

# VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

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# PREP FIRE

Another *View From The Trenches*, somewhat late but life has been full of change recently. As you can probably see from the opposite page I've moved which had a delaying effect on this issue, as did accidentally making the hard drive on my computer un-useable – thank god for back-ups though!!

Hopefully the next issue of *VFTT* should be out on time, as I have another two, maybe even three part article from Michael Davies looking at the Gross Deutschland pack ready to use. I'd still like a few one and two page articles from the rest of you though, so start thinking during the holiday period and see what you can come up with.

I might see a few of you at HEROES in July, but I'm supposed to be at three other events that weekend! Which one will I do? Ask me a couple of days before!! Until then roll low and prosper.

Double I. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipp

**COVER:** The cover of Critical Hit's *Guerra Civil* module which is featured in this issue.

### 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](mailto:majordomo@multimanpublishing.com) with the body of the message reading:

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You MUST use lower case letters!

You will get a message from Majordomo in reply asking for confirmation.

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The digest is mailed out whenever it has queued 100,000 characters of mailings. You may receive more (or less) than one mailing every 24 hour period. The digest is NOT sent at a certain time each day.

### EMOTICONS

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

An emoticon is created with keyboard characters and read with the head tilted to the left. Some typical emoticons are:

:-) humour or smile  
;-) 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 45 should be out at the beginning of September 2002.

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# TRENCH MOVES!

Yes *View From The Trenches* has moved to:  
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Tel (0116) 233 5896.

## INCOMING

### CH IN INDO-CHINA

Out now from Critical Hit is *Dien Bien Phu*, which covers the final battle of the First Indo-China War. *DbF* contains a historical mapsheet, three 8" x 22" geomorphic maps and two overlays (a village and an airfield), as well as counters for Viet Minh infantry and ordnance, Tai' irregulars, French paratroopers, Foreign Legion leaders, 'Crabe' river-warfare amphibious AFVs, Weasels armed with MGs and RCLs, Bofors-mounting armoured trucks, and 1951 Fighter Bombers. The boxed set is completed by a 16 page rulebook with historical notes, play aids and 15 scenarios, and is on sale for \$49.95.

### CANADIANS GO TO ITALY

With the *Wacht am Rhein – Operation Autumn Mist* scenario pack due to be released soon, work has begun on the next pack. *The Canadians in Italy – The Red*

*Patched Devils in Sunny Sicily*. This is the first of three scenario packs following the Canadians from the shores of Pachino in July 1943 to the Po River Valley in February 1945. The first pack covers the First Canadian Division during Operation Husky, the Allied landing Sicily in July 1943. Opposing them will be veteran divisions such as Hermann Goring Panzer Division, the 15<sup>th</sup> Panzer Grenadier Division of Afrika Korps fame and the tough paratroopers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fallschirmjaeger Division.

### SCHWERPUNKT 8 DRIVES TOWARDS ASLOK

*Schwerpunkt 8* is near the end of the playtest, with editing well on its way. It will be in the same format as usual, a 24 page booklet with analyses, articles, and 12 scenarios printed on cardstock and using the format first seen in Volume 7. Work is also progressing on *Schwerpunkt 9* and the updating of the old issues to the new format. The price has risen to \$17.00 per issue, with Volumes 4-7 currently available.

### 15<sup>th</sup> BUNKER STARTED

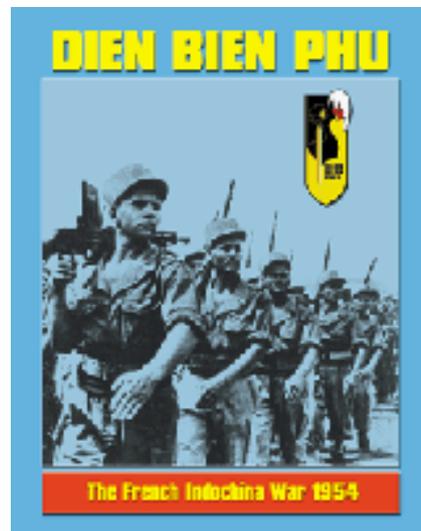
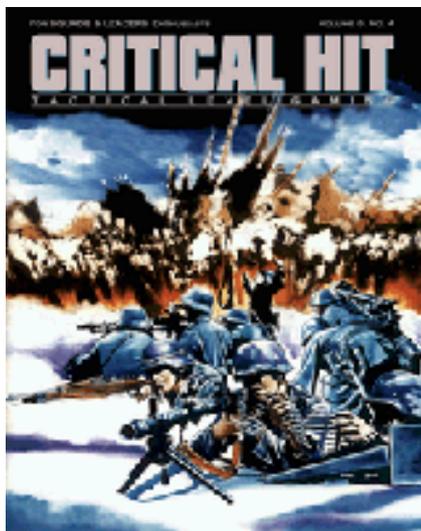
Work on *Despatches From The Bunker 15* has begun and is expected to be completed in late August or early September. The featured scenarios are the latest in Tom Morin's Tunisian Series. 'The Third Column' covers one of the first uses of the Tiger I and sees a German combined arms column trying to blow by a French roadblock on boards 16 and 18 in Heavy Rain, with Bog penalties for off road movement. 'Deep Strike' is a large offering with a French combined arms force trying to battle through the lengths of boards 9 and 17 to take buildings

on the board 24 village. Opposing them are successive layers of German and Italian defenders.

There will also be an analysis from Jim Torkelson on the *Operation Watchtower* scenarios, a summary of the Nor'Easter 2002 Tournament, and the usual Tactical Tips for Veterans and Novices.

Four issue subscriptions are available for \$13.00 (\$15.00 outside the USA). Issue one is available free with a subscription or an SAE, while other back issues are \$3.50 (\$4.00 outside the USA). Payments should be payable to Vic Provost and sent to *Despatches from the Bunker*, P.O. Box 1025, Hinsdale MA 01235. You can email them at [aslbunker@aol.com](mailto:aslbunker@aol.com).

Ω



# 52 Go BERSERK! in Blackpool

Trev Edwards

Berserk! 2002 may go down as our best effort yet. True, a couple of years ago we had more players turn up than this year, and we have consistently received generally positive feedback from our punters, but there was always that nagging problem in my mind... The Hotel Skye itself. Since we started using it in 1998, the quality of the food and service had deteriorated, prices had gone up and the general attitude of the hotelier had suggested that it was getting to be more trouble than it was worth to have us there. On top of this, each year he would promise that the lighting would be improved and I would say OK only to be disappointed again.

Last year was going to be the last. I was definitely going to start looking somewhere else. As I am keen to tell anybody who'll listen, the seaside resort (the last resort some would call it) known as Blackpool on the NW coast of England has more hotel beds than all of Portugal. On the other hand, as I have found, few of them seem ideal for the ASL player looking to run a tournament. What you need is a combination of reasonable room rates, good lighting, enough space with chairs and tables, good lighting, a hotelier who will be accommodating, a bar and good lighting. The Hotel Skye's biggest problem was always the lighting. We had to use angle poise desk lamps for some of the tables and the consistent, well founded gripe of our participants was always the dim interior of the place making every unit partially concealed. Well it wasn't quite that bad but it wasn't good.

I had steeled myself to take a couple of days in the summer to look at every hotel

in the resort if necessary, but we were to be very fortunate as things turned out. On the Saturday of Berserk! 2001 I was introduced by the old owner to the chap who was going to take over the hotel shortly after we left. "Rowland" seemed very keen and promised a lot by way of quality food and beer and so on and I got to explain the problems with the lighting. As I visited him over the next few months I could see the improvements he spoke about taking shape. I had not visited for a few weeks prior to the event itself, however and I was unprepared for the transformation in the main room. The lighting is a vast improvement, as is the décor. Gone was the dreadful two-shades-of-orange and yellow theme which to be replaced by something a little more sane. The uplighters have been replaced with bright wall lighting and the spots above the dining area are much more powerful. I could only see one or two tables where the lighting was less than satisfactory and we weren't full enough for those to be essential. Even after this improvement, one player reported that he felt it was a little dim in the gaming area, so there may still be room for improvement. The bar meals are pretty good value for money, especially compared to previous years, and the beer was improved by all accounts (Stella Artois being on offer for example).

Berserk! started early for me this year as I picked up two friends from North Kentucky (who had flown over for the event) on the Wednesday morning at Manchester Ringway. Knowing that they'd be tired after an overnight flight, I thought that something a little energetic would keep them awake rather than just stale museum visits and the

like. So we ran out to North Wales so I could show Russ and Rod some 13<sup>th</sup> Century castles (Caernarfon and Conway) which they were suitably impressed by (or pretended to be for my sake). A note to the military historians out there: The Royal Welch Fusiliers museum within Caernarfon castle is worth the price of admission alone.

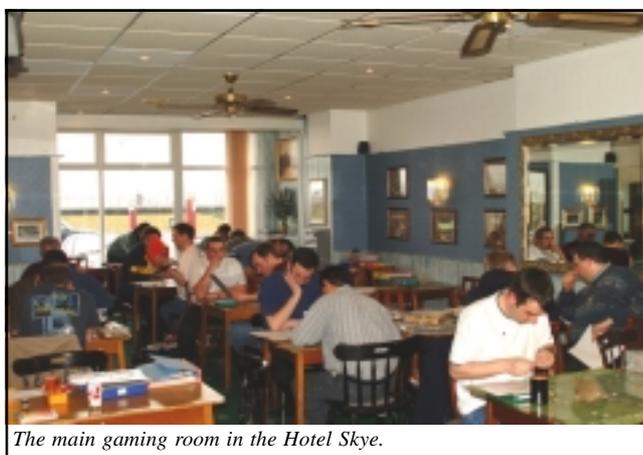
Thursday morning saw us take a detour to the Queen's Lancashire Regimental museum in my home town of Preston -which had become a City that very morning by Royal decree. Not a bad collection of exhibits I felt, but could use better labelling as there were some objects we couldn't identify. This is in the museum but could equally apply to Preston.

We arrived at the hotel at lunch time and, after I had got over the improvement, I helped get the tables set out. Rowland brought through several trestle tables which had apparently been available all along, but the prior proprietor hadn't been bothered to get them out for us. The hotel began to ring to the sound of dice rolling and Rod bitching about his luck as I got my first game in – "Morning in Mouen." At the time I thought Rod was a bit over the top, even complaining about rolling an eight at one point. I was later reminded that the first time I'd played him at ASLOK one year, it was me who'd whined constantly about dice as Rod's septics kicked my Japanese arses off the board during a game of "The Junglers."

I went home to Preston that night so as to be closer to Manchester. The Friday morning I ran out to the airport pick up Paul Boyle from Eire, with whom I had



The prizes at BERSERK! 2002.



The main gaming room in the Hotel Skye.



corresponded by email for a number of years. I was very pleased to finally meet him. Coming in from Toronto was David Kalman whom, I also collected. David's brothers had come to Berserk! 2001 from Israel and were coming again this year, so he was excited about seeing them as well as the ASL that was ahead.

The main event kicked off on Friday afternoon with a round of scenarios involving bridges. We'd struggled to find three suitable scenarios ("suitable" meaning nicely balanced in our opinion *and* short enough for tournament play) actually containing bridges, so one, "Tigers to the Bridge," ABTF 5 only had same in the title. The biggest news from this round was the defeat of Toby Pilling. Toby had won the last four Berserk! Tournaments and I believe that this was only his second defeat by a British player in that time.

The evening round of scenarios were based in NW Europe in '44-45. As this got under way I sat down to play Ben Jones at a game of "Chesty's Turn," from Operation Watchtower. Ben had been good enough to be our odd-man-in-or-out for the tournament and, since we had an even number of men in the line, he stood out. It was Ben's first night-PTO scenario and, while he acquitted himself well enough, my experience carried the day (read this as "Ben doesn't have a clue about ASL and usually relies on dice to get him out of trouble and he was out of luck this time"). Ben is an interesting character: Not been playing long and already fed up of "vanilla" ASL. If it hasn't got at least one

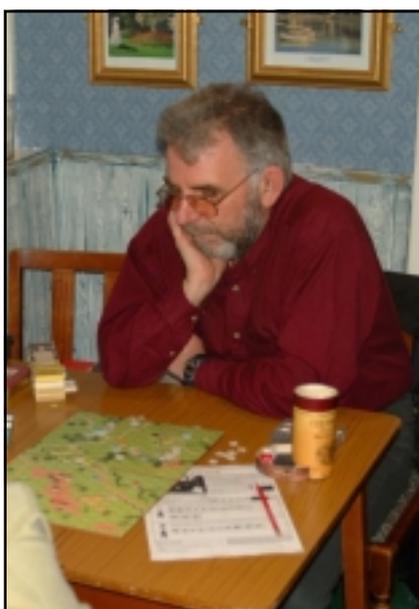
difficult-to-use feature or rule, he's barely interested in a given scenario. He is usually to be found amongst the caves of Kakazu Ridge. I hate him: I fancy myself as a funny guy -Ben would disagree- so, having this-wet-behind-the ears scouser win last year's Golden Spuddy is more than I can bear. And of course, he brought it with him to taunt me. There it was sat on his gaming table all through the weekend, driving me mad! And the worst thing was that I was the only one who could see it...

