus is handled in the charts and tables). However, players have come around, once we demonstrated that the math wasn't really too difficult to get people's heads around, and was within the bounds of playability.

There is a perception that this level of detail in the modelling makes *BoP* "accurate". Of course it isn't — though we haven't compromised the physics too much, the fineness and level of resolution in the model is still very crude. However, because of this perception, we have been showered with requests for adding detail.

This has put us in a bit of a bind. There have been individuals who contribute a lot of data and ideas and enthusiasm to *BoP* — usually in the name of authenticity and realism. However, both Tony and I have

fairly firm ideas about what we wish to model. We are trying to focus the game on the key decision making and have devoted a lot of our time to analysing the essential elements in the O.O.D.A. loop. A game like *BoP*, just like *ASL*, has almost limitless potential for adding detail and chrome to. But there becomes a point where the chrome either:

(a) Increases the workload to the point where the game loses gameplay value [i.e. becomes unplayable].

(b) Obscures the game's key decision making with trivia.

(c) Adds unwanted variables into the model that produces undesired or unrealistic results.

(d) All of the above.

These considerations have forced us to decline or ignore most of the suggestions that have been sent our way. In the case of some of the really insistent listers who won't take no for an answer, we have sometimes lost our tempers with them; a terrible thing really, because they were only trying to be helpful, after all.

Interestingly, Tony hates *ASL* with a passion and cannot fathom my interest in the game (as I've said before, it is the atmosphere and immersive experience that I find so charming). For him, *ASL* is a perfect example of what can happen when "complexity = realism" is taken to an extreme. In designing *BoP* he is moving right to the back of the bus in his attempt to distance himself from what he perceives as *ASL*'s "bankrupt" design philosophy. I find it very hard to argue this point with him.

ALL CHANGE?

Having played *SL/ASL* for something like sixteen years now, there have been times when I have been dismayed by the increasing workload that additional detail has placed on the player. I sympathise and generally agree with those who wish to simplify and streamline the system. I for one was quite horrified by, say, the Chapter G rules and they way in which they took simple concepts such as Wire and tried to reinvent them as the much more complicated Panji. This seems like an application of detail for detail's sake. Was it necessary? I think not. I could have designed something much simpler and fitted it all on the back of a fag packet.

But now that the damage is done, do I want to change it? Well, er, no. Most of this is for quite selfish, rather than rational, reasons. I have a reputation as a radical, but as I trip lightly into middle age, *ASL* is one area where I allow myself to act the conservative. *ASL* is an old friend, and I have become familiar with its idiosyncrasies. They have become part of its rude charm, no less.

The various sleaze rules don't bother me at all, because I don't play the game that way. Indeed, I'd have a very dim view of anyone who did, and would probably refuse to play them again. So I don't care about arguments on bypassing ponds or other minutiae; that's like counting angels on the head of a pin. Frankly, I've got better things to do.

So, for me at least, the ASLRB are canonical, as are the Q&A and errata.

I wouldn't completely pooh-pooh any ideas on rulebook change though. Some of them have merit, but I think it might be too late to implement them without an unacceptably thorough overhaul. If you went through with such a project you would be in danger of losing your core audience for the sake of pleasing some fanboys and foiling a minority of sleaze merchants.

Think back on the development of *Squad Leader*, and the terrible state it got into with the advent of *GI: Anvil of Victory*, I think that *ASL* is in pretty good shape right now, comparatively speaking. We don't have the migraines *GI*'s changes generated, and most of the issues are, I believe, minor as far as the majority of casual gamers are concerned (casual gamers please tell me if I'm wrong!).

I think the next step would not be to 'fix' *ASL*, but instead design a whole new system from scratch. This was pretty much the decision Tony and I made when we decided to stop fiddling with a flawed mechanism like *Air Superiority*/*The Speed of Heat*, and build something better, starting with a blank sheet. As a project it might take you years, but the result would be an evolutionary step towards the level of realism and/or game play you feel the subject warrants. If people truly want simulation fidelity, then they should be prepared to ditch the paradigms that *ASL* is premised upon, do some research and formulate brand new ones. It's really the only valid approach.

In an era where quality self-publishing is not beyond the resources of many people, it doesn't seem an unfeasable task to build and market one's own game (it's more or less what Tony and I are doing). I'm all for people empowering themselves and realising their own creative vision. Anyone who tried this I'd support all the way...

EMULATE, SIMULATE, GAME?

I like people to be clear about what they are talking about. Without precise definitions of technical terms, how can any of us discuss concepts such as "realism"

intelligently?

Broadly speaking, I employ three primary classifications:

Emulation. Emulation is imitation. Emulation aims to reproduce and approximate real-world experiences as authentically as possible. Aircraft training simulators come into this category.

Simulation. Technically, a simulation is a process for studying or solving problems, or for calculating the effects of a course of action. Simulations are usually solved through some form of mathematical modelling, such as statistical analysis.

In the wargames world, the term simulation has been misappropriated and has come to mean something very different. There, it defines a game which seeks to represent events through some form of modelling. Because it is a game, the model has frequently been compromised for the benefit of the player's enjoyment, though the significance of this is often lost on many people.

For most wargamers a "realistic" simulation is something that approximates events in a manner that satisfies their perceptions of how the events should play out. I used the term "Hollywood" with reference to *ASL* because most people's perceptions of WW2 combat (mine included) come from the media, rather than hard analysis or experience (I'm beginning to regret making that connection).

Game. A game is a diversion; a competitive pastime. Because the primary purpose of a game is entertainment, it has dynamics that are at odds with the requirements of simulation. Play balance, for instance, is not a requirement of simulation, but is frequently an essential for a wargame.

When talking about wargame simulations, gamers frequently make comparisons with military wargames, which are often tools used to test tactical knowledge and decision-making ability. These sorts of games are not entertainment (they are rarely play-balanced, for instance) and the level of approximation and abstraction is usually fairly high. War-school wargames are usually designed to test human factors rather than technical and environmental factors. The latter categories are generally left to the mathematicians and computer modellers to test.

So where does our hobby stand in all of this? Even if *ASL* is not a simulation in the true sense, surely we are simulating something?

Well, my take on it is that we are

closest of all to the military wargame. Our technical and environmental modelling is usually too crude to be useful as a simulation tool. What is left is the decision-making. The wargames we play are decision-making tools which try to approximate tactical situations and outcomes. The key elements in determining their simulation fidelity is how close they come to the actual decision-making a battlefield commander might make.

On these criteria, I have to say that *ASL* falls down to a large extent. The essential problem is that with *ASL* I am unsure precisely what level of command it is modelling. If, as I suspect, the game is pitched at the company commander level, then the player shouldn't really be allowed to micromanage units down to squad and SW level. The game also seems to be too concerned with the minutiae of technical and environmental concerns - elements that can be significant, but nevertheless impinge less at the company command level (for instance, a company commander wouldn't decide which weapon or ammunition a tank uses to engage particular targets. Or the type of shot employed. This level of decision-making devolves to the lower echelons).

None of this affects our enjoyment of the game, of course. However it does influence the simulation value of the game. *ASL* cannot be a company commander's game because so much of the decision-making is trivial compared to the level of command.

AN ARTFUL COPY

I think *SL/ASL* reflects aspects of WW2 combat, and I don't want to sound ungenerous, but we should never lose sight of the quite "unreal" (for want of a better word) compromises that have been made to produce *ASL*.

As an approximation of the real thing, we should avoid thinking of *ASL* as a simulation. "Representation" would be a fairer term, more appropriate to our hobby, as it doesn't carry the technical baggage of the S-word. Also, in saying it is a representation, there is an implication that there has been a certain loss of sim fidelity in the transition to a game. I find it significant that the term simulation has hardly, if at all, been used by the designers in the ASLRB. Crikey. I hope this doesn't sound as if I'm pettifogging or splitting hairs...

Jon Mishcon, in one of his clinics, defined *ASL* as "not a simulation, but an artful copy". One of the best definitions of the game I've ever heard.

Ω

A CALL FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Toby Pilling

I thought I would write with an observation. It may just be me, but I have noticed a tendency of most review articles of *ASL* products being released to be rather gushing, disposing towards praise rather than criticism.

It could be that all the products being released really are superb and almost without fault.

I find this unlikely. I believe the reasons are perfectly understandable, but ultimately self-defeating.

Let me elaborate.

Ours is a passionate, devoted hobby. Even if an independent reviewer trashed a product, I doubt it would have much effect on sales. Many of us don't just play *ASL*, we virtually collect it. In the bad old years when Avalon Hill seemed to have forgotten it, *ASL* supplements were produced by third party suppliers much to the gratitude of us all. There was a feeling that whatever its faults, players almost had a duty to support these relatively expensive and amateurish endeavours. Thanks to such support producers such as Heat of Battle and Critical Hit can now turn out perfectly polished and professional packages. However, the duty towards unconditional support still remains. It almost seems like treason to pick out any faults.

But criticism does not have to be nasty. Constructive criticism suggests areas for improvement and can give important feedback on what to do better next time. Without it the same old mistakes can be made over and over.

What I actually feel is that, for the good of our hobby, it's actually now our duty to comment on parts of products that we are unhappy with, honestly and constructively, so that overall quality can improve.

Let me practice what I preach with a couple of observations.

First, is it my imagination or do the maps

for *Stonne*, *Pointe Du Hoc* and *Those Ragged Bloody Heroes* really look consistently inferior to those connected to Ian Daglish's *All American* and *Scotland The Brave* series? Why is that, if the computer technology is available to ensure some conformity?

I am currently playing *Stonne* and enjoying it even if some of the scenarios aren't currently the most balanced in the world, but it has one glaring weakness – the eight different contour level colours are terrible. I've been playing board wargames since the tender age of 11, and I've never seen a map where it is so difficult to figure out the high and low ground at a glance. Some of the different level colours are virtually the same, and there isn't a consistent 'light to dark' theme. Why couldn't *Kampfgruppe Peiper* have been used as a model, moving from green to yellow, orange then brown? Cost may be sited as an excuse, but we normally all manage to afford our *ASL* treats and a coherent, visibly clear method of differentiating levels would have drastically improved to excellent what is already a good product. It seems a shame to skimp on such a vital facet.

Anyway, that's just enough for now. I just wanted to get off my chest a feeling that we are all treating game producers with kid gloves on when, to every ones benefit, sometimes we should be cruel to be kind.

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Drinks all round during one of the Scotland The Brave *CG played at the recent Mad Vet Con. See page 25 for a full report and details on the* KGP *five map monster CG that was also played.*

AN ANALYSIS OF SQUAD FP VALUES

Stéphane Nolet

I have always wanted to figure out the secret behind the firepower values of the different *ASL* squads and corresponding SW. When I read a note by Jim Mcleod, which basically said give 0.33 FP per rifle, 0.5 per automatic weapon, 0.45 per semi-automatic weapon and 1 FP for an inherent LMG, I set about analysing it closer. That is about right, and I will prove it. Even so I still have some reservations, such as why does an inherent LMG have only 1 FP or so while the same LMG as a SW has 3 FP? Since the LMG SW counter represent a weapon alone (no crew to man it; see A9. and you will read that the LMG counter represents an additional LMG to complement the inherent FP of the squad), how can I explain that?

FACTORS

When I read the *SL* designer notes (Page 31) I notice that the designers concluded that ROF was far more important than calibre size for effectiveness, so I bore that in mind in doing my FP calculations. But when you want to know which weapon is more effective than another one, you have to take in consideration many factors. Calibre, ROF, feeding method (ammo clip, drum or bands), the weight and the initial speed of the bullet, even though the speed is directly related to the weight of the bullet.

When you have a FP factor for a weapon you can apply it to the number of men using it to calculate the squad FP, then modify that by the ability of the squad to use them adequately (poor training, for conscript troops etc...should be factors to look after for final FP allocation).

Suddenly I fell on a real problem, maximum ROF vs. real ROF (or effective ROF) of a weapon in real fighting situation, so the time scale has to be viewed. Again I referred to the basis of the game in the *SL* designers note. Abstraction seems to be the word in *SL/ASL* and by far they were right because of the so many factors. So for a two minute turn I assumed half of it (1 minute) was for loading, aiming and firing the weapon. I then gave a 1.25 factor for ammo clip changing for a rifle, 1.5 for a semi-automatic weapon and 2 for a LMG (MMG and HMG was another business). This means an average fellow using a conventional rifle with a 5 round ammo clip could fire it 6.25 times in one minute including clip change, pretty realistic.

THE CALCULATIONS

As the basis of my calculations I used the German Gewehr G98 Mauser Rifle and gave it a Base FP of 0.1 (before modifications). This is a 7.92mm calibre capable of firing 6.25 round by minute (effective ROF based on what I presumed upper) and with an initial speed of 640 meter per second. The basics were:

the basis FP for each weapon (0.1)
x 1 plus 25% for calibre (compared to the Gewehr)
x1 plus the 50% for ROF
x1 plus 25% for bullet weight and speed (compared to the Gewehr

For example, the M1 Garand semi-automatic rifle is 7.62 mm divided by 7.92mm of the Gewehr G98 = 0.96212 x 25%= 0.2405303.

Then the M1 is Clip feed with 8 round clips and being a semi auto rifle is multiplied by 1.5 then 12 effective ROF/min then 12 = x50%= 6 plus one = 7.

Finally the M1 fires the bullet at a speed of 855 meter/second giving a better damaging and stopping capabilities than a much slower bullet like the G98, simply 855 divided by 640 =1.3359375 x25% = 0.3339843 plus one = 1.3339843.

These are then multiplied and added to one and multiplied by the basis FP of 0.1 times the product of [0.2405 (Caliber)X 7(ROF) X 1.3339843(Speed)] plus one = 2.2457625 plus one = 3.2457625 X. 0.1. Total Firepower for this weapon gave the M1 a 0.32FP.

The rest is simple math and here are the results and it match almost everywhere. For comparison I've put the *ASL* of some SW to see if it work, although the MG were a real puzzle, being belt-fed most of the time; in my opinion the *PDH* BAR with a 0.71 FP does not deserve a one FP counter.

SUMMARY

Anyone who wants to recreate the counter of a WWI period squad should take the Squad Organisation Chart and Technical data of the weapons they were equipped with, and just apply the formula, and it will pretty well scale it down to *ASL* size. Range and Morale are another thing, although I'm not sure it will be as playable as a WWII period tactical warfare or at least as more fun.

Ω

EXAMPLE SQUADS

American (41-45 squad) 6-6-6

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 BAR rifle	0.76	0.8
11 M1	0.46	5.1
12 Men Total		5.9

American (paratrooper) 7-4-7

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 BAR rifle	0.76	0.8
2 Thompson M1928	1.04	2.1
9 M1	0.46	4.2
12 Men Total		7.0

German (39-43 squad) 4-6-7

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 MG34 LMG	1.35	1.3
2 MP18, MP28	0.62	1.2
7 G98	0.23	1.6
10 Men Total		4.2

German (44-45 squad) 5-4-8

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 MG42 LMG	1.95	2.0
2 MP38, MP40	0.91	1.8
7 G98	0.23	1.6
10 Men Total		5.4

German (44-45 SS squad) 6-5-8

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
2 MG34 LMG	1.35	2.7
2 MP18, MP28	0.91	1.8
6 G98	0.23	1.4
1 Panzerschreck	- -	- -
11 Men Total		5.9

German (Assault Engineer) 8-3-8

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
9 MP38, MP40	0.91	8.2
9 Men Total		8.2

Russian (41-42 squad) 4-4-7

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 SVT 40 Rifle	0.37	0.4
1 DP model 1928 LMG	1.74	1.7
10 1891/30 Rifle	0.23	2.3
12 Men Total		4.4

Russian (43-45 squad) 4-4-7

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 PPSh-41	1.65	1.7
1 DP model 1928 LMG	1.74	1.7
5 1891/30 Rifle	0.23	1.2
7 Men Total		4.5

Russian (41 SMG squad) 5-2-7

	Weapon's FP	Squad Total
1 PPD 1934/38 (25 rounds)	0.67	0.7
1 DP model 1928 LMG	1.74	1.7
10 1891/30 Rifle	0.23	2.3
12 Men Total		4.7

Weapon	Maker	Nationality	Type	Introduced	Calibre (mm)	Band	Clip/drum	ROF/min	metre/sec	FFP	ASL FP
AMERICAN											
M16, M16 A1	Armalite	American	Auto Rifle	1962	5.56		30	45	1000	0.67	
M1	Garand	American	Auto Rifle	1933	7.62		8	12	855	0.32	
M1, M1 A1	Winchester*	American	Auto Rifle	1933	7.62		15	22.5	600	0.46	
M2, M2 A1	Winchester*	American	Auto Rifle	1933	7.62		30	45	600	0.80	
M2HB	Browning	American	Heavy Machinegun	1918	12.7	200	200	300	884	8.24	8
BAR M1918 A2	Browning	American	Light Machinegun	1918	7.62		20	40	808	0.76	
M1919 A4	Browning	American	Medium Machinegun	1919	7.62	150	150	225	854	3.74	4
M1903 A1	Springfeild	American	Rifle	1903	7.62		5	6.25	855	0.23	
M3 A1	GM	American	Sub Machinegun	1941	9		30	45	280	0.84	
M3	GM	American	Sub Machinegun	1941	11.43		30	45	280	1.04	
M1, M1 A1, M1928	Thompson	American	Sub Machinegun	1941	11.43		30	45	280	1.04	
BRITISH											
Vickers Mk 4	Vickers	British	Heavy Machinegun	1938	12.7	200	200	300	744	7.91	8
Bren Gun Mk 1	Enfield	British	Light Machinegun	1937	7.7		20	40	744	0.76	
Vickers-Berthier mk 3	Vickers-Berthier	British	Light Machinegun	1926	7.7		30	60	745	1.07	
Vickers G.O.	Vickers-Berthier	British	Light Machinegun	1940	7.7		96	192	745	3.14	
Vickers Mk1	Vickers	British	Medium Machinegun	1912	7.7	150	150	225	744	3.66	
Carbine Delisle	Delisle-Ford	British	Rifle	1944	11.43		7	8.75	253	0.31	
N°4 Mark I	Lee-Enfield	British	Rifle	1941	7.7		10	12.5	751	0.33	
N°1 Mark III SMLE	Lee-Enfield	British	Rifle	1895	7.7		10	12.5	751	0.33	
Sten Mk II	Enfield	British	Sub Machinegun	1940	9		32	48	365	0.91	
FRENCH											
Modele 1914	Hotchkiss	France	Heavy Machinegun	1931	8	250	250	375	850	6.44	6
Modele 1931	MAS	France	Light Machinegun	1931	7.5		150	150	850	2.50	2
Modele 1924/29	Chatellereault	France	Light Machinegun	1929	7.5		25	50	820	0.91	
Modele 1914	Hotchkiss	France	Medium Machinegun	1931	8	150	150	225	850	3.92	4
Model 1886/93	Lebel-Berthier	France	Rifle	1893	8		8	10	725	0.29	
MAS 36	MAS	France	Rifle	1936	7.5		5	6.25	823	0.23	
Model 1907/15 M34	Lebel-Berthier	France	Rifle	1934	7.5		5	6.25	823	0.23	
Mas 1938	MAS	France	Sub Machinegun	1938	7.65		32	48	350	0.79	
GERMAN											
Sturmgewehr 44	Schmeisser	German	Auto Rifle	1943	7.92		30	45	650	0.84	
Fallshirmjagergewehr 42	Rheinmetall	German	Auto Rifle	1942	7.92		20	30	761	0.62	
Maschinegewehr 42	Mauser	German	Heavy Machinegun	1942	7.92	50X6	300	450	755	7.42	7
Maschinegewehr 34	Rheinmetall	German	Heavy Machinegun	1934	7.92	50X6	300	450	755	7.42	7
Maschinegewehr 42	Mauser	German	Inherent Squad LMG	1942	7.92	50X2	75	112.5	755	1.95	
Maschinegewehr 34	Rheinmetall	German	Inherent Squad LMG	1934	7.92	50	50	75	755	1.35	
Maschinegewehr 42	Mauser	German	Light Machinegun	1942	7.92	50X2	100	200	755	3.37	3
Maschinegewehr 34	Rheinmetall	German	Light Machinegun	1934	7.92	50X2	100	200	755	3.37	3
Maschinegewehr 42	Mauser	German	Medium Machinegun	1942	7.92	50X4	200	300	755	4.99	5
Maschinegewehr 34	Rheinmetall	German	Medium Machinegun	1934	7.92	50X4	200	300	755	4.99	5
Gewehr 98	Mauser	German	Rifle	1898	7.92		5	6.25	640	0.23	
Karabiner 98k	Mauser	German	Rifle	1898	7.92		5	6.25	755	0.23	
MP 38, MP 40	Schmeisser	German	Sub Machinegun	1938	9		32	48	365	0.91	
MP 34, MP 35	Bergmann	German	Sub Machinegun	1935	9		32	48	365	0.91	
ITALIAN											
Modello 37	Breda	Italian	Heavy Machinegun	1937	8	20X12	240	360	790	6.08	6
Modello 37	Breda	Italian	Inherent Squad LMG	1937	8	20X2	40	60	790	1.12	
Modello 37	Breda	Italian	Light Machinegun	1937	8	20X3	60	120	790	2.12	2
Modello 30	Breda	Italian	Light Machinegun	1930	6.5		20	40	629	0.64	
Modello 37	Breda	Italian	Medium Machinegun	1937	8	20X8	160	240	790	4.10	4
Modello 1938 A	Beretta	Italian	Sub Machinegun	1938	9		30	45	420	0.88	
JAPANESE											
Type 99	Nambu	Japan	Light Machinegun	1922	7.7		30	60	730	1.07	
Type 38	Arisaka	Japan	Rifle	1905	6.5		5	6.25	731	0.21	
Type 100	Nambu	Japan	Sub Machinegun	1940	8		30	45	335	0.77	
RUSSIAN											
AVT	Tokarev	Russian	Auto Rifle	1940	7.62		10	15	830	0.37	
DShK 1938	Degtyerev-	Russian	Heavy Machinegun	1938	12.7	50X4	200	300	843	8.15	8
SG 43	Stankovi-	Russian	Heavy Machinegun	1943	7.62	50X5	250	375	744	5.95	6
DP model 1928	Degtyerev	Russian	Light Machinegun	1928	7.62		50	100	863	1.74	2
SG 43	Stankovi-	Russian	Medium Machinegun	1943	7.62	50X4	200	300	744	4.79	4
Model 1891/30	Mosin-Nagant	Russian	Rifle	1891	7.62		5	6.25	811	0.23	
Model 1938	Mosin-Nagant	Russian	Rifle	1938	7.62		5	6.25	766	0.23	
AVS 36	Tokarev	Russian	Semi-Auto Rifle	1936	7.62		10	15	830	0.37	
SVT 38	Tokarev	Russian	Semi-Auto Rifle	1938	7.62		10	15	830	0.37	
SVT 40	Tokarev	Russian	Semi-Auto Rifle	1940	7.62		10	15	830	0.37	
PPSh-41	PPSh	Russian	Sub Machinegun	1942	7.62		71	106.5	488	1.65	
PPD-1934/38	PPD	Russian	Sub Machinegun	1935	7.62		71	106.5	488	1.65	

THE TRENCHES

ARMOUR STUDIES REVISED

Charles Markuss

For those of you who are unaware of Charles' work in the ASL field, he has been the author of some of the best articles on nationality distinctions in The General *(on the British) and the ASL* Annual '91 *(on the Japanese). He was a major contributor to the design of the British AFV counter set with Bob McNamara. He is a co designer of published scenarios. This is missing out lots of other contributions he has made to our hobby at the design and development stage that would fill a page. It makes interesting reading. Enjoy! – Pete.*

At the risk of sounding rather negative and over-critical, I would take Lorrin Bird's article '*ASL* Armor Studies' (*The General Vol. 24 No 4*) with a large pinch of salt as it contains some errors, untested assumptions, half-truths and is over-selective in its approach, as will be revealed. Although well intentioned, it seeks to further complicate the game in the name of realism - and succeeds only in the former. My main objections to the piece have not changed since I first read it, and are as follows.

