

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

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SCHWERPUNKT 7 - reviewed

OPERATION WATCHTOWER - reviewed

THE LSSAH IN ACTION - analysis of the second LSSAH pack

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PREP FIRE

Welcome to the first *View From The Trenches* of 2002, a few weeks later than planned but I was waiting for one article to turn up – it still hasn't but Trev Edwards was able to get his *Operation Watchtower* review to me in double quick time so I have used that instead. Thanks Trev.

I'd also like to thank Michael Davies who is becoming a prolific writer of scenario analysis's for me. He's hard at work on the *Guerra Civil* scenarios right now so expect to see those in the next couple of issues.

What I could do from the rest of you is small articles, one, two pages in length about tactics or rules. If you're on the ASL Mailing List look at some of the discussions that crop up and turn one of them into a small article. The more I have the better.

See you all at BERSERK! I hope. Until then roll low and prosper.

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps

COVER: German grenadiers prepare to attack.

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:

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You MUST use lower case letters!

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EMOTICONS

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

An emoticon is created with keyboard characters and read with the head tilted to the left.

Some typical emoticons are:

:-) humour or smiley
;-) winking
:> devious smile
<g> grin
:-(sad
:o shocked or surprised
#-(hung-over

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 42 should be out at the beginning of March 2002.

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49 Lombardy Rise

Leicester

LE5 0FQ

Telephone:

(0116) 212 6747

E-mail:

pete@vftt.co.uk

World Wide Web Home Page:

<http://www.vftt.co.uk>

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VIEW FROM

INCOMING

MMP BRING OUT OWT

MMP have just released *Operation Watchtower (OWT)*, the first in a series of historical study scenario packs. This pack focuses on the Guadalcanal campaign from August 1942 to February 1943 and features 16 scenarios and a mini-HASL based on the actions at Edson's Ridge. A 42" x 30" map is included for the mini-HASL, although most of the scenarios use regular mapboards. Background information on the campaign is proved in the accompanying 12 page booklet. Also included is a one counter sheet containing mainly Marine raiders and some Japanese 1st line squads and HS, and a couple of pages of rules for the mini-HASL CG. *OWT* is available for \$40.00.

For King and Country, the reprint of the British non-desert is nearing completion, with just the final proofing of the new Chapter H and a few counters to be completed. The module should contain boards 1, 7, 8, and 12; the complete British OB; and 20 scenarios (including one from *Backblast*), many of which are being updated for balance purposes. The new *West of Alamein* will contain boards 25,26,27,28, and 29; 1 countersheet with desert specific counters, 8 scenarios, Chapter F (the desert rules), and the desert overlays. No release date or price has been set for either module yet.

ASL Journal 4 is being worked on, with 16-20 scenarios under consideration for inclusion. Among these are half a dozen carrier actions designed by Ian Daghish, who is also providing an article on them and their use.

Work continues on the long-awaited

Armies of Oblivion, with playtesting of the numerous potential scenarios appearing to be the main cause of the delay.

Among the many other works in various stages of design and development are *Operation Veritable* (Canadians attacking and holding a road in rural Germany in February of 1945), *Valor of the Guards* (formerly known as *Central Stalingrad*), *Ortona: Little Stalingrad*, *Hakka Paale*, *Operation Pomegranate* (Canadians vs. SS in Normandy), *Red October* (a HASL by *Red Barricades* designer Charlie Kibler), *Warsaw Aflame!* (Polish Home Army uprising in Warsaw), and modules set in the Philippines, Dinant '40, Operation Bagration, Budapest '45, Hurtgen Forest, Stavelot (designed by KGP guru Philippe Leonard), Sicily, Buna, Crete (the German airdrop at Tavronitis Bridge, Hill 107, and Maleme Airfield), and the Spanish Civil War (a DB-sized module designed by Pablo Perez with lots of counters and scenarios).

THE FRENCH FIGHT BACK

Franc Tireur 6 is currently at the printers, and should be released around mid-January. It will contain a dozen new scenarios (ten in English) and 90 pages (in French) of new material including articles, product reviews, tournament news, a series of articles on the Spanish Civil War, and a new overlay.

All orders are charged 22 Euros, including shipping and handling. Send International money orders or cash to *Le Franc Tireur*, c/o Xavier Vitry, 1 impasse des Jardins, 35340 Erce Pres Liffre, France. You can also email them at lefranc-tireur@presse-ecrite.com or at vityr658@wanadoo.fr or visit their web site at <http://asl.histofig.com/>.

CANADIAN ASL

The latest offering from the WASLC, *Grossdeutschland Pack 1 - The Early Years* was released recently. This eight scenario pack follows the unit from its early actions in France in 1940 to the wintry steppes of Russia in early 1942. *GDI*, as well as the earlier packs *WinPak 1*, *Leibstandarte Pack 1 - Blitzkrieg* and *Leibstandarte Pack 2 - Barbarossa* are available for \$10.00 (overseas \$13.00; Canadian orders C\$10.00). Send your orders to George Kelln, 1637-8th Av-

enue, Wainwright, Alberta, Canada, T9W 1H6. You can also email George at gckelln@telusplanet.net

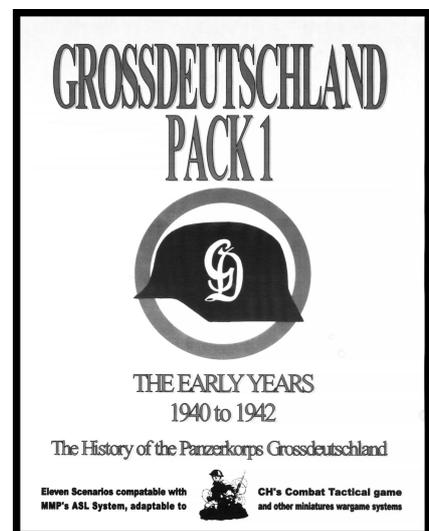
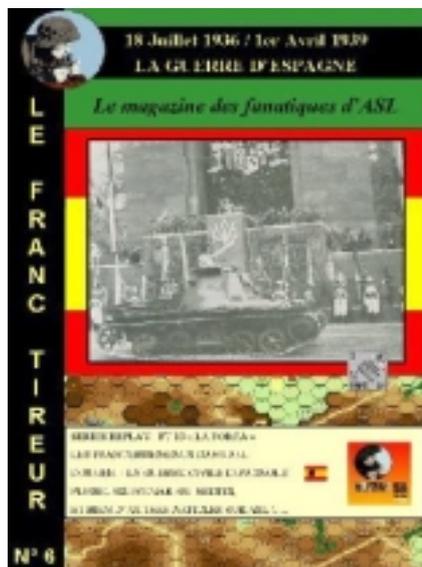
Leibstandarte Pack 3 - Clash at Kharkov is expected to be released soon. This eight scenario pack covers the return of Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler from their refit in France to become SS-Panzer Grenadier Division 1 in March 1943, to help von Manstein save Kharkov during the third battle for the city. Sometime after that *Wacht am Rhen-Operation Autumn Mist* should be released. A double pack scenario pack (16 scenarios), this pack focuses on the German 1st Army and 5th Panzer Army in the central and southern sectors during the Battle of the Bulge. Finally some time late in the summer *First Canadian Division - The Red Patched Devils in Sunny Sicily* should be released. This eight scenario pack concentrates on the actions of the 1st Canadian Division during Operation Husky (the invasion of Sicily) in July 1943.

HEAT OF BATTLE

Due for release soon from Heat of Battle is *SS-III "Neither Fear Nor Hope"*. This new scenario pack follows the actions of the 2nd SS Panzer Division "Das Reich" from its beginnings as a rifle battalion to a full division. *SS-III* will contain 14 scenarios, a mixture of medium to large actions, and have a glossy cover similar to the *Tropic Thunder!* scenario pack. It will cost \$20.00 plus \$1.75 shipping and handling (\$2.25 outside US).

Behind the scenes Eddie Zeman has

Continued on page 12, column 3



The Leibstandarte In Action

LSSAH Pack 2 Scenario Analysis

Michael Davies

Following on from my analysis of the first four scenarios of *LSSAH Pack 2* in the last issue of *VFTT*, here are my thoughts on the rest of the pack.



LSSAH #13 THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING!

Before play starts both sides need to read the rules for beaches, landing craft, and the chapter H notes for the Russian boats. The most significant rule is the effect of the inexperienced boat crews, which reduces landing craft movement to 3 MP. Next have a good look at the map and count up potential Victory points, I make it 83 or thereabouts.

German set up

The Germans face a difficult task opposing a horde of Russian infantry that out numbers them 33 squads to twelve. What keeps the Jerry's in the game is the sea and beach the Russians need to cross before they can make a fight of it.

It is just about possible the Russian might concentrate his force and land either at the extreme Northern or Southern board edges. I doubt this would work as the German can relocate faster than the landing craft, and be likely to hold or slow down and movement. It is rather more likely the attack will come in a broad wave of 15-20 hexes. Covering the whole coastline, not with a continuous string of units but a series of strong positions (or islands) which can be abandoned if the attack materialises elsewhere best defends this.

One possible set up is as follows. Leader, squad and HMG in W8L2; squad and LMG in X8L2; squads and LMGs in DD8L1 and EE8L1; Leader in DD7L1; half squad and Mortar in AA8. Further north, squad, HMG and Leader in J7L1; half squad

and mortar in N7; squad and LMG in I7L1; squads in E8, G8, and P7, K7L1; half squads and flame-throwers could go in G4, X7, U6 or M2? The demolition charges can be issued as anti personnel weapons or possibly used to be set and attempt bridge destruction. The remaining leader could go with a LMG squad, used to bolster X7 or anywhere else that appeals.

Most of the German units will open up on turn one, the rest will soon afterwards, I suspect the best use of the concealment counters is to create a few dummy units to draw sniper fire.

This isn't quite a linear defence but does look a lot like one! There could be a case for concentrating the Germans in bigger chunks possibly stacking squads and/or adding an LMG and squad to the HMG stacks? A few other ideas to consider include setting up a squad on a bridge to attempt to demolish it, manning the HMGs' with half squads, or an uneven set up with more units in the North or South.

A key element in your defensive plan is to inflict serious damage on the Russians as they approach. The landing craft are not particularly strong and you might even sink one or two. Try to keep the Marines away from the Pier but don't be too worried if they do use it. To cross the Ocean and Beach should take about seven turns or about twelve to fourteen fire phases, during most of this time return fire should be less effective. The actual fight for the building will only take about three turns.

The 76mm or 85mm Gun might be effective, but it requires some pretty low rolls to hit using direct fire given the cover you are in. Smoke is probably more of a problem but you might not even suffer too much from this.

If the Marines do go for a board edge attack disengage, some units and move them to the threatened area.

On turn two you get a pair of 105mm Guns which may attract the 76mm guns attention. Decide early on if you want to use them as part of a defensive screen or to crack at the landing craft. Watch out for the Ammo vehicle exploding and attacking adjacent forces with a 16IFT attack, followed by a blaze and smoke in the way of your shooting.

On turn four the Marines are still charging to the beach, bring on the Panzer Jagers. Rush them to the waters edge to try

for landing craft or hold them back to act as rather feeble assault guns.

Once the Russians land this becomes a straight city fight. The Marines will be depleted but still full of fight. Quite how many of them there are makes a big difference but even if a strong force has landed play on.

A few final points, hit Russian Leaders when you can. Keep a rough count of Russian Victory hexes. On the last game turn give some thought to a quick counter attack to regain one or two buildings.

Even if you lose this one you should kill hordes of Marines during the landing, and enjoy a tough fight for the last few turns.

Russian Attack

It's very tempting to say load up the landing craft and head for the beach (slowly). Next capture the buildings on board 22.

That's the basic plan, but a few notes might help. As you are approaching a well-defended beach it makes sense to load your landing craft carefully. Maybe one assault engineer squad per boat maximum, with a Demolition charge and maybe a flame-thrower. Split the MGs' and ATR across the boats and also distribute the leaders. In short don't create killer boats filled with three assault engineers squads, a couple of leaders, and half a dozen support weapons. Keep in view you can deploy to load boats, very useful for flame-throwers and mortars.