Saturday came and I had an eventful day, to say the least. The main tournament had a set of scenarios themed on the Eastern Front. At the same time our "newbie" tournament kicked off. We had four inexperienced players together in a round-robin tournament of fairly straightforward scenarios. We were trying to encourage some new blood and I think we were fairly successful. I hope we'll see at least some of them again next year, probably in the main event. One player who didn't get involved with this was Oliver Gardiner, a South African who is currently a Captain in The Irish Rangers, a British Army unit (makes two currently serving British officers present with Neil Stevens being there also). Nice fellow Oliver, he plays a good game for someone who has only played a dozen or so scenarios. We played a game of "Slamming of the Door," which was his first experience with platoon movement. A last minute rush got him the win as he pushed his infantry through a hail of -2 shots.

Speaking of last minute rushes, it was

during this game that I experienced probably the worse case of an "upset stomach," I have ever had. I'll spare you the reader details, suffice it to say I was often called away from the table with a need to spend some time in my room, and was uncomfortable when at the table. I can't understand it because no one else had this problem. Oliver was extremely patient and understanding, which allowed us to finish the game eventually. I retired to my room for several hours after the game to recover. By the time I came back down several players had already finished the second round of Saturday scenarios. These were under the title "Choose a Theatre" and allowed the players to pick a scenario from the PTO, Desert or plain old Eastern Front. I am pleased to say that all three were subscribed to by someone. Sadly my illness meant that I was unable to get involved with and get to know the "newbie" players and to run their event properly. Thanks to Steve for taking this on in addition to the managing of the main event.

Toby Pilling had finished his game by the time I got over my bout and asked if I'd like to play him at something. It wasn't worth his standing to record the game on the ladder so we agreed to play just for fun (hey, I can if I want, its my event!). We settled on "Betje Wolf Plein" from the latest Schwerpunkt. I warned Toby that I had played it with Steve in the weeks leading up to Berserk! and we'd found it favoured the Germans too much to be included. I'd like to be able to tell you that I played better than Toby to secure my win, but it wouldn't be true. It came down to the dice consistently favouring me, even



Mike Standbridge looks on with concern.



Shaun Carter (left) battles Russ Curry.



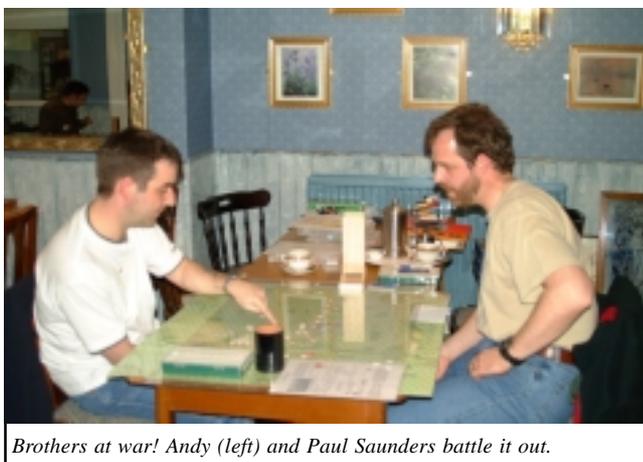
Co-organiser Steve Thomas at work.

down to the walking rubble I got as I placed my pre game allotment of said counters. Add to this my getting away with mistakes and taking chances that paid off and so on, and you get the picture. I got a glimpse of Toby's logical style of play and I noted that he tried everything...it just wasn't going to be the British Commandos day.

Still under the effects of the day's exertions, but by now at least mercifully free of the symptoms, I had a poor night's sleep. Sunday was St Patrick's day so we had set a choice of three scenarios, all of which featured the Irish Guards. Going into this round we had potential strife ahead as three players were unbeaten.

As things worked out, only Derek Tocher came out without losing a game in the tourney and he was our worthy winner. Derek had been the bridesmaid or had been in the running so many times at our earlier events that it was fitting for him to lift Toby's crown. I can still recall him winning the first IF way back in the last century, and now finally he gets to win the big one! (he said expecting much protestation from Neil and Pete). The first prize of the beautifully framed set of trading cards depicting WWII tanks, plus a generous amount of MMP merchandise certificates went to him. In second, having dropped one game against the strongest opposition, was Phil Draper who took away the "silver" cup and a voucher for Second Chance Games (Andy was there at Berserk! as usual with his travelling collection of boardgame merchandise). Ran Shiloah, one of our revisiting Israelis, who had gone unbeaten into the final round, came third and received the "bronze" cup. Well done Ran. Consolations to the others who finished on 4-1, but who had played opponents with weaker records. Our system is unfair I know but there's no other way to resolve the ties.

The new player tournament prize was



Brothers at war! Andy (left) and Paul Saunders battle it out.

a "gold" cup and a Leisure Games voucher. I presented this to Chris Netherton who had not lost in the three-game mini tourney. I also got to present the gag prizes for the players who had rolled the most "snakes" and "cars" in any single scenario for the weekend and these went to Shaun Carter (eight snakeeyes) and Mike Standbridge (eleven -count 'em!- boxcars).

The final presentation was the booby prize for Jacqui Eaves who had gone 0-5 in the tourney. Bearing in mind that she has in her time beaten Dave Schofield, I suspect she just fancied the last place prize: A plaster-of-paris model of the Blackpool Tower with some misshapen dice glued to it (scandalously described in the list of prizes as a "dice tower").

I had offered to run a couple of folks to Preston to allow them to link up with trains and I regret not saying goodbye to so many people at the end. Oliver Gardiner and I didn't finish our game of "High Tide at Heilingebiel," for which I have apologised and noted the positions for next time we meet. I got to break my 36 hour fast that evening at an excellent Fish & Chips restaurant in Bispham where I had the "Moby Dick Special" which is their double helping of haddock. Yum! After that I stayed up late, tired out while Ran Shiloah beat me at "The Last VC in Europe." Completely out played me. I had to drag myself away from the group at 1am to arise early enough the next morning to get my friends to the airport.

And that was Berserk! 2002.



A female ASLer sighting! She's on the left guys! !

I have already arranged in principle with the hotelier to have next year's event in mid March. I know it is close to the Copenhagen tourney in February, but we had two regular players not turn up because of their working in accountancy approaching the end of the financial year.

Despite my being sick, things went off well. Come to think of it, with me out of the way, Steve was free to run the thing properly for once. Thanks then especially to my partner in crime Steve Thomas who ran the tourney -both tourney's- expertly in my absence. He didn't even get to play one game all weekend. Thanks to Ben Jones for sitting in or out of the event and being happy either way, although I still don't like you, you brat. Thanks to our sponsors MMP of the USA, Second Chance Games of Wallasey, and Leisure Games of Fincheley. Thanks also due to Rowland at the Hotel Skye who made things at the hotel run smoothly and gave us better personal service than we've ever had.

One final note of thanks is to all those who attended, but most of all those of you who came a long way (at least eight people

Continued on page 31, column 3



Relaxing after a hard morning at the gaming tables!



# The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

## BERSERK! 2002 Update

First new winner in five years!

Derek Tocher

After a run of four straight BERSERK! titles on the trot Toby Pilling at last suffers a defeat as he was ambushed by relative newcomer Mike Essex in the first round putting him out of contention and leaving your laddermeister a clear run to the top slot. Nevertheless Toby's one defeat still leaves him clear of the pack in terms of the Crusaders Ladder where he heads the list with 3790 points. One of our Israeli visitors, Ran Shiloah, put in an exceptionally strong performance over the weekend going 5-1 and picking up 390 points to move him from 99th to 12th on the ladder.

There have now been 1550+ games played at the INTENSIVE FIRE and BERSERK! tournaments over the last seven years. There are now 52 players who played 20+ games, 24 who have played 40+, and 10 who have played 60+ games. The largest number of games recorded is 79 (by Dave Schofield). The top 10% of players have ratings of 3280+ while the upper quartile are rated 3160+. Those in the lower quartile have ratings below 2810 while the bottom 10% of participants are rated 2665 or less. These

numbers have remained essentially invariant over the last three years and the distribution of results is essentially Gaussian about 3000.

Just as at INTENSIVE FIRE at the end of last year we had a dozen players show up who had not competed in a British ASL tournament before. This was no doubt at least partly facilitated by the tournament organisers decision to run a separate small 'newbie' tournament in parallel with the main event. As a consequence there were some large swings in point totals over the weekend. UK tournament newbies doing particularly well include Phil Draper (+290 pts) and Chris Netherton (+260 pts). Regular attendees at our tournaments who also performed well include Martin Bryan (+315 pts), Justin Key (+335 pts) and Dave Tye (+275 pts) each of whom climbed to a mid table position. In addition Steve Crowley gained 285 pts shooting him from 12<sup>nd</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> position. Biggest loser over the weekend was the UK's only female ASLer Jackie Eaves who went 0-5 and dropped 330 pts - though at least she got to take home an elegant model of Blackpool Tower for her trouble! Others

on a rather steep slippery slope include Mike Essex (who wiped out the gains he made at the last INTENSIVE FIRE), newbie Marc Horton (but at least he has an excuse), and Neil Stevens (well what do you expect if you bring your wife to an ASL tournament!).

Thirty-five players on the ladder have attended more than half of the rated tournaments (and four have attended every event! - for those that are interested these sad individuals are:- Ian Daghish, Trevor Edwards, Dominic McGrath and Pete Phillipps). Although the majority of participants are from the UK there is usually a substantial overseas contingent (ca. 15 %) and we have had players from as far afield as South Africa, the U.S.A. and Australia and New Zealand in attendance in the past.

Congratulations also to Mike Standbridge who went 2-3 and managed to gain enough points to decisively pull himself of the bottom position.

Without further ado here is the ladder as of 24 March 2002.

