

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

Issue 40

Nov - Dec 2001

UK £2.00

US \$5.00



IN THIS ISSUE

INTENSIVE FIRE 2001 - all the action from Bournemouth **NUDEY RUDEY SHAKE-YO-BOOTY ASL WEEKEND** - ASL in Liverpool

THE LEIBSTANDARTE IN ACTION - scenario analysis of the second LSSAH pack **OZZIE RULES** - Toby Pilling vs. Steve Linton

IN THIS ISSUE

PREP FIRE	2
INCOMING	3
INTENSIVE FIRE 2001	4
THE CRUSADERS OPEN ASL TOURNAMENT LADDER	8
LSSAH PACK SCENARIO REPORTS	9
OZZIE RULES	15
A VIEW FROM THE GUN PIT	16
DEBRIEFINGS	16
NUDEY RUDEY SHAKE-YO-BOOTY ASL WEEKEND	17
“THIS IS THE CALL TO INTERNATIONALE ARMS!” ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL	18 19

PREP FIRE

Another *View From The Trenches*, back on schedule for a change. Thanks to Shaun Carter, Ian Daglish and Derek Tocher for getting their IF reports in to me so soon after the event so that this issue could come out on time. I've still got 3 or 4 blank pages to fill to finish off *VFTT41* but I'm still hopeful that it should be out on schedule, X-Mas partying allowing :-). Beyond that, I've got 14 blank pages per issue to fill in, so I could do with some help from you lot!

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps

COVER: A Russian artillery position opens fire, lighting up the night sky.

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@multimanpublishing.com with the body of the message reading:

subscribe advanced-sl

You MUST use lower case letters!

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To subscribe to the digest version send the following in the body of a message:

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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.

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
:-(shocked or surprised
#-(hung-over

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

Issue 41 should be out at the beginning of January 2002.

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.

Back issue prices are:

VFTT Special Edition 98 £3.50 (overseas £5.00)

VFTT 95 £4.00 (overseas £6.00)

VFTT 7 - 9 £1.00 (overseas £2.00)

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VIEW FROM

INCOMING

ALL QUIET ON THE MMP FRONT

Apart from the forthcoming Guadalcanal Historical Study module which is due out soon, MMP have little in the way of forthcoming releases for the immediate future. Work continues on *Armies of Oblivion*, with several scenarios finished and work progressing on the others. No concrete release date has been determined but MMP would like to see *AOO* released early in 2002. MMP also have a number of other projects in various stages of design and development at the moment but it is too early to determine which ones will be released in 2002.

Congratulations also go to MMP's Curt Schilling and part-time pitcher for baseball team the Arizona Diamondbacks on beating the New York Yankees 4-3 in the World Series.

SCHWERPUNKT RETURN

A surprise release at ASLOK was *Schwerpunkt #7*. The new issue consists of a 24 page booklet with analyses, two articles, and 12 scenarios printed on cardstock. The scenario card format is slightly different and

no longer contains any official artwork, instead using text to describe the counters.

Send a check or money order for \$16.00 in U.S. funds payable to Sherry Enterprises to Sherry Enterprises, P.O. Box 3, Ruskin, FL 33570. Add \$3.00 (\$5.00 outside the U.S.) for a single volume, for shipping and handling, plus \$1.00 for each volume > 1 ordered (for 2-7 copies outside the U.S. add \$9.00 [\$10.00 Japan and the Pacific]). Florida Residents must add 7% State Sales Tax.

Issues 1 to 6 are expected to be re-released in the new format at some point in the future.

CH GO TO INDO-CHINA

CH have announced the release of *Dien Bien Phu* for Christmas, a module covering the final battle of the First Indo-china War. It will feature several new maps, two sheets of counters, a rulebook with historical commentary, and a play aid. The Viet Minh (P.A.V.N.) are represented by new MMC and SMC types, plus an array of weapons ranging from home-grown 60mm mortars, Bangalore Torpedoes, Recoiless Rifles, and 3.5" Bazookas. New MMC/SMC are also included for the French, with French Paratrooper squads/HS and Tai irregulars (locals trained by the French). There will also be a counter for each of the named 'Bisons' (M24 Chaffee tanks flown in dismantled and then assembled at the battlefield for service that turned out to be most effective). No price has

been announced yet.

Out now is CH Magazine Volume 6, No. 3, the latest special edition. Priced \$24.95 this edition focuses on the Arab-Israeli War, with additional material for *Genesis '48*, including a new historical map of the disputed Arava Valley (between Jordan and Israel) and several scenarios which take place on it, and a sheet of 140 counters.

13th BUNKER NEARS COMPLETION

Work is slowing continuing on *Dispatches From The Bunker 13*, with three scenarios based around the Lorraine Campaign in September '44 due to be included. There will also be an article looking at the Campaign Game aspects of the Kursk Scenarios/Campaign from *ASL Journal 3*. And the usual Tactical Tips for both Novices and Veterans, and ASL News, with the emphasis on the New England ASL Community. Work should be finished around Thanksgiving.

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 aslunker@aol.com.

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THE MIUS TRAP

MISSION: VELENAVTSKOYE, USSR, 11 July 1943. Evacuated the end of the battle at Rzhev, the Soviets began attacking along the Miuss River. After gaining head heights against their offensive line, the Germans had no time to prepare a counter attack, merely with units still disoriented from the Rzhev defeat. While the pressure diminished the southern flank of the Soviet breakthrough, the 29th Infantry Division emerged from the north. On the second day of the counter-offensive, the 29th struck the communications and control network, bringing the Germans up against two small hills, called 'Bison' and 'Moose' by the Germans. The entire attack would be for the 29th, but the Soviets struck strongly. The attack followed in the face of Soviet infantry and tanks. Finally a Shostkovich Battalion nearby had help. The assault gate rapidly broke up the Soviet attack, killing several tanks. The Soviet contingents were destroyed, and preparations began for the next offensive to be planned.

SCHWERPUNKT SCENARIO SHEET

MISSION: German side at game end if they control all facilities and buildings on the 11th and 12th. German side to be full mission, provided that the Soviet player does not control all facilities and buildings on either hill.

EMERGENCY PROVISIONS:
 1. SC and War vehicles used as tank. (Excepting M24 is to be used as a tank and not as a tank.)
 2. M24 used T-70 with armor-counter. All other T-70s are Redoubt.
 3. There is a tank on each hill for the Soviet player at game end. All entering personnel must enter on hill.
 4. German T-70 are Assault Engineers (AE) 2/1.

Scenario/Design: Brian T. Williams (1999), 17
Source: Diggins, George M., Chronicle in the Eastern Theater: 1941-1945 and 6th Paratrooper (1944), 1-3, Fawcett Publishing, 1994, p. 276.

MAP ORIENTATION: TO

OPTION:
 ★ Add 1-1 to the Russian side game.
 ★ Exchange for German T-70 for 1-1.

MISSION LENGTH

★ GERMAN SEEN EPISODE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
★ GERMAN NOT SEEN							

Units and Statistics:

★ Division of the 127th Guards Rifle Corps, 2nd Guards Army (to be added to the Russian side at the beginning of the mission)	0-1-7	0-0	1-0-2	1-1-1	0-0-0	0-0-0	0-0-0
★ Division of the 127th Guards Rifle Corps (to be added to the Russian side at the beginning of the mission)	4-4-7	0-1	1-0-2	1-1-1	0-0-0	0-0-0	0-0-0
★ Division of the 127th Guards Rifle Corps (to be added to the Russian side at the beginning of the mission)	0-0-0	0-0	1-0-2	1-1-1	0-0-0	0-0-0	0-0-0
★ Division of Infantry Division 29th (to be added to the German side at the beginning of the mission)	0-0-0	0-1-7	0-1	0-1	0-0	0-0-0	0-0-0
★ Division of Infantry Division 29th (to be added to the German side at the beginning of the mission)	4-4-7	0-1	1-0-2	0-1	0-1	0-0-0	0-0-0



The new SP scenario layout (left) and the map from CH Vol 6 No 3 (right).

INTENSIVE FIRE 2001

Well another INTENSIVE FIRE has come and gone, and judging from the numbers it was a great success. 52 ASLers attended for the weekend, while Jon Williams put in his first appearance in several years on Saturday afternoon for a quick game.

“They’re behind you.”

Simon Strevens in any scenario involving the Japanese.

As usual the first players began to arrive on Thursday, led mainly by the overseas contingent – eight from Denmark and Australia’s Steve Linton. By the end of the day almost half of the attendees were there and nearly a dozen games played, with Dave Schofield and Luis Calcada playing their Spanish Civil War mini-tournament game so that Luis could visit the Bovington Tank Museum the following day.

Great turn out, fantastic fun, great bunch of lads. Always reminds me of Norm of the Boston comedy on TV – ‘Cheers’, everybody knows your name and when you walk in you get a great welcome.

David Schofield

Friday Fun

Following on from their successful introduction in 2000, IF2001 saw the return of the Friday mini-tournaments. Unlike the previous year there were only originally two planned, as there had not been enough players available to fill out three tournaments last year. So naturally this year we had more players wanting to take part than we could fit in! Thankfully Michael Hastrup-Leth offered to run a mini-tournament at the last minute so everyone was accommodated.

Thanks to Shaun for organising the Spanish Civil War tournament whose final was played between a Spaniard and a Portuguese. Lot’s of fun.

Luis Calcada

One of the mini-tournaments was a ‘Fog Of War’ event ran by Ian Daglish, where each player was only told what his side had and only vague information about the enemy. To add to the Fog of War, two new maps were also used.

Ian Daglish achieved a brilliant set of scenarios and I thank him for an excellent opportunity to try more a realistic situation, I for one enjoyed them immensely, please do some more for BERSERK! Ian.

Nigel Ashcroft on the Fog of War event

It had gone midnight when a group of us were in the bar drinking and talking about “It’s A Knockout”. Somehow we talked ourselves into an “It’s A Knockout” scenario. Board 7, five players, each with a raft and hero trying to cross the river and back to win. With a HS manning a LMG from each player on the other side. Then we decided that it would be fun to try and sink the rafts so on getting back you had to find a FT and sink rafts. We added resurrection DRs, talked about DR for Jaws, Piranhas, Croc Dundee. It got a bit silly but we didn’t care. Don’t expect to see this scenario in the *ASL Journal* any time soon! We finished about 3, leaving Michael Hastrup-Leth and David Tye to finish off their game of ‘SP84 Von Bodenhausen’s Ride’. For the record the silly ones were Pete Phillipps, Iain ‘Mad Vet’ Mackay, Patrick Dale, Ruarigh Dale and Paul Case.

The Main Event

After breakfast on Saturday morning everyone gathered together for the start of the main event, the Fire Team tournament. As in previous years there were two divisions with a player’s Crusader ladder rating determining which division he was in. Players were then randomly assigned to a team using a system that would put one top, middle and bottom ranked player from that division in each team.

You editor disappeared down the pub just before mid-day to watch the football, Manchester United vs. Leeds – as seems to be common at ASL events MUFC didn’t win, but at least we didn’t lose for a change!

Several of the morning rounds ran late, with adjudication required for one game – it was too close to call so a dr was made.

The second round was underway by 4pm, with most games finished by early evening, leaving players plenty of time for friendly gaming. One or two matches did not finish until quite late though, with a couple lasting beyond midnight.

Fate certainly seemed to be with me as, 2-0 up already, I pulled back a win in my third game (Brits in ‘3rd RTR’) after almost total disaster in



The situation in Pete's game of the 'SP79 The Mius Trap' against Keith Bristow, at the start of the Russian player turn 3



turn two. Goes to show you must never give up.

Ian Daghlish

Me and Keith Bristow started playing 'SP79 The Mius Trap' at midnight, but Keith caved in at 3 due to fatigue (IE alcohol poisoning – most would say I don't suffer from that!) half-way through the game. We recorded the positions the following day and plan to finish it at BERSERK! next year. At 3am (this being 3am after the clocks have gone back an hour), me and Neil tallied the results together and selected the match-ups for the final round. These were fairly easy to decide as teams 2 and 6 were top in the Elite Division, while teams B and H were in a similar position in the First Division. I also

had to substitute for Nigel Ashcroft who was going to Bovington on Sunday morning.