Next roughly plan where you will head for on the beach. It will take five turns to get there and two or three to cross the beach. The Pier will be swept with fire and best avoided, but don't forget its there and can be used if shrouded in smoke? I think the attack needs to be able to contest control of both Northern and Southern parts of the board, by landing in a broad band straddling the Pier. There just isn't time to land in force then work your way along the board.

During the approach you can use the support of the 76mm gun, it can try for smoke, or take a few low probability shots against other targets. I wouldn't expect too much damage to be inflicted. Any ammo vehicles or guns are worth a shot. Later still a Panzer Jager might burn nicely and give some cover for your troops.

Once landed make use of any equipment you have or even any captured equipment. Use inherent Assault engineer smoke. Even captured guns or vehicles are



worth using. A lot depends on how much of your force survived. If you are outnumbered then you have probably lost already barring some better luck, if most of your order of battle is in tact then you have an excellent chance of Victory.

Once on the beach you really must hurry. Having just been shot at for five turns you should be pretty keen to get off the beach and into close combat. A human wave might work, so too would swarming the defenders and volley fire from huge firegroups.

I would be keen to take an 9-0 Commissar, and probably a 10-0 as well these are useful for getting broken units back into the fight rapidly. I would ditch the mortars, possibly before getting into the boats to be honest!

Above all do not dawdle on the beach. Charge into combat, throwing demolition charges, and shooting jets of flame on the way.

In Conclusion

Not a personal favourite but probably as good or better than some marine landings I've seen. If the Russian plays this one to try for the highest possible number of Victory points rather than the target 60vps then I think this might be an interesting game. Its another scenario I'd advocate playing twice and comparing levels of Victory for competitive games. The principle difficulty is there is a fair amount of luck in which Landing craft gets plastered which does distort play balance a bit.

For players who don't usually touch anything with Landing craft in this is worth a look, it plays a bit like a River crossing.



LSSAH #14 A BIRD IN THE HAND

Made a very bad start analysing this one, misunderstood the set up instructions and believed the German entry hexes could be hit by the Russians on turn one. After looking at the map I realised my mistake and started again!

This scenario features a highly mobile,

hard hitting German force against a very mixed Russian force. Victory is earned immediately by controlling all buildings adjacent to the Runway or at the game end by controlling all Multi hex buildings in play.

Russian set up.

As both the Tower in 14L5 and the steeple in 3N2 locations can only be occupied by half squads the only units that can set up there are SMC or a gun crew. Later in the game you might end up with a half squad that could enter. This is a bit disappointing as the Tower has a very decent line of sight.

The Russians need to slow German entry. Also of critical importance is the control of building 14H9, as this is required for both the possible Victory conditions.

To slow the Germans down use part of your force to contest road movement. A squad in 3V1 can shoot at the 3Y3-road junction. A squad in level one of 3S3 with a LMG can hit 3Y2 and 3X2 and defends a multi hex building. This small force delays any German units trying to drive into the Village or across to Board 14. Optionally this force could be larger possibly with a leader but I believe this is small enough to cause a significant delay without weakening other sectors.

On board 14 a squad and 50mm Mortar could go in 14T0, 14R1, 14N1, 14T6, 14P8, 14O9 or 14Q5. Other sites further east around 14D2 are also reasonable. My own choice would be 14R1. Remember to boresight.

Most of the remaining squads go into the buildings around the runway. Put squads in 14I7, L7, and K8. Add a LMG to one squad maybe L7? The remaining squads go in I9 and H9 with the leader and an MMG, unless you believe L7 is a better spot for the MG. Conscript and first line squads are fairly interchangeable but don't give the conscripts an MG or mortar! The 7-0 Leader can go in 14I9 or with one of the blocking units.

Commissars are cracking units and exchanging the 8-1 Leader for a 10-0 Commissar really does appeal. This comes down to personal choice.

Next pick a location for the 45L antitank gun. 14I7, 14D2, G3, K4, H2 or at a pinch 14N1, 14P8 or in a woods hex. After some thought I picked 14Q5. Boresight!

Finally place dummies to conceal your strength or act as sniper bait.

On the surface control of the Runway is probably the more difficult objective for the Germans. If the German goes for Multi hex Building control all building on the map are needed. By hiding a squad somewhere on board three you force the Jerry's' to look for the unit or garrison captured locations to defend against a Russian counter attack on

turns seven or eight. Lots of locations can be used, pick one not too far away from the Village.

On turn one shoot up what you can and place residual fire early. Let motorcycles roll for wreck before you shoot.

The 76LL gun cannot move very far, especially if you chose to unhook. Decide on movement towards the runway or stopping on turn one to unhook with a view to being able to shoot sooner. During turn two unlimber and get set to blaze away at any suitable targets. Moving further down the road doesn't help very much it will probably take two or three turns to get into position near the village then more time to unhook, and unlimber. If the Germans are going for a multi hex building control victory there may be enough time to do this. Don't expect too much from the gun and try hard not to give it to the Germans as it has a very real prospect of killing a KV1E.

On turn four a couple of KV1Es' arrive. They can head straight for the runway then try to keep out of line of sight of the 88mm Guns. I don't think the Russians can use the tanks to go hunting Infantry or vehicles. Mechanical reliability could leave one or both tanks immobilised and probably bypassed. The tanks freedom of movement is also limited by the 88mm guns that can kill them, and the 37mm guns that can immobilise or even kill (a rare event but I've seen a 57mm gun Ice a King Tiger....ER yes it was mine but that's not important). In built up areas German infantry can kill a KV1E as easily as any other tank.

Admittedly this is a rather passive defence, with few surprises for the German player. It is difficult not to get drawn into a fight in the village or to push hard for offensive action, keep in mind the Russian force is very small and can't afford to be drawn into a battle of attrition. Most likely you will win this one with a Commissar and Conscript half squad or KV1E crew hanging on to a building hex.

German Attack

Mobility and firepower are the Germans strengths in this scenario, offset by the vulnerability of the Trucks, tractors, and AA Trucks, and the difficulty in moving the towed guns into position.

As you enter the board you can only approximate the Russian set up. Some concealed units will be dummies and somewhere there is a hidden squad and a gun. The threat from the hidden units can be overestimated, whilst they should not be ignored they should not instil terror and render you afraid to move!

Driving trucks and kubel wagons or Motorcycles through MG or rifle fire can be

hazardous and should be avoided unless it is vital you attempt it. With this in mind check lines of sight from the Russian set up locations to your entry area. Hill 522, woods and buildings blocks much of the Ruskis line of sight. Units can move to locations North of 3Y4 and 3Z4 without being seen except by a leader or anti tank crew in the tower spotting for the 50mm mortar (not very likely though is it?).

Once you reach 3Y4 decide whether you want to drive into the Village, drive to Board 14, or detruck, decycle and start to move over Hill 522 towards the Village.

Driving onto Board 14 strikes me as difficult. Motorcycles in shell hole hexes would need to pass a wreck check, whilst all units would be subject to fire or residual firepower. This is a bit of a gamble, if it pays off you are well on your way to capturing the Runway, if you lose too many units you have effectively lost on turn one. This is a bold move though and might suit some player's style.

Moving straight into the Village on board three also requires movement through 3Y3, followed by more wreck checks for 3X2 and possibly additional fire attacks. An even bolder move for even bolder players.

The remaining alternative is less adventurous. Drive up to Hill 522, with your trucks and motorcycles. Advance onto Level two hexes W5, W6 and W7 in the advance phase then move into the Village. Some squads will need to work along the flanks of Hill 522 to clear the woods and buildings north and South of the Hill. Go through the Village and onto the runway. Use the AA trucks for support moving them along the GG6-3Y3-3U3 road making use of any available cover. This isn't a very exciting plan. It sacrifices mobility and will allow some Russian forces to relocate. When going for a building control victory you must find the hidden squad and gun crew by searching or moving a skirmish line through locations likely to contain them. Do not forget about upper levels of buildings! Another difficulty is this line of attack will allow the KV1Es' to reach the runway, and might even allow the 76LL gun to unlimber somewhere inconvenient. On the positive side the German is near certain to gain control of the Village at low cost to his own forces. Also useful are the simplicity of the plan and its relative ease of execution.

The AA trucks are vulnerable to MG and also rifle fire, their best defence is to fire from a distance using IFE, or even use direct fire to gain target acquisition and make use of their high rate of fire. Working from the edge of the village they can keep one or two Russian squad occupied. They can also be used as rather poorly protected "armoured" cars, to overrun broken infantry units, or

chase them out of cover.

The fight for the village should take three or four turns, whilst this is going on uses a couple of half squads to search for the hidden Russian squad. The possible loss of a half squad will be worthwhile as it prevents the Russian winning a game of hide and seek by reoccupying a multi hex building. Keeping rough records of hexes passed through and searched is tedious, even so I would recommend doing it more to minimise your search than to accuse an opponent of an error! I would be disappointed to lose this one when conscript squads ran round the Village on turn eight.

Certainly the 76mm Gun is a beautiful piece of kit, but don't overestimate its importance, it will take a few turns just to get into action and even then might be poorly located away from your attack. The KV1Es' are a deal more troublesome, they have decent MG armament and guns whilst their armour will be difficult to penetrate. With a bit of luck one or both might fail a mechanical reliability check, more likely you will need to try to immobilise them and/or destroy them in close combat.

The 88mm guns are deadly against tanks or Infantry, it will take some time to get them into position, once unhooked they are dangerous and become more so when unlimbered.

Although weak against the KV1Es' the 50mm anti tank guns have their uses. At short range they can immobilise the tanks, against infantry their rate of fire and reasonable attack will work rather well.

On some occasions the Russians will have turned the Village into a small fortress, leaving the Runway largely unprotected. This might be a change to send a truck or a couple of Motorcycles on a bold move to the runway to seize Victory.

Finally you can use unarmed trucks, or Kubel wagons to overrun broken squads or lone leaders or even good order squads its a tactic that can be used in extremes. I don't recommend taking prisoners, particularly as an escapee might recapture a building late in the game. Use Smoke, avoid close combat and try to avoid driving motor cycles through shellholes.

In Conclusion

This really is a cracking scenario, with an unusual order of Battle for both sides and the prospect of a fight in the Village or a drive across open terrain. Anything with motorcycles in catches my attention. I've also a soft spot for armed trucks. The only very minor glitch for me is the hidden squad which keeps the game alive for the Russians and creates a tactical dilemma for the Germans, trouble is it reminds me of the

children's game of Hide and seek at times! Overall I liked this scenario most out of the pack.



LSSAH #15 SHOT OFF WITH TOO WEAK A BULLET

In this Scenario the German must conduct a hasty attack against a strong defensive position. It features a strong elite force backed up by a few StuGs' that are subject to low ammunition and mechanical reliability. Against this is a large Russian force of low quality in a strong defensive position.

Russian set up

I've never really understood if troops in trenches can set up concealed or not. Reading B27.51 allows units to use non-assault movement between adjacent trenches without concealment loss. One for the rules lawyers I guess? Certainly this is something to resolve amicably before play starts.

First imagine you are the German and think how you would approach Hill 538. Probably the most attractive route is from the woods around 2T0, and 18K1, next best the woods near 2Z1, and least attractive the around 2EE3. Keep in view Pillboxes/Bunkers are vulnerable to Anti Tank rounds from the StuGs'.

At the game end you need to hold one Level two Hill hex to win. A great number of trench complexes are possible, many are roughly convenient. One example would be Trenches in W5, X4, Y4, Z4, AA4, Z5, Y5 and Y6. Bunkers can go in any trench hex, personal preference puts them in W5 (Covered arc V4,W4); and Y5 (covered arc X4,X5). This position is very strong against an attack from Z1, weaker on the flanks. Very different set ups are possible including a defence in trenches of the woods in front of the Hill.

Given a choice support weapons should be manned by first line squads as conscripts are more prone to breaking them and more severe cowering. There is a lot of flexibility in set up as an example MMG and Squad in Y4 or AA4 and W5. Squad and LMG in AA3 or Y4, and Z4. Conscripts in



Z5, X4, Y3, and maybe X3 or W3? Another conscript squad can set up in T5, U5, V6 or W4, with dummy counters in the other hexes. U5 would be first choice. Another possible idea is a conscript in V2, W2, or S3 to slow down any attack towards W4. An important unit is the squad with the ATR, by hiding in R3 or S3 an ambush is possible but I don't think this will kill more than a single Stug followed by a hasty demise. Maybe Y5 or Y6 would be better as it is part of the main position. Start the leaders with the MMGs' then move them back to rally broken units later in the game. Without too much thought I would exchange an 8-1 Leader for a commissar, but I really like commissars'. The 8-1 leader is probably a better option but whichever you choose must fit in with your style of play.