APCR Hits on Sloped Armour

There is no real evidence, and Bird fails to cite any, that APCR suffered to any significant extent against sloped armour. Just what is this German and US data? One modern authority on armoured vehicle technology is Richard M. Ogorkiewicz, author of *Design and Development of Fighting Vehicles* (MacDonald, London 1968) (henceforth cited as *Design*). On page 82 he makes the following point; "The exact effect of sloping of armour depends on the projectile, sloped plates being more effective in the case of APDS [not APCR, you will notice!] shot than in that of full bore projectiles with caps, or with blunt noses which have been used with Russian tank guns". Although the performance of APCR does fall off quicker than APDS over distance, it is/was a more complicated projectile with the outer, lightweight, case aiding penetration by lubricating the area for the solid inner core to then strike. Nowhere does Ogorkiewicz single out APCR for being less effective against sloped armour, even though he is not slow to dwell on its shortcomings in other areas both in Design and in his earlier *Armoured Forces* [*Armor*,

in the USA] (Arms & Armour Press, London, 1960 and 1970). A number of sources make the point that ordinary, ie unsophisticated, AP projectiles ['solid shot'] are more effective against steeply-sloped armour than APCBC, APCR or APDS rounds, but APCR types are never singled-out as being any worse than the others.

Certainly all the data that I have accumulated on armour penetration supports Ogorkiewicz rather than Bird, and if APCR did suffer from a significant performance deterioration against sloped armour we would expect to see it in the penetration figures themselves. As a general rule of thumb, an AP shell will penetrate about 125% more armour sloped at 90 degrees to the horizontal ['normal impact'] than at 60 degrees to the horizontal ['30 degree impact']. Most armour penetration figures are expressed in one or the other, and occasionally but never always, in both. Conversely, the 30 degree inpact figure normally represents about 80% of the normal impact figure. More on this later when discussing some of Bird's other points. If Bird's thesis is correct, we would expect APCR's normal impact, 90 degree, figures to be greater than this 125%: 100% ratio described above, or conversely the 30 degree impact figures to be less than the 80%: 100% ratio. The best test would be to look at figures for penetration at acute angles only, say 30 degrees from the horizontal, but such figures - to my knowledge - do not exist for most weapons. I have tested Bird's thesis against all the data in my possession that cite both 30 and 90 degree impact figures; data for the western Allies uses only 30 degree impact

as a rule, whereas that for the Soviets tends to use 90 degree impact only. Many, but not all, German guns have data for both angles of impact and this does not support Bird, or at least suggests that there was no significant difference in game terms; we are talking millimetres here rather than centimetres.
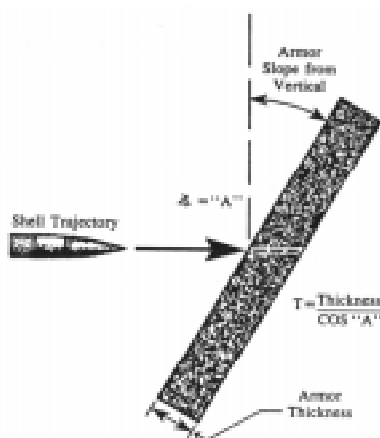
If we compare the ratios for APCR and the standard APCBC, then to prove Bird's theory valid we should see 30 degree impact figures for APCR to be below 80% of the 90 degree impact figures. The German 37L is remarkably consistent between 100 and 500 yds, even though 37L APCR this is a lightweight, small-calibre, shell that should make it a prime candidate for 'the Bird factor' against sloped armour. APCR comes out at 84.31- 86.07%, whereas APCBC varies between 73.91 and 75.0%! Round one to APCR!

For the 50L the APCR performance is also better below 250 yds at 86.66 - 77.3% depending on range, compared to 73.73 - 76.13% for APCBC. For the 75L Pak 40 the APCR performance is worse than APCBC with 77.84 - 63.85% for APCR over 0 to 2000 yds as against 81.2 - 74.48% for APCBC.

For the ex-Soviet 76L in German service the APCR performance is again almost as good as APCBC at close range; 80% at 0 yds for APCR compared to 81.2% for APCBC, but is worse at greater ranges with 74.68 - 66.15% between 500 and 2500 yds, whereas APCBC scores between 81.66 and 82.05% over the same distances.

For the 88LL APCR is also worse at longer ranges; 85.2 - 71.69% between 0 and 2500 yds compared to APCBC 88.0 - 87.93%. But for the 75LL, APCR is about the same with 86.88% at 2000 m compared to between 85.57 - 88.0% for APCBC (figures vary). In any case, neither the 75LL nor 88LL appear ever to have fired APCR in combat due to tungsten shortages; the figures so often quoted by authors were test figures.

The performance of the low-velocity 75* firing basic AP shot is a respectable 80.39% at 500 yds, while the more powerful 50 with APCBC scores only 78.87% at the same range. The APCBC performance of the 75L L/43 varied between 73.55% and 67.53% over 500 to 2000 yds, which is actually worse than the 75LL and 88LL APCR rounds! That for the 75L L/48 firing APCBC at 500 yds is only 72.44%!

What all this suggests to me is that there is not enough firm evidence to prove the Bird thesis, and that performance varies so much from gun to gun and at different ranges that it is too sweeping to lump all the performances of APCR into the same basket, although I do admit that the test sample used above is only a small one. Moreover, Bird does not mention in his article whether or not APCNR, as fired by 'Squeeze-bore' guns (also known as either 'Cone-bore' or 'Taper-bore' weapons), should also be included in his exercise. Strictly speaking they should have been included too, as to all intents and purposes they fire a projectile which is no different to a normal APCR round in shape, appearance and performance after being fired from the gun.

If we examine data for these weapons we find only evidence to support what I have already stated above; the German 28LL's ratios reveal that at short ranges the APCNR round is actually worse at 30 degree impact than at 90 degree impact, 73.4% at 100 yds, 75.5% at 200 yds, 75.9% at 300 yds, and 77.7% at 400 yds. You will notice that it is approaching, over range, our 80% baseline. But between 500 and 800 yds, the sort of ranges when APCR/APCNR is beginning to fall-off in power and the 'Bird factor' should be revealing itself, the performance at 30 degree impact significantly improves, with 78.78% at 500 yds, 80% at 600 yds, 81.48% at 700 yds, and 83.67% at 800 yds. The German 40LL does exactly the same thing ; at 0 yds the ratio is 76.61%, but then steadily improves to 79.04% at 250 yds, 82.75% at 500 yds, 88.57% at 750 yds, and 88.33% at 1000 yds.

Another APCNR weapon excluded from *ASL* because it was fairly rare and short-lived because of tungsten shortages, the German 75mm PaK 41 L/55 (in *ASL* parlance it would be a 55L - my 'L/55' just refers to the bore length expressed in calibres), also shows a similar performance, with 81.63% at 0 yds and slowly improving - in this context a relative term - to 82.25% at 2000 yds.

All these APCR-firing weapons perform better against sloped armour than Bird would have us expect, adding weight to my argument that they cannot be arbitrarily lumped together in the way that Bird has.

Bird's cosine formula is all very well, but he himself admits that it does not give the whole picture and then fails to give more than one example of how sloping affects protection. Many wargamers use the cosine method by default and in ignorance of anything better (Ogorkiewicz's books were not exactly best sellers), albeit by the much

simpler method of drawing the armour thickness out on a sheet of paper and then measuring a straight path through the lines at the relevant angle! The cosine formula devalues the true protection given by sloped armour and over-values that derived from near-vertical faces. TM 9-1914 is hard to get hold of and I have never seen it, but Ogorkiewicz in *Design* gives us all the data we need on p. 83 by supplying two graphs that evaluate (respectively) the 'horizontal' path (the cosine formula), and actual effective thickness through plates at 0 to 90 degrees. Bird's cosine formula merely publicises the former in a way guaranteed to bore all but the most avid mathematician. The cosine formula is a pessimistic assessment of the plate's protective value, whereas Ogorkiewicz's graphs give both the worst and best case values. Faced with the nightmare of calculating AF values for hundreds of vehicles with numerous permutations for each depending on the type of ammunition being fired, Bob McNamara sensibly just took the mid-point between Ogorkiewicz's two graphs, and this is the best we can expect in a game of *ASL*'s overall complexity, especially as meaningful data on the different performances of projectiles is not that easy to come by and, in the final analysis, does not make a great deal of difference to the overall result.

If players really want to determine the fate of each shell being fired they should play *Tobruk* rather than *ASL*, but even this cannot give the whole true picture because it involves far fewer gun, vehicle and projectile types than *ASL*. Moreover, players are likely to get Repetitive Strain Injury from all the dice-rolling in *Tobruk*. The more guns and vehicles, the harder it is to make the whole thing fit into a reasonable approximation of reality, and any tinkering with the system merely distorts the picture to suit a particular prejudice or fetish. As an example, there were 5 different versions of the US 76L, with the M1A2 version at least having a slightly better AP performance when firing APC shot at the longer ranges. Similarly, there were two versions of the vehicle-mounted Soviet 122L, again with slightly different AP characteristics, while the British 57LL came in two different barrel lengths (L/45 and L/52.1) with different characteristics, complicated yet further by the sheer variety of AP munitions successively issued for this gun; AP-T [T = tracer], APC-T, APCBC-T, APCR (briefly) and finally APDS. *ASL*'s German 75L also represents three different guns with slightly different ballistic characteristics; the 75mm PaK 40 L/46, the 75mm L/43 and later 75mm L/48. Even the US 75 and 90L had different types of AP

ammunition available at the same time, giving slightly different performances. Bob has already had to 'weight' some guns to make them fit into the scheme of things historically, and any further tinkering merely threatens to undermine the whole system. To use an American phrase: if it ain't broke, don't fix it!

The 17 pounder

Bird's use of the British 76LL (17 pounder) is a bad example to quote as evidence in his thesis about sloped armour. He contends that this gun "could" penetrate the Panther's glacis plate, worth 18 AF, when in actual fact he should have said that it often could not! Alexander Mckee in *Caen: Anvil of Victory* (London 1984 ed, page 309) cites the case of the 23rd Hussars in Normandy shortly after D-Day who were dismayed to find that even at 300 yds, let alone 500, the 76LL would "frequently" fail to penetrate the glacis plate, and a desert veteran who also served in Normandy, the South African Robert Crisp [author of *Brazen Chariots* - which relates his desert experiences in Stuarts], stated that the 76LL needed three good hits to penetrate as shells tended to merely scuff the surface and bounce off. This is cited in David Fletcher's *The Universal Tank: British Armour in the Second World War Part 2* (HMSO, London, 1993) on pages 111-112. As APDS was not available until the autumn of 1944 these tests must have been conducted with plain AP shot or APCBC; the former penetrated 109mm at 1000 yds 30 degree impact, 120mm at 500 yds - say 150mm at normal impact - and 149mm at 100 yds, but was probably better against sloped armour than these figures suggest. APCBC penetrated 130mm at 1000 yds, and 140mm at 500 yds 30 degree impact, or about 175mm normal impact. I have never seen normal impact figures quoted for this gun, but I think Bird's 180mm is a trifle optimistic in the circumstances. It is also possible, if the user manuals are anything to go by, that 17 pounder APCBC was not available before June 1945 (!), so that the tests might well have only been with plain AP shot. The occasional penetrations in the tests add weight to the theory that AP and not APCBC was being used. The quality of the Panther's armour varied considerably from tank to tank and was further compromised by a carbon content which was much higher than the ideal (due to non-ferrous metal shortages), which made welding extremely difficult. This, I believe, could explain why the 76LL could sometimes but not always penetrate. Using Bird's cosine formula, the Panther's 80mm

glacis plate gave 140mm of 'horizontal' protection but in reality the plate gave up to 224mm; Bob has therefore compromised at 182mm = 18 AF. Bird also gives the T-34/76 with 45mm glacis plate armour as an example and states that the armour sloped at 60 degrees from the vertical gave 90mm of 'horizontal' protection and 117mm of effective protection. Using Ogorkiewicz's graphs the latter value is actually as high as 157mm, and Bob has again taken a mid-point value of 123mm = 11 AF for all the T-34 tank family.

Changing AFs

From all the foregoing I see no justification for changing the AFs for the T-34s, or indeed other vehicles; this is yet another example of where someone with a particular bee in his bonnet feels that an(other) exception should be made to the *ASL* rules for 'his' vehicle. In this, Bird is being highly-selective, for the same arguments he cites could be used to modify the AFs of a host of other vehicles, including the Panther and Jagdpanther (and rendering them impenetrable to APCR from the US 76L and Soviet 85L on the upper hull front - an absurdity), the Japanese Type 97 Te-Ke tankette, the Belgian T-15 LT, the IS-2m, Lee, Grant, and Sherman with 30 degree hull front - to name just some. Where would all this end? With a substantial change to all the Chapter C and D rules and extra complication to burden *ASL* players with! A classic case of where the 'cure' kills the patient!

The IS Turrets

Bird is also wrong about the IS tank turrets. The first batch of the IS-2, about 150 vehicles, used the IS-1 turret with 100mm frontal armour - see Steve Zaloga and Peter Sarson *IS-2 Heavy Tank 1944-1973* (Osprey New Vanguard, London 1994) page 6 (photo caption) and 7. The later, 'standard', IS turret has a triangular chunk cut out of the lower right-hand side of the gun mantlet when viewed from the front, the earlier version lacks this and has a protruding gun shield whereas the later version is more flush with the turret front proper. Although Soviet data is still often sketchy or contradictory there is a well-known photo of an early IS-2 captured and examined by the Germans with,

as usual, the armour thicknesses and angles stencilled on the vehicle in white paint as was their standard practice. This photo appears in both Peter Chamberlain and Chris Ellis' *Soviet Combat Tanks 1939-1945* (Almark Publications, London, 1970 page 61) and, slightly smaller, in Kenneth Macksey's *The Guinness Book of Tank Facts and Feats* (Guinness Superlatives, Enfield, 1972 ed, page 156). The photo shows 100mm for the turret front on either side of the gun mantlet, and what looks like 100mm for the mantlet itself; the numbers are hard to read because of the collar round the gun barrel. This 100mm is not in dispute with Bird in any case. The IS turret mantlet is not only curved very much like that on the Panther's gun mantlet but is also of identical thickness to the Panther's, except that the IS turret is bulbous in shape on either side of the mantlet whereas the Panther's armour is flat and angled at 79 degrees to the horizontal (ie almost vertical) and worth about 104mm on the Panther D and 114mm on the Panther A and G, because it was slightly thicker at 110mm on these last two versions. So, if anything, the IS turret front on either side of the mantlet would, because of this curvature, deflect projectiles more readily than a Panther turret struck in the same place. In *ASL* the Panther turret front is rated at 14 AF because the 100mm rounded mantlet is worth about 133% more in effectice thickness on account of its curvature - as is the IS gun mantlet - giving a notional thickness of 133mm = 14 AF. The small, weaker, areas on the Panther turret front to either side of the gun mantlet are ignored in *ASL* because they were so small in size and constituted another complication that the Critical Hit system already takes care of so well. Note that some sources erroneously give the Panther's gun mantlet as being 120mm thick; it was not.

Bird, in his eagerness to downgrade the armour on the IS tanks to an 11 AF value, also ignores the fact that the Panther gun mantlet was also more likely to deflect projectiles hitting the gun mantlet downwards through the hull roof because the Panther turret was set much further back on the hull than the IS turrets. Balanced against this, the Panther's sloping upper hull front was more likely to deflect projectiles clear of the turret front because of this more rearward position - you cannot have it both ways! Again, these situations are best left for the Critical Hit rules and I would argue that the same should apply to any lucky shots on the IS tanks. Again, where would all this end otherwise? Most IS-2 tanks had the same turret as the IS-2m, and I cannot believe that the Soviets would armour the front of the

turret to 160mm and then foolishly leave the mantlet at just 100mm. I do not know what his sources are, but I suspect that they are German rather than Soviet, and many of the former are demonstrably poor in their objectivity. All my sources state that the later IS turret was 160mm thick at the front and so I see no reason to single out the early IS-2 mantlet for special treatment, but if two players agree that the early version of IS turret is to be used in the game for their IS-2s, then fine - it can be given 14 AF on the turret front. It should not be rated at 11 AF under any circumstances. Bird talks of giving it just 11 on the gunshield, but as we have seen he forgets about both the Panther's 100mm gun mantlet (which gets 14 AF), and the deflective qualities of curvature! The curved 160mm plates on the 'standard' IS turret merit 18 AF because of their deflective value.

Targeting at long range

When talking about the Germans' supposed ability to actually target the IS gun mantlet for special and precise attention, Bird claims that an 88LL penetrated the gunshield at 1.61 miles. So what? Is he claiming that this was a common event? This is just another example of a Critical Hit situation being used to justify something. At such ranges the target would just be a dark smudge in the gunsights, and the idea of targeting the mantlet at other than very close range is absurd. It was/is standard practice to aim at the turret ring when targeting a tank not so much because this is a Critical Hit weak spot, but because it is essentially the centre of the target and thus offers the best chance of a hit somewhere. To quote from Colonel Gordon-Hall in his *Armoured Fighting Vehicles in the Mediterranean Theatre 1939-1945*, a secret report compiled in 1946 for the British Army's School of Tank Technology and copied to me through the good offices of the Bovington Tank Museum, "At the ranges of modern engagements A/T gunners do not and cannot aim at a small point on a tank: they aim at the tank itself and hope that the cross wires will not entirely obscure the target. "Aiming marks" are hardy annuals which come up periodically when a tank has any conspicuous feature, but no one has so far produced any evidence in support of the theory that they lead to increased casualties. Examination of battle damage to Churchills in both North Africa and Italy showed that, in proportion, the mantlet received no more hits than any other part of the turret front and sides". So there! Certainly Bob initially considered making some special rules for vehicles whose mantlets allegedly cast

shadows that could be used as aiming-points, especially British tanks with their internal gun mantlets set behind a rectangular opening in the turret front. However, I reminded Bob that nervous British Sherman crews often painted their external gun mantlets and lower portions of the gun barrels white - most commonly seen on Sherman Fireflies - in order to minimise the shadows cast, and that tanks like the Panther, IS series, T-34 series and a host of others also had external mantlets that cast shadows. Where would all of this have ended?