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Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points	Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points
1	Toby Pilling	44	39—1—4	3790	29	Daniel Kalman	11	8—0—3	3245
2	Steve Thomas	42	32—1—9	3755	30	Luis Calcada	34	17—1—16	3240
3	Derek Tocher	77	56—1—20	3675	31=	Daniel Batey	4	4—0—0	3235
4	Mike Rudd	38	32—1—5	3660	31=	Paul Saunders	19	10—0—9	3235
5	Bjarne Hansen	31	23—0—8	3630	33	Andrew Dando	41	22—2—17	3230
6	Michael Hastrup-Leth	37	24—1—12	3590	34	Christain Koppmeyer	15	8—0—7	3220
7	Aaron Cleavin	6	6—0—0	3565	35	Tom Slizewski	5	4—0—1	3215
8	Peter Bennett	14	12—1—1	3560	36=	Klaus Malmstrom	4	3—1—0	3210
9	Carl Sizmur	16	11—0—5	3515	36=	Nils-Gunner Nilsson	5	4—0—1	3210
10	Fermin Retamero	8	7—0—1	3480	36=	Yves Tielemans	3	3—0—0	3210
11	Simon Strevens	63	40—1—22	3395	39	Francois Boudrenghien	3	3—0—0	3205
12	Ran Shiloah	11	7—0—4	3370	40	Aaron Sibley	43	26—0—17	3195
13	Jes Touvdal	20	13—0—7	3365	41=	Jean Devaux	3	3—0—0	3190
14	Bernt Ribom	5	5—0—0	3350	41=	Russell Gough	41	22—3—16	3190
15	Joe Arthur	21	13—0—8	3305	41=	Armin Deppe	13	7—1—5	3185
16	Frank Tinschert	15	10—0—5	3295	41=	Dominic Mcgrath	73	38—0—35	3185
17	Phil Draper	5	4—0—1	3290	45=	Bill Durrant	5	4—0—1	3180
18=	Philippe Leonard	9	7—1—1	3285	45=	Lars Klysner	6	4—0—2	3180
18=	Steve Linton	11	8—0—3	3285	47	Jonathan Pickles	8	5—0—3	3175
20=	Will Fleming	3	3—0—0	3280	48=	Grant Pettit	7	4—1—2	3170
20=	Ralf Krusat	6	5—0—1	3280	48=	Bruno Tielemans	3	3—0—0	3170
20=	Alan Smee	4	4—0—0	3280	50=	Rodney Callen	6	4—0—2	3160
23	Dave Booth	7	5—0—2	3270	50=	Mel Falk	9	5—0—4	3160
24=	Steve Crowley	44	20—1—23	3260	52	Ray Woloszyn	28	16—1—11	3155
24=	Chris Netherton	7	5—1—1	3260	53=	Jeremy Copley	9	6—0—3	3150
26=	Keith Bristow	33	20—1—12	3255	53=	Paul Sanderson	37	19—0—18	3150
26=	Stephen Burleigh	9	5—0—4	3255	55	Nick Edelsten	22	14—1—7	3145
26=	Dave Schofield	79	52—0—27	3255	56=	Paul O'donald	67	44—1—27	3135



Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points	Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points
56=	Frenk Van Der Mey	4	3—0—1	3135	128	Edo Giaroni	3	1—0—2	2915
58=	Chris Courtier	13	7—2—4	3130	129=	Joel Berridge	3	1—0—2	2910
58=	Bob Eburne	44	26—0—18	3130	129=	Brian Martuzas	5	2—0—3	2910
60	Raurigh Dale	12	7—0—5	3125	129=	Andy Smith	4	0—0—4	2910
61=	Lee Brimmicombe-Wood	12	8—0—4	3120	132	Phil Ward	5	2—0—3	2905
61=	Paul Ryde-Weller	10	5—1—4	3120	133	Josh Kalman	10	5—0—5	2900
63=	Trevor Edwards	66	33—1—32	3115	134	Martin Kristensen	6	2—0—4	2895
63=	Stewart Thain	10	6—0—4	3115	135=	Jakob Norgaard	6	1—1—4	2885
63=	Mark Walley	4	3—0—1	3115	135=	Bernard Savage	21	9—1—11	2885
66	Luc Schonkerren	5	3—0—2	3110	137	Sam Belcher	8	3—0—5	2880
67=	Paul Haesler	6	3—0—3	3105	138	David Kalman	5	2—0—3	2870
67=	Simon Morris	11	6—0—5	3105	139=	Peter Ladwein	21	9—0—12	2860
69	Russ Curry	6	4—0—2	3100	139=	Lutz Pietschker	4	1—0—3	2860
70=	Nigel Brown	26	11—0—15	3095	139=	Neil Piggot	4	1—0—3	2860
70=	Ben Jones	36	16—0—20	3095	142	Paul Boyle	4	1—0—3	2855
70=	Mikael Siemsen	6	3—0—3	3095	143	Nick Angelopoulos	5	1—0—4	2850
73=	Kevin Beard	13	9—1—3	3090	144	Oliver Gray	2	0—0—2	2840
73=	Iain Mackay	43	22—0—21	3090	145	Dave Otway	5	1—0—4	2835
73=	Peter Michels	3	2—0—1	3090	146	Mike Daniel	5	2—0—3	2825
76	Paulo Alessi	6	4—0—2	3085	147	Mark Chapman	6	2—0—4	2820
77	Dirk Beijaard	5	3—0—2	3080	148=	Michael Robertson	4	1—0—3	2810
78	Robin Langston	9	4—2—3	3075	148=	Neil Stevens	44	16—2—26	2810
79=	Jean-Luc Baas	3	2—0—1	3070	150=	Tim Macaire	28	12—0—16	2805
79=	Serge Bettencourt	3	2—0—1	3070	150=	Ian Pollard	46	20—0—26	2805
79=	Mike Davis	3	2—0—1	3070	152	Clive Haden	5	2—0—3	2800
79=	Robert Schaaf	3	2—0—1	3070	153=	Alistair Fairbairn	3	0—0—3	2790
83=	Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire	4	2—1—1	3065	153=	Nick Ranson	5	1—0—4	2790
83=	Bob Runnicles	3	2—0—1	3065	153=	William Roberts	3	0—0—3	2790
85	Patrik Manlig	16	9—0—7	3060	153=	Nick Sionskyj	8	3—0—5	2790
86	Simon Croome	22	12—0—10	3055	157	Bill Eaton	16	5—3—8	2785
87	Stefan Jacobi	11	5—0—6	3050	158=	Chris Littlejohn	14	3—2—9	2780
88=	Shaun Carter	53	25—1—27	3045	158=	Martin Mayers	10	2—0—8	2780
88=	Steve Grainger	5	3—0—2	3045	160	Graham Worsfold	3	0—0—3	2775
88=	Scott Greenman	8	3—1—4	3045	161=	Lee Bray	14	3—0—11	2770
91	Steve Pleva	6	3—0—3	3035	161=	Richard Kirby	7	2—0—5	2770
92	Peter Hofland	4	2—0—2	3025	163	Bill Hensby	31	10—0—21	2765
93=	Vincent Kamer	4	2—0—2	3015	164=	Andrew Hershey	10	4—0—6	2760
93=	David Tye	29	11—0—18	3015	164=	Flemming Scott-Christensen	6	1—0—5	2760
95=	Colin Graham	5	3—0—2	3010	165	Peter Neale	3	0—0—3	2750
95=	Andrew Saunders	33	15—1—17	3010	167=	Burnham Fox	23	10—0—13	2740
97=	Nick Brown	3	1—1—1	3000	167=	Brian Hooper	75	23—1—51	2740
97=	Martin Hubley	4	3—0—1	3000	169=	Rupert Featherby	3	0—0—3	2735
97=	Ian Kenney	4	2—0—2	3000	169=	Nick Quinn	14	5—0—9	2735
97=	Phil Nobo	11	6—0—5	3000	171	Gareth Evans	4	0—0—4	2730
97=	Duncan Spencer	4	2—0—2	3000	172=	Steve Cocks	4	0—0—4	2720
102=	Ivor Gardiner	2	1—0—1	2995	172=	Marc Horton	6	1—0—5	2720
102=	Gilles Hakim	5	2—0—3	2995	174	Simon Hoare	4	0—0—4	2690
102=	Sam Prior	9	3—0—6	2995	175	Jeff Howarden	7	2—0—5	2685
105	Eric Baker	2	1—0—1	2985	176	Christain Speis	5	1—0—4	2680
106=	David Farr	4	2—0—2	2980	177	Malcolm Hatfield	14	4—0—10	2665
106=	William Hanson	13	6—0—7	2980	178	Paul Legg	45	16—0—29	2660
106=	Malcolm Rutledge	3	1—0—2	2980	179	Pedro Barradas	7	1—0—6	2655
109	Ulrich Schwela	29	11—1—17	2970	180	Paul Kettlewell	36	14—0—22	2650
110=	Ian Daghish	69	33—1—35	2965	181	Graham Smith	8	1—0—7	2645
110=	Michael Essex	11	6—0—5	2955	182	Adrian Catchpole	11	2—0—9	2625
110=	Michael Maus	7	3—0—4	2955	183=	Chris Ager	5	0—5	2615
113=	Tim Bunce	5	2—0—3	2945	183=	Neil Brunger	20	8—0—12	2615
113=	Laurent Forest	3	0—0—3	2945	183=	Arthur Garlick	21	2—5—14	2615
113=	Alex Ganna	2	0—1—1	2945	183=	Mike Stanbridge	36	10—1—25	2615
113=	David Murry	5	2—1—2	2945	187	Wayne Baumber	23	11—0—12	2610
113=	Pete Phillipps	70	29—0—41	2945	188	Bryan Brinkman	9	1—0—8	2610
113=	Pedro Ramis	6	3—0—3	2945	189	Patrick Dale	15	4—0—11	2600
119	Jon Williams	14	6—0—8	2940	190	John Fletcher	6	0—0—6	2585
120=	Derek Briscoe	1	0—0—1	2935	191	Nigel Ashcroft	45	16—1—28	2555
120=	Martin Bryan	19	8—0—11	2935	192	Paul Case	62	16—0—46	2550
122=	Justin Key	33	12—1—19	2930	193	Michael Rhodes	43	10—0—33	2545
122=	Andrea Marchino	1	0—0—1	2930	194	John Kennedy	18	4—0—14	2540
122=	Andy Price	3	1—0—2	2930	195	Jackie Eves	15	4—0—11	2500
125	John Sharp	8	3—0—5	2925	196	Roger Cook	28	8—2—18	2460
126=	Steve Allen	6	1—1—4	2920	197	David Ramsey	9	1—0—8	2435
126=	Tim Collier	17	7—0—10	2920					

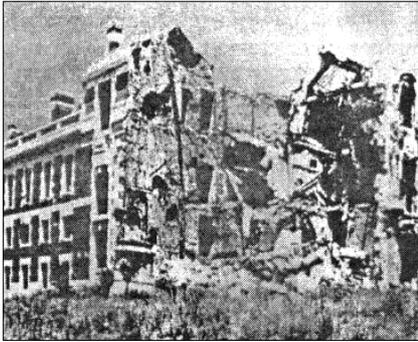


# THE SCENARIOS OF GUERRA CIVIL

## Part 2

Michael Davies

This is the second part of my look at the scenarios of *Guerra Civil*.



### SCW5 DOMBROWSKI'S STAND

Before play starts refresh your memory of the Rules sections on building control, encirclement and rout. Whilst your in the mood have a look at the 20/100 IFT table.

#### SCW5 Republican Set up

If you do not have board 44, this scenario is playable with board 17. I'd suggest either changing the orientation of the board or giving the Republican the Balance provisions as Board 17 gives the Nationalist slightly better starting positions.

Dombrowski's Battalion win by controlling building 6M3/06 (the Casa), at game end. The building is a massive two stories, with stairways in N3 and N5. Stairways are the key to holding any building of this size, try to control them for as long as you can, don't be too unhappy if one of them is destroyed by OBA! An open ground hex in N4 adds character to the building.

Enemy forces outnumber you slightly by sixteen squads to twelve, six Leaders to three, and a few more MGs. Two things increase the strength of the attack. Firstly the OBA of 100mm is impressive. Even with a draw pile of 7B/3R there is a good chance of this arriving for at least a couple of turns. A well placed round could cover an entire wing of the Casa with fire, and can create rubble, leading to falling rubble. The second Nationalist advantage is troop quality, all the units in their OB are elite with what is effectively an underscored morale level of four. As the game progresses you will lose

some troops to KIA/K results from 100mm fire, but that should not be more than a squad or two, however you will find the effectiveness of your force declines due to ELR failure.

I am not sure if placing a couple of squads outside the Casa is a good idea. The benefits would be a slowing down of the Nationalist attack but I think the cost would be too great. It is hard to move units back into the building, particularly if they are broken. For all that placing a squad and LMG in Q1 has an appeal, maybe, maybe not.

Setting up in the Casa can be done in any number of ways. I have reservations about creating Killer stacks with the MMGs and a Leader but it could work. A forward deployment can dish out a lot of punishment on turn one but will suffer when the OBA arrives. Possibly it is better to put the MMG/LMG teams up front with the 9-1 Leader, leaving the rest gaining concealment ready to move forwards when the first FFE impacts. Obviously locations out of site of the Nationalists can automatically gain concealment. Note level one hexes can only be seen from level one building hexes on Boards 44 (or 17). Units 17 or more hexes from the Nationalists are also concealed. This will be useful later in the game.

The Demolition charge can be given to one of the leaders at the start of the game, or a squad if you accept the penalties of non-qualified use. One option is to set it, another is to throw it from a second level hex. If a squad battle hardens deploy it and give it the DC, you are a bit short of leaders in this one and they have other tasks to perform.