As your forces are lumped together in a defensive position very little movement will take place during the course of the game. Try to keep rallying troops and bringing them back into the front line. If you can immobilise a Stug then keep out of its line of sight. There is a very real chance of armour being recalled by disabled Main armament or restricted by mechanical failure. This can be more satisfying than actually destroying the unit with a low rolling ATR shot. Don't waste your efforts against immobilised or recalled squads. Make good use of skulking, gain concealment when you can, give the ATR to a Hero if one is generated. With a high SAN expect to see some reasonable attacks, even pinning an SS Squad can be useful.

I think the biggest difficulty for the Russians is the limited range of their units beyond four hexes the conscripts are ineffective. Rest assured the Germans will get closer as the game progresses.

German Attack

Expect the Russians to be concentrated on Hill 538. Occasionally a wily opponent will have a number of units in the woods in front of the Hills to slow down entry. This might be inconvenient but restricted lines of sight will reduce the effectiveness of a frontal position and the defender will find it difficult to withdraw to the Hill later in the game. I think long range interdiction of German movement works better than an uneven firefight where the Germans have better leadership, support weapons, morale and ELR, and some Stugs'.

Using armoured assault you can cover a reasonable distance on turn one, from the board edge to rows four or five. Start by moving on a couple of half squads to draw Russian fire. If this works you can move with impunity, if it doesn't start by bring on your least valuable units first. It's likely defensive fire will be held until your best

units arrive but with high morale and leadership you will only be hurt by a KIA/K result, and the odd fate result. Stacking a couple of squads, a leader and a couple of support weapons with each StuG is a reasonable compromise between vulnerability to fire and the need to cross ground quickly. With really bad luck a whole stack could be killed, but your survival chances using armoured assault with a zero DRM are considerably greater than moving through open ground and a minus two die roll modifier. Entry points include A10, B10, C10, F10, I10 or O10 there is no need for more than one stack to enter at the same hex. A very cautious approach would be to have one squad and a leader using armoured assault with the other squad moving independently, this has merits, the downside is it increases the time taken to get significant forces into position to attack the Hill. Use smoke to cover this movement from dischargers or infantry units inherent smoke. Moving in the advance phase might not be a good idea if it stops you using armoured assault.

In any fire phase try a few shots at the defenders it might do some damage. On turn two or three at the latest you should reach the treeline.

Before assaulting the Hill search for hidden or concealed units. There is a good chance some Stugs will have their main armament malfunction or be disabled some time during the game, it might make sense not to chance too many speculative shots. Similarly there is a chance of immobilisation due to mechanical reliability. If you sacrifice fire attacks keeping moving reduces this risk.

Once you reach the tree line this scenario become much easier. Using Stugs as cover makes sense as does assault movement up the hill. If you have killed or broken the defenders a simple charge will work. Although time is pressing it may be best to kill the defenders using firepower rather than risking melee. It is possible to lose by starting a melee that lasts beyond the game end!

In Conclusion

I'm sure a lot of player will like this scenario. It doesn't have any special units, a historical map or a massive order of battle but it is well designed and interesting for both players. Possibly the Russians have a very slight edge but I would still play either side in a friendly game. It should end up in a frenetic melee for the Hill most of the time.

LSSAH #16 A GRIM DAY AT KRASNY KRIM

After setting up the boards and overlay OG3, place snow drifts on boards



three and four. Drifts have some effect on play, depending on their location. I would have no objection to the placement of drifts being predetermined. I would suggest rerolling for drifts placed on the I1-A6 road. Next settle down to playing an interesting ambush and hasty assault scenario.

German set up

On turn one the Germans can expect a hail of fire from Russian positions on Hill 547 and the eastern edge of the woods on board four. Hex E4 is out of the line of sight of all Russian units at set up. Hexes D4 and F3 are slightly more exposed, most other hexes on I1-A6 are roughly equivalent.

Setting up alternating Ammunition trucks and other vehicles could be a bad idea if they explode. A possible set up that minimises the risks of secondary explosions and makes use of line of sight restrictions could be as follows; C5 Kubel wagon 8-0 Leader, half squad (optionally LMG); D4 Opel Blitz and two squads; E4 Opel Blitz two squads, 8-1 leader and LMG; F4, G4, and H3 Sdkfz11, crew, and limbered 105mm Gun; ammo trucks in I1, I2, I3. All vehicles are moving from I1 to A6.

Before play starts check lines of sight. If you can see a Russian unit you can immediately end convoy movement, otherwise you must wait until you are fired on. It is almost certain you will see some Russian units, otherwise you drive majestically off A6?

Once you end convoy movement try to detruck quickly, expect some losses, and even burning trucks but keep in view the effects of movement and camouflage on to hit rolls and the red to hit numbers used by the Ruskis. Some trucks will burn, use the smoke they generate to protect you remaining units. On turn one you would do well to recover from the ambush, and take cover. In subsequent turns you can start to fight back. I can't see many ammo trucks surviving, try to keep them away from your other units behind cover if you can.

Help arrives on turns two and four. Sending direct support to the ambushed units is not necessary, once these units are out of the Russians line of sight they are only vulnerable to an infantry attack. It doesn't really make sense for the Russians to charge

the Artillery Company as this leave the village much more vulnerable to attack.

The best way to help is to go for the village, encouraging Russian units to fall back there or for guns to direct their fire against the attackers rather than the convoy. Try to get across board four very quickly use Armoured assault and even double time, two turns should see you in a position to attack the Village. The village fight is difficult and needs some precision to win in the time available. Use vehicle to cover movement across road and try to destroy the Russians by firepower rather than in close combat.

Although a casualty cap exists it is very high. The artillery company is worth 33CVP if totally destroyed, allowing the loss of a further 26 VP during the game which is a lot of units!

Mentally this is a very tough fight for the Germans. The artillery company is fated to get a bit of a kicking. The relieving force has to cross open ground very quickly and is under time pressure throughout the fight for the village. Once in the village they must quickly clear it, find any hidden units and keep control until the game end. If you start to despair and become reluctant to expose units to fire you greatly increase the difficulties you face.

Russian Ambush

It is very tempting to set up the entire Russian force either on Hill 547 or the woods or buildings nearby to try and eliminate the entire German force on turn one. In Russian player turn one head back to the village before the infantry company and StuGs get there. This might just work if you can establish a hold on the southern edge of the village.

Another set up heavily defends the village, with a small blocking force and a few units to ambush the convoy. Leaving the artillery company enough time to detruck and unlimber is not a good idea. Although there is limited scope for operating the 105mm Guns in a direct fire role they might be able to shoot it out with a few guns on the hill, or shoot some outlying positions. The infantry force of a couple of leaders, two LMGs' and 4½ squads is respectable.

I think a more balanced set up is needed, to fulfil the objectives of ambushing the convoy, screening the village from a hasty assault, and ultimately to defend the village.

Here is a possible set up, note the presence of snowdrifts could alter this slightly. The 50mm mortar and squad could start in J6 or K7, to take long range shots at trucks, interdiction of movement towards the village, and finally to support the fight for the village. In an emergency the mortar can be used against armour but is better against softskins or Infantry in woods. H2 is another

good site but might be better used by the 76mm Gun, or a 45mm? F2 is another reasonable gun position. Placing the third gun needs a bit of thought. Probably G3, E3 and D3 are fairly good, whilst K7 is better than a casual look might suggest. Setting up guns in the village might not be a bad idea although hill top positions have better lines of sight. Doing this requires a careful judgement of how much force you need to shoot up the Artillery company compared to the value of an anti tank weapon in the village, really this boils down to personal choice. After shooting at the convoy the guns can interdict movement towards the Village and even have some direct fire shots into the village itself later in the game. Later in the game guns can be manhandled very slowly to slightly better positions to improve their lines of sight.

Setting up Russian infantry you need to address three tactical objectives. Firstly to assist in the destruction of the artillery company, next to delay the advance of Kompanie 11 and the StuGs' across board four, and finally to defend the village.

A good German player can get across board four in two turns, giving the Russians very little time to get from ambush positions to the village. At most I think three or four squads, the 9-1 Leader and an MMG should be part of the ambush. The MMG and Leader start in 4I10, with squads in 4H10, 4D7, and 3D1., 3E1, 3F1 or 3G1. The MMG needs to move in Russian player turn one, the squads can start moving in the advance phase which just about gives enough time to get back to the village. The MG team is heading for 3M5 and should be there by the end of turn two. This covers the road from M5 to T1 rather well. The infantry ends up in the southern end of the village. A screening force delays the German transit across board four, and might even inflict a few casualties. Squads in K9, N9 or N10, 3O1 or O3, 3S1, 4T7, and V10 is a fairly large force. Giving these units a couple of LMGs' and an ATR gives it some teeth. A commissar or 8-0 leader in 3T1 can help rally units.

On turn three or the screening force needs to become the defenders of the village, reinforced by any units from the ambush party. Give ground against infantry grudgingly but don't stand up to the German armour.

Use the concealment counters to create dummy units or Sniper Bait. I can't see much point concealing the ambush force as by rights it should open fire as soon as possible. Creating a concealed gun and using the HIP allocation to create a hidden gun might net a StuG - it's a crafty idea but probably not appropriate for this scenario unless its apt to psyche out your regular opponents.

The hidden unit might be best used to

try and wrest control of a building in the village in the closing stages of the game. Another alternative is a mini ambush to prevent broken German units routing, an upper level building hex in the village might be good for this. Personally I would go for a hidden squad outside the Village.

When the T26s arrive drive them into the village. Their 45mm guns can be effective against armour, whilst machine guns can sweep roads with fire. Without radios it is more difficult to reposition individual tanks, making defence or attack harder; there is also the problem of mechanical reliability. It would be nice to take out a couple of Stugs or Panzer IIIs in exchange for the T26s; there is a chance of this. If any crews bail out do use them as infantry, they are good for spare gun crews, and can operate support weapons effectively.

Expect to enjoy a turkey shoot on turn one, accept you will probably not kill the entire German artillery company but settle for reducing it to a few units. In your own player turn start to realign your forces to contest German movement across board four. Don't spend too much time shooting up the convoy or screening the Village you need to be in stone building to fight the Jerry's in the closing turns.

Win or lose you will kill a lot of German units, very occasionally you might even kill 60 VPs' of units, although it is more likely you will win by holding on to part of the village.

There is scope for using a larger force to ambush the convoy, or alternatively using one or more guns to defend the village. I do think the best chance of a win lies in using your resources for an ambush, followed by a screening action and solid village defence.

In Conclusion

I would have preferred drifts to be placed in predetermined locations or not present, given their limited impact on the game. Apologies to big fans of drifts or players who see drifts adding character to the game. I should stress the presence to drifts did not spoil my enjoyment of the game!

The big attraction of this scenario for the Russian player is giving the Artillerie Kompanie a good kicking, ideally with ammunition trucks blowing up, trucks full of infantry failing survival rolls, and gun towing tractors burning. After German player one the character of the game changes as the fight for the village develops. For the Germans the large armoured force with infantry support can take the village against strong opposition, the real enemy is time.

"EXCUSE ME, HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE!?"

Time As A Factor In DYO Scenarios

Chris Riches

If you were defending a location just about to suffer a bombardment and an enemy attack, would you make sure that you were properly dug in? Of course! Yet how many times in DYO *ASL* scenarios do you purchase fortifications? Not often? Shame!

The Attack and Defence tables in this article give a more realistic approach to defences, and should enhance your DYO. The following rules are used with a slightly modified DYO sequence, but otherwise use all standard *ASL* rules.

DYO SEQUENCE

The DYO purchase sequence is modified to combine both the OBA Phase and the Fortifications Phase:

START

- 1.2 First infantry
- 1.29 SAN >2
- 1.3 Ordnance
- 1.4 Vehicles
- 1.5 / 1.6 Fortifications and OBA
- 1.7 Second infantry
- 1.8 Leaders & SW

END

After DYO vehicle purchases, but prior to the second infantry purchase, the following steps A-C are followed:

- A. OBA Availability Roll for both Defender and Attacker
These are exactly the same as normal, except OBA is not purchased until steps B or C.
- B Defenders Table roll
The Defender makes a DR on the Defender's Table, and uses bonus points and DYO points to buy OBA and Fortifications as permitted by the Defender's Table.
- C Consult Attacker's table
The Attacker purchases OBA and bonus transport/support vehicles as permitted by the table, using the coloured die roll from step B.