I had an awful run of dice on the Saturday, beat Paul O'Donald despite more tough dice on the Sunday which made me feel a bit better, but broke a tooth on a toffee which is a bummer.

Trev Edwards

The Results

As with last year the Elite division was close, but with the result of the final game between the two teams still to come in it was clear that team 2 would win – even if team 6 won the Crusader ladder rating points they would get would not be enough. In the

first division team H was a clear winner.

The best player throughout the weekend had been Fermin, who had managed to go 7-0 by Sunday morning. However he then lost his final game by forgetting to use the Bog rules in 'J62 Lee's Charge', which allowed his opponent's Shermans to freely roam the snow-covered battlefield. This left newcomer Michael Essex as the only unbeaten player, with a 5-0 record, thus giving

FIRE TEAM PLACINGS

ELITE DIVISION

POS	TEAM	PLAYER	PTS	OPPO
1	2	Ruarigh Dale Steve Linton Simon Strevens	19	21970
2	6	Keith Bristow Michael Hastrup-Leth Martin Kristensen	19	18460
3	8	Lars Klysner David Schofield Jes Touvdal	18	18820
4	4	Bjarne Hansen William Hanson Fermin Retamero	15	16110
5	1	Stephen Burleigh Luis Calcada Trevor Edwards	12	12545
6	3	Toby Pilling Paul Sanderson Flemming Scott-Christensen	10	10015
7	5	Russell Gough Dominic McGrath Neil Stevens	9	9090
8	7	Bob Eburne Paul O'Donald Graham Smith	3	3645

FIRST DIVISION

POS	TEAM	PLAYER	PTS	OPPO
1	H	Shaun Carter Steve Crowley Brian Hooper	19	16965
2	B	Wayne Baumber Michael Essex Paul Kettlewell	18	17360
3	E	Ian Daghlish Ben Jones Iain Mckay	18	16890
4	A	Chris Ager Simon Croome Bill Eaton	12	11580
5	C	Paul Legg Tim Macaire Michael Robertson	12	11470
6	D	Justin Key Stewart Thain David Tye	12	11210
7	F	Paul Case Patrick Dale David Murray	10	8350
8	G	Nigel Ashcroft Malcolm Hatfield Pete Phillipps Sam Prior	6	5565

The **OPPO** value is the total value of the Crusader ladder points of the opponents beaten by that fire team
Team G have 4 players because Pete Phillipps replaced Nigel Ashcroft for the final team game.

PLAYER RESULTS

Here are the individual win/loss records from IF'2001.

PLAYER	P	W	L	D
Chris Ager	5	0	5	
Nigel Ashcroft	3	0	3	
Wayne Baumber	4	2	2	
Keith Bristow	8	6	2	
Stephen Burleigh	9	5	4	
Luis Calcada	7	5	2	
Shaun Carter	4	2	2	
Paul Case	5	1	4	
Roger Cook	1	1	0	
Simon Croome	5	4	1	
Steve Crowley	5	2	2	1
Ian Daghlish	5	4	1	
Patrick Dale	5	1	4	
Ruarigh Dale	4	2	2	
Bill Eaton	4	2	2	
Bob Eburne	3	1	2	
Trevor Edwards	7	3	4	
Michael Essex	5	5	0	
Russell Gough	3	2	1	
Bjarne Hansen	3	2	1	
William Hanson	7	3	4	
Michael Hastrup-Leth	7	5	1	1
Malcolm Hatfield	3	1	2	
Brian Hooper	10	3	7	
Ben Jones	5	3	2	
Paul Kettlewell	3	2	1	
Justin Key	6	1	5	
Lars Klysner	6	4	2	
Martin Kristensen	6	2	4	
Paul Legg	4	1	3	
Steve Linton	7	5	2	
Tim Macaire	6	4	2	
Dominic McGrath	3	1	2	
Iain Mckay	5	4	1	
David Murray	5	2	2	1
Paul O'Donald	5	1	4	
Pete Phillipps	6	3	3	
Toby Pilling	3	2	0	1
Sam Prior	3	0	3	
Fermin Retamero	8	7	1	
Michael Robertson	4	1	3	
Paul Sanderson	7	4	3	
David Schofield	8	4	4	
Flemming				
Scott-Christensen	6	1	5	
Graham Smith	3	0	3	
Neil Stevens	3	0	3	
Simon Strevens	7	4	3	
Stewart Thain	5	3	2	
Jes Touvdal	6	5	1	
David Tye	5	1	4	
Jon Williams	1	0	1	

us a bit of a dilemma – is 7-1 better than 5-0? Thanks to Andy Ashton giving us a £25 voucher for Second Chance Games, Neil and myself decided to let Fermin have the main prize and Michael the voucher. Congratulations to both for their excellent performances.

The final results table was propped up by Chris Ager, who played 5, lost 5. Keep practising Chris, and better luck next year.

On a final note, Toby Pilling and Steve Linton refused to play ‘Noble Craft of Warfare’ all weekend.....

On the behalf of all 8 IF participants in the Danish Human Wave, I will thank Pete Phillips and Neil Stevens for a wonderful weekend at INTENSIVE FIRE. We will be back next year!

Michael Hastrup-Leth

THE SCENARIOS

Here is the table of Scenario Win/Loss records from IF2001 - remember draws are used in the tournament rules: Tournament scenarios are shown in *italics*.

Scenario	Allied	Axis	Draw
?1 Battle of Baliuag	1	0	
37 Khamsin	0	1	
A49 Delaying Action	1	0	
A72 Italian Brothers (atp8 repub.)	1	1	
A79 Mike Red	1	0	
ABTF3 Late For Mass	0	1	
ABTF4 First Threat	1	0	
AP11 Swamp Cats	1	0	
ASL News 10 First Contact			
First Defeat	1	0	
BB10 Surrender or Die	2	4	
CH26 Close Order Dreil	6	2	
FC7 Another Day on the Rack!	0	1	
G46 Triumph Atop Taraldsvikjell	1	1	
J28 Inhumaine	0	1	
J31 Lovat First Sight	1	0	
J37 Tretten In Flames	2	7	1
J40 Might Makes Right	0	1	
J43 3rd RTR In The Rain	4	9	
J44 Audacity!	5	6	
J56 A Burnt out Case	1	0	
J62 Lee's Charge	8	1	
MLR5 Third Time Lucky	1	0	
PB4 Killean's Red	1	1	
PB6a It's About Time	0	1	
PBP11 A Civil War,			
Not a Gentlemens' War	0	1	
RB3 Bread Factory #2	0	1	
SP22 Tod's Last Stand	0	2	
SP66 Nicholls and Nash	1	3	
SP74 The Last Tiger	2	5	
SP75 Taurus Pursuant	1	1	
SP76 Flaming Of The Guard	2	0	
SP77 Green Jacket's Bridge	2	0	
SP78 The Golovchino Breakout	0	1	
SP79 The Mius Trap	0	1	
SP81 Betje Wolf Plein	0	1	
SP82 Norway In Half	0	2	
SP83 Boeinked	2	0	
SP84 Von Bodenhausen's Ride	0	1	
T3 Ranger Stronghold	1	0	
T4 Shklov's Labors Lost	1	0	
T9 Niscemi-Biscari Highway	2	6	1
TOT25 Franzen's Roadblock	0	1	
TT5 Commandos Not Supermen	2	0	
US Point D' Appui	1	0	
WCW6 Los Ejercitos Nuevos	1	5	
TOTALS	129	57	70

Aftermath

In part due to the eight Danes who came over, attendance this year was back to the normal levels, so perhaps last years low attendance was just a one-off. Numbers would have higher but several players withdrew due to the current world situation, while Derek Tocher, Steve Thomas and Michael Rudd were all unable to attend.

One interesting fact that I had recently uncovered is that the number of players who have attended every INTENSIVE FIRE is dwindling – there are now only 8 of us left. It would be interesting to find out how many players have attended every BERSERK! as well.

Thanks as usual go to Jon and his staff for the food, drink and excellent facilities they gave us. Bar takings were no doubt up on the previous weekend and they stocked up extra supplies of Newcastle Brown Ale for yours truly to enjoy :-)

While aiding the hotel's profits I was able to get in six games (plus half of 'SP79 The Mius Trap'), ending up 3-3 for the weekend, a vast improvement on my recent showings (1-5 at BERSERK! in March, 1-4 last year at IF). Two of my defeats were at the hands of players placed 4th and 42nd on the ladder (I started 118th!), so it's no surprise I lost them, and the third saw me diced – it must be true, even my opponent agreed!

It was my first-ever tournament and I had a ball, 0-5 combat record notwithstanding. As well as the gaming, I liked the whole relaxed atmosphere of the place, the way the hotel looked after us, and the fact that we could spread ourselves around the hotel without disturbing anyone else or being disturbed by them. And picking the weekend with the extra hour on Saturday was a stroke of genius. "Aaah'll be baack".

Graham Smith

Work has already begun on INTENSIVE FIRE 2002, so pencil in the weekend of 25-27 October 2002 as busy in your diaries and start making your excuses to get away then. See you all next March at BERSERK!.

The Spanish Civil War

Shaun Carter

The idea for this came from discussions between myself and Derek based upon the success of the first mini tournaments held at IF 2000, with the Spanish Civil War theme being a little different and filling the intention of using only Chapters A-D. The tournament format allowed for eight players to play in three elimination rounds to produce a single winner. Following a posting to the ASLML the places were very quickly filled, with the international flavour of IF being confirmed as five English, one Portuguese, one Spanish and one Danish player signing up. Namely David Schofield, Stewart Thain, Tim Macaire, Justine Key, Keith Bristow, Luis Calcada, Fermin Retamero and Jes Tourdal. I paired up people who had not played before for the first round games.

Round One used 'WCW6 Los Ejercitos Nuevos', Republicans versus Nationalists using half of mapboard 36. The Nationalists need to control 8 or more level 2 hill hexes at game end and the results show two wins for each side. The winners were paired up, with Stewart Thain playing Luis Calcada and Jos Tourdal versus Fermin Retamero in round two. This round used 'A72 Italian Brothers', which uses Italian counters to represent the Republicans Black Flame Division and Allied Minors for the Nationalists Garibaldi Battalion on mapboards 17 and 6. The victory conditions are for control of the chateau in the middle of mapboard 6 (immediate Republican win), four other buildings and finally CVP total. Records show one win by either side, which led to an all-Iberian final. Rather appropriate I think given the theme. Any accusations of bias on my part will be fervently denied!

The final used 'PBP18 A Civil War Not A Gentleman's War', a Paddington bears scenario using mapboards 11 and 24. The Nationalist use Axis Minor counters and the Republicans use Russian counters, including 6 T-26 tanks with inexperienced crews. The victory conditions require the Republicans to control 18 building Locations on mapboard 24 at game end, and Fermin beat Luis providing us with a Spanish Winner. He received a certificate for his efforts.

There were some minor organisational details to resolve. I took the pragmatic approach that provided all three rounds were played before the fire team event started that was ok. One game was played on Thursday evening because both players wished to visit the tank museum. Fortunately I was not required to make any rules adjudications! Many thanks to all those who took part. I hope you all enjoyed the experience

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Clearing the Fog of War

Ian Dalglish

Overheard at IF2001:

"Are you defending or attacking in the Fog of War?"

"Attacking. Uhh... defending. No, attacking. Oh, I don't know!"

I am currently adapting reconnaissance actions to ASL. Reconnaissance is all about gaining information about the enemy, so it seemed logical to develop some of these actions into a "Fog of War" event for IF2001. Ten volunteers tried out the system, and appeared to enjoy it. I am now doing a little more work to iron out some difficulties before making the package available for future meetings.

In these Fog of War scenarios, each player had a scenario card with only his own forces listed. Instead of cast iron Victory Conditions, the player had mission objectives: "take that orchard" or "hold that position". Further verbal orders or despatches may come during play. But neither player knew his opponent's order of battle or objectives. As such the scenarios were necessarily "one use only"; the players were asked not to give too much away so as not to spoil the fun of others playing the scenarios later.

British	German	Game 1	Game 2
Paul Case	Roger Cook	German	British
Russel Gough	Brian Hooper	German	German
Graham Smith	Simon Strevens	German	German
Dominic McGrath	Nigel Ashcroft	British	German
Bill Eaton	Ben Jones	German	German

Players were encouraged NOT to report these results for ladder ratings!