At the game start, the MMGs and to a lesser extent the LMGs are needed to contest Nationalist movement. They can do this from level one or two locations, such as D3, D4, D5, D6 and possibly M6 or N5. I do not think there is a need for big kill stacks, at least some shots will be -1, or 0 TEM, you are really looking for the odd K/KIA result as most MC will be passed or the broken squads will soon be back in the game. With this in mind spraying fore become attractive. A brief duel with the Nationalist MGs might go your way but long term it is more important to keep squads out of the Casa. I am not sure if shooting at the field phone operator is productive, a break result would be good enough as by the time he is rallied the situation will have deteriorated to close combat and it will be difficult to hit the Casa

without hurting Nationalist troops? A good Nationalist player's phone operator will be out of range or in good cover. Keep shooting till the barrels melt, do as much damage as possible before the Casa is occupied. The 9-1 leader can direct the fire of one MMG, the other leaders should be set up in reserve positions ready to rally squads.

In the first couple of turns it makes sense to use the 8-0 to rally squads, this may take an extra turn but if you use the Commissar and he fluffs it, presto you have just picked up a green squad. Later on when a wild melee develops the reverse holds, use the Commissar for choice as a green squad is better than being taken prisoner, or being given no quarter.

Position your squads to gain concealment then move them into the line of battle as needed. Skulking is not a bad idea, but try to have some troops in place to oppose Nationalist movement.

Now there is a chance no OBA will arrive, this will not win you the game but it does make things a lot easier for you. It is more probable that some fire missions will arrive. Try to keep a minimum of forces under FFE area. If you are on the ground floor you receive a TEM of +5, barring a critical hit or rubble the worst attack will be a 2MC, in the case of a critical hit you are dead, and probably covered in rubble. If the OBA is use for harassing fire, keep movement to a minimum but do not let it stop you moving completely.

As soon as the Nationalist takes his first building hex you must try to restrict his exploitation of this. Accept some of the building is lost, aim to keep a few hexes for as long as you can. If you have a rough equality of force, be aggressive, if not think more defensively. The Nationalist OB is elite, and stealthy this makes ambush more likely.

Taking prisoners may be a mistake, and out of character historically. It does allow you to deploy a squad but the downside is some units behind your front line that could become active after a sniper attack of OBA hit.

I can not see an easy way to hold on to the whole building for seven turns. I would expect this to come down to a single hex being controlled by a green half squad and a wounded Commissar in M3. On turn seven if a single hex is controlled in your player turn you have won.

## SCW5 Nationalist Set up and Attack

Victory is earned by Controlling the 6M3/O6 building, the “Casa de Valelaquez”, or Casa for short. It is vital to control the whole building, it is also important to realise you must be well on the way to doing this by the end of your seventh player turn. Very occasionally you will scrape a win by close combat victories in the Republican’s last player turn.

At the game start you need to place the field phone operator to maximise his view of the Casa. Set up is restricted to ground level hexes on board six. Starting in a building makes sense as there are a number dotted around, all of which have line of sight equal to other terrain but with better protection from fire. Hexes BB6, CC5, CC1 and EE2 are good and a long way from Republican machine guns. They have a clear line of sight to the Casa but may find it difficult to observe near misses resulting in another turns delay. Two other spots worth a look are 6X5 and 6X8, closer to the Casa they are better able to observe shots. Ideally you need to gain battery access and have an accurate spotting round. Often this will not happen and you will find the OBA delayed until after the time it would be useful. Two red cards or a box cars contact roll are bad enough. Even worse spending several turns trying to land a spotting round on the Casa. A pre registered hex or automatic black card draw on turn one would make this much easier for the Nationalists.

I’d be tempted to go for X8 with an initial target of O3. If it lands spot on great, if it scatters there is a chance of recovering. I’d give Mr 7-0 the phone, the other leaders will be assisting the drive into the Casa. Harassing fire is worth considering. It could affect most of the Casa and low rolls would be fairly effective.

The guts of the Nationalist attack is the infantry assault on the eastern and southern faces of the building. After looking closely at the Reds set up you must decide if an all out push will work better than using a small element to give support fire using the MMGs/HMG.

One or two squads can be deployed as part of your set up. Using these to man the MGs makes sense if you intend to use them from a remote position. If you group two MGs in the same hex and have no intention of moving you can use a squad to crew them both. An option here is deploying the squad later on. On board 44 a squad and MMG/HMG plus a leader could start in a level one building hex. This post will be hard to suppress but is a bit far from the action, and will be useless when the Nationalists start fighting within the building. The

downside also includes vulnerability to SAN attacks, and depriving the leader from the front line when rallying squads is bound to be important.

Two other ideas might be better. Starting the board 44 MMGs and a leader close to the 44L0/6L10 woods gives some fire support but is useful for rallying broken squads to sustain the attack. Setting up further south with a view to creating a big kill stack with the African troops ultimately frees up a leader. My own preference would be to use the Legion close to the L0 woods.

All of the options outlined must be valued against the Republican set up. If no Republican units are visible then moving forwards on turn one makes more sense, in which case setting up dismantled might even be worth doing. On board six, I think there is less choice, probably the only viable locations are stone buildings on the X hexrow. Oddly enough this starting position works for long range fire support or for moving in with the attack.

The African (4-5-7 Squads on Board 44) attack can go through the V0 woods to the stone wall and vineyard beyond. On board six the Legions (4-5-8) set up on the X hexrow. The Africans will move through the woods to the wall, with some elements moving through the vineyard. The aim is to gain a foothold in the Casa around N5 after two or three turns, then expand this to take roughly half of the building. Taking the stairway can help enormously by restricting the defender’s choices. Keep moving forwards, at least one hex per turn will help, move more when you are unopposed, hunker down and push that one hex in the Advance phase if you really are getting shot up badly.

On board six the terrain is not only more open but you have further to travel and can be shot at from more locations. Again it is vital to move forwards every turn. It is more likely you will suffer heavier attacks but the Legion has high morale and high ELR, enough to keep this down. If the defence crumbles or is distracted, remember you are the Legion, Spain’s elite fighting force; charge at the Casa to capture your share with the Africans who have created an opportunity for glory.

Across both the Legion 7 African troops you can lose four or at a pinch five squads during the crossing and still have sufficient force to clear the Casa. In close combat you have the advantage of being stealthy, which amounts to an advantage roughly one third of the time, either through ambush or avoiding ambush. Accept surrender you can always massacre after the game is over.

Any damage the OBA does is most welcome. Realistically it will only be

effective occasionally. In some games it will just keep a 7-0 leader out of the game, in others it will almost win the game for you.

In summary, do what you can with the OBA. Set up carefully to assault the Casa, then push hard, always make progress but do not run across open ground until the Defender is unable to prevent this. If you get into the Casa early enough in strength you will win. Keep fighting to the end this one will not be over till the last player turn.

## SCW5 Conclusion

Given the Nationalist balance provisions I’d be tempted to play another turn for fun after the game has finished if it was a close Republican victory and assuming there is still something to play with.

OBA is a bit tedious in this one. There is a chance of 100mm OBA when you can direct it onto a fairly difficult target. I am a great fan of off-board observers, automatic black card draws, and pre-registered hexes, well at least when I’m dishing it out.

With or without the OBA this should be a tough little fight. Well worth playing particularly if you like close combat in big buildings.



## SCW6 BRIHUEGA DISASTER

### SCW6 CTV Set up

Republican infantry forces are more numerous, better led and have a higher ELR than your own. Support weapon allocation is about even, whilst you will benefit from bore sighting MGs and mortars. As far as armour goes you get the very short end of the stick both in terms of quality and

numbers. A hidden 37mm anti-tank gun might help combat enemy armour. Some time in the game you can expect air support, barring mistakes it will be attacking you! Both sides get OBA, yours 100mm the Republicans a phenomenal 150mm something you don't see too often in ASL.

All this stacks up against the Italians, but you can win this one with a clear understanding of the victory conditions, careful deployment of your forces and of course a decent share of luck. To win you must either prevent the Republicans gaining control of sixteen or more buildings and then exiting thirty two VPs off the map. You can also win by loosing every building on the board but stopping the exiting of enough forces. Contesting control of buildings requires the defence of the village around SCW1H4; over twenty buildings are there with two or three more nearby. There are only eight buildings outside of the village forcing the Republican to attack to gain at least eight more. Unless you plan to prevent the Republicans exiting you must defend the village.

Defending the village requires a serious effort. A sustained Republican attack with infantry, tanks, air support and OBA will succeed but at a cost in time and resources. A less strong attack could fail and earn outright victory for you.

Some other positions need a garrison. The Church (SCW2N4) and the surrounding buildings, also building SCW2Z1 and the woods nearby. There is scope for small one or two squad outpost in front of the more important positions; this is optional as there are pros and cons for doing this.

Begin by deploying two elite squads, these will be used to man the 45mm mortars, with one remaining half squad either used for a MMG crew, a key defensive position or something cunning. The village (SCW1H4) defence needs about ten squads, two or three mortars, a MMG and LMG with the 9-1 leader. Armoured support of the *Lanciafiamme* and an L3/35 give very little protection against tanks but could kill some infantry. Set up in building on the south edge, bore sight open ground with MGs, woods with mortars or alternatively do the opposite - this can also be effective.

The church is an important position. I think it is useful in slowing down Republican entry and complicating the attacker's decision making as well as complicating exit from the north edge for the forces entering on the western board edge. This force will only be six or seven squads, a couple LMG or MMG, a mortar, a pair of L3/35s, and the key to this position, a crew and HMG in the steeple. This is a reasonably strong force that will do much more than slow down

Republican entry. If the post is ignored or bypassed the HMG can still be a pain for quite a distance, the L3/35s can relocate and the infantry platoon can gain concealment or act as sniper bait. Remember all buildings on board SCW2 are wooden. It might make sense to put the field phone operator in the steeple. Admittedly it is a bit obvious but all the same it is a very good spot. It can trace a line from the phone's position to a friendly board edge. This line can be subject to cutting by OBA, or for any DR or 2 along the line. I think the line should connect to the north edge. There are many other reasonable choices for the observer's location; pick one that you feel most comfortable with. There is some scope for placing the 8-0 leader on or near the church. Other starting positions include the village or further east to oppose the entry of the Republican there.

Further east around Building SCW2Z1, and the woods and grainfield three or four squads and a couple of tanks are set up to slow the entry of troops from the east. They are given any spare support weapons, but are short a Leader.

I would admit this is a very shaky defence, it could easily be defeated in detail given enough time and resources. I still think it is pretty reasonable given the forces available and the mission they are faced with. There are other ways to play this one. A serious alternative would be a strong defence of the village SCW1H4, with or without very small forces outside the village. Other good ideas include concentrating the armour into a counterattacking force. Abandoning one or more of the defensive islands might work. There is great scope for changing the set up of units on each individual island. Whatever you do don't become trapped in a defensive mentality, the tanks are very mobile, on a low roll they will hurt a tank, against infantry they are as good as many bigger machines. The *Lanciafiamme* must be used aggressively, ideally in a fight for the village. Given time even squads can relocate if this makes tactical sense.

Using the HMG in an anti aircraft role if it doesn't have other targets is sensible. Use the crews of any L3/35 that survive to man support weapons. Try to avoid being captured, you can be exited off the north edge count for VPs, this could include a captured gun or even a L3/35! Remember to conceal eligible units on turn one this may save casualties later on.

I almost forgot about the ATG! The 37mm gun is very potent, it destroys a T26S with the same sort of rolls an 88mm ices a T34 a few years later. Hide it by all means but make sure it is not isolated. A building in the village with a view to the north such

as H3 or P3 looks acceptable. Other less central locations could also work very well destroying hordes of armour and making it harder for the Republicans to get together the required number of exit VPs.

If the Republican comes in on your boresighted locations you may well give him an outrageous kicking on turn one. It is more likely your "strongest" positions will be bypassed initially then hammered on subsequent turns. Kill enemy tanks if you can, if you achieve this even locally your L3/35 suddenly become powerful units able to shoot up Infantry. Dead tanks also make it harder for the Republican to move north after completing his occupation of Buildings. Remember each tanks counts for five exit VPs. It will be a tough fight which you will always feel you are losing. Even when you win losses will have been high, to put this in perspective if the Republicans break through your entire remaining OB would become prisoners as would many others - your sacrifice will not have been in vain.

## SCW6 Republican Entry and Attack

Before planning your attack in detail have a long hard look at the Italian dispositions. This will give you some clues as to which positions are held in strength. It is possible they have gone for a point defence of the village, or a defence of the village and church, or even attempted to hold many separate defensive posts. A point attack is challenging but should succumb to continuous pressure and hopefully bombardment and/or air attack. A scattered defence is vulnerable to a series of concentrated attacks, before herding hordes of prisoners off the north edge. I think it unlikely you will encounter these two types of defence. Most likely the defender will have set up two, three or at most four defensive islands, perhaps with a mobile armoured reserve.