THE TABLES

Two tables are used, the Defender's Table, and the Attacker's Table. The Defender's Table indicates how long a defender has been in a position prior to the attack, and hence the likely defences they have been able to prepare, whilst the Attacker's table gives the nature of the attack – whether a well supported deliberate attack, or a quick attack from the march.

In both cases there are a set of "Basic Set-Up Limitations". These incorporate many of the SSR rules, and limit the set-up or play rules for each player. Unless allowed otherwise by the tables, all the following are in force:

Set-Up Rules

- No "?" on set-up, even if out of enemy LOS (A12.12)
- Squads may not start Deployed (A2.9)
- Squads may not start in Crest status (B20.91)
- No Infantry may set-up in upper levels of buildings
- All SW must start dismantled (A9.8) where possible
- No vehicles may attempt a HD DR at start (D4.221)
- No vehicles or Guns may set-up in buildings
- Vehicles may not start in Bog hexes (A2.9)
- No vehicles or Guns may set-up in Crest status in a wadi hex (F5.4)
- No emplaced Guns allowed (C11.2)
- No HIP Guns allowed (A12.34)
- No Bore-Sighting allowed (C6.4)
- No set DC on set-up (A23.7)

Play Rules

- No rooftop movement (B23.8)
- No sewer movement (B8.1)
- No kindling (B25.11)
- No rafting (E6.41)

It can be seen from the rules above that a player can have a considerably restricted set-up if his forces have not prepared themselves for battle.

DEFENDER'S TABLE

The Defender rolls 2 dice and refers to the Defender's Table.

The Original DR is used to give a notional "Time in Location" for the defenders.

The Modified DR is obtained by applying the listed modifiers for Experience (ELR), Sappers, Lax units and Extreme Winter, and gives:

1. A maximum possible SAN for the Defender. Any SAN previously purchased higher than this is lost.

Note; SAN is limited on the tables, even though extra capability may have previously been purchased. This reflects that the unit may have trained and equipped their snipers, but they may not have had time to locate good positions and fields of fire, and hence do not operate at full effectiveness.

2. Bonus points for use in purchasing Fortifications. These are expressed in terms of multiples of the number of Squad Equivalents. EX: 10 4-6-7 squads with a modified DR of 8 would give a total of 15 points available for purchasing Fortifications.

These bonus points are in addition to any which the Defender may wish to allocate from his DYO points total. The bonus points may only be used for Fortifications, not for other items.

3. Fortifications available. Only the Fortifications listed in this column from the modified DR or higher can be used.

EX: with a modified DR of 7, the only Fortifications that can be purchased are; AP Mines, Roadblocks, Wire, AT Mines, 10% HIP, Daisy Chains, Extra "?", Sangars, and Foxholes.

Fortifications listed further down the list cannot be purchased, either with bonus points or other points from the player's DYO total.

4. Notes. These list specific exemptions from the Basic Set-Up Limitations that apply to the Defender. Unless lessened by any lower roll, all these restrictions remain in force. Starting from the base case of a "12" DR, work down the Defender can and cannot do.

DEFENDER'S TABLE

MODIFIED DR	TIME IN LOCATION	Max SAN	Bonus Points	Fortifications Available	Notes
12+	10 mins	2	0	None	Basic Set-Up Limitations
11	½ hour	2	0	None	Normal rules for "?". SW may start dm. Squads may Deploy, and set-up in upper levels of buildings and in Crest status. Vehicles may roll for HD status.
10	2 hours	3	0.5Xe	Foxholes, Sangars, extra "?"	Vehicles and Guns may set-up in buildings, and in Crest status in wadis. Vehicles may start in Bog hexes.
9	4 hours	4	1XE	10% HIP, Daisy Chains	Mtr OBA allowed (#). Guns may start emplaced.
8	8 hours	5	1.5XE	Wire, AT Mines	Guns may start HIP. Bore-sighting allowed.
7	12 hours	6	2XE	AP Mines, Roadblocks	Rooftop movement allowed. OBA allowed (#).
6	16 hours	7	2.5XE	Trenches, Level C Booby Traps	Sewer movement allowed.
5	24 hours	7	3XE	AT Trenches, Level B Booby Traps	Can Set DCs. Can breach rowhouses, rubble buildings, blow ice or bridges (*). Kindling allowed.
4	36 hours	7	3.5XE	Level A Booby Traps	May place 3 Trail Breaks in any woods hexes on board.
3	48 hours	7	4XE	Fortified Buildings	Field Phones, Pre-Registered Fire, Ammo Dumps and Air Support allowed (all ~). Rafting allowed.
2	72 hours or more	7	5XE	Bunkers, Pillboxes, Tunnels	Barrage (#)

DRM: -1 if 10% or more of equivalent squads are Sappers
 -1 if Majority Squad Type (H1.74) have ELR of 3 or more
 +1 if Majority Squad Type is Lax.
 +2 Extreme Winter (E3.74)

E = equivalent number of Defender's squads
 (*) = must use DC to achieve this result prior to Attacker set-up
 (#) = may be purchased by DYO points (subject to suitable DR)

Original DR < 5 – Civilian Interrogation available to Attacker (E2.4).

OBA

Items marked (#) indicate the capability to purchase this item as "OBA" (although it does include OBA tanks, etc), using DYO points only (and the normal OBA purchase mechanics).

No OBA is possible if;

1 The modified DR is 10 or more;

2 The modified DR is 8 or 9, but the

OBA roll did not generate a Mortar OBA (this indicates radio contact with heavy guns, but they are not in a position to fire; and no contact with the mortars).

DEMO CHARGES

Demo Charge pre-scenario use: items marked (*) indicate the capability to use a DC prior to both the Attacker and Defender setting up. In each case, one DC is used per attempt, and a normal roll for a Set DC is made for each attack. These attacks can be made on any hex in the playing area, even in the Attacker's set-up area. DC may be 'set' for detonation in play, but they may only be within the Defender's set-up area (A23.7).

If, after SW Allotment, no DC are

allocated to the Defender, then this capability cannot be used.

HIP

10% HIP indicates that up to 10% (FRU) of the squads may set-up HIP, together with any leaders/SW which stack with them (at a cost of 4/3/2 for Squad/HS/SMC).

CIVILIAN INTERROGATION

On an Original DR < 5, Civilian Interrogation (E2.4) is possible for the Attacker throughout the game.

Note: Civilian Interrogation is allowed after the defenders have been in a location for more than a day, because as time progresses it is likely that the civilians become aware of the defence plan.

ROOF-TOPS AND SEWER MOVEMENT

If the Attacker or Defender successfully receives these movement options from the table then they apply to that player only and not to both players

(unless they both received them from the tables).

TRAIL BREAKS

Trail Breaks may be placed on any woods hexes on the mapboards for the Defender, or in the Attacker's set-up area for the Attacker. They can either be full TBs across a whole hex, or just across one hexside into the centre of the hex. They do not count as minefield clearance TBs, should they be in a Location which also contains mines.

ATTACKER'S TABLE

The Attacker uses the coloured dr of the previous Defender's roll to determine what type of attack is being launched. There are two modifiers; for prior reconnaissance, and for a river crossing.

To gain the benefit of the river crossing drm, the scenario must involve at least 50% of the Attacker's force having to make an opposed river crossing across a board 7 or 8 sized river. If there are bridges across the river the drm is -1; if not the drm becomes -



ATTACKER'S TABLE

MODIFIED cdr	ATTACK TYPE	Max SAN	Bonus Points	Attack Options	Notes
6	Snap	2	0	None	Basic Set-Up limitations
5	Hasty	2	0	None	Normal rules for "?". SW may start dm. Squads may Deploy, and set-up in upper levels of buildings or in Crest status. Vehicles may roll for HD status.
4	Quick	2	0	None	Vehicles and Guns may set-up in buildings, and in Crest status in wadis. Vehicles may set-up in Bog hexes.
3	Planned	3	0	None	One dr on Information Table after all set-up (E2.42). Mtr OBA allowed (#)
2	Supported	3	2xE	Transport Vehicles	OBA allowed (#). Guns may start emplaced. Rafting allowed.
1	Prepared	4	3xE	Support Vehicles	Air Support allowed (#). OP tank allowed (#). (even if not motorised OB). Guns may start HIP. Rooftop movement allowed.
0	Deliberate	5	4xE	Support Vehicles	Bombardment, Creeping Barrage, OP Plane allowed (all #). Kindling and sewer movement allowed. Bore-sighting and set DCs allowed (for detonation in play only). 1 Trail Break may be placed in Attacker's set-up area. 1 Forging line may be placed in river (E6.6).

DRM: -1 2 AC or SC; or 4 Motorcycles; or Motorised OB (recce)
-1 River Crossing (becomes -3 if no bridge)

E = equivalent number of Attacker's squads
(#) = may be purchased by DYO points (subject to suitable DR)

Transport Vehicles: any unarmed truck (tr), half-track (ht) or carrier (pc)
(may have ATR, or MG with 4FP or less)

Support Vehicles: any of the transport vehicles, plus:

Tankette	APC	Facine Tank
Scout Car	Ammo Vehicle	Flail Tank
Armoured Car	Amphibious Vehicle	Goliath
Bridgelayar	Dozer	AVRE
Armed Half-track, carrier, or truck (may have any non-IFE Ordnance, and IFE/MG of 12FP or less)		

3. To allow for the fact that the attacker may have previously reconnoitred the area, a -1 drm is applicable if the attacker can fulfil one of the following from his DYO purchases:

- 2 armoured cars or scout cars
- 4 motorcycles (not cycles)
- motorised OB

The results of the modified dr give the following:

1. Attack Type.
2. Max SAN (as per Defender)

3. Bonus points. These points are for extra transport vehicles or for support vehicles for the attack. Note however that these points may not be increased by the use of DYO points – the attacker will already have purchased his vehicles in the previous

DYO purchase phase. The bonus points are expressed as multiples of the number of squad equivalents the attacker has.

4. Attack options give the items that can be purchased with the bonus points. There are two categories – transport vehicles and support vehicles. A player may only purchase from the category(ies) allocated by his dr. Only bonus points can be used, and only the vehicle types listed in each category may be purchased. Any bonus points not used buying this equipment are lost.

5. Notes. These list specific exemptions from the basic set-up limitations that apply to the Attacker. Unless lessened by any lower roll, all these limitations remain in force. Starting from the base case of a "6" dr, work down the table to the actual dr to identify what the Attacker can and cannot do. The notes from the Defender's Table explain all the possible 'specials'.

Once both the Attacker and the Defender have purchased their Fortifications, OBA and special vehicles, continue with the normal DYO sequence at the Second Infantry purchase phase (H1.7)

EXAMPLE

It is June 1944 with an American force attacking a German defence.

GERMAN DEFENDER

ELR 3, 15 4-6-8 squads, purchased SAN of 4.

DR 6 (cdr 3)

DRM -1 (ELR 3)

Modified DR 5. Points available = 3.0 x E = 3.0 x (15 x 4/3) = 60

Purchases:

5 extra ?	10 pts
4 Wire	20 pts
2 squads HIP	8 pts
2 leaders HIP	4 pts

1 roadblock	12 pts
2 factors Daisy Chains	6 pts
TOTAL	60 pts

The German player also wants 2 AT Trenches, so he pays 42 points from his DYO points. The attack is coming from offboard, so all units receive “?” on set-up.

He has no Assault Engineers (and hence no DC), so no demolitions are allowed. However kindling is allowed, as are rooftop and sewer movement, bore-sighting, squads deploying, setting up in crest status, and SW can be dm. Guns can start emplaced and hidden, vehicles and Guns may be in buildings, vehicle HD rolls are allowed, vehicles may set-up in Bog hexes, and vehicles/Guns may set-up in crest status in wadi hexes.

He can also purchase OBA of any description from the OBA table according to his OBA roll.

His SAN 4 is unaffected and can be used fully.