The difficulty of aiming at a specific point on a tank is illustrated further by Ogorkiewicz in his *Design*, page 135, which contains a diagram 'Pattern of hits on a stationary target under ideal conditions, where 'A' represents the aiming point [centre of target on the turret ring] and 'B' the mean impact point'. 'B' is slightly below and to the right of 'A', and of ten hits shown, 3 were on the turret above 'A', another just to the right of 'A' on the turret ring, and the other 6 on the hull front, all grouped together right of centre. Now, if modernish (1968) fire control systems cannot hit a chosen area under ideal conditions, then I am sure most World War Two gunners - Germans included - could not, and this makes Bird's case for the IS tank turret invalid. Or do we give Balthasar Woll, Wittmann's sometime gunner, special *ASL* status? I think not. The much-vaunted German 88LL could, when the gunner knew his job and under the best combat conditions, achieve a first-round hit at 500 metres against a target 2 x 2.5 metres square. See Tom Jentz, Hilary Doyle and Peter Sarson *King Tiger Heavy Tank 1942-1945* Osprey New Vanguard, London, 1993, pp. 23 and 24. That means, a hit somewhere, not on Bird's mythical IS tank mantlet to order. 2 x 2.5 metres is, after all, a much larger target area than the front of an IS turret. I therefore reject Bird's whole thesis about the IS tank turret (he means turrets because, as we have seen, there were two types).

Certainly German accounts at meeting the IS tanks for the first time (presumably with the earlier, thinner turret front armour) are full of bleatings at the inability of their own guns to penetrate the Soviet tanks at the traditionally long ranges that the Germans sought to fight their actions, and to open fire at 1.61 kilometres, let alone Bird's miles, was just inviting trouble. The Panther's 75LL could not guarantee to penetrate at over 600 metres, so the Tiger I's crews rightly bemoaned the 88L being powerless to reply to the IS tanks, which often opened fire at up to 3000 metres, or more than treble the

mean/average World War Two engagement range (according to Ogorkiewicz, *Design*, page 68). Certainly IS tanks appear to have been invulnerable to Tiger Is above 1500 metres, see Zaloga & Sarson *IS-2 Tank*, pages 9-13 and Steven J. Zaloga and James Grandsen *Soviet Heavy Tanks* (Osprey, London, 1981, pp. 28-9).

Split Armour Ratings

Some of Bird's comments do have merit, particularly his points about the thinner lower hull front armour but he is again advocating the introduction of over-selective exceptions that just further complicate the rules, since in certain situations the lower hull front could not be seen/hit due to intervening obstacles or objects, or because the firer had a significant height advantage relative to the target. Bird also forgets that the lower hull front armour usually slopes away from the projectile's path, and this must also increase the tendency of shot to bounce off and down rather than through the armour. After seeing the first draft of this article Bob McNamara replied, "As I recall (dare I trust my fading memory?), Ogorkiewicz said that the very reason lower hull front armor was thinner than that on the upper hull was due to the fact that at normal combat ranges the lower front was almost always masked by undulations in the ground [I cannot find the comment]. And your other points about it being affected by the firer's height advantage and its slope are well taken".

As to AFs, the whole problem with split armour ratings revolves around the lack of space on the vehicle counters in *ASL*. I did suggest to Bob that to increase the 'fog of war', keep costs down and allow for more detailed AFs, he use generic rather than variant-specific vehicle counters in *ASL*, with separate off-board cards/data sheets to identify the particular sub-variant vehicle in play and showing all the AFs and other data. Bob's response was that US gamers would find this unacceptable; they preferred everything to be on the vehicle counters themselves. Well fine, but the price of this is that the AFs have had to be condensed/simplified and counter symbology problems prevented the use of split AF ratings where the turret and hull values, respectively, differed by more than one step in *ASL*'s scale of armour ratings. Andy Daglish, replying to the first draft of this article, suggested various symbology solutions; so did I at the time, Andy, but Bob felt unable to use them. Personally, I mark the relevant armour factor on the counter with a small red dot, alerting me to the fact that it is not quite right for the

purist. If I and my opponent then wish to be more precise and use the true value, we have an aide memoir built-in. Certainly the Deacon's turret front is over-AF'd, as is the Belgian T-15 LT, and there would be similar problems with vehicles like the Porsche-turreted King Tiger, the 'LT' reworked Churchill tanks, among others, if they were to be also now represented in the game.

Cast Armour vs. Rolled Plate

Bird is also correct about cast armour being softer than rolled plate, but forgets that its often rounder shapes tend to deflect shells easier. Cast armour is softer but also less brittle - ie stronger and less prone to shatter; if it severely compromised protection it would never have been used so much. If we make a specific exception in *ASL* for the KV-1 side armour then we should also apply it to the Sherman M4A1 side AFs, to the Matilda II entirely, and indeed to every tank that has a significant portion of cast armour on the turret or hull. Again, where is this to all end? At the end of the day the armour rules in *ASL* are of necessity the best compromise in an already very complicated game. Remember that complexity alone does not guarantee realism, and that total realism leads to total unplayability. Bird's article is interesting to read but at the end of the day it is tinkering to no real purpose save gilding the proverbial lilly. All the points he raises with evidence to support them (as we have seen, this is not always the case) were considered at some point during *ASL*'s creation and rejected, sometimes very reluctantly. If people really want all this detail (judging by the negative feedback given in a later issue of *The General* to his article, most players do not) then they should either play tank-heavy games with miniatures and ditch all the non-armour rules, or they should play other board games that address this particular issue better. Few games do, except perhaps *Tobruk*, and this covers only part of World War Two armoured combat. Even here the purists will fall foul of what is really practicable for even a computer, let alone board, game if present software that I have seen is anything to go by. The *Steel Panthers* system, for axample, merely copies inaccurately *ASL*'s AF system in electronic form. I cannot comment about Talonsoft's *Eastern Front* and *Western Front* as I do not own them.

Bird's Vital Contribution

Bob has this to say about Lorrin Bird's contribution to the *ASL* armour rules as I had

no knowledge of it, and he was never mentioned to me by Bob in our voluminous correspondence. "I want to point out that the current To Kill system in *ASL* was conceived by Lorrin Bird, so he should get the proper credit and thanks for it. I believe it was back when Don Greenwood and I were developing the *SL* gamette *GI: Anvil of Victory* that Lorrin and I struck up a correspondence and he presented me with his ideas on improving the original TK system. What he suggested was far superior to the existing method, and I lobbied Don successfully to incorporate it. Lorrin's suggestion remains essentially what *ASL* uses today, so we all owe him a tip 'o' the hat for it. And if I ever failed to give him full credit for his contribution when I should have, I accept full blame for not doing so. Thank you, Lorrin!".

Schürzen vs. ATRs

Lastly, schürzen. This is actually the German word for 'aprons', not skirts; it loses something in translation. They were made of 8mm mild steel for the turrets of PzKfw III and IV, and the hull plates were 5mm thick. I would dearly love to know the source of a quotation mentioned to me about schürzen "saving the Panther I" from an ATR as this really is an absolute gem of melodramatic nonsense! Even at point-blank range the Soviet PTRD and much rarer PTRS ATRs could not penetrate the 40mm vertical lower hull side armour of the Panther; the best they could manage was about 37.5mm, assuming a perfect strike angle. On lighter vehicles, making schürzen from only mild steel rather than armour plate would still make some sense even if they were intended to defeat just ATR projectiles as even mild steel offers some increase in protection for the weight involved. To quote Bob, "Striking anything of even medium density during its flight can cause a small projectile to tumble, definitely diminishing its penetrative capability. (I have a video that shows how even a few small twigs can cause .50-cal MG bullets to tumble). To be honest, I wasn't aware of this when I wrote the schürzen rules; however, when I did learn of it I decided to leave the rule alone due to its generic nature anyway. As you pointed out [see below], individual schürzen plates were often missing or misaligned, and an ATR gunner would generally have little trouble shooting at where the schürzen weren't". The Soviet ATRs could just about penetrate the side armour of the PzKfw III and IV if the strike angle was good, although the IV E had 20mm + 20mm applique side armour that would often defeat it, and such vehicles reworked to later variants' standards during overhaul and/or repair would be encountered now and again right to the end of the war. Again, *ASL* has no real place for these. How often schürzen defeated ATR is difficult to assess, but for *ASL* purposes it does not really matter since ATR are at best marginally-effective weapons.
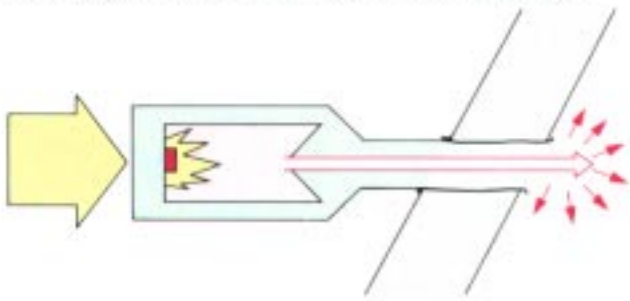
As the ATRs would not penetrate the Panther's lower hull sides, and as the latter's small schürzen did not extend up to protect the upper hull sides from HEAT rounds, there was no point in including them in *ASL*; yet another example of a neat way to avoid pointless complication. If there was space in *ASL* for lower hull AFs, the Panther's hypothetical 4 AF could, in theory, be penetrated by ATRs at 0 or 1 hex range, since Soviet ATRs get a modified 8 TK value, but this would be both unhistorical and would also ignore the protective value of the Panther's interleaved road wheels. The situations covered in footnote 13 to the Chapter C rules on page C20 are to my mind well covered by the Critical Hit rules anyway; this provides opportunity enough for 'special cases'. Certainly the Soviets would routinely fire at all German tanks, even Panthers and Tigers, with ATRs because hits on the glass vision blocks or periscopes would help to impair vehicle visibility and occasionally killed or injured German crewmen - the Critical Hit system suffices!

To guarantee the defeat of ATR rounds the schürzen on PzKfw III and IV tanks or their SP cousins would need to have been made from armour plate, but this would have merely added to the weight burden of vehicles with suspensions that were already groaning under their existing loads; the PzKfw IV H and J retained the thin 50mm turret front armour because the 80mm hull front plates were about as much as the springs could bear, and the Panther was already about 8 tons heavier that desired. All my sources, including Ogorkiewicz, indicate that schürzen were designed to minimise (not defeat) the effects of HEAT rounds, as mild steel is almost as effective against these munitions as armour plate is, but is lighter, cheaper and quicker to make/cut to size, spot-weld (remember my comments about the high carbon content of late-war German armour plate) and, perhaps, replace - thus placing less strain on strategic materials and war production capacity. Also note that late-war PzKfw IVs and other AFVs got wire mesh hull screens instead, and these would have been less effective against ATR, while the Soviets and western Allies also sometimes improvised such mesh screens from old bed-springs in order to augment the protection against the HEAT rounds from Panzerfausts or Panzerschrecks. No, schürzen were introduced, like Zimmerit anti-magnetic paste, merely as a quick, cheap and useful means to protect German vehicles from an anticipated Allied response to Germany's own introduction of HEAT ammunition. With hindsight we now know that the Soviets, too, had been experimenting with a Bazooka-type infantry ATW before
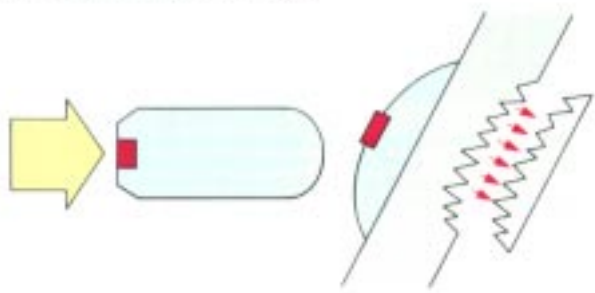
A StuG III with four plates of Schuertzen armour. The different pattern on the rear plate suggests it was added at some point after the other three.

High-explosive anti-tank ammunition effect

HESH ammunition effect

the war started, and this could have seen action, but in reality this was yet another victim of the upheavals after Stalin's purges - see Terry J. Gander *The Bazooka: Hand-held Hollow-charge Anti-tank Weapons* (Pargate, London, 1998, pp. 10-12).

Schürzen, HEAT and HESH

First bear in mind that these were easily and quickly lost in combat; just driving through low vegetation could misplace or tear them off, and unless we keep a detailed record of which vehicle is intact and which has lost the odd plate, we need to make some sweeping assumptions. Effectively, we have all or nothing - less than ideal, but the best compromise (again). Moreover, after hitting the schürzen, a HEAT round detonating properly would remove a large chunk of this outer skirting, creating a gap that the next HEAT round would benfit from, and this is one reason why the PZKfw IVs are being toasted so easily; in effect they are being hit more than just once in the same general area and no Schuertze remains to ward-off the subsequent shot(s). Remember that an *ASL* game turn represents two minutes of real time, and that one roll of the dice does not necessarily equate to one shot from a PIAT. Most infantry ATW had a reasonably good ROF, even if *ASL* dos not give them multiple rates (see also footnote 30 to Chapter C on page C21) and one attack on a PzKfw IV in *Pegasus Bridge* actually represents two minutes of trying to knock the thing out with a PIAT. This is just one of many reasons why schürzen appear to be so ineffective; they are sacrificial plates intended to pre-detonate the HEAT round before it reaches the ideal/ critical 'stand-off' distance from the main armour plate in order to achieve maximum penetration. But the side armour of the Pzkfw III, 'IV and many SP derivatives was a very thin 30mm, so that even with schürzen a HEAT round would have a largish margin of 'overkill' against the side armour, although even that is not the whole story. I include an interesting snippet received from Bob: "In 12/44 the U.S. National Defense Research Committee published the *Review of Principles Involved in Protecting Armored Vehicles against Shaped-Charge Weapons* by Emerson Pugh. One of the observations made in this memorandum was that spaced armor achieved only "some success" in defending against HEAT projectiles. It was most effective against "rotated projectiles [ie fired from rifled guns] and those of poor or slightly unsymetrical [sic] construction". It then went on to say: "However, the penetrating power of many of the modern unrotated projectiles [ie rockets/missiles] is actually increased by spacing a thin plate a short distance in front of the basic armor. Thus spaced armor may in some cases be detrimental. Since most of these unrotated projectiles explode at values of standoff smaller than their optimum the added spacing improves their standoff". This little-known fact - that schürzen could actually "increase" the effectiveness of HEAT by making it explode at a more optimum distance from the armor plate (the "standoff" distance) was one of the major reasons that they are only mildly effective in *ASL*. And to my knowledge no other game system take this into account".

The optimum stand-off distance will of course vary somewhat according to the calibre and construction of the HEAT round, and also according to where it actually strikes, hence Bob's "could" rather than "would". schürzen were intended to augment the thin side armour of the PzKfwIII and 'IV family quickly and cheaply, not to make the tanks invulnerable to, especially, the larger HEAT rounds under any but the most favourable circumstances. I can only repeat that if players find this too abstract, then perhaps *ASL* is not for them, and I defy anyone to come up with a workable, playable, alternative to the existing rules. Remember that schürzen double the score of the lower die roll for TK purposes, and although this will often not suffice to save the target from destruction, it will save the odd vehicle now and again - that was the real-life purpose of schürzen.

HESH was first developed for use against concrete fortifications (Ogorkiewicz, Design, p. 71), and like HEAT is a versatile projectile that is also effective against 'soft' targets. Unlike HEAT, HESH's performance is not degraded when fired from a rifled barrel (which spins the projectile to enhance accuracy but breaks up the explosive jet from a HEAT round and thus roughly halves the penetration). It is also more effective than HEAT against armour - although the differences are relative and should be kept in perspective. In fact, most nations prefer to retain HEAT, which is testimony enough to its effectiveness regardless of the claims made for HESH. Both are easily defeated by spaced armour (schürzen being merely one form of this) or sandwiched armour like Chobham because, again, the sacrificial outer armour pre-detonates the projectile either too far, or at least further away, from the main armour than is necessary to inflict significant damage.

Anyone feeling aggrieved about World War Two HEAT rounds should bear in mind that they were far less effective than modern ones. For un-spun projectiles, a penetration depth of up to 4 times the projectile calibre is the order of the day, for spun projectiles without the device used by the French AMX 30 (to prevent the HEAT warhead spinning with the shell's outer casing), twice the calibre equivalent can be expected. Because World War Two infantry-fired HEAT rounds were un-spun they could penetrate to about double the calibre of the projectile, even if the quality of the munitions was poorer than the case today. HEAT rounds from rifled weapons usually only managed their calibre equivalents, or at little more - the German 88mm guns managed 90mm, the British 95mm howitzer on CS tanks 110mm, the US 105mm howitzer 100mm and the Japanese 70mm gun about 70mm.

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THE **COWTRA** MANTRA

"Concentrate on what the rules do allow..."

John Brock

The COWTRA shibboleth. Perhaps the worst accidental evil perpetrated on the game of *ASL* short of VBM Freeze itself, COWTRA fell victim of its own success and has become an excuse for the most literal-minded *ASLRB* interpreters.

Like everything else in the *ASLRB*, COWTRA must be read and understood in context.

WHY?

Why did the designers put that paragraph in the rulebook? Because they wanted to be able to just write what the rules WERE, and not what the rules WERE NOT, in order to save space. They wanted to be able to just write:

"Count to three before throwing the HHGOA,"

instead of writing:

"Thou shalt count to three before throwing the Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch. Thou shalt not count to four; neither shalt thou count to two, excepting as thou then passest on to three. Five is Right Out!".

On the surface, it's a very good idea. Without it, we might easily have a 1200 page rulebook. And its value is not diminished by the fact that people so often ignore COWTRA, or that a large percentage of the Q&A sent to the rules meisters would not have needed to be asked if the person asking the question had simply applied COWTRA.

PROBLEM 1

So, why ARE there so many people who don't apply COWTRA? Well, probably for two reasons. One is that, like Marx's version of communism, COWTRA turns out to be a wonderfully idealistic concept that doesn't work so well in the real world. The massive, sprawling, poorly cross-referenced nature of the *ASLRB* means that unless the page you are looking at specifically prohibits the action you want to take, there is always the possibility that there's some other page out there that specifically allows it, which you simply haven't found yet. It becomes much simpler to send in a Q&A, rather than to go over every page of the *ASLRB* making sure that you haven't missed the appropriate reference.

[This is also why it's so hard to exorcise the ghosts of *SL* from our minds. As the Introduction puts it, "if a distantly recalled rule isn't found herein... it has been removed!" Well, guess what you have to do to be sure the rule you distantly recall was an *SL* legacy that was removed, rather than a valid *ASL* rule that you've simply misplaced? You have to go through all the places it could possibly be in the *ASLRB*, to make sure that it is not found therein! How much easier it would have been on the grognards to see a few

statements in the *ASLRB* to the effect of, "Note: This rule represents a major change from the *SL* version!"]

PROBLEM 2

The second reason why people ignore COWTRA is that they see a rule which strikes them as so blatantly wrong and unrealistic that they honestly can't believe the designers intended things to work that way. And in fact, they have a perfectly valid point! The biggest flaw with both COWTRA and the policy of "only writing what the rules ARE" is the underlying assumption that 'the designers thought of everything'.

The US Constitution doesn't discuss TV, radio, airplanes, steamships, or dozens of other things that simply weren't imaginable in 1787. In the same way, the *ASLRB* only discusses those situations the designers foresaw during the design process, or which were encountered during the initial play tests. They couldn't write rules about situations that had never even crossed their minds. [EX: why do rules O.1 to O.8 exist? Because they all deal with situations which the designers did not consider when they wrote the original rules for Sewers, Fortified Buildings, Rubble, Factories, and so on; and until the play test of *RB*, those rules were so little used that the questions had never been raised before.]

But now toss COWTRA into this mix. Roughly put, it amounts to saying, "Don't try to read between the lines." As the literalists interpret this, it means, "Only that which is specifically discussed in the *ASLRB* is legal."

What this amounts to is saying that if the designers failed to mention it in the *ASLRB* because they didn't think of it, then no matter how obvious and logical it may be, it's presumed illegal.

This is patently absurd; the intent of COWTRA is not to prevent people from coming up with reasoned, logical answers to questions that the designers never even thought of. And this is one of the reasons I say the *ASLRB* has to be read in context and with an open mind. It's the only way one can hope to figure out what the designers left out intentionally, and what they just didn't think of.

SOME EXAMPLES

In context and with an open mind, it's easy to recognise that the rowhouse rules are full of things that the designers didn't consider. And it's even easier to recognise that split-level buildings were so little used that no one would have found ANY holes in them. Board 15 isn't part of the *ASL* modules, leaving 24U4 as the only split-level building that would have been encountered during the early play tests, and it's only actually a split-level building in ONE *Paratrooper* scenario! So for example the possibility that the idea of

"rowhouse bypass" for split-level buildings was considered and rejected is, in my educated opinion, about nil. As far as I'm concerned, COWTRA doesn't even apply here. It's a clear question for Q&A, and until one is submitted and answered I'll play that it's allowed.