Starting with the good news, decide where you would like the OBA to be targeted. Probably the village will be top priority, followed by the church, and then targets of opportunity. From level four on the north edge you have a clear view of most of the village, your line of sight being obstructed only by the steeple. If this really is inconvenient you could try to rubble it to improve your view! 150mm OBA is tremendously destructive, against tanks as well as troops. A cluster of L3/35 would make an excellent target, as would troops in woods or the open. Harassing fire is viable even against troops in buildings. The only thing that will stop you getting some 150mm support would be two red cards; I think the odds of this are about one time in

twelve games. Expect at least one fire mission, be very pleased with two, keep getting happier all the way up to six. On those rare occasions you don't get any fire missions keep your spirits up as there is a certainty of at least some air support.

Although you cannot get air support on turn one, it must arrive on or before turn seven. The absolute minimum you will receive is one plane without bombs, but this ranges up to three Polikarov R5-A with an 80mm bomb load and twelve factor MG attack. Use your plane or planes to restrict Italian movement, or to destroy tanks, troops in the open or even to keep troops subject to desperation morale. I tend to bomb on the first turn then strafe, keeping at least one bomb armed plane around can work well if that is your style. As L3/35 tend to use platoon movement you should be able to line up a strafing run that hits both tanks at least some of the time. Although the small L3/35s are a difficult target to hit you will destroy them with a roll of 4, stun them with a 5 which means they are recalled (this is on the back of the counter). I'm not sure which is a friendly board edge for the Italians, my best guess is north or south. Given the Nationalist OBA is coming from the north heading south makes some sense. This is something to agree before the game starts. In passing it's worth mentioning the artwork on the air support counters is rather nice, with three different planes for both sides. The Stuka is nicely done, all are rather good. I would like Critical Hit to knock out more of similar in future. I'd even go for an air support pack with Typhoons, Mustangs, Shturmoviks and cannon armed Stukas. I guess it would be a lot of work and I'm not sure how many gamers would go for it though. Do not expect too much anti aircraft fire, if you do draw any you are doing a good job of saving the ground troops from it.

To win you really must secure control of at least sixteen buildings. It is practical to start exiting units whilst you are on your way to doing this but beware sending off too much too soon. To amass the required VPs an attack on the village is mandatory as there are only eight buildings outside of the place. Aim to gain more than sixteen buildings to cater for a spirited Italian counter attack unless that has become impossible.

The burden of attack falls on troops entering from the western board edge. It is likely the Italians will be strongest in this area, the distribution of concealed counters will support this. The task in hand is to find a way onto the board without being shot to bits and partially eliminated for failure to rout. Accept you have no control over bore sighting, but can try to give units a path to rout. Moving half squads or concealed units

can help, avoid pushing stacks around there is no gain to doing this. Try splitting your forces into three tank platoons and three infantry platoons. The tank platoons should be two tanks with the BT5s concentrated in one unit. Infantry platoons are around the four squad mark with a leader and one or two support weapons. Deploy an elite squad to man the mortar and try for others to move under fire. For the armour I think it can come on anywhere. The 37mm gun is the biggest threat; if it turns up try to move out of its line of sight and let the infantry or OBA, or even air support deal with it. L3/35 and MGs as well as mortars can just about destroy you. If the Italians are shooting at tanks the Infantry will have an easier life. Bring the infantry on around the woods in SCW1A7 and SCW2A7, or through the vineyard near SCW2A3. Try not to bunch up as OBA is expected as well as fire from squads and support weapons. This gets you onto the board but further hard work is needed to manoeuvre against the village, gain a foot hold and then exploit it. One platoon cannot take the village on its own, it will need help from either the central platoon or from the troops further east. Use the tanks to take out enemy armour and the push Italian infantry out of stone buildings by short range fire. Overruns might be appropriate against troops in the open or behind walls. Later on give some thought to moving off the board, tanks are best used for this, allow two or three turns to get off the board, take account of other units that can move north and factor in any prisoners taken. Basically do not exit more than you have to before you have to - this applies on both flanks. In brief you need to get on to the board, take the village then move some troops northwards.

As always there is latitude for strengthening or weakening any of the above platoons. Probably the platoon tasked with attacking the village could do with being stronger, with the best available leadership and support weapons. The Dinamiteros are best treated as moving demolition charges and earmarked for the village. Weak in close combat they can still occupy a building, and their attacks ignore TEM making them ideal against stone buildings.

The Garibaldi Battalion enters from the east, with only two tanks in support. Starting in platoons seems a good idea try to come in around the GG4/GG7 Woods on either or both boards. Although the T26s are a match for a couple of L3/35 it would be asking an awful lot for them to take on all the Italian armour and a concealed gun, plus a few irate machine gunners and mortar men. Look for 5/8" concealment counters which look like they have tanks underneath them. There is no way of guessing where the gun

is until it opens fire it could take out both tanks in one fire phase given a ROF of three and a to kill of nine modified by range and armour. This is tough but the more that hits this part of the attack the less resistance there can be to the more important attack on the village. Later when your air support arrives the relatively open terrain will allow you to attack at least some of the units in the east. If you lose your tanks use your MGs and mortars as anti tank weapons, roll low, both to hit and to kill. If resistance is light, push west to support your attack on the village or church. Pick up any buildings you can it all helps. Later try to exit taking any prisoners you capture with you.

Avoiding close combat makes sense unless it saves you from being shot up in the open or you have a clear advantage. Make the best use of your armour, although it is fragile it can even up the odds in the attack on the village while keeping any broken units under desperation morale.

I think the Republicans biggest advantage is not the tanks, OBA or even air support, it is the low ELR of the Italian troops. This makes them fragile in a firefight, which will result in your victory. During turns one and two you might think you are losing badly but as time goes on you will see the strength of the Republican forces under fire compared to their opponents.

Finally keep a careful count of building hexes controlled, keep a careful count of VPs exited. You can be winning hands down then throw it away by forgetting what the fight is all about.

## SCW6 Conclusion

The Italians are in a bit of a fix in this one, attacked from two directions by a superior force that is well supported by aircraft and guns. The village is very strong defensively, but there is a chance of a win if you can hold on to deprive the Republicans of that sixteenth building, or destroy enough units to prevent the exit conditions being fulfilled.

The Republicans have a strong force but must stay focused, they are working against the clock against a defender who is stronger than a casual glance would suggest. Entry is difficult but after the first couple of turns the Republican should start to enjoy this one a bit more.

This is a monster scenario, lots of units, serious OBA and rather nice air support counters. Well worth playing just for the possibility of a big armoured brawl between L3/35 and T25Bs, and a fair few other reasons besides.



## SCW7 RESIST OR DIE

### SCW7 Republican Set up.

To win you must control at least one hex of the graveyard and ensure only nine or less CVPs of Nationalist units/prisoners exit off the south edge of board twelve. You must set up three or more squads or equivalents on board 43. I think this does not include playable half hexes that join on to board twelve, this is a matter for agreement before the game starts. This is a fairly tough mission as your defence must cover all threats on turn one whilst being flexible enough to cater for the enemy's planned attack and odd bits of good or bad luck that arise.

Enemy forces are stronger than your own at the game start. You are outnumbered seventeen squads to nine, until turn three when you receive another six squads. The enemy's leadership is roughly comparable (but with a rather decent 9-2), and LMG allocations are similar. On the plus side you start with a strong position, three foxholes, and an armoured truck – a *Camion Blindado Numero Dos*. You can expect reinforcements on turn three that can go to the points most needed. On the downside the enemy troops are all elite, have better underscored ELR, and better inherent range.

There are several ways to set up for this one. To an extent the distance the Nationalist will have to travel to reach either the church or the southern board edge will allow a less than perfect set up as long as you recover quickly in subsequent turns. Still a good start always helps! I don't think a forward defence setting up on board 43 will work. Even with nine squads against twelve and the advantage of three foxholes a forward defence should be defeated by a double envelopment or even a frontal assault. The game would not be over but balance would shift markedly towards the Nationalists. On occasions a forward defence will work with better than average luck, the reinforcements might arrive in time to support the defence or more often form a second line of defence in or in front of the cemetery. This could win if the Nationalist runs out of time. If you opt for this, make use of buildings P1, B3 and I1 as strongpoints with platoon-sized positions based around them. The CB No 2

looks reasonable side on in 43G1. If this set up attracts a severe kicking in the first few turns you can recover by making use of the Reds ability to move through brush and woods to either fall back or rout back to a second improvised line of defence.

Plan B is a point defence of the graveyard, with a platoon in the 12U5 building, another in the graveyard, a dug in platoon in the 12AA3 woods, and three squads on board 43, say 43I1, I2 and J1. The CB No2 can start just west of the church (12U5 is a church I guess?) or just behind the gully in 12Z5. This is very good if the Nationalists are going all out for the church and graveyard. It can be adapted to cater for a flank attack, making use of the Reds movement advantage.

Probably the set up I would use is a modified point defence, with some units set up to discourage a charge to the southern edge along the right flank (eastern side) of your defence. A possible set up is as follows; half squads in buildings 43P1 and 43B3, squad with LMG and 7-0 leader in the 43C3 woods, squad in 43I1 fulfils the scenario special rules set up conditions. The LMG and 7-0 leader are optional, alternatively you could add a foxhole to 43C3 This is a very weak force, it should impose a delay of a couple of MF on any attacking force with the eastern flank elements but is vulnerable to a hail of fire on turn one. After making a show of force these units pull back towards either the village, church, graveyard or other positions on the eastern flank. The idea is to keep one small step ahead of the Nationalists plans being right where he doesn't want you!

Building 12U5 starts with a garrison of two squads and the Commissar. It makes sense to start on the ground floor to grow concealment, moving upstairs later on makes sense. These units will remain in the building if the graveyard is the obvious attack target otherwise they will move in front of the Nationalists main axis of advance or try to attack the flanks of it. An LMG with this force would be nice but they are initially in short supply.

12AA1 gets a squad, LMG and 8-1 leader, with squads in 12AA2 and 12CC2 probably in foxholes. The last squad goes in 12EE3, in a foxhole to cover the retreat of troops from board 43. In your player turn one you must judge the direction and strength of Nationalist intentions and act to thwart these! If the CC2 woods have been ignored it may make sense to bail into the graveyard, if the eastern flank is the target of a rush to get off board twelve then staying in place and digging in or moving east will make sense.

Two units remain to consider, the 8-0 leader belongs somewhere on board twelve

maybe 12CC2? The other unit is even harder to place the Armoured Car. It is vulnerable to LMG fire almost from the outset but it's MG armament is sorely needed. Setting up on Board 43 could slow down the advance on turn one. 43A3 is hard to shoot at in the prep fire phase but a lot less healthy soon afterwards. Sticking to board twelve is more cautious and should keep the CB around for a bit longer. After some thought I liked the look of 12FF2 to cover the withdrawal or flight of troops on the eastern flank. There might be a strong case for starting on the western flank in 43M1, or on a Hill hex say S1 or T1 to interdict movement on turn one?

All units need to act on turn one, either digging in, staying put or relocating depending on the Nationalist attack. It makes sense to have a rough idea before you need to do it. For example if the attack is a dash for the south the armoured car stays roughly where it is, side on and shots, if it's MG disables, it rolls for repair or turns to fire from the other side. If the attack is on the graveyard the CB moves towards Z5 or AA5 to give supporting fire. Later on it may even get a chance to do overruns the CB has reasonable firepower for this- I make it a 16IFT attack. . If disabled try to roll crew survival (6) and scrounge a LMG to get back in the fight. Have similar plans for all other units.

On turn three you will have a good idea of your opponents intentions bring on the reinforcements to upset these plans as best they can.

If the target is exiting VPs, try to put a substantial force in front of the intended exit site. Conversely if the Graveyard is targeted make strenuous efforts to keep 12U5 ready to hold just one or two hexes at the end of turn seven.

This scenario requires a lot from the defender you need to gauge where the attack or attacks are directed then scurry around in front of the intended targets. If you get it right you have an excellent chance of winning but if you are slow or reticent your chances of winning will evaporate.