AMERICAN ATTACKER

26 6-6 squads, 2 M8 armoured cars, purchased SAN of 3.

Cdr 3
Drm -1 (armoured car recce)
Mod dr 2. Supported attack.

Can purchase OBA of any description (according to OBA roll), use rafting, may have SW dm, and squads can deploy. His San of 3 remains unaffected. If he were not setting up offboard, then vehicles and Guns would be able to set-up in buildings, vehicles could roll for HD, and units could use “?” if they set-up out of enemy LOS,. However they can still use “?” when they enter the map (A12.12). Guns could have started emplaced, and vehicles/Guns in crest status in wadi hexes.

The US player gets one roll on the

Information table (E2.42) after German set-up.

Bonus points = 2 x E = 2 x 26 = 52. Can be used for transport vehicles. The US player purchases one M3 half-track for 34 points, and one 1 ½ ton truck for 16 points (total 50 points). The other 2 points are lost.

SUPPORTING NOTES

It is probably worth making a few comments on certain aspects of the tables. They have been engineered to add to the DYO system, and were designed for two purposes: to stop defenders buying everything they wanted, whilst at the same time increasing common items such as foxholes. The attacker gains miscellaneous benefits, but nothing that should alter play balance significantly.

The tables are best used with DYO, although they can be successfully used in existing published scenarios. They are not recommended for night actions, where the play balance is much more critical.

The coloured die from the Defender’s roll was used as the Attacker’s roll in order to relate the type of attack with the type of defence. If the defender had been in location for some time, and has therefore prepared his defences, it is unlikely that the attacker will launch into a hasty attack without proper preparation himself.

No leader DRMs/drms are used throughout the tables. This is because it is very difficult for one leader to have a great influence on routine activities of the majority of troops (I speak from experience!). It is reflected instead on the ELR DRM for the defence, which shows better troops working more efficiently with their time.

Bonus points are related to the equivalent number of squads rather than the total number of squads. This is to favour elite squads, who are more likely to make better use of the materials they find, and are

also likely to be successful when they demand materials to build defences.

I hope the above has provided you with some variety for ASL. Defences have perhaps been overlooked by players in the past, and I hope this gives you the chance to hear the curses as the enemy blunders into your wire, and the explosions as he runs into your minefields.

Having said that, don’t give up if you’re putting in a hasty attack against a 36-hour defence – you play this game for a challenge, don’t you?

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INCOMING

Continued from page 3

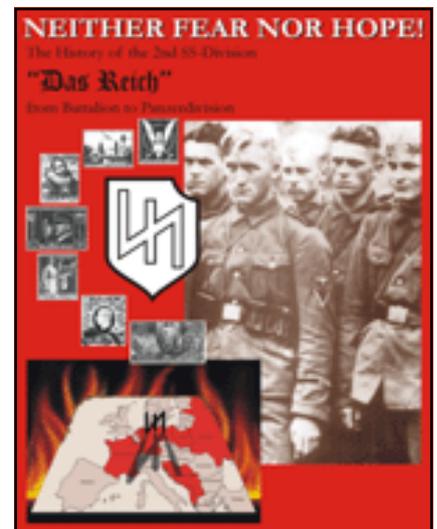
left HOB, with Steve Swann signing up to replace him. Klaus Fischer has also become an associate member and is in charge of graphics and design. HOB have also been in discussions with MMP, and although no formal agreement was reached they feel that the past is now closed. HOB will not be reprinting the counter sheets from *Berlin: Red Vengeance, Fortress Cassino, SS-I or SS-II*, and aim to cover actions that are not planned by MMP – some projects may also be submitted to MMP for possible publication.

HOB can be contacted at Steve Dethlefsen, 525 Golf Lane, Lake Forest IL., 60045-2114, United States of America. They can be contacted by telephone at 847.604.9530. A new web site is due to be up soon.

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FORTIFICATION POINTS (H1.6)

Foxhole	3 / 2 / 1	(Squad / HS / SMC)
Sangar	0.5	
?	2	
Roadblocks	12	
HIP	4 / 3 2	(Squad / HS / SMC)
AT Mines	3	
Daisy Chains	3	
Wire	5	
AP Mines	1	
Trenches	7	
AT Trenches	21	
Booby Traps	10 / 20 / 30	(level A / B / C)
Fortified Building	25	per hex
Bunker / pillbox	(a+b+c) x 3	(Capacity, CA DRM, NCA DRM)
Tunnel	25	



Schwerpunkt

Out from under that UK counter!

Trev Edwards

When I saw a certain message from the *Schwerpunkt* boys on the ASL Internet Mailing List (ASLML) some time ago (in late 2000), I was extremely disappointed. They were letting us know that they were going to cease publication. This was due mainly to MMP/Hasbro's lawyers lowering the boom and threatening litigation over copyright issues (use of the name ASL, counter artwork etc), although SP's team were also losing a couple of their number. I think it is possible to have an opinion on this issue of "Third Party" production without taking one side or the other. While I remain a fan of both MMP and *Schwerpunkt*, I felt it a shame that things turned out the way they did. I do not accept that *Schwerpunkt* scenario packs have done the hobby as a whole - or MMP's sales of "official" products for that matter - any harm whatsoever and would go as far to say that they represent as good a product as you will find for the money. However, the way copyright law seems to work is summed up by "sue one, sue all," so I suppose we should not have been too surprised.

So, when I heard that my friend and sometime travelling companion Shaun had come back from ASLOK 2001 with the new *Schwerpunkt* 7, I was overjoyed (it didn't make up for not going to ASLOK myself mind). Since seeing it and playing it, I am even happier, although somewhat frustrated by the use of boards I am yet to buy in some of the scenarios.

In case you do not know what *Schwerpunkt* (SP) is/are, here's the gen: The Tampa ASL group have to date produced six scenario packs, each with an accompanying magazine containing historical articles, analyses of the scenarios themselves along with designer's notes and also in past years incisive pieces on play technique. The weakest of these issues have been good whilst the best have been really excellent. Some of the scenarios were classics from the moment the ink dried. Those very few less balanced scenarios that have turned up stick in the mind mostly because they are so unusual, rather than because they are all that bad (except for 'Hot in Kot', what were they thinking?!). Even allowing for the other excellent scenario designers our hobby is blessed with, the SP designs are possibly

the best on average, in my opinion, to be found in any publication. Critics have pointed that SP have been so good because all they produce is one scenario pack a year and that other producers, including the brand owners have produced modules, counters, overlays and so on. I have always taken the view that they have found their forte, stuck to it, and have produced a fine contribution to the hobby.

Enough of the history, what of the new pack? Well, the magazine front looks little different than the earlier issues: Same gothic script, a picture of a tank and the Florida tournament gets a mention. Only those knowing what to look for will see that the TLA ASL doesn't appear. Inside we get six cards, each with a scenario on each side. Gone is the old artwork which was a facsimile of the official product with representations of the ASL counters. Now we just have a description of the unit "4-5-8" appears next to "2-2-8." "HMG," alongside "OML 2" MTR." There is no way you can mistake the counter being described. The VC are now the "Mission," the SSRs are the "Coordinating Instructions" and the description of the real action upon which the scenario is based is combined into one paragraph, rather than a set up and aftermath as in the official scenario cards. I think that we've seen enough of these type of things by now to be less traumatised than when I first saw a scenario with non regulation ASL artwork some years ago. These from SP are easy enough on the eye and the real test for me has got to be how they play.

In fact, playing some of them will have to wait. MMP have released the boards from *Armies of Oblivion* early so that scenario designers can use them, but there must be many of us, even those avid ASL players like myself, who will not want to buy them early and have duplicates after AoO is released. Ask me next time you see me how many copies of board 9 I have! This means that I can't play three of these scenarios yet. I'll briefly describe these first. 'Betje Wolf Plein' is a half board seven turn affair with British Commandos trying to prevent first and second line German's exiting. I don't even

know what board 51 is so I can't offer an opinion. 'Seregelyes Slug Out' is a late war heavy metal slugfest with five King Tigers and three Panthers with some good looking but low ELR Germans attacking part of a Soviet Guards heavy tank regiment in Hungary in 1945. The Russians have six IS-2m as part of their OB, so this should be very entertaining. 'Flaming Of the Guard' is set in October 1944 and features the Irish Guards with armour support under attack from a strong looking German Panzerpioneer unit with panthers. Flamethrowers in the German OB explain the title.

At INTENSIVE FIRE 2001 I was able to play a few of these new scenarios. The first was 'Green Jacket's Bridge' on the Thursday evening. I was particularly drawn to this having spent some time that very afternoon in the Green Jacket's Regimental museum in Winchester. This is almost a mini version of 'The Crux of Calais', but without the burning buildings. Using the half of the canal board 23 (the end with the church shaped structure), this has a Searchlight battery (the lights themselves don't play a part) trying to stop some Panzerpioneer's with lots of early tank support crossing the canal and clearing the road. I felt confident as I set up as the Brits, thinking I had a good chance and my initial impressions were borne out. The British 9-2, some lucky MC passes and judicious stripping of the ATRs off the carriers for point blank shots on the Pz IIA's saw me fend them off. I suspect that this is slightly pro British but that a well planned and timed attack from a player used to fighting with combined arms, and the ability to fire sD at the right time, will give the Germans a fair chance.

I played 'Norway in Half' which is set in said country during the early war. Some pretty good quality Norwegians attack a ground level rail crossing from three sides, trying to shift some German paratroopers holding this important feature. In the game I played, the dice were consistently high on attacks and low on MCs that the game stagnated with neither side seriously affecting the other too much. The one exception to this being my throwing away my green platoon with some ill advised movement in

the open in very long range of a German LMG. Germans won comfortably. If I was playing the Norwegians again, I'd be more careful and take my time to get into position a little later but in more force, only then could I lay down the right amount of fire. If it wasn't for the three pronged attack the Norwegians are allowed to make, this would be a bit too vanilla for my taste, but I think it stands up as it is.

'The Last Tiger' is set right near the end of the war with a Russian Guards armoured force, a real mixed bag of vehicles (Shermans, T34/85s, IS-2s, and an ISU 152), attacking the remnants of the Grossdeutschland and a Heavy Tank element in the board 3 village. Russian VC -sorry the mission- are to get 10VP of GO infantry into the village. The Germans get a Nashorn which they can place on the hill for a commanding view of the approach and a HIP Tiger which has numerous set up options in this cluttered board combination. The Russians can attack from one of three main routes, there's no way the Germans can cover them all. Lousy dice meant I had too many MA malfunctions to give my opponent a decent game although I played like a fool, forgetting that riders can't stay on AFV's moving through orchards. I also lost an IS-2 to a casualty MC which had me really whingeing. Seemed a pity because the scenario seems like a very balanced affair with a lot of options for either side.

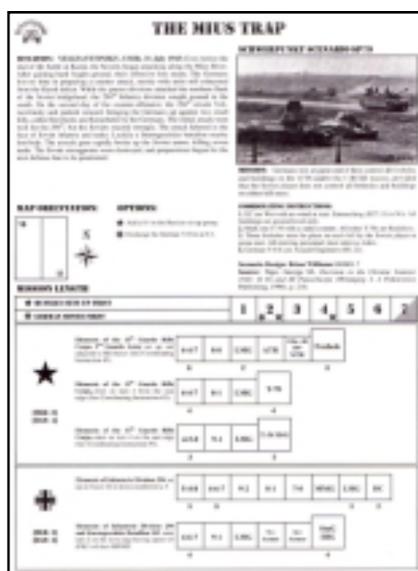
As I write this I am playing 'Taurus Pursuant', which is an interesting test for the attacking British player because he must outnumber the SS he is attacking in two villages at either corner of the two boards (boards 10 and 46 have a village at one end). He needs to split his force just right to achieve this and use his superior mobility. Of course it helps if the German is as stupid as I have been and if the Brit is as lucky as my opponent has been. I lost a HD StugIII to a CH that was just what Steve wanted and I dumbly over committed my Panther and lost it. It looks bad for the Germans right now but I have Brit tanks in easy kill range of my two 'shrecks. I think the scenario is a belter though and I shall insist on a return match immediately after this with myself attacking.