Some might argue "If a woods or building happens to be in a hex then I can move along the hexside, but if the woods or building is removed then I can't??".

Counter-argument: Again a game issue. The only reason why one would WANT to do this is to avoid an enemy LOS. As such, allowing the player to do this would be too much of an unrealistic game tactic - it would allow the player too much ability to avoid enemy fire.
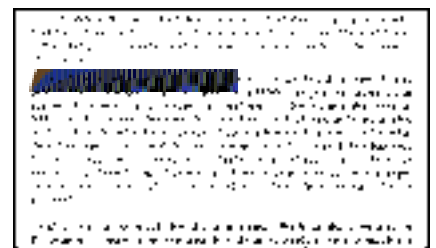
Again "If I look down an adjacent hexspine at a wall/hedge vertex, then my LOS is blocked beyond two hexes, but if I ADD another obstacle to LOS in the form of a wall along that adjacent hexspine then my LOS is clear even beyond two hexes?? Adding an obstacle makes LOS clear??".

I would have agreed with you on this one; it seems absurd on the surface, and I could never figure out why they wrote the rule that way. But while thinking about the question I finally had a brainstorm that I think explains their reasoning. I think this is the designers' way of solving the "straight wall, crooked hexsides" issue. If you look at the B9.1 EX and picture both the X5-X8 wall and the Z7-Z8 hedge as being real-world straight lines, you will see that the two units really SHOULD be able to see each other. Yes, there will be situations where the results are still unrealistic, but not that many.

FINALLY

Some think of COWTRA as "Consider Only What The Rulebook Allows", but this is incorrect - and the difference, while it may seem a trivial one, can also be an important one. The actual statement is: "Concentrate on what the rules do allow..." The former way is a firm injunction against considering any other possibilities. The way it is actually stated, it is much closer to being a guideline of the best way to gain an understanding of the rules.

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Ten Questions With ... Eddie Zeman

Brien Martin

Eddie Zeman is one of the owners of Heat Of Battle, one of the third party manufacturers of *ASL* products. Their recent release, *Waffen SS II: The Fuhrer's Firemen*, has received numerous good reviews. I recently sent my "Ten Questions" survey to Eddie and asked if he would take a few minutes to reply. Here is the transcript of that exchange that followed.

Name: Eddie, er...I think....is this a trick question?
City: Los Angeles
ASL Club affiliation (if any): Southern California *ASL* Club (thanks Kent)
Born: September 25, 1963.
Birthplace: Denver, Colorado.

BRIEN: How did you get involved playing *ASL*?
EDDIE: In 1986 I moved to Chicago to start my Pro Football career with the Bears and saw Bob Bendis' name on a hobby shop wall. Bob taught me a lesson during the off-seasons and during the cold winters when I couldn't do any running. Two months after our first *SL* game I fell in love with his sister and almost married her, but she was too smart for that and dumped me after two years. I signed with the Rams, moved to LA and then didn't see much of Bob or any other *ASL*ers for about 3 years....then all hell broke loose!

BRIEN: What led you to designing scenarios and modules?
EDDIE: My career ended in 1990 with a blown out knee. For the next three years I drank my way through my post-career blues...in 1993 I stopped drinking and partying, and went stone cold straight for another 2 years. During the first few months on the 'wagon' I entered my "blue stage". Very depressed. On Saturday nights I would stay home and indulge myself in creative thoughts to keep my mind off of the parties going on around me. Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights- up 'till 2 AM- no shower- no shave, all weekend- big bummer....but I drew a lot of *ASL* maps and read a lot of battles. I met Steve D in 1994 and I guess he had been doing the same thing since he got home from the Gulf War (but he was starting a family while rather anything destructive). Steve earned a lot of medals in that war, front line officer, and he is one of my heroes but doesn't know it.

BRIEN: What is the process that you go through to choose the subject matter of each module?
EDDIE: The first step is a secret, but step two requires that we check to make sure we have enough materials to accurately portray the battle. Then it's define the battle "time-sequence". Then we work on the 'feel' of the battle. Next, its getting the OB for the forces involved. If all of these things 'line up' then we go for it.

BRIEN: From start-to-finish, what is the approximate time it takes for HoB to complete a new module?
EDDIE: An *HASL* module takes about 12-15 months. We work on them concurrently since much of the work creates some lag time that we fill with research into another product. But once we get going and start the design process, it's about a year. Recently we have designed some scenario packs (although I won't 'plug' them here) and we have been able to knock those out in about 3-4 months. They are VERY rewarding for our creative side.

BRIEN: Errata has received a lot of "bad press" lately. What steps does HoB take to reduce/eliminate the really "dumb" errors from its products (like typos and simple omissions)?
EDDIE: HOB is plagued with many 'typos' simply because we put out many more pages in our product than most others do. Basically, simplifying and streamlining really have helped us over the years to keep such errors to a minimum. *Fortress Cassino* is proof of this. At the final stage of production, we let several new sets of eyes go over the product. Sometimes we have 'parties' where several of us get together and look at the material. Our newest protection against errors is to have our play-testers use a scenario card formatted sheet to play-test from. In the past we used to give them a regular sheet of paper that might say: 658 x3, 8-0 x2, LMG x2, etc. When we would transpose that into a scenario card format we would loose all of the 'eyes' that had play-tested the scenario and we would be starting from scratch trying to weed out the errors.

BRIEN: What, besides declining sales, do you feel is the biggest threat to a small company like HoB?
EDDIE: Competition. In the past years we have had to battle with Ray (and others) at CH in their attempts to compete with us. We have had to fend off many disgusting acts of selfishness (disguised as "normal business procedures") in order to protect ourselves from his attempts to copy our designs. Many other designers have had the same problem but I will let them speak for themselves. Currently, we are about to be confronted by the Hasbro/MMP people in their attempts to harness/contain HOB as a contributing resource to *ASL*. We don't know how that will end up, but it looks grim.

BRIEN: Who are your modules designed for? Casual *ASL* players? Or the real Fanatics?
EDDIE: They are designed for neither. We design our games for the routine player. A player who does not have to be incredibly astute with the rules in order to play (or play well) one of our games. We use Night, Glider, PTO, etc for designs in which we are trying to round out a scenario pack by offering a bit of difficulty.

BRIEN: What is your all-time favourite *ASL* scenario and why?
EDDIE: 'Hill 621'. It never ends till the very end.

BRIEN: What types of "toys" do like to see in scenarios you play and why?
EDDIE: I like 8 ML troops because you can go for it whenever you want and you can push the envelope of the unimaginable. I like the Tiger I because it has such a great reputation and because, in *ASL* terms, it is not the 'dominant' tank that it was cracked up to be. Its 88L gun does not always mean that you are making a TK DR just to see if the target is a burning wreck or not (like the 88LL). It's always a competitive fight with one of those babies.

BRIEN: Final question: Wilma Flintstone or Betty Rubble?
EDDIE: Pebbles....in 10 years.

I would once again like to thank Eddie for his time and for his answers. Here's hoping that he and the other TPMs continue to produce quality *ASL* components, well into the future.

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Combat! Normandy

Squad Leader II?

Norman Smith

I will not be supporting Combat! *in the pages of* VFTT*, because this is an ASL mag. However I am included this review and the accompanying article by CH as they may be of interest to ASLers who want to see how* Combat! *compares to ASL - Pete*

Many years ago, I bought and enthusiastically played and replayed Avalon Hill's *Squad Leader*. The next module *Cross of Iron* equally captivated me but the two modules that followed that made rule assimilation difficult with successive rule books revising earlier rules.

When *Advanced Squad Leader* was announced, I thought this would be a new edition, bringing all the (now disjointed) rules of the system together into one orderly rulebook. Well it wasn't; *ASL* surprised many by essentially totally replacing the earlier stuff (except for the boards). In my disappointment, I wrote to Avalon Hill, suggesting that they do a 'Captain's Edition' of *ASL*, by updating the basic game with new standard counters for all nations from the first four modules and updating the rules from those games into a single volume. The result would allow the captain's edition to serve as an introduction to the world of *ASL*. It never happened and as *ASL* became progressively bigger and basic *SL* became unsupported, I stopped playing both. I say all of this because *Combat! Normandy* strikes me as being the captain's edition of the game that I always wanted.

THE RULES

It is difficult to discuss *Combat! Normandy* without making direct reference to *SL/ASL* because this game is a very close

relative to those two systems. Obviously they deal with the same subject, that is, tactical World War Two, using squads and individual vehicles with a scale of 50 metres to the hex.

The good news is that all of this is contained in 16 pages of rules with good clear print, although the page count of later editions will almost certainly grow as presently many of the rules are not explained in sufficient depth. The down side is that the 'programmed learning' system of *Squad Leader* has been dropped so those who have never been exposed to the *SL/ASL* system will have a lot of detailed rules to digest in one go. As the game covers the actions of the 82nd Airborne, some rules (such as river crossings, fortified buildings, bunkers) are not present, although they will appear in later modules when appropriate.

The rules are similar to the original *Squad Leader* with bells and whistles from the later modules added. Certainly the language of *SL* is here. Squads, half squads, support weapons, NCOs (read leaders), bypass movement, stairwells, line of sight, Morale Check (MC), defensive fire, AFV overrun, smoke, wall, hedge, close combat (CC) and fire for effect (FFE) are just some of the many terms that are to *SL/ASL* friendly. As a consequence, the rules of *Combat! Normandy* are more easily read, or should I say interpreted. I say interpreted because the rules in their present form often fall short in fully explaining a procedure, leaving the player having to check against other rules or using *SL* experience to compensate. The rule writer has assumed the reader has some knowledge of the *SL* system rather than ensuring that the rules have absolute clarity. I used to own 4th edition *Squad Leader* and even then questions were still being raised,

but in *Combat! Normandy*, the under explanation is so prevalent that to fully address the problem the rules are in need of a rewrite, probably only expanding the system by a couple of pages or so. I am led to believe that a new rulebook (v1.2) is being prepared.

On the positive side, the rule brevity does appear to evidence an ethos of wanting to make the rules tight and to eliminate all those dreadful 'rule exceptions' that appear to follow so many *ASL* rules. I am left with the impression that the intention of the design was to take an *ASL* type of design and strip out all the ultra detailed chrome to present a system more in keeping with the original *Squad Leader* system. If that is so, I am at a loss to understand why the actual combat resolution of the game uses such a convoluted process.

THE COMBAT SYSTEM

To test the system, I set up the first scenario 'The Milling Crowd'. It has few units and does not use artillery or vehicles, yet within moments of play, I became a confused victim of the rulebook, charts and combat process. Play shuddered to a halt as I flicked between rules and game charts to simply bring on a unit and subject it to defensive fire. The squad and support weapon counters do not display any information, rather, each player has a play aid card, where everything has it's own line of factors.

For example, a German squad has a range of 12 hexes with a different level of firepower for each of those hexes. The squad also has an inherent machine gun with a range of 16 hexes and different levels of firepower for each of those hexes. Lets say

two German Squads and a MG42 combine their fire against a stack of two American squads in a building six hexes away. Then the following process is typical:

1. Total fire factors at six hexes (33 for each squad + 16 for each inherent MG + 54 for the MG42) gives 152 fire points - I know this because I had to work it out on my calculator!

2. Go to the fire table and cross index the fire factor with a percentage die roll. The die roll, say 33, is modified with a +25 for fire at a building, giving a result of C/M+20.

3. C/M+20 means one American squad is flipped to a half squad and the other must take a morale check but add 20 to the dice roll.

4. The basic troop quality of an American squad is 55. It gets a +10 for being in a building and a +5 for being with another unit (there are 19 possible modifiers altogether on this chart) so it's modified troop quality is now 70. Roll the dice and add the 20 point penalty. If the score is less than the troop quality then the unit has passed. If it fails by 1 - 20 the testing unit would be pinned, if it failed by more than 20 it would instead be disrupted.

As you can see, there is quite a bit of maths involved. Some may like the idea of weapon ranges being always measurable, frankly, certainly when taken across the whole game, I think its too much maths and not enough fun.

I have not tried combat with vehicles or guns yet, each of these have their own chart for each target. That is for example, there are 3 different German vehicles in the game, so there are 3 bazooka charts (1 for effects against each vehicle), 3 Sherman tank charts, 3 x 57mm anti tank gun charts (get the picture). Each chart is substantial, having at least 5 lines of information/figures on them to co-ordinate facing, range and the degree of kill.

THE SEQUENCE OF PLAY

It's a shame that the combat side of the game is so unfriendly because the sequence of play is actually very good, giving lots of very interactive play. The sequence is divided into 3 main phases.

1. Command phase. A sort of joint admin phase in which all yellow markers (pin, disrupt and casualty) can be removed or reduced i.e. a disrupt reduces to a pin.

2. Fire & Movement phase. A joint phase using alternate impulses. The first player selects a unit to move and/or fire (or a group of units if platoon move/fire is used). The impulse then goes to the other player who does the same and then the first player goes again etc. etc. This continues until both players pass consecutively. Units are marked after movement and fire, multiple fire is allowed when appropriate and of course one

or both players may be desperate to end the phase early in an effort to try and recover some units in the next command phase before they degrade into actual losses.

3. Melee Phase. Also a joint phase and very reminiscent of the Close Combat Phase in *Squad Leader*.

THE COMPONENTS

The quality of the components is fine. All the counters are the small ½" type and are presented on one sheet, squads have their half squads printed on their reverse and the counters are clean as all unit information is presented on a separate quick reference card (small print) rather than the counter face. The lack of information on the counter faces might even encourage some to develop their own rules and charts to make their own unique game.

There are three maps (16" x 25" each) in total, each using over size hexes (nice, apparently to encourage miniatures to be used but mainly helpful when dealing with stacks), basically, if you've seen a *SL* board you will know what to expect.

There are three play aid cards (plus the free replacement for one of them), again nicely set out though the print is smaller than I would have wished for.

The 15 scenarios come in their own booklet (called a firefight booklet - which is typical of the many examples in this game where new labels are used rather than recognised dialogue, i.e. firefight instead of scenario). The scenario's are set out in standard *SL* format, although a nice touch is the drawing on each scenario has been replaced by a real photo, showing a terrain feature and naming the hex number that the picture relates to.

The artwork on the box is very good, it is an artists painting, showing a group of Para's huddled around a Sherman tank and I can well understand the frustration of those who have complained that their boxes have been damaged in the post through inadequate packaging.

Whilst the cover artwork is strong, the rear of the box is a let down. It does not give the buyer the valuable information needed to make an informed decision on purchase.

All in all, 15 scenarios and three maps does provide plenty of replay value to those who are happy

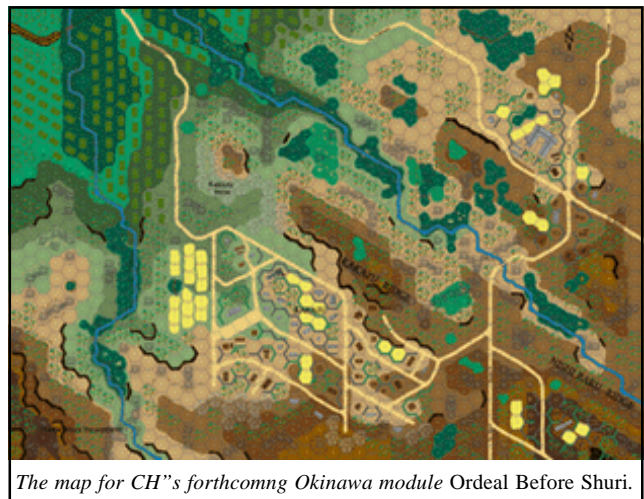with the system.

CONCLUSIONS

The first time that I played this game, I was forced to stop early on turn 1. I had read the rules and felt quite comfortable with them, assuming that since much sounded like *Squad Leader*, that it would roughly play the same - it doesn't. My grasp on the rules was actually much less than required. I reread the rules, especially concentrating on the full page that gives examples of play and then on one of the maps, then set up a small firefight with a couple of squads and a machine gun on each side and re ran that about half a dozen times. Even with this preparation, my opening moves of the scenario creaked along.

I have a preference towards low complexity and playable games (which is why I bought *Combat! Normandy* in the first place) and in that context, I find the excessive use of charts and mathematics in *Combat! Normandy* somewhat tedious.

I imagine the game will mostly appeal to those who want a tactical game but shy from the size of *ASL*. In it's present form it is probably comparable in terms of complexity with The Gamers *Tactical Combat Series*, although I expect a second edition rulebook will make this the less complex of the two games. An early appearance of a second edition rulebook may encourage me to return to this game.

As a final thought, many of the trappings of this game are rooted in the original *Squad Leader* game by John Hill; that game was an amazing step forward in game design. I think it would have been appropriate for Critical Hit to recognise in the game credits the contribution that John Hill made to games of this ilk.

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The map for CH"s forthcomng Okinawa module Ordeal Before Shuri.

COMBAT! ACCORDING TO CH

The following comments have been taken from numerous emails that Ray Tapio and Kurt have Martin posted to the ConsimWorld Discussion Board regarding Combat! *and the CH Web Site. I thought I would include them here for your interest –* Pete.

When I see guys in my basement around an *ASL* game session there's a lot of hooting and hollering, occasional high-five'ing during team play, etc. In a nutshell - the kind of fun and excitement I believe you get when "your" tank is firing at "mine" in that crucial last turn compared to 'watching' me move pieces for three hours while you stare at my book collection. It is that excitement that I want to provide as a publisher and the *Combat!* playtest saw plenty of it.

Combat! makes it easy for normal folks to play historical battles at the squad level. That means individual tanks, sergeants, machine gun crews and bazookas. At this level we can take the fascinating historical detail of individuals in specific battles and put the players very close to the action. When you move a bazooka (or PIAT or panzershreck or molotov thrower) into the building by the side of the road, you're likely doing exactly what some young men did 50-some years ago at the same spot.

Combat! is a new game on the same scale as *ASL* and comments as regards "copying" are off base. Three phases, all three in use by both players as they swap impulses. Linear progression of damage to squads. Count the range between gun (AFV) and AFV and roll two dice (i.e., no determining what the "To Hit" or "To Kill" numbers are with dozens of modifiers. That is the core of *Combat!* and it has been lost on some. Find me these concepts in *ASL*. You can't.

Our approach for *Combat!* is very different than *ASL*. Each *Combat!* module will be fully self-contained: you need buy no previous module. They will work off the previous rules-set with extra rules for specific module situations. For example, *Combat! Stalingrad* will add air support, commissars, sewers, factories, fanatic resistance, etc. With a smoothly playing system, adding chrome is relatively painless. Since each game will stand on its own, players will be free to follow the battles that most interest them without having to buy the whole ball of wax. Thus

the main appeal for players will be a rich array of battles to experience, based on one reasonable, well-developed rules set.

The game was also designed specifically to play well solitaire as our focus group research revealed a significant portion of you play solo.

Combat! is going to be quite a series as we have so many modules in hand already. We're going to support this game system to the hilt and our next steps include *Combat! Diary magazine, Volume 1, No. 1* (in mid-August); *Combat! Normandy* expansion module, *Shanley's Hill* (also ready for mid-August), and *Combat! Stalingrad* (well on its way to being finished for a late summer '99 release).

The *Combat!* rules will doubtless morph as they move forward, although they already represent a huge amount of research on tactical combat solidly based on 'the infantry reality.' With this in mind, the goal will be to continually tweak the rules to make them easier to understand and use. Changed sections will be marked with bullets. Each latest version will supersede the previous (i.e., never more than one rulebook worth of errata and that will diminish as the series matures).

A lot changed during the development of this game following since the article published in *Critical Hit Volume 5, Number 2*. We replaced the Combat Cards with the GFET tables, concentrating them on the Player Aid Cards (PAC) for ease of use. On the rules side, the concept of "interrupts" was replaced by the ebb and flow inherent in the use of impulses. Because of these improvements we actually scrapped the original counter-set and made all new ones to meet the changes. When we did THAT we decided to go with the ½" AFV counters; use of these helps reduce stacking in large hexes as you can 'park' a tank next to your infantry stack.

The feedback coming in has me already drawing up a new card-based effects table format to replace the current GFET presentation. We have the data and the goal is keeping the easy part: target - firer - range - roll two ten-siders (i.e., no need to calculate just what the "To Hit" or "To Kill" numbers are) while limiting the number of charts you'll need to use.

Other suggestions for future versions include a "To Hit chart for 11.645; converting the MST modifiers were converted into

morale check drm modifiers to make it easier to resolve a morale check; and adding some type of random events generator for the battlefield that could include snipers, short rounds and bad rations (not to mention lice, cholera, the occasional minefield or fly swarm). Feedback?

I note with interest some comments about the difficulty in learning *Combat!* Certainly, undue difficulty is not intended and we anticipated some growing pains as the system is first 'born'. It was intended to take some effort to master; in the absence of such effort, interest in a series would likely fade. The rules will get easier to digest and with more players to instruct, it will be much easier for new players to get started. Suggestions such as Quick Start and Programmed Instruction from you guys don't fall on deaf ears - CH is already deep into the possible additions and changes for the next rules set. With that in mind, please let us know whenever anything isn't clear!