### SCW7 Nationalist Set up and Attack

To win you need either to capture the entire graveyard or to exit 10 VP of units including prisoners or a captured Armoured truck off the south edge of board twelve.

It can be useful to look at the map before the Republican set up. The quickest way off the board is straight down the western edge of the village, though hexrows R and S. The next most direct route is down the eastern Edge say DD or EE hexrows. Straight down the Middle is rougher terrain and less likely to be used. One possible route

is down the Gully from BB3 to CC10. although this would take the most MF it can only be interdicted from adjacent or Level one hexes. This would rank as a surprise tactic or it could come about from a stalled attack on the graveyard.

If you decide on an attack on the graveyard there are at least three ways to go about this. Direct frontal attack generally has a bad press, though this is the most effective way to exploit a lightly held position. Better is an attack through the AA2, AA3 woods. Probably the best is an indirect approach starting in the woods between V0 and Z0, moving to Buildings 12V2 and 12U2 thence to 12U5 and into the graveyard. Building 12U5 really is the key to the Graveyard making a counter attack difficult. A MG in a first level location should sweep Republicans out of the surrounding area. Try for the T3 and U6 buildings later on to secure your control, the X1 woods also help.

Once the Republican has set up look at the Map again. Some of the ideas above will be completely unworkable. You should be left with one or two that look a lot better than the others. Concentrate on these and decide on a primary approach with some scope for switching to another strategy if this proves not to be working. For example an attack down the western Flank may look promising on turn one, after several turns a Wall of Republican units has built up between you and the southern board edge, maybe its time to switch to an attack on the graveyard? Similarly an attack on the eastern or western flanks can rapidly become a push to the Graveyard.

There is another valid Strategy, that of attrition. It may be possible to move against part of the Republican forces and annihilate them at little cost to yourself if they have gone for a very dispersed set up or are concentrated on board 43. After repeating this once or twice the Republicans line will be very thin and you can decide on your next move.

It is possible for the Reds to set up all their units on board 43. I think this is a bad idea, but it could work! Against this it may be possible to run past on either wing and exit before the Reds can get out of their foxholes and catch you. More realistic would be a strong attack against part of the Reds position by the *Varela Column*, followed by further blows by the *Bandera de La Legion*. Numbers, Leadership, ELR, and support weapons should prevail against slightly better terrain. Be careful to restrict rout paths or this forward deployment will become a very effective delaying tactic as routing units sprint through brush and woods to rally and form a new front line. Ideally you want to capture routing units.

Probably the most promising route will be along the western flank, but do not make a decision until you have seen the Republicans set up. A Festung in Building 12U5 with LMG nests on the first floor would stop an attack in its tracks necessitating a change of strategy or promoting a serious firefight to gain the building.

I've not said too much about your troops in this one. You have a numerical advantage, better underscored ELR, support weapons including a MMG and Leadership including a formidable 9-2. On the downside is the Republicans ability to move quickly through brush and the inability of African troops to gain concealment in Buildings.

The Armoured truck is worth watching. Although it has very light armour it does pack two MMGs and can perform some pretty horrific overruns. One idea is to use the LMGs as Anti tank rifles. Although this loses 2IFT that could hit infantry it is worth doing. A hit is very likely and you should do some damage on a four or five to kill. It is just about possible to Stun the truck, capture it in close combat and exit it off the southern edge. The truck can be killed, fairly easily and fairly soon in my opinion. Everyone has a story about the time they took out a Tank with a critical hit or low roll, killing the truck is not quite in the same league but a nice consolation prize if you go on to lose later on!

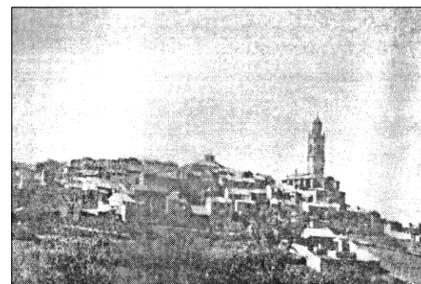
Provided you make a good initial choice you will have a very reasonable chance of a win. Take ten or fifteen minutes looking at the map before you set up, apologise if this annoys your opponent the delay is necessary and will result in a better game for both of you.

If pressed I would probably go for an attack down the western edge, aiming to exit off the south edge but swinging to attack the graveyard if the opportunity arises.

### SCW7 Conclusion

This is a very nice scenario. The only way to spoil it is to have kittens trying to plan the perfect defence or attack. There is some scope for a poor set up as long as you move quickly to correct it. Luck will play a part but a good planner who can make quick decisions should win. Win or lose it should be good fun.

The Armoured truck is a nice addition to the scenario adding a few tactical dilemmas for both sides.



### SCW8 AY CARMELA SCW8 Nationalist Set up.

A good look at the Map helps to plan your defence. Several features are interesting. The Church and Hill around SCW2M5/N4 bisects board SCW2. It has an excellent line of sight dominating the surrounding terrain. A small lake around 42BB2 helps defend the western flank, whilst a massive woods on board 42 restricts movement of exiting units slowing down infantry and making Armoured cars seek another way off. A quick building count tallies Nineteen buildings on Board 42, and five counting as seven on SCW2. In total there are effectively twenty six building locations.

To win the Republicans must control fourteen buildings, and exit eight VPs off the north edge within eight turns. You win by either controlling thirteen buildings or preventing the exit of more than seven units.

One possible strategy is a strong defence of the village in the eastern Half of board 42. This gives you control of twelve buildings at the Game start, needing only one more location to win. It should be possible to gain SCW2X1 by the game end, and initially at least you will have an advantage in any firefight for the village. The trick is to hold out for eight turns. I think this is difficult, perhaps very difficult particularly in the face of accurate OBA. Although this simple set up might work it might do better if you also try to control some buildings away from the village. The idea is to draw off more attackers than defenders, making your defence easier. A force of 2/3 squads and an 8-0 Leader should be able to put up a credible defence of 42U8, Y10, DD9 and/or DD4 against moderate opposition. Another alternative is to defend the Church and Hill in platoon strength. Any Republican attack on the Church will have to be a serious effort. I'd estimate at least six squads, and a couple of Leaders helped by some support weapons or Armoured Cars. To complicate matters you can bring on all of your reserves to bolster this position making it impossible for the Reds to sustain the attack until their own reinforcements arrive. Do not forget the Church defenders are fanatic, it is worth putting elite squads there to gain a morale

level of nine.

I find it helps to split the defenders forces into Platoons of three or four squads plus a couple of support weapons and a Leader. Note the Field phone operator is also a platoon Leader in this Scenario. I think there are four or five areas that should be considered as defensive zones. Probably the most obvious is the Church. A HMG in the Steeple could do an awful lot of damage, especially if directed by the 9-1 Leader, this is also a good spot for the Artillery observer. Keep in view any squads that break will need to be rallied by a Leader the 9-1 can do this but he will need to leave the HMG for a while, a Phone operator should really stick with the OBA mission.

Possibly a better spot for the Phone is 42V1 level one. This has a good field of fire and makes a second defensive platoon zone. V1 is a fair spot for another HMG if the phone is better located elsewhere. There is a reasonable chance of at least some OBA which will be effective against the Republican Armoured cars as well as Infantry. Do what you can with what you get, use the operator as a Leader if you have been unlucky. The V1 position protects the rear of the Church, and could conceivably cover a withdrawal through the graveyards. A mortar and half squad or squad in 42Y4 is very tempting. It should not have many immediate targets so did in if you can ready for action later on. The two strongest platoons set up in the village one around 42Z3, the other 42I3. A couple of mortars on the 42C3 hill can plaster the area in front of the village for a while. The weakest platoon has a number of set up options. The fifth defensive zone is 42DD4. This area could be bypassed completely, perhaps it is better to go for a reserve position behind the two platoons in the village or even split this platoon up and allocate it to the other zones. Yet another idea is to start in the graveyard by the Church, best of all is to pick a location that suits your style of play.

The two Anti tank guns can start in front line positions or further back. There are a great number of possible locations, 42F5 and 42AA7 are fair examples. Try for Armoured cars and do not restrict yourself to short range shots, in 1938 the 37mm Gun is very effective, with a ROF of three and a basic to kill of nine. When all the armour is gone use the guns liberally against Infantry targets, if the guns malfunction take on the role of MG or mortar crews.

The LMGs are useful in the anti tank role. Destroying an armoured car is probably more important than a morale check on one of twenty six squads. I prefer using elite squads for MG crews as they are likely to attract a decent amount of IFT attacks.

This may look like a linear defence but it isn't there is a fairly large zone in the middle of the board that is only covered by fire, but this area leads nowhere. Admittedly the Reds could march eight VPs off through the woods but this takes four Squads or three and a Leader out of the game. Note each zone is supported by fire from at least one other, and all can up sticks and move if the need arises.

As soon as the Republican sets up you will have a reasonable idea of his plans. Sit tight if you are in positions move units which need to relocate but do this not because you have lost the initiative but to reinforce areas where you anticipate he will attack. On turn one you receive reserves a decent force of four squads, a Leader and a couple of armoured cars. Probably these will end up on the western flank, but think about where you bring them on, send them where they will do the most good. There might be scope for a small armoured action against enemy vehicles, enjoy it if it happens an equal trade of vehicles helps you more than the Reds.

On turn eight go all out to gain building locations making attacks you would not normally consider. It is worth treating this last player turn as a puzzle if you only need a couple of locations to win. Count up what you've got, see what you need and then plan your attack, you might still lose but you will have done your best. Please don't do this if you have already won! Ask your opponent for a win and shake hands, it is not necessary to play for the maximum number of buildings and you could win the game and lose an opponent.

As usual there are other ways of setting up. Switch squads, leaders or Support weapons between zones until you are happy with your starting positions. The fun really starts when the attack begins. This is a fairly difficult scenario for the defender but I think it is highly enjoyable and should prove exciting.

#### SCW8 Republican Set up and Attack

You win this one by capturing fourteen or more buildings, and exiting 8 VPs off the north edge in the face of strong opposition. Killing enemy forces helps to achieve your aim, remember you are going after terrain and exiting VPs' your own casualties are not important. To begin with you can lose six squads and still have a force as large as the Nationalists! The armoured cars are excellent units for exiting, aside from a very reasonable movement allowance their exit value of five VP far exceeds their combat ability. As always there are snags, exiting too early does weaken your force. Another obstacle is the terrain which restricts you to exiting off the extreme east or west of Board 42. Also worth a mention are the two 37mm Anti tanks guns

with a basic TK of nine, LMGs', a pair of HMGs' and later some armoured cars all with basic to kills of four. OBA will Immobilise or shock on a DR of five, kill on four or less, even the 50mm mortars do some damage on a four. If you are careful all of these threats can be avoided or neutralised and at least one Armoured car will be available for exit. In a bad case where everything is shooting at your vehicles this should create some opportunities for your other troops. Probably the best way to use the Armoured cars is to keep them close to other units. They are not powerful units but can help assaulting units by providing firepower, cover, or in a worst case smoke when they brew up! Seizing and controlling terrain presents different challenges. By setting up second you can take the initiative and decide on the direction and strength of your attack. Ideally you want the Nationalist in a crazy set up stacked in the woods around 42O5 waiting to be hit by 100mm OBA. It is more likely the Church and village will be defended with some small forces positioned in other key spots. If the Church is held in strength, with supporting positions near by attacking the village makes more sense. Similarly a weak platoon in the Church, and most of everything else in the village means an attack on the Church is sensible. As part of your plan you should count how many buildings you expect to capture. You need fourteen or more, twelve or thirteen is close but counts as a loss. Apologies for labouring the point but the village is only thirteen buildings, it is just about possible to win by taking it and SCW2X1. Holding another building elsewhere helps a lot in the closing turn of the game when you want to exit troops and the Nationalist is preparing for a desperate turn eight counter attack.

After looking at the Map and the Nationalist dispositions decide how you want to play this one. I would start by deploying a couple of elite squads to act as mortar crews. Then split the force into platoons of three to five squads, a Leader and a couple of support weapons. The mortars and crews can be treated as separate sub units free to set up away from the platoons. The Armour is radioless so should start in a platoon of its own, it is used as a support unit rather than being assigned specific tasks all of its own.