The other half of the scenarios are a mixed bag. 'Die Gurkha (sic), Die' is the only PTO scenario in the pack and has a combined force of Nationalist Chinese and Gurkhas defending a hut complex in Burma in May 1942 from a large force of Japanese. We have played this twice and found the Japanese to be too strong each time. Although the combination of a Gurkha 9-2 and HMG looks hard to beat, it can only cover one approach effectively and the Japanese are

able to take three routes to their objective. It is entertaining enough but we felt balance lay outside of tourney territory.

I saw 'The Mius Trap' being played at IF where the classic StugIII vs T-34 affair got the thumbs up. We have played it here twice and it is a tense action played over the shallow hills of board 11. We liked it enough to include it in our BERSERK! 2002 playlist, which is as good a recommendation I can offer any scenario.

Another Eastern Front scenario is 'The Golovchino Breakout' which is an attack by German infantry supported by AC and ht on a strong looking Russian defender. Some Russian light armour reinforces half way through and this looked interesting. The Russians have a rough time against the German AFV's since they don't get a proper



AT weapon before their OT TD (an SU-76m) arrives. By the time this arrives, the Germans need to get a grip on the VC hexes and set up large FG ready to try and break the CE crew.

There is a place in Holland called Boeinke apparently and 'Boeinked' is set there. Combined ops, Brits vs Krauts over two boards. The scenario card itself doesn't give much away but it will get a play soon enough. The other scenario is 'Von Bodenhausen's Ride', which is another Eastern Front clash, this time in falling snow in November 1942 during Operation Mars. A nice looking mix of armour, guns and infantry on both sides are the attraction here.

The scenarios are not terribly challenging for rules. No night, only one scenario has OBA, bit of weather. However I think that there is enough variation of situation here to engage most players. Interestingly, most scenarios have few SSRs

and overlays are rarely used.

One rule that was left broadly unaltered by the ASLRB 2 was platoon movement. This can afford a player an opportunity to get an AFV out of deep trouble if he has an adjacent hex which is blind to an enemy AT threat and a friendly AFV that is also adjacent. Briefly, defensive fire against an AFV platoon is based on an impulse system. You can only fire at the end of an impulse and the first of these does not end until an AFV has entered a new hex. This means you can start, change CA and move away without being shot at until you enter your first new hex. Sounds bonkers I know but there it is at D14.2. This has caused much heated debate on the ASLML and some people think it remains a major problem. A recurring SSR in this pack is that "Platoon movement is NA," which is fair enough. As an example, if things were getting a little hot for the Nashorn in 'The Last Tiger' and this SSR was not in place, it would be possible to set up the halftrack behind it so it could effectively disappear in its MPH without being shot at. I have in my time set up a defensive position with AFV's poised to use this sleaze, but I am yet to actually try using it (I think).

There is an excellent two page description of the history of the German SCW (PFK, PF and PSK) in this issue of *Schwerpunkt*. I have read many designer's notes articles in my years of playing ASL. Make that rather that I have tried to do so, since many are so dry that I have given up after a few paragraphs. Brook White's piece in this issue of *SP* - "Red Army; the Supremacy of Firepower" - is a much better than average effort which kept me interested all the way through. It basically highlights the way Soviet doctrine changed during the war to give better killing machines to its army as time went on. More MG's, more artillery, more and heavier AFVs. This is a really good read for the general history buff as well as anyone thinking of trying a hand at late war scenario design. There is an amusing short article written by an ASL widow. She doesn't appreciate that the best way to stop a man playing ASL is to have children by him. Apparently.

One final point of note is the back page where we are told that the old issues of *SP* are going to be re released in the new format. Most of these are as good as the latest issue so this is indeed good news.

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Where are they now ... ?

Mark S Walz

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

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

SQUAD LEADER

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

CROSS OF IRON

13	The Capture of Balta	Published as ASL Scenario J29
14	The Paw of the Tiger	Published as ASL Scenario F
15	Hube’s Pockett	Published as ASL Scenario G
16	Sowchos 79	Submitted to MMP. Status Unknown
17	Debacle at Korosten	Published as ASL Scenario A106
18	The Defense of Luga	Published as ASL Scenario W
19	A Winter Melec	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
20	Breakout from Borisovo	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest

CRESCENDO OF DOOM

21	Battle For the Warta Line	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
22	The Borders are Burning	Published as ASL Scenario A10
23	Silent Death	Published as ASL Scenario A11
24	Action at Balberkamp	Published as ASL Scenario A63
25	Resistance at Chabrehez	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
26	Assault on A Queen	Published in VF777. Probably won’t be published by MMP due to lack of historical basis.
27	The Dinant Bridgehead	Published as ASL Scenario A65
28	Counter Stroke at Stonne	Published as ASL Scenario A66
29	In Rommel’s Wake	Published as ASL Scenario A96
30	Ad Hoc at Beurains	Published as ASL Scenario A40
31	Chateau de Quesnoy	Published as ASL Scenario A64
32	Rehearsal for Crete	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest

GI: ANVIL OF VICTORY

33	A Belated Christmas	Published as ASL Scenario U9
34	Climax at the Nijmegen Bridge	Published as ASL Scenario U4
35	The French Decide to Fight	Published as ASL Scenario U1
36	Weissenhoff Crossroads	Published as ASL Scenario U8
37	Medal of Honor	Published as ASL Scenario A75
38	The Factory	Published as ASL Scenario 3
39	Sweep for the Bordj Toum Bridge	Published as ASL Scenario 2
40	The Dornot Watermark	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
41	Swatting at Tigers	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
42	Bridgehead on the Rhine	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
43	Action at Kommerseidit	Published as ASL Scenario
44	Prelude to Breakout	Published as ASL Scenario A78
45	Hide and Seek	Published as ASL Scenario A77
46	Operation Varsity	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
47	Encircling the Ruhr	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest

SERIES 100

101	Blocking Action at Lipki	Published as ASL Scenario A44
102	Slamming the Door	Published as ASL Scenario A07
103	Bald Hill	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
104	The Penetration of Rostov	Published as ASL Scenario A17
105	Night Battle at Noromaryevka	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
106	Beachhead at Ozereyka Bay	Published as ASL Scenario A26
107	Disaster on the Dnieper Loop	Submitted to MMP. Status Unknown
108	Block Busting in Bokuisk	Published as ASL Scenario J008
109	Counterattack on the Vistula	Published as ASL Scenario A21
110	The Agony of Doom	Published as ASL Scenario A08

SERIES 200

201	Sacrifice of Polish Armour	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
202	Under Cover of Darkness	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
203	Bitter Defense of Otta	Published as ASL Scenario J38
204	Chance D’Une Affaire	Published as ASL Scenario U
205	Last Defense Line	Published as ASL Scenario A94
206	Fighting at the Worlds Edge	Converted. Need to Submit to MMP.

207	The French Perimeter	Converted. Need to Submit to MMP.
208	Road to Kozani Pass	Published by CH in Volume One. Also converted. Need to Submit to MMP.
209	The Akroiri Peninsula Defense	Published as ASL Scenario T15
210	Commando Raid at Dieppe	Published as ASL Scenario T13

ROGUE SERIES

211	Auld Lang Syne	Published as ASL Scenario V
212	On the Road to Andalsnes	Published as ASL Scenario A31
213	Traverse Right ... Fire!	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
214	The Front in Flames	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
215	Hasty Pudding	Converted. Need to Submit to MMP.
216	A Small Town in Germany	Converted. Need to Submit to MMP.
217	The Whirlwind	Published as ASL Scenario S
218	Operation Switch Back	Awaiting Conversion
219	Scheldt Fortress South	Awaiting Conversion
220	Clearing the Breskins Pocket	Converted. Need to Submit to MMP.
221	Vitality I	Awaiting Conversion
222	Infatuate II	Awaiting Conversion
223	Night Drop	Published as ASL Scenario A76

SERIES 300

300	Trial by Combat	Published as ASL Scenario U10
301	The Clearing	Awaiting Conversion
302	Stand Fast	Awaiting Conversion
303	Thrust and Perry	Published as ASL Scenario U11
304	Riposte	Published as ASL Scenario U12
305	The Duel	Published as ASL Scenario U13
306	The Rag Tag Circus	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
307	Point D’ Appui	Published as ASL Scenario U5
308	Han Sur Neid	Published as ASL Scenario U7
309	The Roer Bridgehead	Awaiting Conversion

THE GENERAL

A	Burzevo	Published as ASL Scenario R
B	Hill 253.5	Published as ASL Scenario T07
C	The Bukrin Bridgehead	Awaiting Conversion
D	Delaying Action	Published as ASL Scenario A49
E	The Nissemi-Biscari Highway	Published as ASL Scenario T09
F	The Pouppeville Exit	Published as ASL Scenario T05
G	Devil’s Hill	Published as ASL Scenario T10
H	The Attempt to Relieve Peiper	Published as ASL Scenario T11
I	Hunters From the Sky	Published as ASL Scenario T12
J	Semper Paratus	Awaiting Conversion
K	Fast Heinz	Submitted to MMP. Scenario in playtest
L	The Long Road	Published as ASL Scenario A95
M	The Dead of Winter	Published as ASL Scenario T06
N	Faugh A’ Ballagh	Published as ASL Scenario A93
P	Aachen’s Pall	Published as ASL Scenario T08
Q	Gambit	Published as ASL Scenario T14
T1	First Crisis at Army Group North	Published as ASL Scenario M
T2	Pavlov’s House	Published as ASL Scenario T
T3	Land Leviathans	Published as ASL Scenario Q
T4	Soldiers of Destruction	Published as ASL Scenario N

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OPERATION WATCHTOWER

Trev Edwards

I finally got my hands on a copy of *Operation Watchtower* nearly a month after the initial release of the product in the US. I had seen one fairly scathing review on the ASL internet mailing list (a discussion board for ASL players, scenario designers and publishers from around the world) and on that same forum, I saw the message from MMP that they had found the print of the map to be unacceptable and were preparing to issue replacements for each module supplied so far. So you can understand that I was wondering exactly what I was going to find when I received mine.

Before I bought my copy from Leisure Games in London, I checked with them as to the status of the maps in those units they had to sell at that time. I was told that these were indeed ones with the faulty map and that MMP were going to supply Leisure Games with replacements, which they in turn would then send on at no extra charge. I was happy with this and ordered my usual two copies, one for myself and one for my regular opponent.

Operation Watchtower is a new kind of product from MMP and it is the first of its kind I have seen. This is because it is a combination of a historical study in a style released once before by a third party publisher, and of the CG modules that have been produced by Avalon Hill, MMP and others covering numerous topics. Many years ago Nadir El-Farra and his friends designed a historical study covering the fighting around Baraque de Fraiture – more famously known as Parker's Crossroads. The resulting pack *Baraque de Fraiture* was published by Front Line Productions (their only release) and included a large paper map of the battleground and various scenarios depicting actions that took place there as the 'Battle of the Bulge' ebbed and flowed across that part of Belgium. Uniquely – until now at least – the 'module' also included some other scenarios that required the use of the familiar, normal, geomorphic ASL boards. These represented actions that took place in the area nearby (which were effectively part of the same battle). These scenarios were pretty good and at least one of these was used in an early BERSERK! tournament. I had not since seen anything quite like this product which I can recall being fairly impressed with at the time, although I was aware that some learned observers in the ASL community had misgivings. The use of ground snow at that early stage of 'The Bulge' was questioned and an article appeared in an issue of Critical Hit which suggested that the way the land lies at the actual crossroads prevents a clear LOS across the area depicted on the map. In the editorial of the booklet from *BdF* we were told that the next projects would include an

Edson's Ridge CG and I notice some coincidental names (Badhir Erimli and Nadir El-Farra) in the credits of both *BdF* and *Operation Watchtower*.

In *Operation Watchtower* we get the large paper map of Edson's Ridge with four scenarios to play on this famous geographical feature as well as a series of 12 other scenarios (one is a reprint of a *Backblast* scenario) that are set elsewhere on Guadalcanal, to be played on geomorphic boards. There is an uncanny resemblance between one of these scenarios and the action that saw John Cusack's team take the bunker complex in the film *The Thin Red Line* but I can't be sure whether the one is supposed to be the other (the book the film is based on possibly took the idea from the action itself – after all it is a novel not a history book). The one difference is a lack of artillery in the scenario. What makes this module unique compared even to *BdF* is that there is also a CG for use with the map.