Below are some edited highlights from players' after action reports to give some of the flavour.

(Roger Cook)

"...charged headlong for the opposite board edge fearing a 17 pdr screen or Shermans or both and had no idea what direction to turn their turrets and didn't believe there was any future for them in hanging about waiting for their friends ... the result was 2 K.O.'d (1 crew survived) and 1 off. Pause. Second wave arrived to find the British had moved forward and were cluttering up the end of the board with concealment counters and probably PIATs or worse ... panic ..."

(Nigel Ashcroft)

"I didn't know the enemy's intent his OB etc. All I knew was my mission, my forces

and the terrain. A truly realistic platoon commander's situation. The Brit player did his first move out my sight. I came to the board in my player turn and saw a lot of concealed 5/8" counters, and some concealed 1/2" counters blocking my entry point. Yuk, were these fireflies, 6pdrs, 17pdrs or what?

(Later) "So as I slowly toasted in my [tank deleted] I reflected on the insaneness of my senior commanders who failed to give me up to date Intel. on the Brits."

(Roger again)

"Some surprise was expressed by my Feldwebel when the AFV failed to exit the board, even more surprise when it started back! We attempted to Panzerfaust the next two AFVs when they passed, having failed to detonate both or either mine! Our chaps seemed reluctant to take them on and the Schrek blew up when first used so things weren't looking too good at this stage ...

Bloody good game - seemed very realistic(!?) to me ... lots of confusion, panic, weird behaviour and humour..."

(Nigel again)

"The terrain was boggy, with some good ambush positions and mines. So off we went, down the road came three 5/8" counter boom up one it went on mines, it was a [deleted] Tank. Next ran into my Schrek team and toast it was. The last one drove around my now revealed ambush ...

(Later) I had achieved my mission but lost my screen, but that's what those boys were supposed to do.

Well, those scenarios were excellent. They created the right kind of situation that you, as a platoon commander would face, no helicopter commanders here. No chance to carefully study what the enemy could do, it was react to the threat, deal with it, adapt, and try to achieve your mission. Also it must be said that it does show how versatile ASL is in that it adapted very well to a Kriegspiel type wargame. ASL is really excellent indeed, in recreating a simulation of WW2 combat at the platoon level. One thing I would say is that this style of play is not ever body's cup of tea, not for the gamer that likes to know everything and can analysis what the enemy can do before the battle."



THIRD PARTY PRODUCERS UK AVAILABILITY

As well as editing *VFTT* I also help to distribute those third party products not generally available in the shops over here.

The prices are as follows, and are effective until the next issue of *VFTT*:

<i>Leibstandarte Pack 1</i>	£7.00
<i>Leibstandarte Pack 2</i>	£7.00
<i>WinPak 1</i>	£7.00

O/S - Out of stock temporarily

Add 50p per item for postage and send your payment made out to PETE PHILLIPPS to The Crusaders, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, England, LE5 0FQ.

For the latest on stock availability telephone me on (0116) 212 6747 (as usual evenings when Man United are not playing are your best bet!), or email me at pete@vftt.co.uk.

UK RETAILER STOCKISTS OF THIRD PARTY PRODUCTS

To purchase other third party products such as Critical Hit, Schwerpunkt or Heat of Battle contact any of the following shops.

LEISURE GAMES, 91 Ballards Lane, Finchley, London, N3 1XY. Telephone (020) 8346 2327 or e-mail them at shop@leisuregames.com.

SECOND CHANCE GAMES, 182 Borough Road, Seacombe, The Wirral, L44 6NJ. Telephone (0151) 638 3535 or e-mail them at 2ndcgames@currantbun.com.

PLAN 9, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen, AB25 1NE. Telephone (01224) 624 467 or e-mail them at PLAN9@IFB.CO.UK.

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



The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

Post Intensive Fire 2001 Update

Derek Tocher

With INTENSIVE FIRE now past for this year it is time for the usual update on how the results affected the Crusaders ASL ladder. There have now been 1450+ games played at the Intensive Fire and Berserk tournaments over the last six years and no fewer than 184 players have taken part. There are now 50 players who played 20+ games, 20 who have played 40+, and 8 who have played 60+ games. The largest number of games recorded is 72 (by your laddermeister). The top 10% of players have ratings of 3285+ while the upper quartile are rated 3180+. Those in the lower quartile have ratings below 2785 while the bottom 10% of participants are rated 2665 or less. These numbers have remained essentially

invariant over the last three years and the distribution of results is essentially Gaussian about 3010. International players present at Intensive Fire 2001 came from Australia, Spain, Portugal and Denmark.

Toby Pilling easily retained his top slot dropping only 5 points from his previous high of 3900. The Danish players Bjarne Hansen and Michael Hastrup-Leth both put in strong performances and now both appear in the top six positions on the ladder. The tournament winner (and INTENSIVE FIRE newbie!) Fermin Retamero from Spain went 7-1 over the weekend gaining 480 points and going straight into the ladder at number ten.

One of the most encouraging aspects of

INTENSIVE FIRE this year was the appearance of no fewer than twelve players (from 51 in total) who had not previously competed in a British tournament. With so many tournament newbies participating there were inevitably some large swings in point totals over the weekend. UK tournament newbies doing particularly well include Stephen Burleigh +255 pts and Michael Essex +270 pts. Regular attendees at our tournaments who also performed well include Keith Bristow +260 pts (jumping 60 positions on the ladder), Luis Calcada +215 pts, Simon Croome +280 pts (jumping almost seventy positions), Ian

Continued on page 16, column 3

Position	Player	Played	Points	Position	Player	Played	Points	Position	Player	Played	Points
1	Toby Pilling	42	3895	63=	Paul Haesler	6	3105	124=	Jakob Norgaard	6	2885
2	Mike Rudd	34	3780	63=	Simon Morris	11	3105	124=	Bernard Savage	21	2885
3	Steve Thomas	42	3755	65	Russell Gough	35	3100	126	Sam Belcher	8	2880
4	Bjarne Hansen	31	3630	66=	Nigel Brown	26	3095	127	Shaun Carter	48	2870
5	Derek Tocher	72	3625	66=	Mikael Siemsen	6	3095	128=	Peter Ladwein	21	2860
6	Michael Hastrup-Leth	37	3590	68=	Kevin Beard	13	3090	128=	Lutz Pietschker	4	2860
7	Aaron Cleavin	6	3565	68=	Iain Mckay	43	3090	128=	Neil Piggot	4	2860
8	Peter Bennett	14	3560	68=	Peter Michels	3	3090	131	Nick Angelopoulos	5	2850
9	Carl Sizmur	16	3515	68=	Neil Stevens	39	3090	132	Oliver Gray	2	2840
10	Fermin Retamero	8	3480	72	Paulo Alessi	6	3085	133	Dave Otway	5	2835
11	Dave Schofield	70	3410	73	Dirk Beijaard	5	3080	134	Jackie Eves	9	2830
12	Simon Strevens	53	3395	74=	Robin Langston	9	3075	135	Mike Daniel	5	2825
13	Jes Touvdal	20	3365	74=	Andrew Saunders	32	3075	136	Mark Chapman	6	2820
14	Bernt Ribom	5	3350	76=	Jean-Luc Baas	3	3070	137=	Michael Robertson	4	2810
15	Joe Arthur	21	3305	76=	Serge Bettencourt	3	3070	137=	Graham Smith	3	2810
16	Frank Tinschert	15	3295	76=	Robert Schaaf	3	3070	139	Wayne Baumber	18	2800
17	Keith Bristow	27	3290	79=	Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire	4	3065	140=	Alistair Fairbairn	3	2790
18=	Philippe Leonard	9	3285	79=	Bob Runnicles	3	3065	140=	Nick Ranson	5	2790
18=	Steve Linton	11	3285	81=	Josh Kalman	5	3060	140=	William Roberts	3	2790
20=	Will Fleming	3	3280	81=	Patrik Manlig	16	3060	140=	Nick Sionskyj	8	2790
20=	Daniel Kalman	6	3280	83	Stefan Jacobi	11	3050	144	Bill Eaton	16	2785
20=	Ralf Krusat	6	3280	84=	Steve Grainger	5	3045	145	Chris Littlejohn	14	2780
20=	Alan Smece	4	3280	84=	Scott Greenman	8	3045	146	Martin Mayers	10	2780
24=	Dave Booth	7	3270	86	Steve Pleva	6	3035	147=	Sam Prior	3	2775
24=	Michael Essex	4	3270	87	Ian Pollard	41	3030	147=	Graham Worsfold	3	2775
26	Stephen Burleigh	9	3255	88	Peter Hofland	4	3025	149=	Lee Bray	14	2770
27	Luis Calcada	34	3240	89=	Vincent Kamer	4	3015	149=	Richard Kirby	7	2770
28	Daniel Batey	4	3235	89=	David Murry	5	3015	151=	Bill Hensby	31	2765
29	Andrew Dando	41	3230	89=	Stewart Thain	5	3015	151=	Ulrich Schwela	23	2765
30	Christain Koppmeyer	15	3220	92	Colin Graham	5	3010	153=	Andrew Hershey	10	2760
31	Tom Slizewski	5	3215	93=	Nick Brown	3	3000	153=	Flemming Scott-Christensen	6	2760
32=	Klaus Malmstrom	4	3210	93=	Martin Hubley	4	3000	155	Peter Neale	3	2750
32=	Nils-Gunner Nilsson	5	3210	93=	Ian Kenney	4	3000	156=	Burnham Fox	23	2740
32=	Yves Tielemans	3	3210	93=	Phil Nobo	11	3000	156=	David Tye	24	2740
35	Francois Boudrenghien	3	3205	93=	Duncan Spencer	4	3000	158=	Rupert Featherby	3	2735
36	Aaron Sibley	43	3195	98	Eric Baker	2	2985	158=	Nick Quinn	14	2735
37	Jean Devaux	3	3190	99=	David Farr	4	2980	160	Gareth Evans	4	2730
38=	Armin Deppe	13	3185	99=	William Hanson	13	2980	161	Steve Cocks	4	2720
38=	Trevor Edwards	62	3185	99=	Malcolm Rutledge	3	2980	162	Simon Hoare	4	2690
40=	Bill Durrant	5	3180	99=	Ran Shiloah	5	2980	163	Jeff Howarden	7	2685
40=	Lars Klynsner	6	3180	103	Michael Maus	7	2955	164	Christain Speis	5	2680
42	Jonathan Pickles	8	3175	104	Paul Kettlewell	30	2950	165	Brian Hooper	67	2675
43=	Grant Pettit	7	3170	105=	Laurent Forest	3	2945	166=	Malcolm Hatfield	14	2665
43=	Paul Saunders	18	3170	105=	Alex Ganna	2	2945	166=	Pedro Barradas	7	2655
43=	Bruno Tielemans	3	3170	105=	Pedro Ramis	6	2945	168	Adrian Catchpole	11	2625
46	Mel Falk	9	3160	108=	Ben Jones	30	2940	169	Martin Bryan	14	2620
47	Ray Woloszyn	28	3155	108=	Pete Phillipps	66	2940	170=	Chris Ager	5	2615
48=	Jeremy Copley	9	3150	108=	Jon Williams	14	2940	170=	Neil Brunger	20	2615
48=	Paul Sanderson	37	3150	111=	Derek Briscoe	1	2935	170=	Arthur Garlick	21	2615
50=	Simon Croome	16	3145	111=	Tim Macaie	23	2935	173	Bryan Brinkman	9	2610
50=	Nick Edelsten	22	3145	113=	Andrea Marchino	1	2930	174	Patrick Dale	15	2600
52=	Dominic Mcgrath	67	3135	113=	Andy Price	3	2930	175	Justin Key	28	2595
52=	Paul O'donald	67	3135	115	John Sharp	8	2925	176	John Fletcher	6	2585
52=	Frenk Van Der MEY	4	3135	116=	Steve Allen	6	2920	177	Paul Case	56	2570
55=	Chris Courtier	13	3130	116=	Tim Collier	17	2920	178	Nigel Ashcroft	45	2555
55=	Bob Eburne	44	3130	118	Edo Giaroni	3	2915	179	Michael Rhodes	43	2545
57	Raurigh Dale	12	3125	119=	Joel Berridge	3	2910	180	John Kennedy	18	2540
58=	Lee Brimmicombe-Wood	12	3120	119=	Brian Martuzas	5	2910	181	Paul Legg	39	2535
58=	Paul Ryde-Weller	10	3120	119=	Andy Smith	4	2910	182	Roger Cook	28	2460
60	Mark Walley	4	3115	122	Steve Crowley	37	2905	183	David Ramsey	9	2435
61=	Ian Daglish	64	3110	123	Martin Kristensen	6	2895	184	Mike Stanbridge	31	2405
61=	Luc Schonkerren	5	3110								

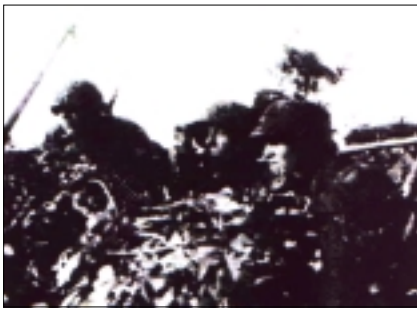


The Leibstandarte In Action

LSSAH Pack 2 Scenario Analysis

Michael Davies

I've just started playing the Leibstandarte Packs and thought you might be interested in a few notes I'd jotted down. I have enjoyed playing most of the scenarios in this pack. I'm not usually a great fan of anything amphibious but would recommend looking at "Sea Battle". I also enjoyed "A Bird in the Hand". If you like East Front scenario then this pack is definitely worth getting.