The presentation of the GFET tables for individual firers and targets may look like a lot of data (and they are produced as a result of the analysis of a hell of a lot of data), but they are very simple to use. Simply pick your table, count the range between firer and target and apply the result of two ten-siders to that target facing. Gone are all the calculations to determine the correct number needed for hitting or causing a specific effect. In practice, the system used in *Combat!* proved quite simple.

But despite the simplicity of individual rules subsystems, the interplay between all this is quite complex. That's why we came out of the box with the Airborne in Normandy; easier to assimilate these critical play interactions with a limited OB.

A key element of Norman's review is that he finds the math entry point set fairly high but the sequence of play solid and easy. In a nutshell, play testing found two old gaming truths to hold - it's much easier to learn playing with someone who already knows how, and it's much easier to play the second time. What happens is that the same shots and morale checks get taken over and over. References to the charts become less frequent and play moves much faster.

As regards the use of GFET tables and same getting onerous in future releases, remember they are for ordnance vs. AFV only
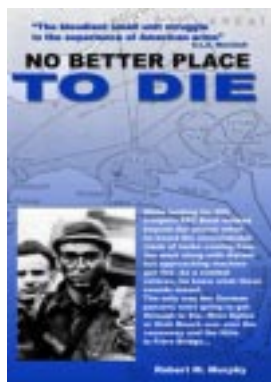
and each *COMBAT!* module will only involve a specific group of such weapons. Once again, the trade off is lots of easy to use data instead of a one size fits all approach with tons of modifiers (and resulting rules arguments).

Our goal is to grow the game system and everyone's feedback assists that goal and is much appreciated. We cannot promise you will become the ultimate company commander your first time out but our play test experience proved once you knew how to maneuver your men and machines about the battlefield, most of the common tasks (e.g., machine-gun strongpoint reduction) came second nature. You then can concentrate on defeating your opponent's moves and counter-moves.

While there may be complaints about the rules layout or language, the cool fact of the matter is that the system works. It's a great game to play, and we're working on a number of ways to make it easier to learn. Because this is a series, each subsequent release will incorporate any changes and improvements. Everyone will have a chance to try the system by actually playing it and seeing others play it - then the very real and important differences from games such as *Squad Leader* will be apparent.

You can find the *Combat!* errata and Q&A up at **http://www.criticalhit.com/comclar.html**. For those wishing to play larger battles, extra counter sheets are available for $5.00 each. You may also purchase additional Play Aid cards for $2.00 each (be sure to specify which PAC you want). Add $1.50 S & H per order world-wide and send your check or international money order to Critical Hit, Inc. PO Box 279, Croton Falls, NY 10519. We're also interested in hearing from you if you want to playtest for future games using this system.

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Robert Murphy's account of his actions during the D-Day landings as a member of the 82nd Airborne Division, available now from CH.

SECOND PLATOON LEADER
THIRD BRIDGE

Kurt Martin

Firstly, allow me to point out why I believe so strongly in *Platoon Leader* - I've been taking everyone's comments on this system for two years now. I know that we've taken a look at every single complaint, suggestion, problem, hang-up and proposal. I've heard from the people who were never satisfied with anything after *RB*, who were annoyed by *PL 2.0*, pleased/bored by *PB* - you name it. The result really does work nicely, as the folks who are writing to me about their current experiences shows. Not perfect, but better every time out, compatible now with just about every CG, and still free.

CGs under development include Kursk, Guadalcanal, Cassino, Poland 39, Okinawa and Wake Island, among others. Difficulties range from intense, monster PTO to quick play ETO. Players will see the full range of duty from the *RB*-type workload (lots of planning, purchasing and setup) to things more like the original *PL 1.0* series (with lower unit densities and short campaigns).

I trust you will note the original intent of *PL*, to encourage the publication of numerous modules, by different authors and on different topics, is also moving ahead.

The free on-line versions will never be released along with the versions available in stores - it would be patently unfair to the game stores. But, there will always be a recent version of *PL* available for free. Yes, it will tend to be quite up to date, as I've been churning versions fairly rapidly to add new features and insert Q&A.

I'm also focusing a good bit on finding ways to ease the workload of people who want to play a campaign but just can't find the time for extensive inter-game work (the challenge of buying for and setting up those huge, intricate fortification networks, for one thing). At any rate, the new *PL* stuff will have something for everyone, to be sure, and with the quality bar up where *Arnhem: The Third Bridge* pushed it this winter.

The specific CG special rules are where the nuances of that particular small unit action are 'dialed-in' and that is the intent - provide a framework for historical designs and allow designers the flexibility to work within and around any perceived

rules barriers. Check out the wholesale changes to *PL* in the latest releases - *Scotland the Brave II* and *Arnhem: The Third Bridge*. In both cases they simplify things quite a bit to make for tidier and more accurate simulations.

Q&A, ERRATA, NOTES

I'm not especially fond of Redeployment as a general rule, but it is optional and I concede that in certain CGs it may be a better representation of the situation than the "Case B" option)

The new approach is to allow for gamers (read as 'designers' also) who do not like the redeployment approach while continuing with it for situations ideally suited for such restrictions.

I consider the Leader Generation rules to be a show-stopper; the potential to skew a CG by a few lucky (or unlucky) DRs by one side is enormous.

There is always the possibility that one or more lucky DRs will skew a scenario in the *ASL* system, whether it be a '12' on that key gun taking that key shot to stop the AFV from exiting and piling up those last needed VP for your opponent or what have you. We've all been there. As 2.362 provides for leader limits (i.e., only one 10-2, etc.) there is no way your opponent can 'show up' with a pile of 10-2's staring you down. Thus, I must assume you did not read 2.362 or your concerns are as regards the lack of any 'good' leaders for one side or another.

Yes, a strong series of die rolls can put you in trouble, but CGs give you a break by letting you dissipate the effect over various groups and time (I was most dismayed to face two 9-2's with two 8-0's lately, but my RGs were whole and those of the 9-2s were Depleted...)

2.3 "Note that a side may never purchase more than 3 infantry platoons (RG with an ID beginning with 'I' and identified as a 'Platoon' or 'Pltn') unless specifically allowed by that CG." Is this limit per RePh or per CG?

Section 2 outlines the steps taken during one RePh.

2.32 "Units purchased for any firefight after the Initial CG Firefight may not set up in entrenchments which were also purchased during that RePh." This seems a harsh (and odd) restriction; presumably most such units are costing extra for the luxury of on-map setup, but regardless you're only allowed to place them in pre-existing foxholes? I have trouble seeing the logic of this.

I know what you mean and many people agree with you. In this case, it's a rule that was inserted after much debate with playtesters. It will be altered by CGSR but the intent is to avoid a trench-line or bunker suddenly appearing 'from the sky' in the midst of a heated firefight. In game terms, your opponent can get an annoying 'creeping foxhole disease' effect by digging entrenchments at the edge of his Perimeter during each RePh. These poke the Perimeter out a couple more hexes each time without him having to allocate troops to dig them. We also avoid conscript Company A digging a nice fortification line for Company R's Assault Engineers...

2.33 This rule says Reserve units must setup > 7 hexes from the nearest enemy-controlled Location or Entry Area, but the 1.4 "In Reserve" definition says ≥ 7 hexes.

A. This is a typo! Yow - it's pretty much always been ≥ 7.

2.34 The setup cost table does not say what the "In Reserve" cost reduction (if any) is for "HW" units (allowed to setup In Reserve in 2.33), but does list "V" units which are not allowed to setup In Reserve (again, according to 2.33).

No penalty or cost reduction.

2.36 So an Infantry company could start with a 10-2 and a 9-2, or two 6+1s, but on average will have two 8-0s? This table seems way skewed. Better, I would think, to have "sets" of leaders rolled for each x no. of platoons, so that you get a better spread of leader types. An entire CG could be won or lost just on this table!
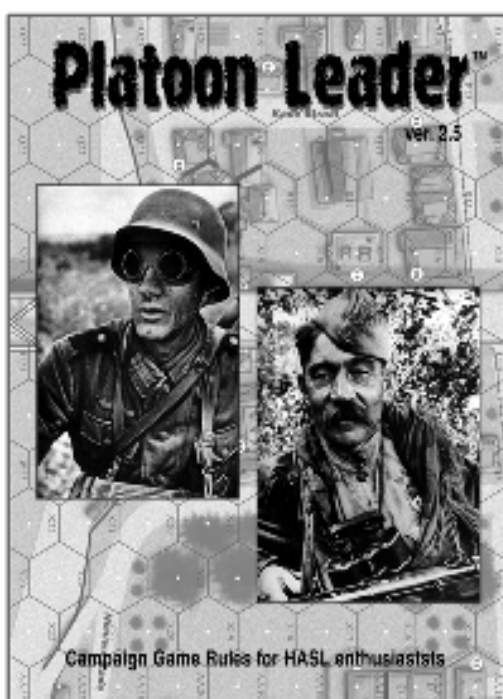
Once again, a specific design choice to avoid the 'army' of 10-2 phenomenon. We've had plenty of discussion on this one from the various players and testers. All agreed in the end that this was a tidy way of giving both 'some' chance for greatness/terribleness with a strong likelihood of 'Army Average.'

2.362 The rule refers to the "2.361 table" but in the rules there is no 2.361.

The 2.361, "Leader/Armor Leader Table" is directly above 2.362.

2.37 "Each Leader must set up/enter stacked with a MMC ..." So it's not possible to have a lone leader off doing HIP Radio duty, for instance? Or even more likely, hiding in the back line, ready to rally broken troops who come his way? I grant you that you don't often want your leaders off by themselves ... but sometimes you do.

Good point. I added a line we had discussed previously: [EXC: ... OR a leader in possession of a Radio/Field Phone.] A leader, of course, could 'drop back' and 'hide' anywhere he wants after entering but he is not going to gain HIP status unless set up on-board.

2.381 Footnote 2, at first glance, appears to directly conflict with the Note at the end of the table, but I assume what you mean is that you may purchase dummy cloaking counters, but you may not purchase dummies and then cloak them, correct?

Correct.

2.42 "Cloaked units must dm all possible SW while cloaked." This is redundant.

Fixed.

The last sentence — should that read "... may NOT be used as Dummy non-Reserve Cloaking Counters"? If it's a blanket restriction, than an appropriate note

should be added to Footnote 2 of 2.381.

Yes.

2.74 The DRM chart seems to have been duplicated.

My mistake - two different formats for the on-line edition. Fixed.

3.15d) Pin & TI counters will already have been removed by this time (since the player turn ended before the Firefight End dr was made).

Just a reminder for the forgetful.

When are concealment/dummy counters removed?

When dictated by normal concealment loss and during some Redeployment steps. Some are retained .

3.202 A shame if you're trying to play one of the early PL CGs that has no "reduced-size map" to photocopy!

But these are easy to create yourself, photocopying the map, at least until demand forces me to do it... Requests?

3.21 "Dismounted Armor Leaders may redeploy as infantry to another vehicle and re-mount." If this is meant to be an exception to the general rule that Armor Leaders may never take counter form, it should be very clearly stated as such! Are ALs redeployed in this manner subject to Casualty Reduction and/or Replacement, and if so, how is that handled?

This is simply an item that many players wanted included. The specific case is to allow him to change out of an immobilized vehicle. In all cases, the Armor Leader shares the fate of his crew, and thus doesn't need to take counter form.

"(i.e., a truck could move, pick up infantry and move again as during the MPh)" Uh, that would NOT be allowed in the normal MPh rules — a transporting vehicle may not move prior to embarking passengers/riders (D6.4).

A. Hit me! Duh! No, I really have played ASL before. All MPh rules apply to said movement; I've changed the last two items to read: "Dismounted Armor Leaders may redeploy with their crew as infantry to another vehicle and re-mount. Infantry may only combine their Redeployment with that of a conveyance by following normal MPh MF/MP restrictions (i.e., a truck could pick up infantry then move as during a MPh)."

3.219 REDEPLOYMENT DRM: I assume the DRM for leadership does not

apply for a leader moving alone.

Unless a Hero.

3.31 OK, so burning buildings become rubble when they are extinguished; but burning rubble becomes Open Ground?!

It is quite linear, eh? But yes is the answer.

3.44 BATTLEFIELD PROMOTION TABLE The drms are listed twice.

Web version - Fixed.

3.46 "Ammunition Shortage DRM apply." What is an Ammunition Shortage DRM? "Leadership, Inexperience, Captured Use DRM apply." I assume only for those units stacked with/possessing the weapon in question?

If Ammo shortage is in effect, apply "Ammunition Shortage (A19.131) DRM, "...all B# and Ammunition Depletion numbers are decreased by one during an Ammunition Shortage", i.e., apply a -1 DRM. Yes.

Leadership can apply to repairing an Immobilised vehicle. Armor Leaders in that vehicle only, or what?

Yes.

"Captured malfunctioned weapons are removed from play." I assume this is after you have attempted to repair them?

Yes.

3.461. Again, the mysterious Ammo Shortage DRM is invoked. Also, what are the Captured Use and Inexperienced DRMs when applied to Recalled vehicles?

Apply "Ammunition Shortage (A19.131) DRM, "...all B# and Ammunition Depletion numbers are decreased by one during an Ammunition Shortage", i.e., apply a -1 DRM. Inexperience is +1 (D3.45).

Let's say you are hellaciously lucky - you capture a King Tiger with a conscript half squad. Then Mr. Sniper lays a shot on your CE conscript Soviet King Tiger crew. You are now Recalled, and subject to A21 Captured Equipment, and will have a hard time rolling ≤ 2 for purposes of 3.461 with all of those + mods (+4)...

3.47 The ELR Change DRM lists "friendly side won last CG Firefight (if possible)". What does "if possible" mean?!

If there is no related EXC in the CG SR. Some do not allow a Firefight victory.

CG1 Bocage. These rules are nonsense, in that they do not "clarify" the existing Bocage rules, they contradict them! I strongly suggest that you leave well enough alone and let Bocage be handled where it should be handled, in the ASLRB.

E.G.: You say "Units may not claim WA, fire in the PFPh, then drop it before the enemy can return fire in the DFPh." Yes, they can — that's what Bocage is all about. You can say that your rules "only apply to PL" but in reality people who learn your rule will tend to apply it to all their ASL games. And they will be playing it wrong.

First answer - the 'official' Bocage rules are a source of a great deal of confusion and contention among *ASL* players. Since a good number of CH CGs deal with Bocage,

we worked with developers, players and testers to come up with a standard that incorporates official Q&A with practical solutions and historical fact.

We knew we'd get a response to these rules. The ambiguity communicated to us by our customers in these rules - we have a lot of modules in publication using Bocage - led to the choice to provide a way to play them that can be agreed upon by both players - 'we'll use these'. They are optional, of course, but they have been welcomed as a solution by the players that have used them.

Now for the designer's intent, blame me. However, before you level another "nonsense" comment, be advised the *PL* research did not just include the historical info, such as "Busting the Bocage" and such.

We have interviewed a number of veterans of hedgerow fighting, including William "L" Rod Petty of Pointe du Hoc fame and Bob Murphy, 82nd combat vet and the author of the new CH book, "No Better Place to Die".

The result of this work was to represent two types of fire from behind Bocage - sustained (full FP) fire, such as represented by Prep/Defensive Fire, and Advancing Fire, which is handled with its own restrictions and in the main represents a shorter burst of fire after moving (½ FP). The vets are clear on these points: Could an enemy machine-gun open up, place effective fire, then disappear before return fire could be brought to bear? Yes to effective fire, but not sustained. Bob Murphy is adamant that the 57mm gun simply "could not" even be concealed behind Bocage.

Note the rule only applies to units marked with a Prep Fire/Final Fire marker. There are plenty of ways that short, surprise bursts of fire are simulated within the *ASL* rules-set; we have chosen not to represent that HMG that gets 'hot' and fires burst after burst (>1 ROF) as capable of avoiding any return fire. Now you can make a choice if you get ROF with a MG; stay and continue to lay in the fire or avoid the risk of placing a Prep Fire marker by skipping that next shot.

It still simulates the function of 'time' spent firing on the enemy as same relates to the ability of said enemy to pick out the location of the firer and respond with effective fire. As for "that's what Bocage is all about" I do not know if Bob McNamara or Don Greenwood wrote that rule; we'll check with them!

CG4 OBA. I think this makes OBA purchases too much of an "easy" option ("it can't go wrong!") but I won't dispute it too much.

Artillery was the 'big killer' and is under-represented in *ASL* as such. This rules section was largely provided by the input of Jim Thompson, 254th Regiment, a Master Gunnery Sergeant and you can read more from Jim in his article "Steel Rain" in *CH Volume 4 No. 1*.

The CG effect of this rule is terrific - as the owner of a module, you know that there's always some chance of getting a mission, although the odds can turn against you steeply with red draws. As an opponent, you can never be sure that more shells won't come down. The Grainfield is never safe. The tension is accordingly higher, as it should be, but a bad module (one that always draws red) still sucks.

COMPATIBILITY ISSUES

People have asked about *PL2.5* as being "fully backward compatible". They want to play some of the very first *PL* CGs that were designed with *PL1.0*. *PL2.0* changed a lot of the "nomenclature" (for lack of a better word). For example, concepts like MLR aren't around in *PL1.0*. So can the *PL1.0* CGs still be played with this new version?

This from the CH clarifications page:

Use Redeployment option B.
All reference to Battle Hardening (1.6114) should now refer to Battlefield Promotion (3.44)
SSR are now FSR
CPP are now CP
FPP are now FP
PL CG SSR = CG SR
 "Scenario" is now referred to as "Firefight"
 "determine leaders as per 1.6205" now should read "determine leaders as per 2.36"
 "must enter as reinforcements on the CG date of purchase [EXC:1.6194]" should now read "must enter as reinforcements on the CG date of purchase [EXC:2.34]".
Intensity Levels determine the maximum number of 'I' type RGs that may be purchased by each for each CG Firefight: 3 for Low, 5 for Mid, 7 for High.

Part of the *PL2.5* mission was to allow its use for these older guys. It works pretty seamlessly with Option B, which is pretty much the old 'wipe the board clean at the end of the scenario' method of CGing. Yes, there are others like this planned, including Dien Bien Phu and some other things much in the vein of *PL1.0* ...

THE THIRD BRIDGE

On the subject of *Arnhem: The Third Bridge*, the first historical map we did for was very straightforward and played fine. But it really lacked flavor. The next map (the *A Bridge Too Far* map by Don Petros) was much better but was still too simple and not accurate enough.

There followed a long process of adding and subtracting historical and game detail, looking for a mix that was both satisfactory from an historical perspective and good to play on. This map has that mix.

Oh yes, it has lots of things to make you raise your eyebrows, but it was designed to be played on, not analyzed. So players inevitably come to this conclusion "Oh, it's a little funky at first, but it's cool to play on." That was the goal and the gist of the letters and e-mail I've received from people that have played on it.

Now it's true that I could have made it a lot easier. But it wouldn't have been as interesting to play on, and it's just not that hard. So yes, perhaps I'm giving people too much credit to work it out, but if you sit down to play a scenario, I think you'll find things settling down nicely.

Rule 2 MAP DEPICTIONS says that stray building parts do not block LOF/LOS to/from a building if they are part of the same building. Does this include an LOF/LOS traced directly along the hexspine? For example: - Is there LOS between CC19 and DD17? - Between I10 and K10? - Between M4 and O4?

Each of these is blocked. Remember that the rule of thumb on all of these LOS questions is common sense - of course you can fire from N3 to N5 but L4 to N4 is clearly intentionally blocked.

The same rule says that stray building parts deny Bypass along their hexsides. This is clearly logical for the building that the stray part belongs to. But may a unit Bypass the obstacle that does NOT cross the hexside? For example: - Can a unit move from L5 to M7 by Bypassing the L6 building along the L6/M6 hexside? - From I10 to K10 along the J9/J10 hexside?

In both cases infantry could, but a vehicle could not.

Can a unit perform "Rowhouse bypass" by way of a vertex which is covered by the building-depiction/black-bar, such as: - Vertex N7/O7/O8?

Due to the depiction, they would have to enter O7 for 1 MP.

Vertex X6/Y6/Y7?

The unit would have to enter X6 or use 'rowhouse bypass' on the east side - Y6-Y7, where the black bar doesn't extend past the vertex.

If LOS traced along the hexspine of a stray part is not blocked (per the above question), does the presence of a black bar cause it to become blocked? For example: - Is there LOS from P19 to R19?

No.

Is hex A8 a building hex or merely a stray part?

Not a building hex.

Is hex R16 a building hex or merely a stray part?

This hex was actually an error on my part during a late stage of the game. It should have been a building hex, but as depicted is not.

Roads....

Yes, they are unconventional, but they work well, and should only take a minute to grasp. Again, rather than belabor the rules, a dive into playing it works out better.

We specifically ruled out (no pun intended) the half-Orchard and Narrow Road rules as too ugly to contemplate. Some would argue, but half-orchard is much harder and less clear than what we have here - Orchard hexes and decorative hexes, with no halves.