The module presents itself as an "Historical Study" and it would be easy to make the mistake that the whole point of the module is the map and the CG. In fact those scenarios set on geomorphic boards allow you to play various interesting looking actions which highlight the terrain and conditions that the combatants found themselves in. Many battles raged on the shorelines and across the mouths of the rivers on Guadalcanal and some of these are depicted by scenarios here. The module includes a 12 page booklet which gives you a brief background to the land fighting that took place on and around Guadalcanal. The booklet acknowledges that it must skip over the intense and fascinating naval struggle that took place in the South Pacific around the Solomons at that time (I can recommend the Avalon Hill game *Flat Top* for anyone interested in this). Anyone who has read a half decent book on the subject matter will no doubt find this booklet a little lightweight but it will serve to set the stage well enough for those unfamiliar with the fight for the Solomons. The later pages of the book go into a bit more detail about the battle for Lunga Ridge, which became known to the Marines who fought there as Bloody Ridge, and finally Edson's Ridge, after the commander of the US forces at the time. In brief, this spot saw a desperate struggle between the Japanese and Americans for a significant piece of high ground which had a commanding view of the only decent sized airbase for many hundreds of miles on any direction. I have the Osprey book on the Guadalcanal campaign and there are a lot of really good photos of the ridge if you are interested in seeing what it really looks like.

The single sheet map is huge, 106cm by

75cm and will present a problem to some, if not many, gaming tables. However it is smaller by far than the two piece released for *Blood Reef: Tarawa*. The first print run was flawed in that the shades of green used to depict the lowest and the next-to-lowest levels are so close in colour that the crest lines are difficult to see. And they are *really* difficult to see. I recall that at least one of the KGP maps suffered from this problem (though not quite as bad) and that it was even seen as necessary by some to highlight crest lines on the *PB* map by hand with a pen in order to see exactly what was going on. I think MMP's attitude – their decision to replace each faulty map free of charge – is entirely commendable. After all, this module is not a cheap product and the map is seriously flawed. We *could* make do and play on it but why should we? For those of us "fortunate" enough to be in this position, we will eventually have the bonus of a spare map on which we can string our LOS threads without disturbing the piles of counters on the game map.

The map, as I say, is a big one and this is partly because it has a larger size hex than the geomorphic boards. These are roughly the same as we have seen on the *Red Barricades* maps and these are going to make the play of the game a little easier where large stacks of counters are in close proximity. The map is of a long, narrow bald hill mass rising out of a mat of jungle and bamboo. The artwork distinguishes between light and dense jungle by the shade of the artwork. There are lots of areas where the jungle has a porous look to allow you to see through to the crest line patterns below. It is a pleasant enough thing to behold and I don't think that the replacement one will be any less easy on the eye. I count 5 different levels overall, with a peak marked 120 (feet or metres I don't know), but the hill is steep enough that there is no need for any slope rules.

Speaking of rules, you get 18 pages of Chapter Z: The Edson's Ridge CG. Interestingly, there are no rules for special terrain since there is nothing here that you wouldn't find on the geomorphic maps, with the exception of the presence of dense and light jungle on the same map. I am pleased to note that, should you be playing a single scenario or the CG, you are not burdened by as long list of SSR as we were with previous *HASL* issues. *RB*, *KGP*, *PB*, *ABTF* and *BR:T* have all had a half page of changes to the rules for play on the map. *Operation Watchtower* has only eight, two of which are descriptions of the new types of squads. The only one that you couldn't have guessed at has to do with the USMC using entrenchments as rally terrain and their having trouble digging them in the first place. The



one thing that leaps out from the CG options is an ability to plot elaborate looking FPF barrages, a kind of zeroed-in defensive artillery mission.

You get a single sheet of counters in the module. It is apparent that some of these are duplicates of those we saw in the *BR:T* counter mix. An extra set of 1st line Japanese squads/HS, US and Jap concealment counters, some US leaders (as if we needed more - I must have a hundred by now!) and a couple of Jap crews, MGs and leaders. Add to this some US/Jap control markers using the white star rather than the "Eagle and Ball" we saw at Tarawa. Because of the dense nature of the jungle it is anticipated that plenty of paths will be cut so we get some more of these markers and there are also some extra starshells to allow for large scale night actions. The only main new counters we get are two types of Marine MMC. These are 5-5-8 Marine Raiders and Paramarines the latter distinguished by tiny parachute markings and all are distinguished from those we already have by a circle around the USMC symbol. The reasoning behind the issue of these counters is that both of these types differ from the regular USMC BAR squad in that they have the assault fire bonus as described in G17.111. These are the units that made up Edson's command during the fighting depicted. A quick look at the rules tells me that the 5-5-8 raiders are stealthy and the parachute marines are apparently not. I don't think you'll see any para-drops in any of the actions though.

I noted that there are no 5/8" counters at all on this sheet and that even the attack/idle chits are 1/2". Intrigued, I took a look at the new rules and found that you would only use two sniper counters a side "by mutual agreement," presumably thus allowing you to just have one apiece if you don't have two of each sniper counter (either a second *COB* or ownership of *BR:T*). My biggest gripe about the entire module - as far as component quality is concerned - is that the Japs are a far brighter shade of yellow than my existing counters. I can recall the slanging match that went on about the lilac SS counters in *KGPII* and they were less of a problem in my eyes than these new Japanese counters are, yet the SS were ultimately replaced. I recall, in fact, that my copy of *COB* had two distinct shades to the Japanese OB right from the get go.

Scenarios again use some boards we don't yet have. I am patiently waiting for *Armies of Oblivion* and *Hakka Palle* (forgive my spelling) for my new boards as I don't want duplicates I won't need. *Operation Watchtower* uses board 52 in three of the non *HASL* map scenarios but I'm determined to wait, thanks. No really. There are lots and lots of overlays used. I mean a lot. I note that there are 12 on a 2 board scenario, and 6 overlays on a different single board scenario. This will ruffle some people's feathers as I know there are a lot of people who don't like them. I don't mind them myself and I think the key is to have a practical storage system that gives you easy access (playing

games at home under an acetate sheet helps as well). The thing to remember here is that many of the geomorphic board scenarios show fights on the shoreline and river mouths and the only way to depict this terrain are the beach and ocean overlays.

The presentation, attention to detail and quality of print is, aside from the map (which will be replaced) and the too-bright Japanese counters, excellent. I am really looking forward to getting stuck into these scenarios and the CG.

This is what is in the box. So far, so good. The outside of the box is not so good. I can't say I'm impressed with the artwork, I'm afraid, it doesn't do the high quality components justice. I can't draw or paint to save my life, so maybe I have no right to offer an opinion on these things, but I don't like this guy's work much at all (I really miss George Parrish, who did the artwork for the early core modules). I have to say that the info on the back falls short of the usual quality we have seen in the past also. It says, for example, that we need all the core modules to play this, but I don't see some of them (the desert ones, and maybe *The last Hurrah!*) as being essential here. I understand that MMP's investigation/gut feeling/advice they have received is that the box is an essential requirement for the product to do well in off-the-shelf sales in game shops. Can't say I'm convinced however since it isn't a core module. Surely someone likely to buy this will see the magic letters (MMP) and buy it anyway. It is only going to appeal to those who have most of the other *ASL* system anyway. I know this box has added greatly to the cost of the module and it is of very little use to me now I have stowed the pieces in my beloved Raacos (Denmark is good for more than the Copenhagen tourney), my scenarios in their binders and the board in my artist's portfolio (a great way to store paper maps). This box will knock around my flat for a couple of weeks before I just throw it away the way I have most of my others.

Cost. This raises the one major gripe I have about this otherwise excellent product. Folks, this is an expensive piece of *ASL* merchandise. It retails at \$40 in the US and, because the pound has slipped over the last year against the dollar, I paid nearly £38 for it. By the time I paid postage, I had paid more in sterling than it cost in dollars! This doesn't make me ready to tell you that *Operation Watchtower* isn't worth the money, it really is, but I would offer a note of caution: If you don't like the Pacific theatre, *HASLs* or overlays, then don't buy it. Unless you are going to play most of the scenarios - and the CG - you may find a better bang-per-euro elsewhere in the *ASL* world.

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Alfred E. Newbie, ASLer

Paul Case

Winter Offensive

The Newbie turns up from Blighty, and asks how you play this game? One quick demo from Bunten, and it's into the tourney. Shock and horror for the Yanks. Cooke, Youse and Schilling are beaten by this upstart Brit, who goes on to win the tourney. 1-0

Scandinavian Open

Another shock for the *ASL* community, Manlig, Hastrup-Leth and visiting Brit Tocher are beaten by Newbie, who wins the tourney. 2-0

Berserk!

Back in Blackpool, word has spread about Newbie. Pilling is off sick (got a cold), so it's up to Strevens to do the damage. Final round, and it's Newbie vs Strevens. Strevens has a bad day, Newbie wins again. 3-0

Can-Con

Newbie decides to visit Oz with the family. They go to see the outback and Newbie plays *ASL*. Haseler, Linton and Bishop are trashed by the Pom, who wins the tourney (we let them win the 'Ashes' as compensation)! 4-0

Family commitments prevent further showings for Newbie until October.

ASLOK

Newbie goes to the biggest *ASL* event and meets Nixon, who he beats in a friendly at 'Khamsin'. Next he meets Tapio, whilst wearing ear-defenders, and proceeds to beat Tapio at Tapio's favourite scenario from the new *Critical Hit*. Only Newbie and McGrath are left undefeated, and 7-0, in the main tourney 'GROFAZ', so they are paired off against each other. McGrath gives a good game, but concedes victory to Newbie. 5-0

Intensive Fire

Pilling is back to good health, and so everyone is waiting to see the match. They avoid each other in the tourney, but are the only ones on 6-0, and both have the same oppo ratings! So, the decider (which everyone stays to watch). Scenario: 'Piercing the Peel'. Sides: Pilling - German, Newbie - Dutch. Gasp and horror as Newbie offers Pilling the balance. Accepted. End of a tight game, and Pilling is defeated (sends the scenario ratings into

Continued on page 19, column 2



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>	£7.50
<i>Leibstandarte Pack 2</i>	£7.50
<i>WinPak 1</i>	£7.50
<i>Gross Deutschland Pack 1</i>	£7.50

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.

"THIS IS THE CALL TO AMERICAN ARMS!"

This is the latest edition of the American continent ASL Players Directory. It is broken down by country. Within the country, players are listed according to their ZIP/Postal Code.

Canada

Martin Hubley, 105 Melrose Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3N 2E6
L. Fernandez, 3220 Millert, Ste Foy, Quebec, G 1 X-1 N8
T' Gongora, 3316 Edouard Montpeit #10, Montreal, Quebec, H3T 1K5
Michael Rodgers, 5187 Beamish, Pierrefonds, QC, H8Z 3G4
Adrian Earle, Apt 201, 17 Marlborough, Ottawa, K1N 8E6
Jim MacLeod, 978 Strathcona Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 3G5
Rick L. Fortier, 766 Brock Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3N 0Z5
George Kellin, 350 Kenaston Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3N 1V8
D Mattieson, PO BOX 3124 Medley, Alberta, T0A 2M0
R Sanderson, 19005-76th Ave, Surrey, British Columbia, V4N 3G5
S.P Smith, 1001 1 NE 9th Street, Vancouver, WA98664