LSSAH #9 FOREST THROUGH THE TREES

The Germans win this one by gaining more than 18 Victory points, with VPs being awarded for control of Bunkers (2VPS), Level three hexes (3 VPs), and a contiguous string of road hexes from South to North (½ VPs per road/bridge hex). It's a difficult scenario presenting challenges for both the attacker and the defender.

Russian set up

To win the Russian needs initially to delay the German advance, later to hold on to Level Three Hill hexes and bunkers, and finally to contest the control of the Contiguous string of road hexes that will win the Germans the bulk of their Victory Points.

One possible strategy is to set up in force on Hill 526, complete with Mines and flanking positions to stop the Germans at the first stream. I guarantee this would work for at least two turns but by turns four or five gaps will appear and the Germans will be able to push across the bridge or ford the stream and start rounding up prisoners or dispensing no quarter. A leisurely walk North follows. At best falling back to the woods around T6 will slow things down for a further two or three turns.

Another no starter is to abandon Hill

526 and set up on Hill 604, this allows the Germans to gain road hexes and get further up the map easier, which doesn't help the Russian cause.

For choice I would defend both Hill 604 & 526. Maybe 6 or 7 squads set up to defend Hill 604 with both Mortars & the Gun. A forward position of 3 or 4 squads starts on Hill 526. A longstop position of 1 or 2 squads can go on Hill 601, but this may be over cautious. A hidden squad can be used to assist the defence of either position, set up in a cunning ambush or remain behind the forward edge of Battle to threaten the Germans road control.

A possible defence of Hill 526 could be squads in foxholes in hexes W7, X7 & X8, possibly with a LMG. These positions will slow the German advance on turn 1 without providing good cover for the enemy's use later in the game. I would be tempted to exchange an 8-0 Leader for a Commissar in either W7 or X7. This force will be very difficult to withdraw; a commissar might stiffen the defence for another turn. I could be wrong and a better spot for the Leader might be further back on Hill 604. Making this blocking force slightly larger will not greatly increase the delay it causes unless it receives more support weapons. Fire support from Hill 604 positions should be expected. A minefield in Y6 will slow down the German advance even if the small blocking force is suppressed or destroyed. Generally I use 6FP minefields, an 8 or 12 FP field would be even more effective but I think other hexes also need to be mined.

The next speed bump to slow down the Germans could be around the T5 woods. Putting concealed squads in S5 & T6 is a fair idea. A dummy squad in one of these locations might draw enemy fire. R6 strikes me as a decent spot for a small minefield. I see no real need to defend the Q1 to R5 road, as it doesn't lead anywhere.

Expect another minefield in P5. The remaining mines can go in X5, S6, P6, G4 or I5? Alternatively upgrade a minefield to 12 FP or upgrade three to 8FP. Slightly different uses for the last 6 FP minefield include setting up cunning traps, maybe in terrain the Germans are sure to occupy, or underneath a dummy stack. Less cunning but rather lethal would be on top of a trench, or just in front of a bunker in a boresighted location. There is room for some creativity but the Russians will get the most benefit from putting mines immediately in front of bridges.

Two decent locations for the Mortars are K3 & P8; both have reasonable fields of fire and can hit parts of Hill 526. Both mortars can go in foxholes. A trench in K3 makes a level three hex more defensible.

By putting the 76mm Gun in a Bunker with a carefully sighted covered arc you can prevent its use against the Russians. Possible positions include Q9, P6, O5, P4, P8 (?), or R1. I really like the look of R1, it is difficult for the attacker to get to and may get a few decent shots off. Another location R9 is interesting, though my own preference is for R1. A small minefield on top of a Bunker can be a bit of a surprise.

Another Pillbox can be used for a MMG or HMG position overlooking the Q6 Bridge and its approaches. O5, is excellent, P5, P6, P4, & P3 are good and might merit an entrenched squad or two to cover the stream.

A small force of two or three squads can go on the Level 3 hexes of Hill 601. If the German gets this far he is pretty close to Victory but this small force might just be enough to hag on for a turn or two. Any "spare" squads can be placed to cover the stream at the base of Hill 604 or on uphill positions along the road. Anyone not in a trench, Pillbox or foxhole should dig in if possible and keep digging to provide a haven for routing squads.

I don't really see much point defending Hill 601; it's a long way for the Germans to travel in the time available. If the Germans have got this far they are already well on the way to 18VPs! I also can't see much point in putting all three Pillboxes on Hill 601 to deny the Germans 6VPs.

Dummy counters can be used to suggest positions are held in greater strength, as sniper bait, or moved around to suggest Russian infiltration.

It is crucial to appreciate the road control victory conditions require a contiguous string of controlled road hexes. Obviously if the Russians can interrupt this string the Germans will lose a lot of Victory points.

The further South a unit is hidden the greater the potential for VP loss. On a map covered with Brush, Woods, & Orchard there are a lot of places for the Ruski to hide. Against this tactic the German can use search, deliberate and incidental OBA fire, and movement through concealment hexes.

If this tactic doesn't appeal you can

THE TRENCHES



add the hidden unit to another defensive position or set up an ambush on a stream bank to belt an exiting CX squad.

This is a very vague outline of a defensive set up covering Hills 604 & 526. The key to the defence is to slow down German movement using natural obstacles such as Marsh & Stream Hexes; to set mines to make the use of bridges riskier, and to contest important locations with fire. Minor issues are the defence of Level Three Hexes, location & defence of Pillboxes, and the role of the Hidden unit.

A few final points expect to see lots of German smoke, take any decent shots you get against the OBA observer. Accept close combat when you have a reasonable chance of an ambush, although you can't match German losses, Melee does restrict movement and can go on for several turns. Try to get routed squads back in the game quickly. With a SAN of 4 expect a reasonable number of sniper attacks.

I'm not sure if a Pillbox destroyed by a DC would count as controlled. My own view is it should but a strict interpretation of the rules takes the opposite opinion! I'm also not sure if a forest fire would remove control of road hexes from the Germans. I would urge players to discuss and agree these points before starting play. No one likes winning on a technicality.

German Attack

The Germans face a difficult challenge in this Scenario to cross at least two deep streams against fortified stealthy defenders, and plenty of mines. However they do have a considerable numerical advantage, plenty of support weapons, Assault Engineers/Sappers & 105mm OBA.

Before play study Board 36 carefully. Note the positions of concealed Russian units. Try to judge how far you can reasonably expect to move on turns 1,2, & 3. Then apply a similar judgement for movement across the second stream and up Hill 104. Even without opposition the Germans face a fair old hike. It is almost certain the Russians will defend Hills 526, 601 & 604. If you encounter a very strong defence of Hill 526 position yourself for a firefight which you should win in two or three game turns. No troops on Hill 526 allows a more rapid advance. Some troops should use the bridge; some others should cross the stream. When mines are encountered try to go round them or attempt clearance. An undefended Hill 526 must mean Hill 604 is defended in greater strength. Again this will lead to a firefight in which numbers; morale, ELR & Leadership will bring you Victory.

The most difficult defence to

overcome is one that imposes delays on movement- specifically a small force of three or four squads covering mines on Hill 526 and a series of blocking positions on Hill 604 and its approaches. Without the mines this would not be much of a problem for the Jerry's. The presence of mines makes movement across the streams more problematical. Before the game starts you should consider how you will clear mines. Also give thought to stream crossings without the use of a bridge to flank mined hexes.

Deploy a couple of squads before play to act as scouts and mortar crews. The scouts are tasked with finding Hidden units, minefields, & dummy units. Movement will locate some of these but use search as well. Expect to lose units to ambush, strong defensive fire or the odd minefield attack but the loss should be worth the information you have gained.

On turn one you can get close to the first stream and start preparing for a crossing on turns two or three. Blaze away at concealed units use volley fire in the advance phase, hammer located units in your defensive fire phase. On turn two use prep fire to suppress known and suspected units, then move some units even if its only your scouts. Search for the hidden squad it might be waiting to interdict your string of controlled road hexes. The half squad that finds it may die or emerge victorious from a confused melee (yeah right and generate an 8-1 Leader in close combat). I would expect to find mines in hex Y6, you can attempt to remove them using Sappers, or OBA. It makes sense to use OBA if you are also hitting other Russian units. There is a minute chance you will blow up the bridge so keep it out of the blast area.

On turn three take stock of the position. If mine clearance is still progressing think seriously about moving a scout through the minefield and further up the road, other units can and probably should cross the stream unless Russian opposition is still very strong.

On turn four keep inching forwards be aggressive with troops already across. Move more troops into and across the streams if the Russians are still strong to attempt this don't despair keep shooting and hope for a run of luck.

On turn five you really must be across the first stream this turn. If you aren't accept you are likely to lose the scenario but make a decent effort to push as far as you can. If you can get 12 VPs' you have matched the German balance and done fairly well.

The attack on Hill 604 is similar to that on Hill 526 develop fire positions then support a stream crossing. Keep pushing up the Hill to the Level three hexes. Go for

Pillboxes as you find them. Use the FT and demolition charges the first chance you get. Killing a squad early on will save time, and you don't really need DC or even the flame-thrower to take on the Pillboxes.

I'm not entirely sure it's worth taking prisoners. There is a possibility of a sniper attack breaking a guard and freeing a small horde of conscript squads who will interrupt the important road hex string. I don't see a need for massacre in this scenario; no quarter is bad enough.

When attacking Pillboxes close combat is very effective but do allow time to occupy the position after you have killed the defenders.

I almost forgot to mention smoke. Squads have inherent smoke, as do assault engineers; also OBA can produce a valuable screen that is more use than a couple of pinned Russian squads. Smoke can be used to cover movement and clearance attempts.

Make maximum use of your firepower and leadership; remember the Russians lower morale, ELR and lack of leaders makes their force very fragile. The Ruskis will hold there own for a while but will crack under sustained pressure. By contrast for the Krauts anything less than a KIA or a K result is almost shruggable for troops with broken side morale of Nine.

In Conclusion

This is a scenario in which both sides will rate their opponent's chances of a win as better than their own! The Russians will see their own force as rather fragile and be impressed by the German firepower. German players will be worried about mines, Russian defences, Hidden units and possibly his real enemy in this one the terrain. The sub plot of the concealed squad remaining hidden to interdict road control is interesting.

If pushed I would give the Russians an advantage in this one. Against a good German player the odds are pretty even but I know I'm not a good player!



LSSAH #10 BAPTISM OF FIRE

The Victory conditions require the



Germans to gain 25VPs' from a possible pool of 37 points available for buildings on Board 24. Each wooden building hex is worth a point; a stone building earns two points.

Russian set up

One possible perspective for the Russians is that they win by controlling 13 or more points of building hexes. Some buildings are difficult to defend for more than a few turns notably 24Y8, Z9, DD5, J8 # & Q10. Others are vulnerable to a strong attack N7, S8, S7, T6 & U6. U4 & V3 are also vulnerable. The remaining buildings are a much tougher proposition for the Germans and could form the main Russian defensive position.