Finally, regarding the Narrow Road EX (following the 2.814 section), I found the first part quite clear but the second part confused me thoroughly. Can you check it for errors and also explain it in more detail?

I included this one because it's probably the hardest road on the map. Of course, few if any vehicles ever go that way... Still, the example is correct. It helps to think of these roads as not having buildings. I also find the vehicle bypass CAFP difficult to grasp at first.

If a HIP AT Gun in G6 (CA at F4) wants to wait until the vehicle has spent >3 MP in LOS before it starts shooting, where will the vehicle be and what facing will it have on the 4th MP in LOS? On MP 5?

Vehicle expenditures in the example: 0MP - C6 1MP - D6 2 - Turn left 3 - E6 4 - F5 (now in Gun LOS) 5 - Turn left (2MP in LOS) 6 - Turn left (3) 7 - Turn right (4) 8 - F4 (5) 9 - G4 (Out of LOS). Just like driving in Boston.

Several scenarios give the German OB is given two different ELR ratings. TB 3. states that Germans "follow the SS ELR listings in the Firefight Chart."

I guess I could have made this more brain-free! My apologies - the basic rule is simple: the 6-5-8 and 5-4-8 units are SS and get Elite ammo status and the higher ELR, usually 4 or 5. Everyone else (usually 4-4-7s) gets the lower ELR - usually 3. That's it.

The German OB for many of the scenarios, as well as the CG, provides 5-4-8 SS squads However, there is no information I can find in the rules that gives these counters an underlined Morale and a higher broken side Morale.

This is a method I've used for lots of SS scenarios. For Arnhem in particular, it's way too generous to make all of the SS 6-5-8s. At the time of Market Garden, the two SS divisions in the area were at roughly 30% of establishment manpower. Some of the infantry units were at more like 10% or had been combined. The dragnets and regroupings which followed the British land-

ings sometimes re-built these units using whoever was available.

A 5-4-8 is a great replacement, and more accurately reflects the state of the SS units.

As the *ASLRB* says: "SS crews and SMC do not receive the increased Morale Level on their broken side, and are therefore represented by normal German crew and SMC counters. SS are entitled to Assault Fire capabilities in any scenario during 1944-45." Add 5-4-8s to that first sentence and you have the standard 'other SS' scenario design approach.

Along the river there is a one-level drop off with a retaining wall, which is supposed to use wall rules (although the Chapter G Seawall rules might be more appropriate). But, the depiction of this drop off does NOT follow any sort of hexsides, instead just wandering all over the map, including at least one hex which contains a road above the wall, the wall itself, AND the riverside road below it. I freely admit that the absence of any rules to cover this stuff probably isn't a big deal, because I suspect the river road is of little importance to the game. However, it is possible that units could want to rout to it when all other options are closed to them, since the wall would prevent it from being Open Ground.

Oops. We failed to make this clear enough in the rules, I suppose, but it is simply a Seawall-type drop-off that very rarely sees activity, including for Rout.

The counters were to give players who only own *WOA* and *BV* enough to play the CG. They cover quite a variety, Red Devils squads, leaders and SW, same for the Germans, various terrain markers, control markers, Random Event Markers [could be handy]; the Cleared Fire-Zones and Japanese Control Markers are for *TRBH*.

Anyway, play *A:TTB* and let me know what you think. A lot of folks have already had a lot of fun with those 8 scenarios and the CG...

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MAD VET CON

Ian Daglish

On the weekend of 18th June (Waterloo Day!), a rather remarkable meeting was held in Wybunbury, Cheshire. Mad Vet Con was the brainchild of Iain McKay, the antipodean Mad Vet himself, encouraged by the success of the Gold Beach extravaganza organised last year by Dave Schofield. Once again, a number of the top players in the country assembled for a weekend spent playing the sort of monster Campaign Games that most of us have neither the time or the space for.

One group plunged into "Squeezing Peiper's Bulge", the monster CG published in *VFTT24* which utilises all five of the *KGP* map sheets. The group was extremely well prepared and launched straight into the play (moral: if you are going to play a CG at a Conference, do all the preparation you can before the event, even up to purchases and set-up plans. Otherwise, you will end up wasting valuable meeting time with your head in the rulebook! Besides, it is much more fun to ponder strategies and tactics at leisure before the Wind Change DR rather than in a panic once play has started!).

The other two groups played CG3 from *Scotland The Brave II*, both played with the luxury of photo-enlarged maps (40% increase, yielding RB-size hexes accommodating two half inch stacks). Each involved three players a side, which

is comfortable so long as all three were ready to work hard. The two games were remarkably different: one was a close run thing, very close to the historical event; while the other was a totally historical German walkover. Guess which one the designer of the game played, as the British!

Three pieces of advice for CG designers:
ONE: avoid playing your own work in public. It can be embarrassing.

TWO: avoid even being present when they are being played. You see, people will inevitably turn to you with rules queries. Anyone else present who has read the CG rules will probably give the right answer, whereas the designer will remember all the different rules he experimented with… and half the time will not for the life of him remember which treatment he settled for!

And THREE, if you absolutely have to be there and playing (and to be honest, it is very rewarding to witness your creation being played out on a seven foot long map), try using alcohol to make them think your inability to respond is purely temporary. Fortunately, the three British players on the losing side of our CG had all come most appropriately equipped with bottles of very fine malt whisky.

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The action on one of the enlarged Scotland The Brave *CG maps.*

SQUEEZING PEIPER'S BULGE

Playing the biggest ASL CG

Pete Phillipps

When our resident Aussie vet, Mad Vet Iain Mckay announced he was going to play host to a group of *ASL*ers in his local village so we could attempt to play the monster *KGP* 'CG V Squeezing Peiper's Bulge', I jumped at the chance.

Produced by Australia's Paddington Bears and reprinted in *VFTT24*, this is a 4 CG-Date CG running from 20PM to 21PM, which links all three of the *KGP* map groups to form one massive CG. Although the action on the three map groups is pretty independent, there is scope for units to move between map groups, and for the German side their reinforcements are purchased from a central CPP pool and allocated to each map group as the German players see fit.

The players for each side were allocated by Iain himself, and I found myself as the American player on the Cheneux map, up against Paul Case. I've played against Paul a number of times before, and our usual modus operandi is to get some beers in and then decide on a scenario to play - needless to say our games tend to be about enjoying ourselves rather than winning at all costs!

To clear Cheneux I was given three platoons of paras, a captured SPW251/9, and 24 CPP to augment that. I used the CPP to buy another two platoons of paras, a jeep section and an M36 GMC. My plan for 20PM was to advance to contact using the Very Heavy Mist as cover, and smash my way through the outer German lines. I aimed to be on the edge of Cheneux by the end of the CG-Date and ready to storm the village in the Night CG-Date. This would set me up to grab the rest of the village

on the 21AM CG-Date while reinforcements entering on the south edge of the map would seize Monceau. After that it would be a matter of mopping up and grabbing the bridge at Cheneux in the final CG-Date.

The opening CG-Date went pretty much as planned, and given another turn or two I could well have made some headway into the outskirts of Cheneux. As it was I had to settle with control of the three buildings along the road to Cheneux and the area to either side of the road. With hindsight (this being only my attempt at a third CG, the previous two being a couple of years ago now, and both ending unfinished), I should have been a bit more aggressive in choosing Objective Hexes and sent HS probing the flanks and digging foxholes to expand my set-up area even further.

It took everyone all of Saturday to finish the first CG-Date so both sides decided to do their RePh activites and set up the game ready to start afresh on Sunday morning. As expected, the Night CG-Date brought Dual Attacks on all three map groups. I had brought three more platoons of paras, setting two of them up onboard, increased my SAN by 2 and purchased some Recon, which enabled me to discover the contents of his forward stacks - two stacks consisting of a pair of squads with LMGs, a third stack of two HS manning a HMG and a MMG, and two more stacks consisting of a sqaud with a PSK. With both sides lined up facing each other two hexes apart (and unable to see each other due to the NVR of 1!), it looked like a scene from an ancient battle.

The first turn consisted of the Germans

placing a concealment counter on one of their vehicles which was out of my LOS, and my paras moving into position to launch their attack.

As the first paras Assault Moved adjacent to the Germans they were met by a 16FP +1 attack which broke both squads and their leader, a situation that was to be repeated for almost every other stack that moved adjacent. By the time he had finished his Defensive Final Fires I had just one unbroken squad out of 12 that had closed to contact with the enemy. It's not often I claim I was diced, but this was one of those moments, when every roll he made seemed to be under 6 and every roll I made over 8. Things were marginally better in the north-west corner of the village, but with half of my attacking force gone in the first moments I knew I faced an uphill struggle to force the SS out of the stone buildings they occupied.

And that was the case. Rally attempts failed abysmally, many not even being low enough to remove DM. Only the timely arrival of the third reinforcement platoon on the frontline that stopped the Germans from recapturing one or two of the houses they had lost in the earlier CG-Date. A brief surge from a Fanatic squad in the north-west corner of the village allowed me to take a few of these buildings and eliminate several of the Flak trucks he had, but every approach to the other buildings was repulsed. Then I inadvertently moved into LOS of his reserve squads and activated five squads and a 10-2 which led a counterattack to recapture much of the north-west corner of the village.

As the game was drawing to an end, my luck briefly changed. A squad and an HS man-

The early action at Chenuex. My 'Amsterdam Special' OBA cards are not quite visible, but went down quite well with everyone - shame neither me or Paul used any OBA in our CG-Dates!!

Trev Edwards (left) and Paul Sanderson come to grips with the battle for La Gleize. The sound of battle could frequently be heard in Cheneux!

aged to get into the victory building occupied by his MMG and HMG HS and 8-1 who were all CX. I Ambushed him, and split my attacks, the squad attacking the leader and HS with the HMG, my HS attacking his other HS with the MMG. I promptly rolled snake-eyes with the squad, creating an 8-1, and then eliminate the other HS without loss. I now controlled the additional building I needed to win the CG-Date. Unfortunately I was surrounded by German units.

However my luck continued to hold out during his turn. His first Prep Fire managed to break the 8-1 and the HS, but the squad rolled a snake-eyes, went Fanatic and created a Hero. His next shot encircled the stack, eliminating the leader and HS, but the Hero and squad both rolled snake-eyes, and the HoB roll created yet ANOTHER Hero, this one Fanatic coming from a Fanatic squad! They then proceeded to Break the 10-2 as he moved adjacent, which led to the three SS squads moving with him failing their LLTC, and for their Defensive Final Fire they broke another couple of squads for good measure. Despite this he was still able to bring three squads and a Heroic 8-1 in for CC, and he just managed to Ambush me. With a 2-1 and a -3 DRM it was no surprise that my troops were eliminated, and at that point we ended the CG-Date.

It had taken me and Paul eight hours to finish the CG-Date as the date had gone on the longest. By now it was gone 5pm and we had to be out of the hall within the hour, so we only had time to had a brief discussion about the prospects for each side in the next CG-Date. Despite my horrendous losses, it was felt that I was in a strong position as I had a set-up area that almost had Cheneux in a pincer just waiting to be closed, and with 65 CPP I would be able to make good my para losses quite easily.

Paul's situation looked less healthy as he had lost a number of squads and most of his vehicles, and with 40 CPP (minus a DR) of reinforcements to be spread around three map groups it didn't look like he would be getting much to replace those losses (especially as an SS platoon cost 8 CPP). It would have been interesting to have been able to continue the CG but all three map groups had agreed earlier in the day that we wouldn't fight the two remaining CG-Dates, and me and Paul didn't have time to record the details on our map group so we could continue it alone.

Anyway, congrats to the Vet on a job well done, and it's nice to know that the experience hasn't put him off planning on doing it again next year!

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WESTWALL '99

Derek Tocher

The first weekend in July saw the first WESTWALL *ASL* tournament in Germany. The venue was the youth hostel in Saarbrucken. My regular opponent, Dominic McGrath, and I had travelled out from Heathrow mid-morning on Thursday for Frankfurt, hoping to make a quick rail connection to the Saarbrucken about 200 km away. Times must have changed in Germany however as the first train was cancelled and the next two we travelled on ran late. We finally arrived at the venue around 6.30 pm to find around 20 gamers already getting into the dice action.

On the Thursday night I played a warm-up game of 'SP11 Pomeranian Tigers' with Michael Maus. My Russians got lucky with the 57L taking out the three lighter tanks very early in the game and seeing off 1.5 squads. My Russian infantry proved too tough for their German opponents and Michael conceded with a couple of turns to go as he clearly would not exit 40 VP.

First game of the tournament proper was 'ASLN 58 Nemesis'. This is an unusual scenario design by Ian Daglish as it is set in East Sussex after a successful 'Sealion' invasion. The armour on both sides died early and this was a particular problem for the British (who have a CS tank with infinite smoke capability) as they must attack through the German help Board 12 village and exit one MMC through a single hex (only) on the opposite side of the village, but now with no covering smoke. My British got close but four MMC broke in or adjacent to the exit hex on the last turn netting a loss. This was a great game with both sides living on their nerves throughout.

Next up, an old OAF scenario 'Firefight for Breakfast' featuring SS attacking Americans on board 10. I think this has great potential but my German opponent, Michael Sachau, clearly thought 8ML SS were tough enough to stack. However my hot dice quickly showed him the error of his ways.

Friday afternoon was a Critical Hit scenario 'Long Minutes' involving a crossing of the board 22 canal on rafts. My opponent Philippe Briaux played an excellent game as the German but in truth there is nowhere for the Belgium defenders to hide from the truly massive German firepower which covers the crossing. This scenario is a true dog - avoid it like the plague. At that stage I was well out of the running and just playing for fun.

My Saturday afternoon game was a second playing of 'Pomeranian Tigers', this time against Frenchman Jean-Pierre Cillufa. I again had the Russian but this time gave up the balance (add two 548s to the German OOB). I think we both had a great time playing this despite the fact that Jean spoke only a little English and found my Scottish accent virtually incomprehensible.

The game was very tight and after losing a STUG early to a known AT mine Jean played extremely well and should have won. However on the last turn he became fixated on trying to eliminate the last JSII rather than running his infantry of-board. This backfired as he rolled about 4 consecutive 6s on PF checks. When he did get one he rolled boxcars on the effects roll and doubles on the random selection for the casualty reduction (a leader directed the fire)! He then followed this up with a boxcars on his CC attack vs the JSII. This resulted in the Germans only getting 34 of the 40 points needed of-board and my Russian picking up a somewhat lucky win.

Final game of the Saturday was a match of Schwerepunkt's 'Raiders at Regi' vs Francois Boudrenghien . This came down to a Japanese half-squad ambushing a marine unit on the last turn and withdrawing into the victory area to claim the win.

While I was just scraping by with a pretty even win/loss record Dominic had recorded three wins in the first three rounds. However on the Saturday afternoon he lost in 'Death Knell at Kalach' to Christain Koppemeyer, one of only two other 3-0 players. However with one round to play on Sunday he was still in with a shout of a minor placing.

My Sunday morning game was against Ray Wolosyn who I had previous met at tournaments in the UK (BERSERK!) and Copenhagen. Our previous game had been very tight (Ray effectively winning on the last DR) but Ray comprehensively beat me in 'Brioch Bash' this time around as my American attack developed too slowly for fear of being gunned down before reaching the board 24 village.

4-3 for the weekend was ok but my report card says 'should have done better'!

Back at the part of the tournament where win/loss record was going to make a difference to who got to take the silverware home, Dominic had beaten Peter Ladwein in 'Brioch Bash', while Christain Koppemeyer had lost to Philippe Briaux in the same scenario. This meant three players finished the tournament with 4-1 records. The organisers went into enclave behind closed doors to analyse the records of the opponents of these three, and after an appropriate interval announced the results.

1st   Dominic McGrath
2nd   Christain Koppemeyer
3rd   Philippe Briaux

A warm congratulations to the organisers Peter Ladwein, Christain Spies and Stephan Jakobi for hosting an excellent event. Thanks also to everyone else for making two Brits feel welcome, and particularly for making a great effort to speak in English!
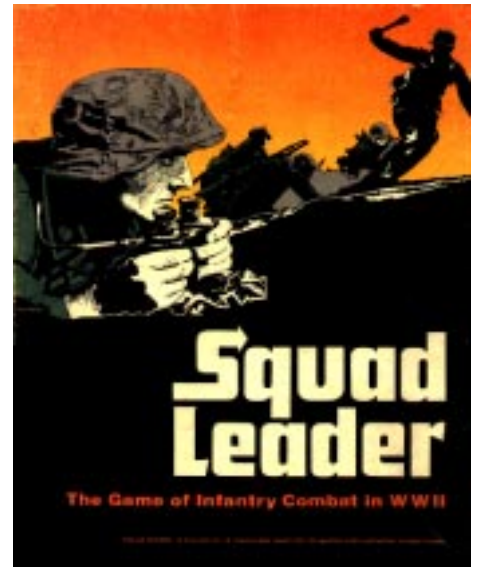
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Where are they now ... ?

Mark S Walz

It seems like only yesterday when I read those words "A shot disturbs the eerie silence of a deserted city street ... Seconds later the sharp staccato retort of a Russian machinegun concludes with the assertiveness of death itself that this time Kruger was wrong."

When I read those words as a fifteen-year-old boy I was hooked. It's hard to believe that I first set up 'The Guards Counter Attack' twenty years ago. Enough reminiscing. The list is not complete, as I have not covered scenarios from third parties: all remain unconverted to the best of my knowledge.

SQUAD LEADER

1	**The Guards Counterattack**	**Published as ASL Scenario A**
2	**The Tractor Works**	**Published as ASL Scenario B**
3	**The Streets of Stalingrad**	**Published as ASL Scenario C**
4	**The Hedgehog of Piepsk**	**Published as ASL Scenario D**
5	**Hill 621**	**Published as ASL Scenario E**
6	**Escape From Valikiye Luki**	**Published as ASL Scenario H**
7	**Bucholz Station**	**Published as ASL Scenario I**
8	**The Bitchie Salient.**	**Published as ASL Scenario J**
9	**The Cannes Strong Point**	**Published as ASL Scenario K**
10	**Hitdorf on the Rhine**	**Published as ASL Scenario L**
11	**The St. Goar Assault**	**Published as ASL Scenario O**
12	**The Road to Wiltz**	**Published as ASL Scenario P**

CROSS OF IRON

13	The Capture of Balta	Submitted to MMP. Status Unknown
14	**The Paw of the Tiger**	**Published as ASL Scenario F**
15	**Hube's Pockett**	**Published as ASL Scenario G**
16	Sowchos 79	Submitted to MMP. Status Unknown
17	**Debacle at Korosten**	**Published as ASL Scenario A106**
18	**The Defense of Luga**	**Published as ASL Scenario W**
19	A Winter Melee	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
20	Breakout from Borisovo	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest

CRESCENDO OF DOOM

21	Battle For the Warta Line	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
22	**The Borders are Burning**	**Published as ASL Scenario A010**
23	**Silent Death**	**Published as ASL Scenario A011**
24	**Action at Balberkamp**	**Published as ASL Scenario A063**
25	Resistance at Chabrehez	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
26	Assault on A Queen	Published in *VFTT7*. Probably won't be published by MMP. for lack of historical basis.
27	**The Dinant Bridgehead**	**Published as ASL Scenario A065**
28	**Counter Stroke at Stonne**	**Published as ASL Scenario A066**
29	**In Rommel's Wake**	**Published as ASL Scenario A096**
30	**Ad Hoc at Beaurains**	**Published as ASL Scenario A040**
31	**Chateau de Quesnoy**	**Published as ASL Scenario A064**
32	Rehearsal for Crete	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest

GI: ANVIL OF VICTORY

33	A Belated Christmas	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
34	Climax at the Nijmegan Bridge	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
35	The French Decide to Fight	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
36	Weissenhoff Crossroads	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
37	**Medal of Honor**	**Published as ASL Scenario A075**
38	The Factory	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
39	Sweep for the Bordj Toum Bridge	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
40	The Dornot Watermark	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
41	Swatting at Tigers	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
42	Bridgehead on the Rhine	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
43	Action at Kommerscheidt	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
44	**Prelude to Breakout**	**Published as ASL Scenario A078**
45	**Hide and Seek**	**Published as ASL Scenario A077**
46	Operation Varsity	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
47	Encircling the Ruhr	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest

SERIES 100

101	**Blocking Action at Lipki**	**Published as ASL Scenario A044**
102	**Slamming the Door**	**Published as ASL Scenario A007**
103	Bald Hill	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
104	**The Penetration of Rostov**	**Published as ASL Scenario A017**
105	Night Battle at Noromaryevka	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
106	**Beachhead at Ozereyka Bay**	**Published as ASL Scenario A026**
107	Disaster on the Dnieper Loop	Submitted to MMP. Status Unknown
108	**Block Busting in Bokuisk**	**Published as ASL Scenario J008**
109	**Counterattack on the Vistula**	**Published as ASL Scenario A021**
110	**The Agony of Doom**	**Published as ASL Scenario A008**