Mexico

S. Mrozek, Avenida Ticoman 240, Lindavista D.F.

United States of America

M. Allenbaugh, 1117 Beall Place, Laurel, MD20707
E. Angleton, 4818 Cross Creek Lane APT O, Indianapolis, IN46254
G. Ashton, 2880 Carter Road, Trevose, PA19053
Chris Barlow, 24 Audubon Avenue, Braintree, MA02184
Linda Barnickel, 3453 SW Burlingame Road, Apt C203, Topeka, KS 66611
Mark Beatty, 115 Oakridge Drive, Weatherford, TX 76086
J. Berhalter, 2900 Colerain Rd #223, St Marys, GA31558
Brian Blad, 1031 S. Stewart #2204, Mesa, AZ 85202
Wayne Boudreaux Jr., Apt. #8, 4420 Wimbledon Drive, Grandville, MI 49418
L.J. Bradbury, 13127 South 2615 West, Riverton, Utah 84065
Scott Brady, 273 Merline Road, Vernon, CT 06066-4024
David Cabera, 1206 Spring Street, Apt #9, Syracuse, NY 13208
M. Cadieux, 11610 Zandra Ave, Midwest City, 73130
T. Campbell, PO BOX 23591, Sacramento, CA95823
E. Carter, 410 N. State, Geneseo, IL61254
Zeke Carter, 666 Prospect Street #705, Honolulu, HI96813
R.F. Conabee, 1014 Washington Street, Apt 3, Hoboken, NJ07030-52022
J. Coyle, 13226 Shady Ridge Lane, Fairfax, VA22033
C. Cuno, 628 Fairfield Avenue, Gretna, LA70056
S. D'elia, 77 Maple Ave, Greenwich, CT06830
D.A. Dally, 901, Oeffing Drive, McHenry, IL60050
Steve Dethlefsen, 11808 April Ann Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93312
B. Dey, 610 N. Willis, Champaign, IL61821
J.C. Doughan, 1903 Chesnut Circle, Ardmore, PA19003
R. Duenskie, 13 Hickory Drive, Stanhope, NJ07874
W.B. Edwards III, 2400 New Berne Rd, Richmond, VA23228
Ben Emanuele, 256 Lake Shore Drive, Pleasantville, NY 10570-1304
Cliff Emery, 1306 Buddy Moore Road, Colbert, Georgia 30628
Mark Evans, 4740 Rusina Road, Apt #109, Colorado Springs, CO 80907
C. Fago, 1012 Saxton Drive, State College, PA16801
J. Farris, PO BOX 547, Norman, OK73070
Stephen Foren, 406 Northwood Dr. #3, West Palm Beach, FL 33407
G. Fortenberry, 232 Linda Drive, Burleson, TX76028
Carl Fung, Castle Point, P. O. Box S-359, Hoboken, NJ 09030
Russ Gifford, 320 E. 27th Street, South Sioux, NE 68776
Randy Glesing, 10040 Penrith Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46229
Chuck Goetz, 531 S. Sharp Street, Baltimore, MD 21201
Eric Gustafson, 3 Mercier Drive, Belchertown, MA 01007
W. Hancock, 728 Dutton Hill Road, Gray, Maine, CT04039
B. Harden, 237 Montecito Avenue -Apt 1, Monterey, CA93940
Charles Harris, PO Box 39215, Tacoma, WA 98439-0215
Jeff Harris, 4501 Tillery Road, Apt # D-30, Knoxville, TN 37912
Andrew Hershey, 361 Hilltop Drive #335, King of Prussia, PA19406
G. Holmberg, 9051E 7th Street, Tucson, AZ85710
Scott Holst, 5530 N. Artesian, Chicago, IL 60625
P. Hornbeck, 6504 NW 31st Street, Bethany, OK73008
Tu.x Humphrey, 730 Chester Street, Oakland, CA94607
Rich Jenulis, 6713 Classen Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44105
Richie Johns, 9771 Jefferson Highway #185, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
David Johnson, 9028 Preakness Drive, Florence, KY 41042
C. Kavanagh, 59 Ridgefield Drive, Centerport, NY11721
Stewart King, 13826 S. Meyers Road, Apt #2037, Oregon City, OR 97045
Randolph Knight, 419 Shore Road, Westerly, RI 02891
L.P. Kreitz, HC64, Box 462, Trout Run, PA17771
M. Laney, 7608 Monterey Drive, Oklahoma City, OK73139
V. Lewonski, 509 South Bishop Ave, Secane, PA19018
Brad Lipps, 8379 Youngstown-Conneaut Road, N.E. Kinsman, OH44428

Rick Lubben, 400 W. Main Street, La Porte City, IA50651
D. Lundy, 54 Wiltshire St, Bronxville, NY10708
R. Lyon, 5125 Heather Drive #111, Dearborn, MI48126
Chris Maloney, 319 Larkfield Road, East Northport, NY 11731-2903
Roger March, 469 Avenida De Socies #11, Nipomo, CA 93444
Kurt Martin, 2684 Avonhurst, Troy, MI48084-1028
Brian Martuzas, 108 Church Street, Moopou, CT 06354
Douglas Maston, 4 Three Meadows Ct, Greensboro, NC 27455-1728
L.R. Mehr, 718 Cascade Creek Dr, Katy, TX77450-3210
K. Meyer, 1090 Peggy Drive - Apt #7, Hummelstown, PA17036
Jeff Miller, 263 Buechert Road, Gilbertsville, PA19525
M. Monczunski, 233B Fielding, Ferndale, MI48220
W.B. Nagel, 9712 W. 105th Terrace, Overland Park, KS66212
James Neary, 1729 Forest Cove #308, Mt Prospect, IL 60056
J. Pault, 404 Trappers Run, Cary, NC27513
Frank Payne, 7625 SW 91st Avenue, Portland, OR97223-7029
S. Petersen, 112 Vernon Ave, Glen Burnie, MD21061
Glenn Petroski, 210 W. Hunt, Twin Lakes, WI 53181-9786
P. Pomerantz, 818 Redwood Avenue, Wyoming, PA19610
J.J. Quinn Jr, 707 Mitchell Street, Ridley Park, PA19078
Tod Reiser, 472 Hartwick Road, Mercer, PA 16137
Tom Repetti, 17322 Paoli Way, Parker, CO80134
Michael Rhodes, 850 Lincoln Centre Drive, Foster City, CA 94404
Tate Rogers, 4930-F Corporate Drive, Huntsville, AL 35805
R. Rossi, 30970 Stone Ridge Drive #12301, Wixom, MI48393
Darryl Rubin, PO Box 907, Redmond, WA98073
Robert Schauf, 2335 Middle Creek Lane, Reston, VA
John Slotwinski, 2701 Harmon Road, Silver Spring, MD 20902
C. Smith, 3736 Sacramento ave, Santa Rosa, CA95405
W. Smith, 426 Beech St #8B, Kearny, NJ07032
Jan Spoor, 2849 Woodlawn Avenue, Falls Church, VA22042-2045
Ray Tapio, Critical Hit! Inc., 88 Lodar Lane, Brewster, NY 10509
S. Tinsley, 8444 NW 87th, Oklahoma City, OK73132
J. R. Tracy, 59 W. 9th Street, New York, NY 10011
Rick Troha, 4485 Oak Circle, North Olmsted, OH 44070-2838
W. Ullicki, 230 Washington Valley Road, Randolph, NJ07869
Paul Venard, PO Box 1716, Bonners Ferry, Idaho, 83805
D. Wetzelberger, 24 Dulaney Hills Ct, Hunt Valley, MD21030
William Wiesing, 1936 Pine Meadow Avenue, Tom's River, New Jersey, NJ 08753-7823
K. Wilhite, 121 Springfield Lane, Madison, AL35758-1973
G. Windau, PO BOX 13134, Toledo, OH43613
R. Wolkey, E6208 6th #D 1, Spokane, WA99212
Paul W. Works Jr., 12018 W. 68th Street, Shawnee, Kansas, 66216
Darrell Wright, 1007 West Cole Street, Dunn, NC 28334
Brian Youse, 309 Chase Hill Court, Severn, MD 31144
Eddie Zeman, Heat of Battle, PO Box 15073, Newport Beach, CA 92659
Steve Zundel, 3601 Dawn Smoke Court, Raleigh, NC 27615
Nadir El-Farra, Front Line Productions, PO Box 10345, Glendale, CA 91209-3345
Paul Simonsen, 2118 N. Orange Grove Ave., Pomona, CA 91767
Robert Hammond, 4414 Stay Ct., Orange, CA 92868
Tom Huntington, 1425 Bison Ridge Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80919
Evan Sherry, Sherry Enterprises, PO Box 3, Ruskin, FL 33570
Vic Provost, Dispatches From The Bunker, 209 Granby Rd. Aot. 18, Chicopee, MA 01013, MA 01040
Donald Garlit, 17430 Brady, Redford, Michigan, MI 48240
Ray Woloszyn, 317 Kilburn Way Lane, Kernersville, North Carolina, NC27284-7104
J R Van Mechelen, Apt 8E, 301 Heights Lane, Feasterville, PA 19053
Will Fleming, 20455 First Avenue NE #C103, Poulso, WA98370

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

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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 bcyouse@cablespeed.com. You can also sign up on MMP's web site at www.advancedsqadleader.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.socasl.com.

FEBRUARY

WINTER WAR 2002

When: 1 - 3 February.

Where: Champaign, Illinois, United States of America.

Fee: To be determined.

Format: ASLOK style.

Notes: for more information check out the Winter War web site at <http://www.geocities.com/ahwargamer/ww02/home.html>.

Contact: Brien Martin at bkmartin26@aol.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@freuk.com.

SEPTEMBER

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

OKTOBERFEST ASLOK 2002

When: 2 - 7 October.

Where: Radisson Inn, 7230 Engle Road, Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130. Telephone 440-243-4040. Room Rates for ASLOK 2000 were \$85.00 for 1-4 occupants and are likely to be similar this year.

Fee: Likely to be similar to last year, about \$20.00 or \$25.00.

Format: Same as always. Weekend tournament plus numerous mini-tournaments.

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

INTENSIVE FIRE 2002

When: 25 – 27 October.

Where: The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Bourmemouth, 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@vftt.co.uk.

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ALFRED E. NEWBIE, ASLer

Continued from page 17

chaos!). 6-0

Grenadier

Off to Germany, visits the Reeperbahn. Then down to the tourney. Tieleman brothers, Koppermayer and Ladwien games later and Newbie is undefeated again. Champ once more! 7-0

The newspapers have gotten hold of this, and relegate the other top story (Father Christmas is a lesbian) to the second slot.

STOP PRESS

Newbie has announced his retirement from tourney *ASL*!

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THE TRENCHES

Announcing the return of

SCHWERPUNKT VOLUME #7



SP73 Seregelyes Slug-Out: This is a big combined arms action on the East front with Stalins vs. King Tigers. It uses boards 18, 41, and 50.

SP74 The Last Tiger: Another one of Sherry's heavy metal East front actions featuring a Nashorn and a Tiger vs. a horde of Russian armor including IS2s and an ISU 152.

SP75 Taurus Pursuant: Two desperate groups of SS panzergrenadiers fight a determined action to hold twin villages against a combined force of halftrack mounted British supported by Shermans and Cromwells.

SP76 Flaming of the Guard: A company of Germans supported by flamethrowers and Panthers tries to burn out a stubborn group of Irish guards supported by 17-pounders and Sherman tanks.

SP77 Green Jacket's Bridge: A beleaguered British searchlight battery fights a last-ditch battle to delay the German advance on Calais.

SP78 Golovchino Breakout: Tournament level East front action featuring Russian guards defending against a German recon unit with supporting infantry.

SP79 Mius Trap: Russian guards armor and infantry defend board 11 hills against a German infantry supported by STuGs.

SP80 Die Gurkha Die: A savage PTO action pitting Gurkhas and Chinese in a defense against a large two-pronged Japanese attack.

SP81 Betje Wolf Plein: A tournament level infantry action featuring British commandos defending half of board 51 against infantry of the German 70th Division.

SP82 Norway in Half: This is a rare thing, a Norwegian attack! A fast playing tournament action with Fallschirmjaegers defending on boards 5 and 10.

SP83 Boeinked: A terrific design from Greg Davis featuring lumbering British Churchills in a spirited sloth-krieg versus infantry supported by STuGs and Pak40s.

SP84 Von Bodenhausen's Ride: A classic 1942 East front gem with a large German tank\infantry kampgruppe reliving the Charge of the Light Brigade through murderous fire from Russian infantry, antitank guns, and T34s.

This issue's 24-page booklet contains two articles as well as our trademark analyses and designer's notes for each of the scenarios. The twelve scenarios are printed on card stock in our new easy to read format. The scenarios are in keeping with the *Schwerpunkt* tradition of tournament-sized as well as medium sized actions. This pack has something for every ASL player.

Schwerpunkt 7 is available for \$16.00. Please add \$3.00 (\$6.00 outside the U.S.) for a single volume, for shipping and handling, plus \$1.00 for each volume > 1 ordered (Example: Shipping for four copies is \$6.00 in the U.S.). (Foreign Orders for 2-7 copies please use the following Global Priority Mail shipping rate: Canada and Europe \$9.00; Japan and the Pacific: \$10.00).

Send your check or money order in U.S. funds payable to Sherry Enterprises, P.O. Box 3, Ruskin, FL 33570