Most players will have very definite ideas on how to defend the Village. A very basic set up follows but this could easily be improved upon or altered to suit someone else's style of play. In 24R5 level one squad, HMG & Mr. 9-1, boresight a woods hex on Board 47 based on your expected avenue of approach for the Germans, if you pick the right hex you could be looking at a 6 or 8 FP attack at -5 DRM, scratch one half squad. Squads can go in S5, O6, M6, U5, P7, & S8. In woods hexes squads should roll for entrenchment before the game starts. A LMG could be added to P7, U5 or O6? A squad with a mortar can go in O2, or T1, if you are using spotted fire Q6 might do. Again roll for entrenchment and remember the DRM for Russians.

This is a fairly strong defence. It is noticeable their isn't anything to take on tanks but the T34s' are earmarked to provide this.

Outside of the Village you need to slow down the German advance across Board 47. Given the terrain it is likely the Germans will consider moving down the 47I10-24I6 road with his armour and the bulk of his troops. Another approach rout will move from 47CC10 towards the eastern edge of the Village. A StugIII might be added to the eastern force. The Centre is just about a viable approach for infantry but a bit too risky for armour. On the Western flank a small force can inflict a delay on the Germans and might even inflict casualties. A mortar in H2, H3, G3 or E3 makes the 47I10 road more difficult. Back this up with a 76mm Gun in G3 or H2, and squads in I, I3, J4 and/or J3 or even G5 all help. Roll for entrenchment where appropriate. Adding a leader to this group may help it hold out for another turn. I usually go for a Commissar when I can they really do stiffen up a defence. Add an LMG or ATR to this force. If the Germans avoid this position you can pull back to the Village in 2 or 3 turns still on time to assist the defenders.

On the Eastern flank a hidden squad in 24EE8, FF7 or EE9 and an ATR might ambush a Stug, or shoot up a squad or two. A few squads in Y4 or Z4 & AA2 with a LMG and a 7-0 leader can fire a few shots before running or routing back to the Village.

This leaves the Russians with a 76mm gun, and a squad plus a MMG. The gun could go in 24F7, F4, I7, & K6. In the Village Q6 or T2 are decent. If you prefer 24EE8, FF7 or EE9 would do in which case you could relocate the hidden squad and ATR. My own preference is for 24F7 to protect the T34s' approach onto the board.

The remaining squad and MMG could go in the Village or be added to either advance position. For some reason I was taken with 24J2 but there are better spots I'm sure.

The advance force should fall back when broken or just before it is overwhelmed. Make use of skulking; be very pleased with any casualties you inflict and also any delay you impose on the attacker.

Ideally the turn five tanks will arrive as the Germans are crossing 47F1 worst case would be charging to the rescue of the Villagers whilst dodging shots from recently captured 76mm guns!

If your hidden squad is bypassed it can run out to seize buildings late in the game. Gun crews can also control buildings late in the game if they are bypassed keep them hidden and play on the fact the German can't really be sure where they are. Use dummies to bolster your positions, creating dummies or if this doesn't appeal sniper bait. I'd be tempted to defend the centre of board 47 with a couple of dummies.

Before play look at the to kill tables for the Stug's 75*, as well as 76 & 76L guns, and even the ATR.

If a T34 gacks a mechanical reliability roll it becomes a bunker but is still in the game. Try to keep the German infantry off your tanks. Keep in view the object of the game is to control buildings not to have all your tanks in tact at the game end.

With a SAN of 4 expect your share of sniper attacks. Only piece of really bad news is the ELR of 2, which may lead to Conscripts and later on, Disrupted units.

German Attack

Before play starts read all the rules sections covering Platoon movement, inexperienced Vechile crews, mechanical reliability, and the Vechile notes for both your own and the Russian vechiles. A quick look at the bog rules is a fair idea too! From the to kill tables it should be pretty clear there isn't much chance of knocking out a T34 with AP.

Next look at what you can see of the Russian set up. Although some dummy &

hidden units exist you can make a judgement of where the defence is strongest. Against a regular opponent this guess can be supported by knowledge from previous games. A favourable set up will either be one where the Russian does not attempt to delay the German entry but concentrates his forces in the Village, or one where the Village is held weakly and a massive force contest entry on the East and/or West flanks. I doubt you will see anything like that. Rather more likely is a fairly strong force in the Village with outposts to slow German entry and movement.

There are only three main routes towards the Village. Straight down the centre of Board 47 is probably the least attractive. The stream crossing is difficult for infantry and rather risky for Armour. There is something to be gained from sending about three squads, a leader and a couple of support weapons this way. I think the bog rolls required make it risky for the Stugs especially if a gun is lurking in the woods. A larger force might use this approach to attack from an unexpected direction. Keep in mind the terrain is rather difficult particularly for AFVs.

In the East Orchard hexes allow rapid movement and can be used for Armour. Lead with the infantry and search for Guns or hidden units. A force of about six squads, two leaders and a proportion of the support weapons can use this rout to the eastern edge of the Village. A StuG could go with them and possibly another three squads if you chose not to drive up the centre of the board. This should pick up a couple of VPs on the way.

The rest of your forces should approach along the 47I10 road. Lead with the infantry and only bring out your armour when the 76mm guns are located and preferably neutralised. Move quickly to the edge of the woods; locate the enemy by fire and by advancing half squads towards the enemy positions. Expect some casualties, you really do need to push hard due to time constraints. Given the Russian ELR of "2" you can reasonably expect to win a firefight, given superior numbers and weight of fire you may be able to suppress the Ruskis then charge across to drive them away.

On turn three another two platoons arrive as reinforcements, chose the best rout for them to enter. Generally they should follow the quickest rout into the village. If either flank is bogged down another six units might win the firefight but this will waste time. Keep the mission in sight you win by capturing buildings not CPVs'.

On turn five a couple of Russian tanks arrive. It is likely these will head for the Village. They can be immobilised by fire but

are very difficult to kill by AP. The best way to deal with them is to hit them in close combat. Cover your attack with smoke from squads or StuGs and don't make the attack just for the sake of it!

Make good use of smoke. If you capture a 76mm gun make use of it. I would avoid close combat with infantry units as German firepower; Morale & ELR make a squad for squad trade less favourable.

There are at least two ways to lose this one, either take six turns to cross board 47 or cross it in three with less than half your force! A difficult balance between caution and recklessness is needed. A third way to blow it is to lead with your StuG, you will find the 76mm Guns quickly they will be just in from of a smoking wreck.

In Conclusion

I think this is a fairly decent scenario that requires some flexibility from both the attacker and defender during play. The Victory conditions give some scope for considering decisive/marginal victories or defeats, which should be a consolation for anyone losing!



LSSAH #11 SEA BATTLE

Some players are adverse to scenarios involving Landing craft or boats; despite the title the naval component in this scenario is very limited and should not put players off looking at it.

The guts of the scenario are the Russian evacuation of the town of Cherson, and a rearguard action against a strong German force. Both sides field respectable forces, and whilst it wasn't my favourite scenario I would go as far as to say I liked it.

Russian Set up

To win the Russians need to evacuate 26 exit VPs of infantry either by crossing the River or exiting as passengers on the Freighters. From the Scenario special rules I think the Landing craft or freighter are unarmed, certainly they can only load at Piers. This makes the use of Freighter a bit easier to grasp. Typically the Freighters will move onto the board on their first turn, reach

the pier and stop & load in the next, then finish loading and prepare to move off in the third or fourth turn. This is a simple operation as long as the German do not control the Pier with troops or are able to hit it with OBA or long range MG fire. The Freighters' are very resilient but Infantry on the Pier is not especially against 210mm OBA.

In the East a small ferry service operates. I think the beached boats can be launched without assistance then move to the West bank to pick up passengers. The journey will take about two turns making it possible to get six squads across the River and off the East edge. Obviously the Germans will try to interdict this crossing.

To win you need a Freighter full of troops and a few boatloads plus a small margin to be certain of Victory.

You need to defend the Western bank of the river and contest or occupy all building with a line of sight to both the River and the Pier.

The Russian set up is difficult. Boats can go in 8I10, P10 & E10, ready to cross the River and return. In the course of the game they can make to trips.

On board 8 there are some pretty decent stone buildings with reasonable lines of sight. One possibility is a fortified building hex in 8H2, this is a possible location for the 76LL gun that gives good coverage of Board 8 and can hit locations on board 21. An alternative might be the Orchard Hexes in 8I4, 8J4, or fortified building hexes 8H3, 8G2, & 8F1. I didn't see an advantage in placement on boards 20. On board 21 many building hexes would be suitable.

Returning to the defence of board 8. A hidden SMG Squad in 8J2 (Level one or two) might surprise a searching squad or radio-toting leader. Alternatively 8J0 or an Orchard hex are fair. Concealed rifle squads in 8H2, H3, F1, & G1 supported by a squad & LMG in 21Y2 provide a strong first line. Note this strong first line will soon start falling back to the River! A squad & MMG in 20AA2 level two can help on board 20 or 8. Behind the front line 3 or 4 squads and a leader provide a location for rallying and passengers for the boats. Some of you might have guessed I advocate exchanging two leaders for commissars, one of them could be used here. This position could be tweaked by adding or subtracting a squad or two or adding a couple of support weapons. There might be a reasonable case for setting up less squads in the front line and setting up more troops closer to the River edge or even on Board 20 ready to use the Freighters.

Board 20 is difficult to defend against a North-South attack. One option is a couple of SMG squads in 21X5; X6, X7 or Y7 to

slow down the Germans before falling back towards the Sea. Squads in X2 & X3 could be useful. Some second level locations for machine guns are worth a look, 21DD3, or DD4, 21Y4 & 20Z2. I would be tempted to team the 10-2 Leader up with the .50 HMG; first choice would be 21DD3? A second line of some squads and a leader in 21Z6, & 21Z7 can cover a retreat.

It is possible for the 25mm Anti Aircraft gun to blow the tracks off a StuGIII or serve as a pretty decent machine gun. By fortifying 21DD4 or 21CC2 the guns gets a respectable field of fire. If either gun is disabled either heads for the boats or uses the crew to gallantly man a MG.

Another small screening force is needed on Board 20. A LMG & squad in 21AA6, and a couple of squads in 20Z4, Z7 or AA1 will delay movement. Hidden squads could go somewhere on row X of board 20, or 21EE? A position further back might surprise the Germans later on. Fortifying 8H3 helps the gun in H2.

The remaining infantry should set up in building close to the Pier ready to run for the Freighters; retreating units will join them.

This isn't the only way to defend the position. There might be scope for setting up a stronger front line, or setting up closer to the sea and letting the Germans advance more quickly onto the board. Try to use MGs to fight and weaker units to evacuate. I think the Leaders should be used to stiffen the defenders rather than joining the rush for the boats but I could be wrong, maybe a boat full of Leaders and commissar paddling to the Eastern bank of the River is the classy tactic to win this one! Briefly swimming might be an option it makes some sense to cross the River this way but I don't think this should be used in Ocean hexes, this really is a desperate tactic though.

The Russians troubles really start when the Germans arrive. First identify the direction and strength of their attacks and then react to it. You do not need to screen areas where he is not attacking, letting troops fall back to areas under threat or move towards the Pier. If any section receives the attention of most of the German force attempt to delay them. There is a case for stiffer defences on board 21 as an early capture of the Pier spells doom for the Russians.

When the first freighter arrives have troops ready to load, as soon as it is full or nearly full head for the open seas. A bit obvious but you may as well leave behind any support weapons, either destroy them or let other units use them. Conscript squads make excellent passengers leaving tougher units to act as a rearguard.

By the time the second freighter arrives the first will be off the board. Although you



may be able to calculate exactly how many troops you need to exit, do add a few squads to this total to cater contingencies such as sniper attacks or effective enemy fire.

During play you may see just how destructive 210mm OBA is, as whole building collapse into rubble. If you are lucky a couple of red cards or a series of gacked access rolls may keep the OBA away from you. Direct some fire against the observer or make a small counter attack to capture the radio.