To attack the village use two platoons in the Grainfield around SCW2BB4 to work their way into the eastern half of the village. another platoon can start in the SCW2U1 woods, going for the western part of the village. The Armour can start in the east up nice and close if there are mortars about but no MGs. The fourth squad are positioned to occupy the attention of the Church defenders, the SCW2H3 Vineyard is good for this. OBA

is used against the Church. If the OBA rubbles the place then take and hold the Church. Later the OBA might switch to targets of opportunity, or fizzle out.

Attacking the Church starts with a small firebase in SCW2H5. A platoon either in the Vineyard, or at the edge of the graveyard. A third platoon in the woods around J6, the S4 grainfield or ready to enter on SCW2J10, L10, or N10 on turn one.

In both attacks make use of prep fire. Time is limited, both attacks will need to cross some open ground and arrive in greater strength than the defenders, it makes sense to suppress at least some of the defenders before moving.

On turn two you get another eight squads, two leaders and a pair of *UNL-35* armoured cars. The armoured cars are about as useful as the *Bilbao 32* you start with. Decide where all these units will do the most good. They can support your attacks or push into other areas if their defenders have been rushed to oppose your efforts elsewhere. To give an extreme example if your attack on the village is stalling in the face of the entire Nationalist OB, you could enter around SCW2A1 and start mopping up building prior to a triumphant drive off the northern edge on turn eight. There probably isn't much difference in going for the Church or the village on turn one if they are both strongly defended. I've a slight preference for the village attack. I'm sure other players would see it different! One certain way to blow this one is to dither. Set up with one intention then change your mind after every die roll, repositioning your forces to exploit some real or imagined bit of good or bad luck. Plan your attack before you start and save the quick decisions for attacks on individual buildings as they arise.

The *Dinamiteros* are very good against units in buildings particularly over loaded defenders or broken units. They ignore TEM making them lethal. Try to keep them busy. I think the commissar should go with the main assault force he may create a few conscripts but there is a better chance of keeping a fierce attack going.

The Armoured cars should be used before they are exited. They have a decent MG armament and can help troops cross open ground by providing cover. It is possible to use Riders not only for assault but for exit. One Armoured car, a squad and a Leader is enough to do it. At some stage Nationalist armour will arrive. It is vulnerable to OBA, mortars, MG fire and close combat. Your own vehicles can also be used against them.

The OBA can be very effective, probably the best way to get elite fanatic well led defenders out of the Church. Make the

most of what arrives but the game is not lost if you do not get a single fire mission in the course of the game.

Take advantage of close combat opportunities were you have an advantage for ambushes. Take prisoners and march them off the north edge pronto. Capturing a Gun or an Armoured car is a fun way to help you gain VPs'.

I think this is a tough attack to plan but once you are in position and started it becomes more enjoyable. Although I favour an attack aimed at taking most if not all of the village it is practical to win this one by taking the Church, and some other buildings before exiting near 42FF10.

### SCW8 Conclusion

Most playing of this Scenario should start turn eight with the Republicans looking to take a couple more buildings and exit another couple of units. Both players have a lot of work to do to get to this. The Nationalists must plan their defence in detail, and anticipate the Republicans attack. The Republican must find a tangible weakness in the Nationalist defence and gradually exploit it. With forty seven squads, six Armoured cars, a couple of guns and OBA for both sides this is a bit of a Monster sized scenario. I'm not a great fan of huge scenarios just for the sake of it but this one works very well.



## SCW9 THE ROAD TO TORIJA

### SCW9 Republican Set up

Republican set up is complicated by Scenario special rule four that requires eight squads and all the trenches to set up on boards 14 and SCW1. Without this restriction you could set up a very strong position on board 22 and wait for the Italian attack with a decent chance of a win. The rule's restriction forces you to play this one differently and makes for an interesting scenario.

Several strategies are worth considering. An extreme idea uses a forward defence of Board 14. Start with platoon sized positions in and around the 14Z3 and 14R1

Woods, the 14DD4 Brush, and Building V1. Almost your entire OB sets up on board 14 with the intention of shooting the Italians to bits as they enter on carefully boresighted locations. Armour will be destroyed, whilst infantry will be broken and driven off board or captured. Should all be over by turn three. This really can work if you pick the right locations, you have a fair run of the dice and your opponent favours a broad frontal attack in a board wide sweep or a column attack into the middle of your positions. The Italian can counter by aggressive use of armour, carefully entering on part of the board, weight of numbers and OBA. If a forwards defence suits your style of play then try it. I'm not sure it gives you the best chance of either a win or an interesting game though.

You can adopt a similar linear defence on Board SCW2 with similar advantages to defending board fourteen, plus the option to fall back to board 22. Set up around the SCW1S6 Vineyard and the SCW1AA10-FF10 Woods Brush. Pretty similar is setting up five or six hexes back in the next set of woods, Vineyards or buildings. If this is going to work you will win very quickly by turn four or five. The disadvantages are the Italians can get on to the board easier to develop a better attack and has more time to benefit from effective OBA before you can respond.

If you abandon the idea of a forward defence another strategy is that of defence in depth. This aims for some positions on board 22, with speed bumps to slow down the attack and inflict casualties. A very deep position would have some troops on board 14. Given the size of the area under threat I think a very deep defence spreads your forces too thinly and it might be better to go for positions further back on board SCW1.

To win you need to control three or more Multi Hex buildings at the game end. It can help plan a defence if you decide which three or four buildings you can best defend from the Game start. I think the easiest to defend are 22W8, T6 and U3, with Z2 being held until turn seven or eight. The best way to keep these buildings is to hold the Level two stone building 22W8 in strength, whilst creating delay along the simplest approaches to this part of Torija.

Begin by considering Anti tank defence. The Italians start with eight Armoured vehicles all with armour factors of one or less. That adds up to a lot of armour. It is to be hoped the Italians do not abandon all the Vehicles and scrounge a stack of LMGs'! The L3s are small targets but once hit can be destroyed with LMG fire, mortars or even by 45mm guns- including those in the T26B's. It makes sense for every platoon to have some anti tank weapons. This might

just be a LMG, or it might be a 45mm gun allocated to that area. Later your tanks can plug any gaps in tank defence caused by weapons malfunctions or enemy action.

To get to Torija the Italian tanks must cross SCW1. Vineyards are in effect so around BB3 and S6 Infantry movement is slowed and vehicles must take bog checks. Most Italian commanders will not risk it, there is too much chance of losing a tank for little gain. Some may take a calculated risk but if they do they will have to be very lucky not to lose at least one L3 to immobilisation and you can expect others to be delayed. aside from the Vineyards much of the SCW1 border with Board 14 is woods, Marsh or even a decent sized pond. Easy access for vehicles comes down to SCW1 Hexes W10, Y10 and AA10-GG10. These gaps can be covered with fire reasonably easily. Boresighting helps, keep in view the difficulty in hitting a very small moving L3 once you get a hit a kill is rather likely. Faced with a shot against infantry moving in the open or L3 tanks I think LMGs' should go for the Infantry. The L3s are pretty doomed and the Infantry is needed to assault buildings later in the game. As with all rules of engagement or fire plans there are times when you should do the exact opposite!

The first platoon position is in woods hexes SCW1R1,S2,T1 and U1. three or four squads, a LMG, a Leader, mortar (50mm or 82mm), and a 45mm gun all in trenches. The gun will open fire at 12-14 Hexes range to do damage of some kind on a nine or less versus L3, a ten or less against the *Lancia IZM*. There is a chance of shock with a higher rolls. Smoke from burning wrecks will help the Italians by covering their attack but this is no real reason not to shoot. Go for the *Lanciafiamme* first these are deadly little tanks that a lot of people overlook until facing 32IFT attacks. Use the MG and mortar as soon as targets arise, keep concealment with other troops until the Italians have shot it off you or are moving temptingly in front of you. This small force is resistant to Artillery and should take a serious effort to dislodge. Admittedly a determined attack will shift it, in such a case try to melt back to board 22 just before this can be delivered. Unfortunately the Gun would be lost and it might not be worth carrying the Mortar out of there?

The second platoon position goes in or around 22W8. The second level of this building needs an MG position. A HMG or MMG plus a decent Leader is a very commanding position. If you add the other MG you get an 8IFT attack at -1 or -2 out to 16 hexes, that is over in board 14. As sniper bait using spotted fire for a mortar firing from Y9 or Y8 with a spotter in X8 works well at

the cost of lower Rate of fire and accuracy. A few strikes by 100mm OBA could neutralise this position but that is true of virtually every other post as well. As soon as the shelling stops rallying should not take too long and the MG can resume fire. The rest of the platoon can set up in buildings nearby or be set to work digging foxholes to connect defensive positions. By turns five or six you will need to have plenty of troops in or around 22W8. Expect some of your troops on board SCW1 to withdraw there. I do think 22W8 is absolutely vital to holding the village, aside from being stone it has a commanding line of sight. Despite this strong feeling remember you win by controlling three or more Multi hex buildings don't get bled white defending W8 just because I think it is key! Pull out if the Italians are plastering it with OBA, *Lanciafiamme* bursts and massed infantry swarm firegroups.

The third position in 22DD8 comprises at least a half squad and MMG, I think it also needs a Leader. There is also scope for another spotter and mortar. Two or three other squads are associated with this position they can either be in buildings within one or two hexes or further forwards in the SCW1BB2 Vineyard ready to fall back at the first signs of any trouble. This MG provides a 2/4 IFT attack out to sixteen hexes which will help to slow down or at least complicate Italian movement. This is a very weakly defence, more vulnerable to OBA than any other position. I would expect it to be assaulted and taken some time in the game, falling back to the north you can slow Italian progress from CC6 for at least another turn.

The fourth platoon is the hardest one to place. One idea is in Woods around SCW1FF3, not ideal as it can be bypassed. A shade better could be the SCW1FF9 Woods, and SCW1CC9 Brush area. One for careful though is Building 14V1 and the surrounding woods, a bit far forwards but very tempting. In each case we are looking at a four trench position with 4-6 squads, a LMG or two, mortar and 45mm gun. From SCW1FF9 or 14V1 you can hit the Italians early in the game slowing down the attack and inflicting some losses. The danger is you start the firefight earlier and place a small part of your force in the path of overwhelming numbers. Unfortunately you do need something there to slow down the Italian or they will fly across board 14, through the woods and Vineyards on the east flank of SCW1 and into the village all too soon.

There is considerable scope for doing things differently, the Anti tank guns can be treated as separate units positioned away from the infantry they can make use of their

considerable range to keep them out of harms way. Again they would be vulnerable to OBA but the 100mm FFE cannot hit four separate platoon positions and isolated gun positions all at one, or even in the course of the entire scenario for that matter. A few interesting gun positions include 14R1, SCW1BB3 and SCW1U7. Worth a look is SCW1Y4, or 22V10. Everyone likes to pull off an ambush, it is enjoyable but in this scenario you might be better off with a blindingly obvious location that is in the path of enemy armour rather than the one that kills a tank then see nothing for the next seven turns.

When the tanks arrive split them into two platoons then go L3 hunting. Use your MG armament against infantry 2/4 IFT attacks will work against troops in the open. Give the L3s' some respect, their MGs can penetrate your armour, the *Lanciafiammes* are deadly at one hex range. Watch out for Italian MGs and of course the 100mm OBA.

The 82mm Mortar can set up independently, also an option for 50mm mortar half squads. Use similar positions to the Guns or spotted fire if you are a fan of it.

There is some scope for setting up a couple of squads on board 14 just to slow down Italian entry. Another possible idea is putting the fourth platoon in the SCW1BB3 Vineyard, this protects the eastern flank without being vulnerable to enemy action unless the 100mm OBA is used (again), or the Italian attacks the position across open ground. This is certainly one to think about seems a tad too clever.

Once you have decided on your set up give serious thought to how your troops will withdraw when under overwhelming pressure. This planning phase covers not only pre planned movement but rout paths. Fight hard but give ground grudgingly just before it is taken from you by force.

Well that's a few ideas, certainly not a strong defence with mutually supporting fore positions but not too bad. Against a good player you will have to carefully time withdrawals and redeployment. Against a lesser mortal your defences will win by making the Italian run out of time. It takes at least four turns to cross Boards 14 and SCW1, one turn to occupy a building, leaving just three turns to cross most of board 22, difficult enough without several Spanish squads blazing away from concealment terrain with a wodge of support weapons and guns.