SERIES 200

201	Sacrifice of Polish Armour	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
202	Under Cover of Darkness	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
203	Bitter Defense of Otta	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
204	**Chance D'Une Affaire**	**Published as ASL Scenario U**
205	**Last Defense Line**	**Published as ASL Scenario A094**
206	Fighting at the Worlds Edge	Converted Need to Submit to MMP.
207	The French Perimeter	Converted Need to Submit to MMP.
208	Road to Kozani Pass	Published by CH in Volume One. Also converted Need to Submit to MMP.
209	**The Akroiri Peninsula Defense**	**Published as ASL Scenario T15**
210	**Commando Raid at Dieppe**	**Published as ASL Scenario T13**

ROGUE SERIES

211	**Auld Lang Syne**	**Published as ASL Scenario V**
212	**On the Road to Andalsnes**	**Published as ASL Scenario A031**
213	Traverse Right ... Fire!	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
214	The Front in Flames	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
215	Hasty Pudding	Converted Need to Submit to MMP.
216	A Small Town in Germany	Converted Need to Submit to MMP.
217	**The Whirlwind**	**Published as ASL Scenario S**
218	Operation Switch Back	Awaiting Conversion
219	Scheldt Fortress South	Awaiting Conversion
220	Clearing the Breskins Pocket	Awaiting Conversion
221	Vitality I	Awaiting Conversion
222	Infatuate II	Awaiting Conversion
223	**Night Drop**	**Published as ASL Scenario A076**

SERIES 300

300	Trial by Combat	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
301	The Clearing	Awaiting Conversion
302	Stand Fast	Awaiting Conversion
303	Thrust and Perry	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
304	Riposte	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
305	The Duel	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
306	The Rag Tag Circus	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
307	Point D' Appui	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
308	Han Sur Neid	Awaiting Conversion
309	The Roer Bridgehead	Awaiting Conversion

THE GENERAL

A	**Burzevo**	**Published as ASL Scenario R**
B	**Hill 253.5**	**Published as ASL Scenario T07**
C	The Bukrin Bridgehead	Awaiting Conversion
D	Delaying Action	Published as ASL Scenario A049
E	**The Niscemi-Biscari Highway**	**Published as ASL Scenario T09**
F	**The Pouppeville Exit**	**Published as ASL Scenario T05**
G	**Devil's Hill**	**Published as ASL Scenario T10**
H	**The Attempt to Relieve Peiper**	**Published as ASL Scenario T11**
I	**Hunters From the Sky**	**Published as ASL Scenario T12**
J	Semper Paratus	Awaiting Conversion
K	Fast Heinz	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
L	**The Long Road**	**Published as ASL Scenario A095**
M	**The Dead of Winter**	**Published as ASL Scenario T06**
N	**Faugh A' Ballagh**	**Published as ASL Scenario A093**
P	**Aachen's Pall**	**Published as ASL Scenario T08**
Q	**Gambit**	**Published as ASL Scenario T14**
T1	**First Crisis at Army Group North**	**Published as ASL Scenario M**
T2	**Pavlov's House**	**Published as ASL Scenario T**
T3	**Land Leviathans**	**Published as ASL Scenario Q**
T4	**Sodiers of Destruction**	**Published as ASL Scenario N**

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INTERROGATION

Scott Jackson

The interrogation rules (E2.) are a really neat section! It makes capture of enemy units an actually worthwhile goal. Personally, I recommend that players agree to use this section before each game. Players should keep in mind that this section usually helps the Attacker—so the Defender may need the Balance to even things out. Further, if a scenario hinges (for the Defender) on just a few units or just a couple of HIP Guns/AFV, then players may want to add an additional +1 DRM for playability/balance. Since I play for fun, I don't worry about it too much—I use the section and take my chances and my lumps. It will often change your playing style...

THE BASICS

Let's start with a layman's description of this section.

Basically, a captor can immediately interrogate a just-captured or just-surrendered enemy Personnel unit [Personnel are all SMC and MMC counters, including those mounted as Cavalry or Passengers/Riders, but excluding inherent crews since they are not in counter form], or if SSR allow Civilian Interrogation then a Wind Change DR of 3 [in hostile/neutral country] or 4 [in friendly country] can help the ATTACKER [player whose Player-Turn it is currently] out.

Just make a DR (dr for Civilian Interrogation [CI]), check and add any applicable DRM, and if you get a 5 (6 for CI) or less you have learned something! Easy,

yes? Yes!

A few caveats:

If you get a result that is NA (such a revelation of HIP Attackers), just use the next-higher DR result.

Multi-hex Fortifications get revealed in their entirety if even just one hex is revealed by Interrogation.

Civilian Interrogation still applies even if there is no ATTACKER's Sniper Counter currently on-map (though what happens if there are no ATTACKER's units on-map at the time??? Common Sense says to ignore the Civilian Interrogation...).

Units/fortifications can only be revealed if they are both within 8 hexes and are in LOS of the Interrogated unit; though for LOS purposes, that Interrogated unit can be assumed to be in any Location within it's current hex that it could reach in the next MPh (and no, it does not have to move to that Location in the next MPh!). Note: this rule (E2.3) only specifically applies to Interrogation as opposed to Civilian Interrogation. Oversight? Maybe...

SMC are almost useless to Interrogate since they by definition (A1.11) are Elite (EXC: Partisan SMC, per MMP Q&A) and will thus have an automatic +2 DRM.

POSSIBLE HOUSE RULES

Interrogating unit(s) immediately become TI until the next CCPh (so counter is not removed at the end of this CCPh if Interrogation was done during a CCPh; i.e.,

capturing an enemy unit in CC and then immediately Interrogating it means the Interrogating unit will be TI during the entire next Player-Turn).

Wounded SMC prisoner receives a -1 DRM

Broken prisoner units receive a -1 DRM

DM prisoner units receive a -1 DRM
Surrendering units receive a -1 DRM
Disrupted units receive a -1 DRM
Interrogating unit is Squad/Crew — +2 DRM (hey, these guys aren't trained in interrogation! On the other hand, crews "represents picked men who are the best of their company.")

Interrogating unit is HS — +3 DRM (same, but fewer skills to draw on)

Interrogating unit is SMC — add his(/her?) leadership modifier

Any Final Results DR of 7 is "False Information. Units being informed are TI" (and CX if using the "Interrogating units become TI" house rule).

Rule E2.3 is applied to Civilian Interrogation as well, but is applied as if to a theoretical captured Defender's unit in the same hex as the "informed" Attacker unit. I strongly recommend using this House Rule (HR)...

Civilian Interrogation is NA unless there are ATTACKER Player's units on-map. Again, this really should be a rule...

Finally, to re-introduce uncertainty, change the results as follows:

"Concealed Unit(s) Revealed" now means that only the size (Squad/HS/Crew/SMC) and number of SW (but not specifics on type) are verbally revealed [alternatively, unit and specific SW are temporarily revealed].

"HIP Unit(s) Revealed" now means that the player must point out a hex that either has a HIP unit in or adjacent to that hex. Note that the HIP unit is not placed on map at this time (nor is unit type [½" or 5/8"] revealed)...

"Hidden Fortification(s) Revealed" now means that the player must point out a hex that either has a Fortification in or adjacent to that hex, and must state whether it is part of a multi-hex Fortification System, as well as stating what general type of Fortification it is (Cave, Entrenchment, Minefield, Panji, Pillbox, Roadblock, Tetrahedron, Wire—but not revealing any other information, nor placing any Fort. counters on the map at this time).

Interrogator is not allowed to make notes or place counters of any kind...

Got a gooooood memory???

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BREAKING BAMBOO

Shaun Carter and Charles Markuss

Given mine and Charles' reputation for producing 'heavy metal' tank scenarios (as the amount of good-natured stick I get at *ASL* tournaments will easily attest to) we have felt for some time now we had something of a point to prove – that we could design a scenario without any AFV's!. Broken Bamboo, from the newly-released *Action Pack 2*, allowed us to fulfil that goal.

Some time ago Carl Fago, scenario co-ordinator for MMP, mentioned to us that there was a new 'dry river bed' board in the pipeline. While on a research trip to the Public Record Office at Kew, England, I came across a reference to a chaung (dry river bed) in the description of a Chindit action involving Gurkhas and Japanese. Thus the germ of an idea was born.

The Chindits are a good source of possible scenarios in that their operations are well documented, particularly by Brigadier 'Mad' Mike Calvert - a brigade commander who wrote extensively on the subject. They cover a wide range of infantry battles in the Burma theatre.

The basic proposition of the scenario is typical PTO with Allied troops versus tenacious, well dug in, Japanese defenders. The challenge was to design something that was just a little different.

I have to admit my own personal perceptions of how Japanese troops behave in battle has probably been too strongly influenced by a literal reading of the *ASL* rules; they fight and die in place. However the description of this particular action clearly states that the Japanese troops broke and ran. So how best to simulate this result? I have to thank my good friend Iain 'Mad Vet' Mackay for suggesting the use of Japanese half squads in this instance. This way they are vulnerable to CC and will break when failing an MC.

The Gurkhas were easier to define; although they are described as having lost their temper, I reasoned that the berserk rules would cover this situation better than using any SSR to simulate their mental state.

A surprise discovery on my part was in the Chindit weaponry used. I had seen references to the use of flame-throwers. Until I read the war diary of the First Battalion, Staffordshire Regiment, which itemised 24 refuelling cells for man-pack flame-throwers I did not realise that they were part of the establishment of each battalion. Given the fact that Chindits were light infantry whose machine guns and mortars were the main sources of firepower it is not surprising that they were supplemented by the use of portable man-pack flame-throwers.

In the scenario they are very useful for dealing with the Japanese bunkers. The mortars gives the Allied player extra firepower and the ability to use smoke at a distance something - which should be part of any *ASL* player's armoury.

The Japanese player has the benefits of terrain, concealment and fortification to bolster his defence. We'll let others pass comment on how best to play it. We are both great believers in letting people find out for themselves.

The victory conditions are based upon control of the buildings on mapboard 47 to represent the importance of the stated objective in capturing the village.

I'd like to thank Phillippe Leonard for providing me with a draft copy of the mapboard for design and play-test purposes. We hope you enjoy playing it.

Bibliography

Fighting Mad, Mike Calvert. Airlife London 1996, p 150-154
Prisoners of Hope, Mike Calvert. Jonathan Cape London, p 67-69
Chindits: Long Range Penetration, Michael Calvert. Pan/Ballantine London 1973, p93
WO172/4920 War Diary of 1st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment January - December 1944

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BECKERS AND DICKIES

Scenario Designer Notes

Shaun Carter and Charles Markuss

Beckers Battery

There is a plethora of weird and wonderful German AFVS in *ASL*. The GSW 39H(f) and GSW 39H(f)Pak designed by Major Becker are amongst some of the more effective examples, hence their inclusion here. Rather than being mechanical lost causes both were cost effective conversions mounting the powerful Pak 40 L/70 75mm anti tank gun and 105 mm howitzer on French AFV chassis'. Their claim to fame in the anti tank role comes from their effectiveness in helping to prevent a tank breakout in 'Operation Goodwood'. Contrary to the claims of Mr Barker in the *Imperial War Museum Review* issue 10, I find it hard to believe that the defending German forces did not take any casualties from the advancing British tanks, 3RTR being one of the most experienced armoured regiments in the British army of the time. Unfortunately the lack of German strength returns is a problem in corroborating this argument.

This tank versus tank encounter is an attempt to give a realistic feel to the use of mass armoured tactics of the period. It puts the British player in the driving seat, seeking to exit his AFVs off the southern board edge of the playing area. A full squadron of British tanks in represented, as is a battery of German guns. It would be good if those nice people at MMP Hill would give us a decent number of Sherman and Churchill counters to pit against all those Panthers and Panzer IV's which have become available due to the success of *KGP*. The addition of rubble to the scenario is at the request of playtesters and nicely represents the aerial bombardment prior to the assault.

Dickie's Bridge

Before you exclaim "not another Normandy scenario!", the design rationale for this one is to show the use of armoured cars in a more realistic light i.e. trying to avoid combat and penetrate behind enemy lines. Given the extensive coverage of the action provided by Alexander McKee and the regimental history of the Second Household Cavalry Regiment, finding the background was a fairly straightforward task.

Snipers are omitted for the sake of play balance as they can be regarded as having a disproportionate effect in such a small sce-nario. In effect this action is a sequence of encounters between the rapidly moving armoured cars and variety of German opposition.

Your objective as the British player is to bypass enemy forces using speed and not to fight them. Thus the victory conditions of getting to the bridge. Any delay in Allied movement is penalised by the arrival of German reinforcements emphasising their ability to respond quickly to Allied attacks.

The German forces are deliberately handicapped to reflect the omnipresent allied air power. German AFVs moving in daylight were subject to constant Allied artillery and aerial bombardment, something that our cardboard heroes in *ASL* are rarely subject to. This is the rationale behind the SSR regarding the movement of the Panther.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped with playtesting without which these ideas would be stillborne. To mention just a few Andrew Saunders, Ian Brown, Nigel Ashcroft, Brian Hooper, Pete Kettlewell, Nick Edelsten, Bob Eburne and Steve Crowley. Not to forget David Schofield's proof reading contributions. Apologies for any omissions you can always seek redress at the next UK tournament when I'm looking for more volunteers.
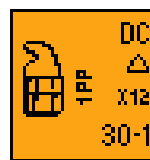
A footnote: change to 'CH95 Shambles'

We've discovered that the Canadians did not have the normal equipment during this scenario (published in *CH Vol. 5 No 1*), so we suggest the following (little tiny) changes:

Delete the Sherman Fireflies

Increase the number of Sherman V(a) from 15 to 19

Increase the number of Achilles from 1 to 4

"Shermans? Yeah, I got a few more out back. How many ya need?"

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DC PRIMER

Martin Moser

The following is probably not of much use for the more experienced players around, but as there are always some newbies (like me) lurking in the shadows, I thought I post this.

Below is something like a Quick Reference Data Card for Demo Charge attacks some of you might find helpful the first 2-3 times you come across scenarios with DCs in them. It is basically the memos I took from the RB when preparing for a scenario with DCs. They do not save you the time to read the rules proper but afterwards can save playing time and avoid mistakes in the heat of battle when it comes to actually try and place those things (something I always seem to fail to do, being KIAed, broken or pinned in the process sooner or later). Also remember I left out the Thrown, vs AFV and Set DC rules here. I am just aiming for the very basic DC usage for the time being. If anybody finds any mistakes below, please point them out to me so I can correct the list below. Hope this helps some guys out there struggling with their first couple of scenarios.

30FP in AFPh, 15FP against Concealment no Leader modifiers, Defender TEM applies, CX placing unit adds +1 to attack DR

User must be Elite, otherwise the captured SW X# penalty (A21.11) applies

Expend MF necessary to enter target hex to place DC; move is considered to take place in hex occupied by the placing unit, so defensive fire is PBF, not TPBF
Placement vs. AFV: PAATC is necessary
DC is operably placed if placing unit survives all DFF, SFF & FPF (i.e. does not break or get pinned) up to the time of the MF expenditure necessary for placement inclusive (any MC/PTC failed thereafter has no effect on the DC placement)

Original attack DR (in AFPh) = 12: malfunction, remove DC

Rubble Creation: Original attack DR = KIA: if subsequent dr (+1 drm for stone building) ≤ KIA#: rubbles level and all above (B24.11)
Falling rubble (upper level buildings): new DR: coloored dr (+1 per rubbled level above ground level) ≥ 7: rubble falls in direction of white dr (chain reaction possible, B24.121)

Flame Creation: Original DR = KIA result on IFT (check Rubble Creation first, if rubble is created, flame is NA [B25.13]). NA if caused rubble): new DR + EC DRM ≥ Kindling # = Flame

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THE DANCE OF DEATH

J. R. Tracy

The purpose of the Dance of Death is to gain a favourable target facing on an otherwise-impervious opponent. The idea is to get the other guy to burn off his cover-arc changes as you zip around his hapless pin-wheeling AFV. Tank Destroyers are particularly vulnerable to this as they don't have the option of pivoting a turret and suffer terrible VCA change DRMs. Blowing right through his hex induces maximum CA changes; for some reason a lot of *ASL*ers are reluctant to do this, perhaps because they don't realise it's legal.

For the DoD to work you need to start fairly close and have a pretty swift vehicle, preferably more than one. Gyro-stabilized HVS Shermans are the ultimate DoD tool.

The key is to draw his fire with unfavourable modifiers, and hold your own until you are guaranteed a side or rear shot on hull or turret, preferably both. It is not a sure thing, and on a bad day might cost you a couple of tanks with nothing to show for it. It is also not recommended if the opposing vehicle has some support. But, when you pull it off, it is most glorious. In addition to removing a key enemy piece, you have dazzled your opponent with your deft manoeuvring and mastery of the game, thereby seizing the psychological high ground.

The Dance of Death in action

The following is an example from a recent game of 'Acts of Defiance' when I had the Russians. I have only shown the units involved; the German actions look like this.

```
Z5 (CA AA5/AA6) BU JagdPanzer IV/
70
CC4 (CA CC4/DD4 T44 w/malf MA
DD8 (CA CC8/DD7) T44
V8 (CA V7/W8) T44
```


DD8 T44: goes CE, moves CC8, BB7, AA7, Stops.

```
TD changes VCA one hexside
and fires BMG at CE crew, NE.
```


W8 T44: Start, go CE, W8, X7, X6/ Bypass Y7, Stop.

```
TD turns again, fires MA,
misses (+4 VCA change, +2 Moving
target, +1 BU, -1 PB: +6 TH DRM,
needed a four).
```


Start, Y6, Z5, AA5 (TCA Z6), Stop

```
TD turns counter-clockwise two
hexsides, Intensive Fires, misses,
```

```
marked w/No Fire (+4 VCA change,
+2 Moving target, +1 BU, +2 IF, -
2 PB, -1 Acq: +6 TH DRM, needed a
four).
```

Start, turn VCA two hexsides counter-clockwise, ESBs for two MP - successful, Z5, Y6 (TCA AA6), Stop, Fire

Being a clever sleaze artist and known maximiser of idiosyncratic Special Ammo rules, I chose APCR (depletion of 6) - rolled seven, no APCR! Agh! (+4 BFF, +1 target size, -2 PB: +3, needed a 7).

AP, roll a 10, miss, cannot IF as I do not have any MPs remaining.

Now this story should have had a happy ending, if I had just used AP on the first attempt; I didn't need the APCR since I had a butt shot, but figured the extra roll offered by the special ammo increased my chances for a hit. Ah well, got too clever by half and it bit me in the ass. Fortunately God is a Bolshie, so my 9-1and a 458 were able to slip up to the TD and kill it via Street Fighting in the ensuing CCPh. So there is justice after all.

Try the DoD sometime when the opportunity presents itself.

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ACHTUNG MINEN!

In any scenario in which you get AT mines, the question is should you place them all together or spread out?

Let's look at some numbers based on attacking minefields. There is a 16.7% chance that a 1 factor minefield will attack you on entry (either immobilising or killing you; B28.52). There is a 30.6% chance it will get you when you run through (enter and exit) the location, as there is a 5/6 chance it won't get you when entering and a 5/6 it won't get you when exiting.

AT factors per location	% KIA/or Immob. achieved
1	30.6%
2	55.6%
3	75.0%
4	88.9%
5	97.2%

Now if you run through more than one 1 factor mine locations:

2 level 1 factor locations: 51.7%
3 level 1 factor locations: 66.5%
4 level 1 factor locations: 76.7%
5 level 1 factor locations: 83.8% chance that you will be immobilised/KIA.

That means that four attacks from 1 factor AT mines (2 locations entered and exited) are slightly inferior to entering and exiting a 2 factor AT minefield location. You lose more to higher level locations, e.g. entering/exiting five 1 factor AT Locations

has a 83.8 % chance to bag a tank, while a 5 factor hex gets you 97.2 % of the time.

The problem with minefields is that once your opponent rolls, you know you are in a minefield, thus you will tend not enter again. If your opponent rolls high you do not know about the strength.

My advice would be to put out 1 AT mine fields, both in this scenario and in general. Most players, when they drive into a minefield, tend to avoid it in the future and not try to rush through it, and would not do so even if they knew it was 1 mine factor. The 30% chance is usually just too great.

In a scenario with the bottlenecks it is of course great to make bigger AT mine hexes to get the first vehicle that enter, otherwise, laying out 1 factor minefields will make the opponent very nervous, as you check more often.

Also, if possible, try putting 2 minefields close together, the second located in the most likely "detour" hex. And of course, the minefields are best in hexes where detours are a pain, or where the presence of a burning wreck screws up further enemy moves. Best of all is an AT mine in a hex that that the enemy wants/needs to bypass.

Something some players forget about minefields and fully tracked vehicles is that if a fully tracked vehicle stumbles into a

minefield, it places a trailbreak, and can exit the minefield using that trailbreak without triggering another minefield attack. This lessens the 30% chance of a result to roughly 16% for a 1 AT factor minefield.

Don't forget Daisy Chains. There is probably no good place to use them in "A Breezeless Day", but they can be used effectively in other scenarios. For example, HIP defenders in areas with paved road/ woods hexes effectively gives you HIP AT mines on a paved road.