It makes sense to try and immobilise a StuGIII with the 25mm gun. It's likely once gun positions are known German armour will avoid them. I find it a bit surprising the Russians have no anti tank rifles given the size of their order of battle (apologies if this is historically accurate). There is a remote chance you will capture an ATR from the Germans, or rather unlikely a Gun or a Stug?

This really is a tough fight for the Russian player. A well planned set up helps but this must be helped by effective counters to German moves. Keeps site of the objective, you need to evacuate units to win. If you get over 20 Vps' I rate that, as a victory 26 seems a bit steep to me.

German Attack

Begin by looking at the Russian set up to get an idea of position strengths & weaknesses. A lot depends on where the Russian forces are and how they react to your attack but before play starts you need to formulate a rough idea of how you will attack then change it as circumstances change. The closer your plan remains to the original the better but don't be too rigid.

The quickest way to win is sink the freighters, or stop troops loading on to them by covering the Pier with fire. Building 20U2 has excellent line of sight to the Pier, or to direct fire onto board 21. Using an 8-0 or 7-0 Leader accompanied by two or three squads and a couple of LMGs' move into 20U2. A pair of Stugs, and a couple of Leaders with two platoons (three squads in each) and support weapons flank this force by using armoured assault to move down the roads either side of 20U2. A few half squads bring on the 50mm Mortars. At a later stage the Mortars might be able to use spotted fire but more pressing needs may prevent this. If you include a decent leader and a couple of MMG in this force you may be able to engage the Russian MGs' or interdict moving troops from a second level building hex.

On board 8 use armoured assault to get to building 8M3 with a view to setting up a firebase using an 9-2 or 9-1 leader and a couple of squads with MMGs' to control the River. Another platoon and leader support

this position probing forwards to find hidden guns, squads, and later to put pressure on Russian troops attempting to withdraw. A couple of mortars and half squads move along the Riverbank to set up and interdict river traffic from the walls and orchards, unless you want to use spotted fire from a less exposed position.

Make maximum use of Smoke, including vehicular smoke dischargers to cover movement on all boards but particularly on Board 20.

The remaining squads (about six), Leaders and support weapons enter via the rowhouses between 21R2 & R6. The first units onto the board can roll for smoke, if successful following units can move through S4, S5 or S6 to T4 & T5 in the advance phase.

All this could be done differently! The board 8 attack could be stronger, the board 20 weaker, all the StuGs' could be used on one flank. The truth is much depends on the Russians deployment and not knowing exactly which units are dummies or real. Although a good entry on turn one can go towards winning, a less than ideal first move can be recovered from by good play.

After the Russian player turn, take stock of what's happened and what you now know about the Russian positions. Some time soon the Russians must move towards the Pier and/or River, when he does gaps will appear and you should be positioned to exploit these. Try to get the off board Artillery into action as soon as possible. It can ice troops on the Pier or create a huge hole in the Russian position. Target of choice should really be the Pier, but if you have a shot at a wooden building or even a fortified stone one, containing more than five squads and a Leader give serious thought to hitting it with 210mm fire. I would expect rubble and some falling rubble. Watch out for rubble falling back on your own troops is amusing when this happens but the problem can be avoided by not setting up so close to the target! I can't see the point of using 210mm OBA for smoke in a built up area. If the radio breaks down, or you draw two red cards you should be disappointed but don't give up, use the Leader as a leader.

Later in the game you get an 88mm and an 50mm Guns, decide on their entry hexes and plan their route before they come on. This might slow the game down a bit but it is necessary. The 50mm gun can be pushed; the 88mm needs to find a good spot then stay there for the rest of the game.

Briefly use smoke; avoid the 76LL gun when you find it until you can make a co-ordinated attack. Try hard to interdict movement on the Pier. Keep up the pace of forward movement but don't push too hard

too quickly the Russian force is large and can fight back in the first couple of turns at least.

In Conclusion

I'm generally not too keen on anything with Landing craft in due to the added complexity. I really do struggle with the rules and at the back of my mind would rather play a game that starts just after the troops have landed. On this occasion the scenario wouldn't be as interesting without the amphibious evacuation, being simply a City fight with a phased withdrawal. In brief don't let the naval component put you off playing.

In terms of plain enjoyment the Russians should get the most out of this game. He is saving lives, needs to conduct a heroic rearguard, and is defending Mother Russia. The Germans might not have as much fun, but should feel they are winning most of the time, and might even sink a freighter. I don't think play balance is easily determined on this one, but I guarantee anyone who plays it will talk about it at length afterwards.



LSSAH #12 CONTACT

To win the Germans must control 14 or more Level two Hill hexes at the game end. From east to west victory hexes available are as follows; Hill 498 one, Hill 522 three, Hill 534 six & Hill 547 Seven. A grand total of seventeen hexes. A casualty cap of 16 CVP is in place for the Germans.

Russian set up

One option is a forward's defence of Hill 522, with three MMG/HMG & Squads in foxholes on Hill 522 level two hexes. Supporting squads go in X0, X1, X3, W4, W8, X9 or X10. Boresight hexes GG4 & GG7 to meet German entry with withering fire. The spare MMG could start in X3, the 9-1 Leader on the Hill, the other in W1? This defence avoids stacking but lacks depth and will struggle against a well-developed German attack. After a definite advantage on turn

one the Russians will face a less even firefight from then on. It might be possible to withdraw some Russian forces to form a second defensive line along with broken units which would just about work. Rather more likely is the loss of an uneven firefight and a much easier game for the Germans.

A different approach is a series of small defensive Islands designed to delay and if possible kill attacking forces. Bypassed or breaking positions should fall back to the nearest accessible Island to assist its defence.

There is some sense in opposing the German entry on turn one otherwise units will swarm down the road to the foot of Hill 522. In effect this gives the German an extra game turn to play with! A small platoon sized force of three squads, a MMG and a Leader in hexes W5, W6 & W7. For choice I'd exchange the 8-0 Leader for a commissar, but you could use a 9-1, or 8-0 Leader. This force will contest the German entry before skulking, pulling back or staying to fight depending on how effective the Germans first turn has been. No foxholes are used with this force as the Germans are bound to overrun the position. Without a foxhole the Jerry's are more vulnerable to fire from other level two Hill hexes. When forced to retire pull back to the Village.

A second defensive position of another three squads sets up in level two hexes on Hill 547, with a HMG & a Leader in a foxhole. This position offers long-range fire support. Unoccupied squads should start entrenching to strengthen what will become the Russians last defensive position. It is worth digging a second or third entrenchment in a hex if time allows.

On Hill 534, use two or three squads, a foxhole and an MMG. One option is to put a Leader with this group instead of on Hill 522, another idea to head for this Hill from Hill 522? Squads should try to entrench when not engaged in other activities.

There are several reasonable locations for the Hidden Squad. A woods hex close to Hill 522 might contest control of Hill hexes later in the game. Similarly there are hexes close to Hills 537 & 547. A rather different approach is to hide a unit in the Village to slow down German progress. Adding a MMG to the hidden unit greatly increases its lethality. Possible choices are V1, U6, M5, or P2; many other hexes are nearly as good and a bit less obvious. I tried an MMG in level one of S3, which gave a good account of itself but did come into action early in the game and solved the problem of where is the hidden unit for the Germans.

Use concealment counters to create dummies or sniper bait.

The defensive set up is not perfect.

One weakness is most Russian units are not concealed. There is also a danger that the defensive Islands are rather too small and will neither slow the German player nor inflict casualties. Given a fair run of luck the small forces should be enough. The most serious weakness though is the need for units to entrench on turn one or two to improve their survival chances. This does depend on some reasonable die rolls but if you are having an unlucky Night you are probably down for a loss however you set up! If you go for defending the Village an idea would be squads in S3, T3, T4, T6 & U6 with a couple of MMGs and a Leader. Some forces on Hill 522 and anything left on Hill 547.

Another defence to consider is setting up in strength in the Village. The advantages include concealment, rally terrain, good rout paths and TEM the downside is once the German is in the Village in numbers they should win. This doesn't appeal to me but it could suit some player's style of play.

Some quick points. Keep your eye on the Jerry's casualty cap. By accepting close combat you may be able to push towards this. Expect to see some Conscript squads.

In my opinion defending the Hills and delaying German entry offers the best chance of success, the two alternatives a strong Defence of Hill 522 or the Village could work better on occasions.

German Attack

On turn one the most important consideration for the German player is line of sight. He needs to get onto the board without being shot up by the Russians. Begin by looking at the Russians set up and judge lines of sight from these hexes. Hexes GG1, GG3 & FF1 are blind hexes to any hex in the Russian set up area. Also useful are FF3, GG4 & GG7 woods hexes. Make use of smoke concealment, and deployed squads, blind hexes and woods to get onto the board and start building firebases. If the Russian has avoided setting some units or even dummies with a line of sight to the board edge being bold could pay dividends. Charge across with half squads, then squads and leaders, but be prepared to revise this plan if you find yourself up against a Hidden squad, leader and HMG that is rolling low. If the Russian has a very small force on Hill 522 which cowers or shoots early give very serious thought to charging units forwards.

In the advance phase use shoot, and shoot again in the Russian player turn.

On turn two judge very carefully how much prep fire you need to make, before moving units already on the board or bringing on the MG Company. Remember to move forwards in the advance phase.

Repeat this pattern in successive

turns. Keep track of your progress across the board. By turn seven you should be halfway across the board, having moved 3 or 4 hexes every turn.

In the Village you might encounter strong forces. Try to engage these whilst moving around their flanks. Almost certainly you will win any firefight but you really must keep moving forwards to attack Hills 534 & 547.

In the last two or three turns you need to assault the remaining hills. Sets up a firebase in the Village then suppress the defenders before charging up the Hill.

Throughout this scenario you need to carefully balance the number of units using prep fire against those moving, by taking into account the strength of enemy resistance. In the Defensive fire phase do as much as you can. Although the Ruskis are in a decent position with lots of MGs', your real enemies are space & time. To win you must cross most of board three.

A few quick points, Use captured Russian MG's if you capture them but don't drag them slowly across the board they will slow you down. Try to kill both Russian Leaders, shoot up MG crews and keep broken units under the effects of desperation morale. Don't rush into melee, as generally you will do better in fire combat.

As the scenario goes on the Russian forces will start to melt away from morale check & ELR failures, if you have advance briskly you should win. If you've concentrated on winning firefights and killing units but are too far away from the Hills to assault them then you may find it impossible to reach the Hills in the turns remaining. Don't give up too soon there is always a chance of a Berserk squad or hero being generated and grabbing a win.

In conclusion

This isn't a bad little scenario, I think the scenario length, objectives and order of battle are nicely balanced and I would happily play either side in this. I would have liked a SSR to allow the Ruskis to use the Steeple in N2.

To be concluded next issue.....

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OZZIE RULES

Toby Pilling

I'll admit to feeling somewhat daunted by my upcoming challenge match. Steve Linton, or "Linty", as his compatriots know him, is one of the top Australian ASL players. He's won various tournaments in his homeland and is definitely a top class talent. Obviously, I'm no slouch myself. That didn't stop me feeling slightly nervous though.

The problem was that I was totally convinced that "The Noble Craft of War" was a howling dog. In his defence of the scenario, Steve had defended its balance and offered to take the side of the hapless British. Of course, he also disingenuously claimed the balance provisions in advance – rather proving my point I felt. However, even with the 9-2 leader so provided to him, I still felt confident. All apart from the niggling worry of luck.

Any scenario, even the most unbalanced, is vulnerable to the vagaries of fortune. What, I asked myself, would happen if he diced me? My argument and credibility would be in tatters. Any claim I made blaming chance would sound like the sour grapes of a bad loser. That was my fear.

I'm pleased to say therefore, that before we ever crossed swords I procured what was definitely a moral victory: Steve refused to play the scenario!

I'd rung him from my Uncle's house in Brisbane in advance, to plan my arrival time. It transpired that I was going to be in Canberra around Anzac day – the Australian Bank Holiday midweek. This worked well as Steve was having ASL friends over for gaming on that day, so I'd be able to play a few of them. When I tentatively brought up the subject of our game, Steve said something like:

"Well of course we won't be playing Noble Craft of War."

I was surprised but strangely relieved. We'd be able to play a normal scenario, that rather took the pressure off the whole event. As well as that, my contention that the Heat of Battle scenario was massively pro-German stood. It was him who'd pulled out.

I looked forward to our game all the more now that it was more of a "friendly".

Chaos in Canberra

All my Australian friends had said the same thing when I informed them that my tour of their country included Canberra.

"What do you want to go there for?" They would exclaim incredulously.

"All it has is government buildings and trees. It's boring, mate."

When I told them of my interest in military history, they would grudgingly accept that the war memorial was worth seeing. "If you like that sort of thing."

My first impressions of Canberra began at the airport on my arrival. I have to say

they were not positive. I was astonished to find that there were no public transport facilities between the airport and the city. For the capital, I thought this was a disgrace. I had to share a cab in to town, with the final indignity of paying full fare (not half) when I got to my destination.

Anyway, I toured around on foot all day, ending with a visit to the aforementioned war museum, which was indeed amazing. Outside the gates of this was where I had agreed to meet Steve, so as light fell I was left dawdling around, wishing that I owned a mobile phone...

"The Match"

Thankfully Steve found me. We proceeded to the venue of an ASL get-together held at one of his mate's houses. I was slightly tired but felt in fine fettle. When I'd spoken to Steve from Brisbane on the phone, he'd asked me what scenario (apart from "Noble Craft of War" of course) I wanted to play. I told him that I didn't really mind but thought it might be apt to have a go at something involving ANZAC troops, to give the game a bit of a theme. He therefore now presented me with the options – "Cattern's Position" from an old annual or a scenario from the new *Tropic Thunder* pack from Heat of Battle. I'd played the former and won before, so fancied something new. *Tropic Thunder* it was then...

Don Company's Canal – TT7

The *Tropic Thunder* pack depicts the action surrounding the late war action against the Japanese defenders of Borneo by the 2nd Australian Imperial Force. The scenario we were going to play looked quite interesting. It involved a Japanese infantry force defending a hill, screened by a forest and canal. The Australian force entered from off board onto a built up area and had to ford the canal, whose only bridge was pretty much wrecked and impassable to tanks. Whilst they had the advantage of a few tanks and an armour leader, their usefulness was limited by not being able to get over the canal, so they could only provide a bit of fire support. They also got a bit of OBA through an entering leader with a radio.

Steve admitted that he had helped play-test the scenario when it was being developed. I didn't mind this at all. I was just looking forward to a non-competitive test of skill.

We diced for sides and I ended up with the Australians. That was fine by me as I therefore avoided having to set up a defence. After Steve had deployed his men, I surveyed the board to plan my attack.

The victory conditions seemed clear: I

had to position troops worth a certain number of victory points on the hill mass the Japs were defending by game end to win. Unfortunately, I was a bit lazy and complacent. I didn't bother to check exactly how many points of men I actually had. I just assumed that if I sent everyone forward, apart from the support elements, I should have enough at game end. An oversight, I'm afraid to say that doomed me.

I went for a left flank push, avoiding the bridge, which was quite well covered. I got over the canal but soon ran into a minefield that slowed me down. My attack picked up though and I was ploughing through a stubborn defence when Steve wondered aloud if I actually had enough men left over the canal to win. A bit surprised, we both did a bit of maths and I discovered what a dearth of leeway I suffered from. My initial strategy had hamstrung me from the beginning. It seemed the Australians had to send everyone over, even through the sleazy tactic I normally try to avoid of dismounting vehicle crews and the armour leader.

So the game sort of fizzled out as I bowed to the inevitable. I'd enjoyed it but felt a bit disappointed. I suppose it's a lesson to me always to read the victory conditions carefully. I hadn't played a perfect game anyway, as with hindsight I think the best option is probably a hammer blow straight up the middle, avoiding the mines through sticking to paved roads. I have to say I think it is probably a tad pro-Japanese, especially if a shrewd player trades his Nippon forces in Hand-to-Hand casualties the Australians can ill afford. Steve played well though and deserved the victory.

He also told me that in the play test version it was deemed pro-Australian, so the designer had changed it. He agreed probably too much.

Ah well, maybe next time...

ANZAC Day

This was a mid-week Bank Holiday in Australia and enabled a few ASL grognards to gather at Steve's house for a session. Again, all the scenarios were from the *Tropic Thunder* pack. This time I was scheduled to play an individual everyone referred to before his arrival as "The Doctor". Half expecting Tom Baker to materialise in his Tardis, I was reassured when my opponent turned out to be one Robert Mugford. Nice bloke and not a Time Lord at all.

Frogs in the Pocket – TT9

The scenario we decided on looked interesting and fun, especially for the attacker. This was mainly due to it involving Matilda

Frog tanks. These were specially adapted, flame-thrower toting Matildas. Cool! The scenario involved an infantry and armour force trying to clear Japanese defenders out of a few fortifications on a jungle clad hill. Sadly, it did not seem too balanced on first perusal, given that the Australians had to virtually eliminate every defender to gain the requisite amount of victory points. It seemed to me that a cautious defence with the Japanese would be very difficult to annihilate in the limited time available to the attacker. Robert was very chivalrous in allowing me to take the Japanese, so I was able to put this theory into practice. Suffice to say, my first impressions were confirmed as I eked out a reasonably comfortable win.

It was an enjoyable game though and Robert played well. I was helped by his misfortune of rolling boxcars on one of his Matilda Frog's first mechanical reliability tests. The other one I managed to take out with a hidden AT mine DC on a road. My final verdict is one of an unbalanced scenario, which is a shame given its high potential.

Fruit and Nuts – TT6

My last game of ASL in Australia was against a pleasant opponent called Scott Byrne. It was by necessity a short, small scenario. It was also very unusual though in that it tried, successfully I think to depict a historical counterattack. What you had was a group of Australians setting up at the foot of a Japanese dominated hill, who also had a pillbox on the heights. The Japanese were the ones attacking.

I find it very difficult to assess the prospective balance of tiny scenarios and this was no exception. Having just defended though I quite fancied a change so opted for the forces of Nippon.

I was aware that a lot depended on the Australian set up. Thankfully for me Scott's defence was a bit dispersed and I was able to pin his front with my machine guns in the pillbox whilst I sent in twin flanking manoeuvres. These managed to make progress and I won in the end reasonably comfortably.

Epilogue

As I was earlier playing Dr Mugford I noticed one of the other games being played on the table to my right. It was an Australian attack on the built up deluxe boards again using one of the Matilda Frogs. Suddenly, a feeling of *deja vue* overtook me as I realised that I recognised the scenario: I had helped play test it in the past! Not recently, but years ago against Mike Rudd in Newcastle. I remember that I either won or lost early on but couldn't even recall which side I played. It felt weird to be playing a series of scenarios which I had forgotten I had ever contributed to, albeit in a minor way.

One other thing I realised was that an assumption I held was no longer true: I had believed that scenario unbalance was mostly

due to inadequate play testing. From what Steve told me and also from my own recent experiences, it now appears that the best play-testing in the world is worthless if designers, publishers or editors ignore the resulting advice.

Anyway, that concludes my ASL experiences down under. Steve's hospitality and generosity were fantastic and I enjoyed the gaming immensely.

Next time we play though, I'm taking the Germans in 'Noble Craft of War'...

Ω

A View From The Gun Pit

Paul Case

This is the first of a series of articles that I hope to write for *VFTT*, if Pete will let me! (*feel free, the more others write, the less I have to do myself!* – Pete).

This, the first piece, is not about ASL, but what I think. Pretty soon, it is 'Remembrance Sunday', and I for one will be wearing my Poppy with pride. But let us not forget that it is not only the dead from the two world wars that need remembering, as the recent events in America have shown. The war against terrorism is still going on, and there are still innocent people being killed and maimed today. My sincere sympathies go out to all non-terrorist victims, relatives and friends of these attacks, (I do not care about the terrorists at all!!).

Whilst thinking about this, I remembered another, and in my mind more vile, terrorist attack that took place in the 1980's. Enniskillen in Northern Ireland, the IRA set off a bomb during a Remembrance Day service, killing and maiming innocent men, women and children whilst they were paying their respects to those who had died for their country in numerous conflicts around the world.

What I am saying is this, when we play our games, give a small thought for those who are, or have, suffered.

Remember to buy your Poppy, and wear it with Pride.

I will end with this saying; "LEST WE FORGET." I will not!

DEBRIEFINGS

The following clarifications and errata for *Guerra Civil* have been posted to Critical Hit's web site to date.

GUERRA CIVIL Rulebook: Page 2, SCW 1.11 - REPUBLICAN units use Allied Minor SW/Vehicle/Ordnance counters (not Axis). NATIONALIST units use Axis Minor SW/Vehicle/Ordnance counters (not Allied).

GUERRA CIVIL Scenario Cards:

Q: What are players supposed to do about counters not matching the clip art on firefight cards?

A: Use counters from your existing Allied and Axis Minor counter set for those not provided with *Guerra Civil* and ignore subtle differences between the counters provided and their depictions on the scenario cards as the cards do not reflect a couple of final changes made to the counters.

In SCW #2, REPUBLICANS should set up first (as defenders), and NATIONALISTS should move first (as attackers).

In SCW #3, ignore the playtester note on the card referencing SCW 2. It is already correctly placed on the Board Layout graphic.

In SCW #6, change Scenario Rule 2 to read, "...on Board SCW 2 are wood."

Q: In SCW #7 Scenario rule 3 refers to ... a Level 0 Two Story House, not sure what the Level 0 refers to.

A: As per the Scenario Rule, follow B23.22. The building simply sits on Level 0.

In SCW #11, -in Republican setup instructions for units setting up on board 42, change the hex coordinate of 'S12' to 'S1'.

For SCW #12:- In Objectives: The Nationalists need to Control three of the Six Hills at Game End without losing >45 CVP. (Changed 'five' to 'six' above as there are six 'hills'.). Note that the counter clip art on the Firefight Card does not match the counters available for the following vehicles (subtle differences): T-26B, FT-17C, and Pz.IB. Use the counters provided.

Q: In Firefight #12 does the definition of a "hill" in the Objectives, apply to the hill reference in the setup for the Republicans?

A: No. Republican units may set up on any level hill hex on board SCW2.

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The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

Continued from page 8

Daglish +235 pts and Jes Touvdal +300 pts (into the lucky 13th slot!). At the opposite end of the scale newbies Chris Ager, Sam Prior and Flemming Scott-Christensen all lost over 200 pts (but hopefully enjoyed the experience nevertheless) as did several notable regular players including Nigel Ashcroft, Justin Key, Paul O'Donald, Dave Schofield and Simon Strevens (the last two dropping out of their top ten positions).

Roger Cook played only one game over the weekend but his victory (over Nigel Ashcroft) was enough to move him out of the tail-end-Charlie position for the first time in a couple of years. A special mention should also go to Brian Hooper who played the most games (ten) over the weekend.

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Nudey Rudey Shake-yo-Booty ASL Weekend

Ben Jones

Well hello Girls. This is to invite you all to the *Nudey Rudey Shake-yo-Booty ASL Weekend*. Friday 25th January 2002 to Sunday 27th. In Liverpool, in my flat, well it's my partner's flat, but her input will be restricted to "have all the freaks arrived yet?". Raw ASL and cooked breakfasts (or should that be cooked ASL and raw breakfast). Close enough to Valentines Day for you lovey-dovey types to make it up to the Mrs.

Past events, even with the implicit threat of naked ASLers, have gone down very well. The only downer has been the lack of married with kids types. We need you lot to keep us younger players in line.

Previous attendees have included:

"Dangerous" Dave Schofield
Dave "the fringe" Tye
Dave "the ex-teacher" Murray
Trev "I'll play anyone but Ben" Edwards
Steve "he's rather good don't you know" Thomas
Ulric "faster than a glacier" Schwela (only just though)
Pete "ah, who needs a third dimension, I was born skinny" Phillipps
Martin "I am significantly taller than you" Castrey
Gareth "if I aint walking" Evans
Greg "my dice laugh at you" Davis
Bad vet Mackay

Hey, now I count em that's quite a few. Cool.

However, I feel that us young studs have had it our own way for too long. We need more people like Schofield to tell us what it was like back in the days of olde.

So, shake yo booties and organise yo selves. Friday 25th January in Liverpool. Plenty of floor space and hotels for the older amongst us.