Finally, don't forget that, like all obstacles, minefields are most effective if you can cover them (or the detours) with fire.

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"THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!"

This is the latest edition of the UK *ASL* Players Directory.

It is broken down by country. Within the country, players are listed according to the county they live in.

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Mike Standbridge, 31 Hunstanon Drive, Bury, Lancs., BL8 1EG
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Brian Hooper, Basement flat, 125 Redland Road, Redland, Bristol, Avon, BS6 6XX
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Gaute Strokkenes, Girton College, Cambridge, CB3 0JG
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Alan Leigh, 190 Hurdsfield Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire
Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RD
Robert Harris, 64 Wedgewood Drive, Church Langley, Harlow, Essex, CM17 9PY
Nick Ranson, 34 Mill Lane, Witham, Essex, CM8 1BP
Alistair Fairbairn, 3 School Lane, Brantham, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 1QE
Martin Johnson, 16 Wick Lane, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3TA
Derek Tocher, 19 Tyrell Square, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3SD
Derek Briscoe, 129b Melfort Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 7RX
Joe Arthur, 33 Cedar Close, St Peters, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 3BU
Peter Wenman, 12 Clementine Close, Belting, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6SN
Andy Back, 21 Elmwood Court, St Nicholas Street, Coventry, W. Mids., CV1 4BS
Hubert Noar, 39 Rugby Road, Cifton, Rugby, Warks., CV23 0DE
Tim Collier, 71 Kinross Road, Leamington Spa, Warks., CV32 7EN
Tony Wardlow, 6 Beech Tree Avenue, Coventry, W. Mids., CV4 9FG
Iain Mckay, 8 Southfields Close, Wybunbury, Cheshire, CW5 7SE
Ian Pollard, 2 Fiveash Road, North Fleet, Kent, DA11 0RE
Carl Sizmus, 53 Singlewell Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 7PU
Bill Durrant, 10 Coopers Close, South Darenth, Kent, DA4 9AH
Sean Pratt, 19 Premier Avenue, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 1LH
Neil Brunger, 72 Penhill Close, Ouston, Chester Le Street, Co. Durham, DH2 1SG
M. W. Jones, 1 Cheviot View, Front St, Dipton, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 9DQ
Philip Bohin, 2 Manor Road, Northorpe, Gainsborough, Lincs., DN21 4AA
Chris Bunyan, 89 Hallcroft Road, Retford, Notts., DN22 7PY
Roy Quarton, 8 Bassey Road, Branton, Doncaster, S. Yorks., DN3 3NS
David Farr, First Floor Flat, 259 High Road Leyton, Leyton, London, E10 5QE
Michael Chantler, Flat 7, Pickwick House, 100-102 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DH
Andrew Saunders, 22 Douglas Avenue, Layton, Blackpool, Lancs., FY3 7AL
Nigel Brown, 3 Chepstow Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY3 7NN
Arthur Garlick, 23 St. Annes Road East, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs., FY8 1TA
Michael Davies, 36 Heyhouses Court, Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St Annes, Lancs., FY8 3RF
Russell Gough, 4 Berrells Road, Tetbury, GL8 8ED
Jeff Cansell, 24a Upper Queen Street, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1DQ
Giulio Manganoni, 111 Kings Road, Godalming, Farncombe, Surrey, GU7 3EU
Tristam Maclean, 9 Carlyon Mansions, Carlyon Road, Alperton, Middx.
Kevin Beard, 36 Oxford Road, Harrow, Middx., HA1 4JQ
Simon Croome, 1 Bowling Parade, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx., HA10 1AJ
Jackie Eaves, 1 Bowling Parade, Ridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx., HA10 1AJ
Lee Winterbone, 47 Locket Road, Wealdstone, Harrow, Middx., HA3 7NQ
Chris Littlejohn, 214A Field End Road, Eastcote, Pinner, Middx., HA5 1RD
Bob Runnicles, 34 Albury Drive, Pinner, Middx., HA5 3RE
Scott Greenman, 2 Oak Avenue, Killinghall, North Yorks., HG3 2RT
Paul Kettlewell, 15 Willowherb, Watermead, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP19 3FH
Nick Edelsten, 22 Wey Lane, Chesham, Bucks., HP5 1JH
Gary Headland, 35 Grammar School Yard, Old Town, Hull, Humberside, HU1 1SE
Malcolm Holland, 57 Westfield Rise, Barrow Lane, Hessle, Humberside, HU13 0NA

Steve Balcam, 1 Cornwall Street, Cottingham, N. Humberside, HU16 4NB
Michael Rudd, 52 Woodbine Road, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne
Ruarigh Dale, 13 Swinemoor Lane, Beverley, Humberside, HU17 0JU
Tony Maryou, 41 Benton Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 4AU
Neil Clark, EAATM, Badingham, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 8LA
Paul Legg, 21 Grimsey Road, Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4BW
Lee Bray, Flat 4, 13 Kingston Hill, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey, KT2 7PW
Andy Smith, 31 Egerton Road, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4AP
Ben Jones, 72 Church Road, Hale, Liverpool, Merseyside, L24 4BA
Andy Ashton, 62 Earlston Drive, Wallasey, The Wirral, Merseyside, L45 5DZ
Gareth Evans, 29 Hillfield Road, Little Sutton, South Wirral, Merseyside, L66 1JA
Patrick Dale, 28 Bancroft Road, Cottingham, Market Harbourgh, Leics., LE16 8XA
Nick Brown, 53 Henley Crescent, Braunstone, Leicester, Leics., LE3 2SA
Pete Phillipps, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, Leics., LE5 0FQ
Chris Tomlin, 19 Moorgate, Lancaster, Lancs., LN1 3QF
Karl Bown, The Games Store, The Manor House, Lincoln, Lincs., LN6 9DG
Bob Groves, 56 Hall Orchards Avenue, Wetherby, W. Yorks, LS22 6SN
John Elwen, Vine Cottage, Main Street, Walton, Nr. Wetherby, W. Yorks., LS23 7DJ
John Truscott, 28 Bracken Edge, Leeds, W. Yorks, LS8 4EE
Santiago Lopez, TF 1.7 Owens Park, 293 Winslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6HD
J. W. Overton, 12 Didsbury Park, Manchester, M20 5LJ
Bernard Savage, 73 Penrhyn Avenue, Middleton, Manchester, M24 1FP
Simon Sayers, 21 Barlea Avenue, New Moston, Manchester, M40 3WL
Bob Eburne, 33 Whitton Way, Newport Pagnell, Bucks., MK16 0PR
Paul Layzell, 5 Sparsholt Close, Emerson Valley, Milton Keynes, Bucks., MK4 2HJ
Norman Melvin, 11 Jerome Court, 59 The Limes Avenue, London, N11 1RF
Dr. Mike Batley, Doctors Mess, North Middlesex Hospital, Stirling Way, London, N18 1QX
Jamie Sewell, 115 Cresent Road, Alexandra Palace, London, N22 4RU
Mike J. Harker, 22e Richardson Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 4BH
Martin Legg, 51 Beacon Glade, South Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE34 7PS
Geoff Geddes, 30 Sheepwalk Lane, Ravenshead, Nottingham, Notts., NG15 9FD
George Jaycock, 51 Burleigh Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Notts., NG2 6FQ
Chris Gower, 7 Boxley Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Notts., NG2 7GQ
L. Othacehe, 17 Russel Drive, Wollaston, Notts., NG8 2BA
Duncan Spencer, 33 St Anthonys Road, Kettering, Northants, NN15 5HT
A. Kendall, 12 Hunsbury Close, West Hunsbury, Northampton, NN4 9UE
Peter Fraser, 66 Salcombe Gardens, Millhill, London, NW7 2NT
Nick Hughes, 15 Layfield Road, Hendon, London, NW9 3UH
Tony Hayes, 11 Upper Fisher Row, Oxford, Oxon, OX1 2EZ
Darren Clahanne, 40 Atwell Close, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 0LJ
Toby Pilling, 30 Alexandra Road, Botley, Oxford, Oxon, OX2 0DB
William Eaton, 42 Princes Street, Oxford, Oxon, OX4 1DD
John Sharp, 3 Union Street, Oxford, Oxon, OX4 1JP
Alan Anderson, Penmareve, Maddever Crescent, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3PT
Paul Rideout, 5 Fisher Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants., PO14 3RA
Simon Strevens, 14 Teddington Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 8DB
Keith Bristow, Flat 7, 41 Nightingale Road, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants., PO5 3JJ
Justin Key, Flat 7, 41 Nightingale Road, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants., PO5 3JJ
Trevor Edwards, 18 Conway House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YJ
Steven Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL
Martin Vodden, 21 Cheshire Park, Warfield Green, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 6XA
Michael Strefford, 3 Walton Way, Shaw, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2LL
Roger Cook, Toadhall, 1 Westmead Drive, Newbury, Berks., RG14 7DJ
Paul Sanderson, Flat 9, 24a Southcote Road, Reading, Berks., RG30 2AB
Kevin Croskery, 3 Crockham Close, Southgate West, Crawley, W. Sussex, RH11 8TP
Bill Hensby, 32 The Vineries, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 0NF
A. J. Barton, 194 Chanctonbury Road, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH19 9HN
Keith Graves, 51 Humbar Avenue, South Ockenden, Essex, RM15 5JL
Tom Burke, 96 Great Oak Road, Sheffield, S. Yorks, S17 4FR
Andy Osborne, 42 Atlantis Close, Lee, London, SE12 8RE
Martin Edwards, 127 Pepys Road, London, SE14 5SE
Michael Rhodes, 23 Ash Grove, Melbourn, Royston, Herts., SG8 6BJ
Roger Underwood, 34 Woodside Lane, Poynton, Cheshire, SK12 1BB
Andrew Dando, 52 Redhouse Lane, Disley, Cheshire, SK12 2HP
Martin Mayers, 38 Syddall Street, Hyde, Chesire, SK14 1JH

Graham Forster, 1 Dalston Drive, Bramhill, Stockport, Manchester, SK7 1DW
Ian Daglish, 5 Swiss Hill Mews, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7DP
Peter Bennet, 84 Littlebrook Avenue, Burnham, Bucks., SL2 2NN
Dominic McGrath, 59 Upper Village Road, Sunninghill, Berks., SL5 7AJ
Steve Crowley, 58 Portlock Road, Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 6DZ
Robert Hartwell, 40 Brambledown Road, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 0TF
Adrian Catchpole, The Malting Barn, Top Lane, Whitley, Melksham, Wilts., SN12 8QJ
Jon Williams, 17 Larch Road, Colerne, Chippenham, Wilts., SN14 8QG
Bill Gunning, 14 Eagles, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7DT
Chris Riches, 3 Bernwood Grove, Blackfield, Southampton, Hants., SO45 1ZW
John Fletcher, 191 Trent Valley Road, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 5LE
Hugh Kernohan, 6 Parklands Road, London, SW16 6TD
Julian Blakeney-Edwards, 1 Elmbourne Road, London, SW17 8JS
Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, 57 Arnal Crescent, Southfields, SW18 5PX
Christopher Chen, Flat 11, 14 Sloane Gardens, London, SW1W 8DL
Jonathan Pickles, 115 Wavertree Road, Streathem Hill, London, SW2 3SN
Jean-Denis Martin, 33 Rothesay Avenue, London, SW20 8JU
Jonathan Wollen, 2 Inglethorpe Street, London, SW6 6NT
David Otway, Department of Chemistry, Imperial College, South Kensington, London, SW7 2AY
Chris Courtiour, 17b Hargwyne Street, London, SW9 9RQ
Paul Case, 4 Ponsford Road, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 5DX
Carl Bedson, 5 Allerton Meadow, Shawbirch, Telford, Salop, TF5 0NW
Nick Law, Flat 4, 12 Boyne Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8ET
Flerg, 38 Park Avenue, Hounslow, London, TW3 2LX
Ivor Gardiner, 27 Taylor Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4EB
Simon Morris, c/o 6 Milton Road, Ickenham, Middx., UB10 8NQ
Phil Nobo, 6 Milton Road, Ickenham, Middx., UB10 8NQ
Bob Nugent, 49 Thornhill Road, Ickenham, Middx., UB10 8SO
Nick Quinn, 21 Roxwell Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, W12 9QE
Dave Booth, 47 Dunnock Grove, Oakwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6NW
Mike Kerfoot, Rugby Tavern, Rugby Street, London, WC1
Robin Langston, 105 Little Bushey Lane, Bushey, Herts., WD2
Andy Ralls, 11 Edridge Close, Bushey, Watford, Bucks., WD2 3PF
Paul Ryde-Weller, 44 Farm Way, Watford, Herts., WD2 3SY
Sandy Goh, 12 Mornington Road, Radlett, Herts., WD7 7BL
Michael Murray, 34 Bell Road, Walsall, West Mids., WS5 3JW
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Johan Flatseth, Kelvin Lodge, 8 Park Circus, Glasgow
Ian Percy, 1 Polmuir Road, Aberdeen, AB11 7SP
Steven Trease, 2 Charlestown Circle, Cove, Aberdeen, AB12 3EY
Paul Saunders, 59 Grampian Gardens, Arbroath, Angus, DD1 4AQ
Garry Ferguson, 30E Forrester Park Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9AW
Mark Chapman, 6 Quarry Foot Green, Bonnrigg, Midlothian, EH19 2EJ
Neil Stevens, 14 Riverside Road, Craigiehall, South Queensferry, Lothian, EH30 9TP
Richard Kirby, 20 Dawson Avenue, Howden, Livingston, Lothian, EH54 6AJ
Bill Finlayson, 19 Taymouth Road, Polmont, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, FK2 0PF
Andrew Kassian, Flat 14/2, 20 Petershill Court, Glasgow, G21 4QA
Ellis Simpson, 4 Langtree Avenue, Whitecraigs, Glasgow, G46 7LW
Oliver Gray, 117 Upper Dalgairn, Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JQ
Jonathan Swilliamson, Da Croft, Bridge End, Burra, Shetland Islands, ZE2 9LE

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Kev Sutton, 1 Gorphwysfa, Windsor Road, New Broughton, Wrexham, LL11 6SP
C. Jones, Deer Park Lodge, Stepaside, Narbeth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8JL

If there are any mistakes, please let me know so I can correct them for the next edition.

Ω

ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL

There are more and more *ASL* tournaments cropping up all over the world. In fact, it is possible to be involved in an *ASL* tournament at least once a month, often more, if you were so inclined (and had the financial means to live such a life - I wish!).

If you plan on holding an *ASL* tournament, please let me know and I'll include the details here, space permitting.

If you contact anyone regarding these tournaments, please tell them that I sent you!

OCTOBER
OKTOBERFEST *ASL*OK 1999

When: 5 - 10 October.

Where: Radisson Inn, 7230 Engle Road, Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130. Telephone 440-243-4040. Room Rates are $79.00 for 1-4 occupants before September 12th. Be sure to mention "*ASL* Oktoberfest" when reserving.

Fee: $20.00 before September 12th, $25.00 thereafter.

Format: Same as always. Weekend Tournament plus numerous Mini-Tournaments.

Notes: Further details to be announced.

Contact: Mark Nixon, 443 Richmond Park West, #201D, Richmond Heights, OH 44143, or by telephone on (440) 473 1680. You can also email Rick Troha at **aslok@nwsup.com**, or visit the ASLOK Home Page at **http://www.nwsup.com/aslok/**.

INTENSIVE FIRE '99

When: 29 - 31 October.

Where: The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Bournemouth, England, BH2 5EG. Telephone (01202) 555 889 or fax (01202) 789 567.

Fee: £5.00, free for members of The Crusaders, the UK *ASL* association.

Format: Two divisions of Fire Teams of three players compete over three rounds on Saturday and Sunday. There may also be some single day mini-tournaments. Open gaming is available for those who do not wish to take part in the tournament. Shaun Carter will be running a number of playtest games of scenarios for possible inclusion in future issues of *VFTT* or a possible *Brit Pack* scenario pack.

Notes: Prizes are awarded to winning Fire Team players and the Convention Champion, who is the player judged to have had the most successful tournament with all games played over the weekend being taken into consideration.

Contact: David Schofield, 11 Longfield Drive, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 8TY. Phone (01202) 573 482 or email **dschofie@bournemouth.ac.uk**.

NOVEMBER
GRENADIER '99

When: 19 - 21 November. Play starts at 1000 hrs. on Friday and finishes at 1600 hrs. on Sunday. A Thursday start is on offer if enough players are interested.
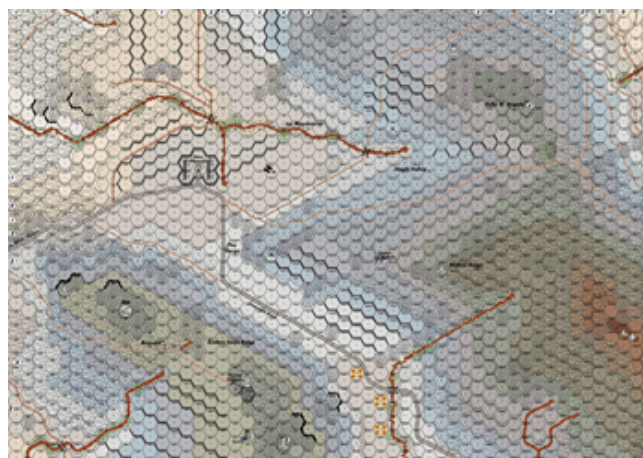
The INTENSIVE FIRE 99 Tournament Scenario List			
	PRIORITY	SCENARIO NAME	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS
Sat AM	1	IC112 Monty's Mess	British vs. German; Boards 1, 23; HIP, OBA
	2	NQNG4 Noble Craft of Warfare	British vs. German; Boards 42, 43; Mines; British 'Funnies'
	3	PB2 Howard's Men	British vs. German; Board PB; Night
Sat PM	1	A110 Shanghai In Flames	Chinese vs. Japanese; Boards 1, 20; Blazes, Fortified Locations
	2	TOT17 Last Stand At Wesen	British vs. Hungarian; Boards 40, 42; Water Obstacles, OBA, TOT SSR
	3	SoN2 Criniti's Escape	Ethiopian vs. Italian; Boards 26, 30, 31, overlays H4, H6, H1, H2, H3, S8, D3; Desert; Cavalry; Tank Hunter Heroes
Sun AM	1	DeluxeA3 Back To School	Russian vs. German; Boards b, d; FT; DC; Commandoes; Scaling
	2	SP36 Desantniki	Russian vs. German; Boards 17, 18; Riders
	3	AP13 Shielding Moscow	Russian vs. German; Board 46, overlays X16, X17; Factories; Steeples; MOL; Falling Snow, Ground Snow, Extreme Winter

Where: The "Jugendlandhaus" in Hergarten, near Zülpich in the Eifel (the German part of the Ardennes), near the famous "Hürtgenwald" (near the location for 'CH76 Hürtgen Hell'). The building will be opened on Friday at 10:00 CET. The country house is rented for three days and provides 40 beds, several showers and a kitchen. For playing we have two large rooms. We plan to provide Coffee and rolls for Saturday and Sunday mornings breakfast.

Fee: DM 100.00 (US $55.00 / •50) for three nights accommodation, breakfast and entrance. A DM 40.00 deposit (US $25.00 / •20) is required (this will be returned if you cancel before October 1st).

Format: The tournament will be played in three rounds with victory points awarded for each game won. The opportunity to play campaigns or longer scenarios will be provided as well.

Contact: Christian Koppmeyer, Hagebuttenweg 9, 41564 Kaarst, Germany or by email at **100556.3650@compuserve.com**.

The maps for the forthcoming Critical Hit modules Genesis '48 *and* Carnage At Cassino.

HEAT OF BATTLE presents:
Our first issue of

RECON

48 PAGES OF PURE ASL!

This first issue of RECON will focus on the new HASL release of BLOOD REEF: TARAWA (coming soon!) by the MMP guys.

Inside, you will find a fascinating article about how the BRT Campaign Game Victory Conditions were designed...and why the CVP Caps were set so deadly high!

Also included within these "48 pages of pure ASL" is a Terrain Chart for your soon-to-be-blood-covered BRT HASL map (art by Don Petros). This chart will increase your TARAWA killing time exponentially!

Rich Summers and Rob Banozic have provided us with CROSSFIRE featuring the ASL scenario "Blazin' Chariots". This article alone will teach you more about Armor vs Armor tactics than ten scenarios will!

Rob Seulowitz shares with us some interesting insights on how to prepare for an ASL tournament!

In addition to many interesting articles from some of your favorite ASL writers HOB has put together a set of eight cool scenarios. To give you a great variety in this inaugural issue of RECON, we have included scenarios designed by some of your favorite ASL groups such as The Paddington Bears, the Bounding Fire boys, and, of course, Heat Of Battle.

These scenarios cover the full spectre of ASL with actions taking place with the Australians vs. the Africa Corps in the desert, to the GIs attacking Italians in Italy, to the Russians steamrolling through the German lines in the summer of 1944.

RECON magazine is by the ASL player, and for the ASL player.

Send only $17.50 plus $2.50 S&H ($5.00 S&H if outside the US or Canada) to Heat of Battle, PO BOX 15073, Newport Beach, CA 92659, USA