In the past people have just played amongst themselves, but I understand that the older you get the more structure you need. Discussions between the organiser (me) and the scenario designers (Shaun "C", Ian "D", Ian "Mc" and Bob "E") have centred on six themes so far. I have added an extra two choices.

1. Playtest *Operation Pomegranite* CG or scenarios (this is Bob "E"'s bocage CG destined for a journal).

2. Ian Mackay to do a foggy thing (probably too soon for him to prepare anything).

3. Ian Daghish to do a foggy thing (probably too soon to prepare anything) and will not be able to attend cos its a family birthday that weekend (this is a lie, he will be able to attend from Sat onwards).

4. Playtest some of Shaun's scenario designs either British thus far done or some Crete stuff if anything is ready by then (Crete being another eventual MMP thang).

5. Play normal ASL lots to choose from. A theme perhaps (desert Night PTO).

Someone pick one.

6. Play other published CG: *ABTF*, *Tarawa*, *Red Budgiecage Berlin Red Vengeance*, *Cassino* or *KGP*.

7. An introduction to caves - I'll make a man of you lot yet :-)

8. A session on the HoB *Fortress Cassino* map which I will have copies made of and especially blown up for the occasion.

Well fellas, this is community consultation in action, whadda ya fancy for the weekend? Let us know, with the dirtiest organisational mind on the case (me) and the best UK ASL designers we cannot go wrong.

What follows is the never finished AAR of the last naked ASL event.

Hey ladies. Weeeeeell, I am now an ASL 1-4-9, two newbies dragged into the fold, another part newbie (yeah, you Murray) dragged further into said fold, and two ASL events hosted in the last few months.

Last weeks naked ASL event went swimmingly. Ulric (Can we play a bit slower please) Schwela, Dave (I only take the piss behind your back) Tye, Dave (Communal) Murray, Pete (too foolish to live) Phillipps, Trev (the one the only) Edwards and Steve (I let my guys die in a field) Thomas all attended and were variously beaten, victorious, forcibly introduced to caves, (nearly) introduced to my cousins and fed outstandingly well. All for a minimum charge. Well, no charge actually, but that's worth a try.

We started on Friday evening, the majority of the boys arriving around 8pm, I knew Ulric was coming at sometime, but hadn't checked my email and was a bit thrown when he arrived well early. "Er, sit there, I'll be back in about three hours, sorry, wanna read my new journal :>)" I think he was happy.

The lad Schwela did a good job getting there, I spoke to him on Thursday, he told me that he had just got back from two weeks with his wife on holiday - so I pointed out to him that he had no excuse not to come. so he did.

Went to meet Dave x2 and Pete, all were late, so I retired to the boozier and kept an eye on the crowds in the station below. It was some time later that I noticed a skinny guy standing in the middle of a growing circle of people, it was Pete in his 'Man United' jacket. I went to save him. The fool.

I had to wander down and meet Dave Murray, who I hadn't met before; I knew that he was about 30 but had no idea what he looked like. So I borrowed Pete's rulebook and stood opposite the entrance trying to catch the eye of every 30 year old man who walked out, (we've all been there don't deny it) while at the same time trying to avoid the

gaze of all the young, tanned Liverpool women, and there are so many - ask the boys. Anyway, this was so embarrassing, cos Pete has the first edition (not true, it's a second edition rulebook in a custom binder with the first edition covers :-)) - Pete). All of a sudden i saw another guy with an ASLRB, I presume it was Dave Murray, I never confirmed this but he knew how to play, and he stayed the weekend, so I suppose that it wasn't important.

Got back and i jumped into a game of Cactus farm with Dave M, with Dave T, Pete and Ulric getting into some early war shite - I like double figure TK numbers.

'Cactus Farm' rocks, this is the second incarnation i have played, the first was Shaun "Armour" Carter's and was also satisfying. Falschirmjaegers, MMGs, 40LL (what they only shoot APCR? Cool) AT guns and 100mm OBA. In combination with Cactus patches and the dreaded cactus hedges make this farm one that even MAFF inspectors would think twice about before incinerating. The 457's and 9 Churchills didn't really have a chance. Didn't get near the farm I think, but I taught Dave about OBA, IFE and the meaning of the word pain.

I think Ulric beat Dave and Pete, but you'll have to wait for their AAR's (he did, the CVP cap finishing us off - Pete). Bed by 2 or so. My girlfriend was away, sensibly.

Up at 8.30, kicked everyone's ass out of bed, except Pete's - I don't think he has one. ASL at 8.30, in our pants, you could tell there were no women about. Anyway, I finished beating Murray, although, as he is a newbie, it is not the kind of victory that I take great pleasure out of - he didn't cry.

Dave and Pete started a game, so i tried to talk Ulric and Dave T into a game of 'American Tragedy' - it started as a joke "any of you lady boys wanna play a cave scenario". Dave was saying it's too big, bah blah girly blah. In the end he said oh, what ever you want to play is fine by me. Bwahahaha. while he was out buying smokes, i set up 'Agony Ateball and Angel' from Uncommon Valor, I've played this before and have a set-up somewhere on my gf's computer, which I couldn't find so I was forced to set up my 14 caves, 15 squads, mines, AT set dc's, trenches wire and pillboxes too quickly, while teaching Ulric and Dave the cave and NOBA rules.

At this point the author fell asleep and what was the best tale of how an ASL weekend was invaded by young women and changed into something else completely, was never finished.

See you all at the next one. Call me on 0151 227 4335 or 07811 476 181.

"THIS IS THE CALL TO INTERNATIONALE ARMS!"

This is the latest edition of the overseas (IE non Britain or North American) *ASL* Players Directory.
It is broken down by country. Within the country, players are listed according to their ZIP/Postal Code.

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

Ω



VIEW FROM

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!

2002 JANUARY WINTER OFFENSIVE

When: 17 – 20 January.
Where: The Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD20718. Tel 301-464-0089. Single and double rooms are 471.20 per day, triple rooms \$79.20 per day and quad rooms \$87.20 per day. Mention Winter Offensive for the special room rate.
Fee: \$20.00 pre-registered by 31 December, \$25.00 thereafter.
Format: Unstructured format, mutually agreeable scenarios. Special mini-tournaments start Thursday morning with brand new scenarios. The main event free-for-all starts Friday morning.
Notes: Cash prizes based on attendance, plus a special 1st place trophy.
All proceeds will be dedicated to the fight against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig's disease as part of "Curt's Pitch for ALS" – WO 2001 raised \$4,072.
Contact: Multi-Man Publishing, 403 Headquarters Drive, Suite 7, Millersville MD 21108 or contact perrycocke@aol.com or beyouse@cablespeed.com. You can also sign up on MMP's web site at www.advancedquadleader.com.

WINTER RV

When: 26 – 27 January.
Where: "The Game Room", McLeod Residence, RM of Springfield, MB, Canada.
Fee: \$10.00CD.
Format: Timed, scheduled rounds, 2 rounds on Saturday, 1 round on Sunday, winner is last undefeated player.
Notes: If you are planning on attending, please pre-register to obtain tournament information and directions to tournament site.
Contact: Jim McLeod, Box 31, Group 8, RR 2, Dugald, MB, R0E 0K0. Telephone 204 444 2583 or email jimmcleod@mb.sympatico.ca.

WEST COAST MELEE V

When: 31 January – 3 February.
Where: Embassy Suites, LAX, South 1440 East Imperial Ave., El Segundo, CA 90245.
Fee: \$25.00 before 18 January 2002, \$30.00 after that.
Format: WCM is a 'structured open' format. Players will be initially paired at random. From that point on, for a game to count toward your overall event record, you must play against another player with the same number of wins. There will also be a team competition as part of "The Melee", where teams of 3 players compile their records and compete for prizes.
Notes: Gaming begins on Thursday before the main tournament on Friday. There will also be a 7-0 Leaders corner, where an experienced player will be available to answer questions and explain rules for new and inexperienced players, three mini-tournaments on Saturday for players who have been knocked out of "The Melee", and a desert team tournament, based on an unpublished Pete Shelling design similar to his Kursk mini-CG.
Contact: Jim Aitken, (909) 698-6273 or email ala@pe.net. You can get up to date information at www.socas.com.

ASL SCANDANAVIAN OPEN

When: 22 – 24 February.
Where: Danish National Arms Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark. You can sleep on the floor at the tournament site (there is a bath) and eat there. If you want more luxury then you can get accommodation from £13.00.
Fee: To be announced.
Format: The tournament will be a six round Swiss style affair and each round will have three scenarios to choose from.
Contact: Michael Hastrup-Leth, Favrholtmvanget 15, 3400 Hillerod, Denmark, or email at hastrup@image.dk.

MARCH BERSERK 2002

When: 14 - 17 March.
Where: Hotel Skye, South Promenade, Blackpool, England. Room rates are £20.00 for a shared room or £26.50 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.
Fee: £6.00.
Format: Five round tournament beginning Friday afternoon (arrangements will be made for those unable to arrive until Friday night), with three or six scenarios to choose from in each round. CG and friendly games can also be found throughout the weekend. There will also be a special three round tournament for new players.
Contact: Steve Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL, or email Trev Edwards at trev.hulldown@freeuk.com.

SEPTEMBER

THE TRENCHES

CANADIAN ASL OPEN

When: 20 – 22 September.
Where: Winnipeg, MB, Canada.
Fee: To be confirmed.
Format: To be announced.
Contact: Jim McLeod, Box 31, Group 8, RR 2, Dugald, MB, R0E 0K0. Telephone 204 444 2583 or email jimmcleod@mb.sympatico.ca.

OCTOBER INTENSIVE FIRE 2002

When: 25 – 27 October.
Where: The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Boumemouth, England, BH2 5EG. Telephone (01202) 555 889 or fax (01202) 789 567 to arrange accommodation.
Fee: £6.00. Players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in September.
Format: Three round Fire Team tournament (two rounds on Saturday, one on Sunday). There will also be some single day mini-tournaments on the Friday. Open gaming is available for those who do not wish to take part in the tournament.
Notes: Prizes are awarded to winning players and the Convention Champion, who is the player judged to have had the most successful tournament with all games played over the weekend being taken into consideration.
Contact: For more details or to register contact Pete Phillipps, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, LE5 0FQ. Phone (0116) 212 6747 (evenings only) or email if2002@vfit.co.uk.

Ω



Product - Weddinggram
Message Text:
Nicky and Neil
An ASL telegram.
J22 (Oh Joy) at getting married. Please save us BBP7 (A Piece of Cake). Sorry we can't be with you, it's bound to be A56 (A Good Party). All the best for the future.
Your ASL mates.
Sent to:
1 - Major Neil Stevens
- Barony Castle
Eddleston by Peebles
Peebleshire eh45 8qw



BERSERK!

BLACKPOOL 2002

**ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT
15TH - 17TH MARCH (FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY) 2002
HOTEL SKYE, SOUTH PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, ENGLAND**

THE EVENT

This year sees the sixth annual *Advanced Squad Leader* event in the North West of England. We are now well established in the world ASL calendar and offer an extended weekend (there are usually games played from the Thursday evening) where you can play in an ASL tournament and/or play friendly games (or even try your hand at a campaign game if you can find an opponent). In the main tournament, players of like record are paired off to allow us to determine the winners after five rounds. The first round will start on Friday afternoon and each round sees players choose from three carefully selected scenarios. Main tournament entrants are to be familiar with the rules through to the first half of Chapter G.

THE EVENT

A special three-round event is to be arranged for up to eight new players (players who have only ever played five or fewer games against a live opponent). Scenarios with easy to handle units and manageable forces will be set. You can learn the game with an experienced player nearby to offer advice on rules. There will never be a better time to try your hand at ASL!

Remember, you can also drop in just for part of a day if you can't make it for the full weekend.

THE VENUE

The Hotel Skye is under new management this year and our host is very keen to see us remain regulars. The facilities are already being improved with meals and good beer available in the hotel. The nearest train station is very close by and various alternative food outlets are not far.

THE COST

The weekend, whether you enter a tournament or just play games with the people you will meet, is fantastic values at only £6.00!

HOTEL PRICING

Cheaper than last year!

B&B – for a shared room £20.00 (per person)

B&B – for a single room £26.50

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Steve Thomas
19 Derwent House
Samuel Street
Preston
Lancashire,
PR1 4YL

Or e-mail **Trevor Edwards**
trev@cableinet.co.uk