Keep a wary eye on the turn record, try to win by destroying Italian forces or by imposing enough delay to prevent Victory. It could even come down to a mad scramble for one multi hex building on turn eight!

## SCW9 Italian set up and attack

This is a rather challenging scenario for the Italians, you have to cross two boards or twenty hexes before you can attack your objective four of the six multi hex buildings. A reasonable opening gambit is to ask for the balance the extra turn does help a lot and you could always agree to check who is winning on turn eight?

Begin by thinking which four buildings you would like to control and how you will try to gain them. This will help you to decide if you are best moving down the middle of the board or on either flank. This planning should take account of the Republicans dispositions and allow for some misfortunes along the way. I guarantee there will be an approach which is less well defended than any others, pick this line of attack unless other more compelling reasons push you to use another.

If board 14 is heavily defended this makes entry more difficult. Later on you will gain from defeating part of the enemy force early in the game, initially the most pressing problem is establishing yourself on the board without being shot to bits. Try to place a spotting round right in the middle of an enemy concentration. In reality this can't do any damage until the next player turn, it can help just by making the enemy nervous. Try to draw fire by moving concealed units on in woods hexes T10, Z10, V10 and X10, later bring on other units making use of these hexes and brush, woods or building that connect to them. Bring on a couple of tanks at a time. There really is no way of knowing where a hidden gun will be until it opens fire. Your armour is key in breaking down strong positions. It might be ambushed by Anti tank guns on turn one, as soon as you know where they are try to stay out of line of sight. The last vehicles to move on should be the *Lanciafiamme*, these are lovely little tanks with 32IFT flame-throwers. They are near certain death to infantry and fairly injurious to tanks. By bring them on late they will attract less fire or your other units will have had an easy entry onto the board. Leaders should arrive last, ideally they should be out of line of sight and if not at least concealed, moving on it the Advance phase is worth considering. Receiving a 9-2 Leader is not bad news, I would swap him for two 8-1 if the rules allowed it! You really are short of leadership. This makes little difference to fire combat but slows down movement and recovery from breaking. In the advance phase shoot with large firegroups, the tanks may as well use their machine guns even when not adjacent to the enemy. A short firefight of one or two turns duration should see you suffering some casualties, less than your opponent and positioned ready to continue your attack. Any

units not involved in reducing the attackers position should keep moving gaining ground and cutting off both rout paths and routs for Republican support to intervene. A strong defence of board 14 greatly improves your chances of a win by creating a firefight you will win quickly.

A similar defence might use a single strong position on board 14, say the 14Z4 woods, assault this in strength whilst other units focus on movement once the post is fully occupied. The appearance of the hidden guns would complicate this attack but you will still win losing some time and casualties.

I would be amazed to see a strong defence of the southern edge of board 14! If it does happen entry in the advance phase after an armoured attack gives a good chance of winning on turn one. It is still worth moving some units through blind spots to gain momentum for your attack. Horrible things can happen in close combat improve your chances by superior numbers and aggressive use of armour to strip concealment from the defenders.

Some defences will focus on board SCW1. This makes turn one entry easier for you. The downside is your attack is delayed by two or even three turns whilst you position yourself to attack. If the defence is strong then a combined arms attack will be needed using both infantry and armour. I don't think you can use riders, but there are no restrictions on armoured assault which give some protection to infantry. Artillery can commence preparations immediately on a good day plastering the Republicans before your attack goes in. If the enemy is absurdly weak a massed armour attack takes the fight to him, assess the risks from the guns, mortars, and machine guns before committing yourself. Given time you will prevail, expect some casualties, accept a few more if you can gain ground as time is your biggest enemy in this one.

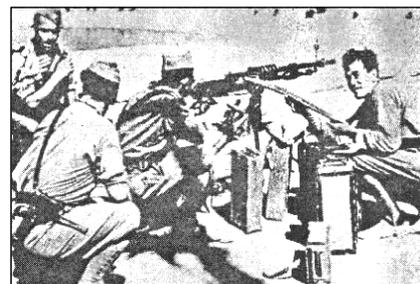
By turn four you must be on or close to board 22, turn five sees you on it having made extensive use of double time. this gives you three turns to gain buildings. Hoping to secure all six buildings is pointless, four gets you a win, with each being won paid for in casualties. Decide which four you want than press your attack. If you can take 22W8 this makes Republican defence much harder. Once you have your four building hunker down and defend them. Expect a hard fight but expect to win. On turn seven try to strengthen your hold on the buildings you control and plan attacks to gain any buildings still needed to win. Similarly on turn eight make a desperate attack if this is needed, consolidate your defence if it isn't.

This is a very hard fight for the Italians, your numerical superiority is very

slight, the inherent firepower of your squads is inferior and their morale is lower. Crossing open ground in the face of a number of support weapons is going to be difficult. A shortage of time makes all of these problems more serious. On the upside the 100mm OBA can make a difference, your opponents dispositions are restricted by Scenario special rules, your ELR is three (surprising for Italians), you start with a lot of tanks including two *Lanciafiamme*. With strong play you can win even against competent opposition.

## SCW9 Conclusion

I'm sure a lot of hard work went into designing and play testing this scenario, the net result is a decent scenario and balanced. I found playing the Italians a bit of a struggle. OK so I lost. For the Republican player this is a rather good fun and the game poses some reasonable tactical problems.



## SCW10 FALANGIST PRIDE SCW10 Nationalist Set up

There are four Multi hex buildings in play. You need to control at least one of these to win and prevent the Republicans exiting more than 16VPs' of Infantry off the south edge.

Enemy forces outnumber you slightly by seventeen squads to fifteen, with advantages in troop quality and support weapon allocation. The Reds receive armour support and an 81mm Mortar, countered by a couple of anti tank guns and a mortar of your own. To strengthen your defence you receive some trenches and roadblocks, as well as 70mm OBA.

Start by taking a long hard look at the maps. SSR3 makes the 17N7 pond dry, but has no effect on the 17AA10-BB9 pond. The same SSR makes woods into brush, whilst SSR1 transforms Orchards into Vineyards. Grain, brush, and Vineyards all slow infantry movement, as the Republican Armoured cars use truck movement the effects on their movement are dramatic. Grain requires 5MP, Brush 6MP, Vineyard 6MP plus a Bog check, even open ground requires 4MP. Note Walls

and Hedges are impassable terrain for all the Red armoured cars. Boresighting road hexes with anti tank weapons makes a lot of sense. The main effect of terrain is to provide some cover for the attackers whilst restricting same level lines of sight.

One defensive option is a forwards defence on or close to the AA Hexrow. This is a reasonable set up, with scope to use the trenches to create a small bastion. Later troops can fall back to buildings to continue the fight. I think there are some better alternatives than this.

One fairly bad idea is to turn a single building into a fortress and wait to be attacked. Again this might work but could fall prey to being bypassed or a well executed assault.

I think it is better to defend the village on board seventeen and the farm on board 43 in some strength, with smaller outposts providing support. Starting on board seventeen a platoon of African troops defends 17W3. A squad, 9-1 Leader and the HMG start in 17W3 Level one, to contest enemy entry with 2-8IFT attacks. Due to the presence of masses of terrain that hinders line of sight I think there is a really good case for using spotted fire for the Mortars. A unit in 17W4 Level one could spot for the 81mm Mortar or a 50mm in V3 or W5. The loss of Rate of fire and accuracy is offset by improved line of sight and protection from return fire. When the Reds get very close dismantle the Mortar(s) and pull back. The rest of the platoon can wait in W3/W4 ready to replace their fallen or broken comrades or start up front to delay or at least disrupt Republican entry. Typical hexes for this are AA3 and X10, adding a LMG to either squad increases its effectiveness. This forward deployment is vulnerable to Armoured attack or an Infantry swarm think carefully before you try it. I think it makes sense to deploy a 4-5-7 to man the 50mm Mortars, a 3-4-7 will do the job just as well, just don't give it to a 3-3-6 unless you stack them with a Leader...which isn't too bad an idea?

On board 43 a strong platoon starts in 43O7. Squads at Level one in O7 and O8 can spot for Mortars in adjacent hexes. One squad starts with an LMG for a few long range shots if concealment is lost or a very attractive target appears, a Leader might be needed as well. Two other squads in the Farm's courtyard start digging in to connect separate farm buildings. If you like use a trench or two from your OB to save digging. The farm is a very strong position. Setting up the HMG here might be a good idea, so too would be using the African platoon, trouble is they can't be in two places. This is worth thinking about bearing in mind you will not win or lose because you made a

marginally correct or incorrect decision during set up!

This leaves us with the guns, six or seven squads, a few Leaders and support weapons. A conscript platoon could defend 17P4, admittedly if it manages to do this for two turns it will be doing rather well. Start the troops on the ground level keeping concealment as long as possible. A 3-3-6 in S6 might help P4 hold on for an extra turn or at least a fire phase.

Another small platoon of 2/3 squads, an LMG and Leader sets up in Building 43P1 and trenches in 43P2, and 43Q3. The intention is to oppose movement down the L6 to V3 road. This force could be added to the farms defence or even begin on board 17 beefing up the W3/W4 post. Make the choice you feel most comfortable with.

This leaves us with a few units. The first is a Leader who can be added to either the farm or 17W3/W4. Later we will look at the Artillery observer, but first the guns. Its hard to find a really bad spot for them, line of sight is hindered but there is very little terrain that actually blocks it. The guns can set up together in a Pak front, be added to Infantry platoons or even set up single. The 37mm can shoot through several hexes of hindrance which reduce to hit rolls by 3 or 4 and still have a chance to hit. Return fire on the IFT is greatly effected by +3 Hindrance, and any additional TEM for the guns location. I would aim to have one gun on each board. Set up hidden and remain hidden till you have a decent target. Any vehicles hit be effected by a DR of eight, the weaker ones might be shocked by a ten or even an eleven at closer range.

Use the roadblocks to slow down vehicle movement forcing them off the road into brush or grain, 17X9/Y10, 43X4/Y5, and 43Z5/AA5 are all good choices. Pick one on each board. The Republicans might remove them by clearance attempts I would be surprised if they did.

The Field phone operator can set up hidden to avoid sniper fire. He can set up virtually anywhere and still call down fire somewhere. A level one location is more use as the line of sight is greater and accuracy benefits from seeing over hindrances. Once you draw a black card you should not lose sight of any spotting rounds, getting the OBA into action very quickly. The best locations are all rather obvious 17W3/W4, or 43O7/O8. Less obvious due to line of sight restrictions are 43N9 and 17O4. I think 43O7 takes some beating. Harassing fire with 4IFT attacks will work against troops in the open or soft cover. At the very least it should make movement much harder for Infantry. It is always nice to roll a critical hit with Harassing fire.

This is a skeleton of a defence. As usual not close to perfection or in any way unbeatable. There is even more scope than is usually the case for swapping units between buildings, creating or deleting satellite positions, using the trenches to create a small redoubt. All options are worth considering pick the ones you are most comfortable with.

Once the action starts there is a need for the defence to act. Move units to support threatened areas, improve your positions by digging in. When the enemy get too close in greater numbers pull back. I'd expect to fall back from 17O3/4 to the village then later across over to the farm. Oppose any Republican plans to exit masses of Infantry until turns seven or eight when if the game is still going there should be a murderous fight for the last multi hex building.

All things considered you should enjoy this one. The attackers forces are not much more powerful than your own, any advantage is offset by good defensive terrain. There is a chance you may win simply because of the time taken by the Republicans to struggle through terrain that slows movement.

## SCW10 Republican set up and Attack

There are two ways you can win this one, either exit 16VPs or more of Infantry off the south edge or control all four multi hex buildings. Exiting 16 VPs of Infantry could be very difficult, you need to cross an entire board of 33 hexes in eight turns. This is possible if the Defender has concentrated his entire force on the Defence of the farm. Another chance might arise if you assault the village and drive the defenders back to the farm creating the opportunity to rush off the board with a few prisoners. Prisoners do count for exit VPs but only their basic value. Marching them off-board is a fair idea even if you are not going for an exit victory. Even a modest enemy force could slow you down, a couple of squads in front of you or a MG in a level one location would suffice. Terrain slows you down a lot, adding to the difficulties involved in an exit win. Riders can help, you can put two squads and all your Leaders if you want on the T26Bs', the truck can carry a squad or the 81mm and crew taking six VPs off the board comparatively quickly. I don't think vehicle crews count as Infantry, if they did that would add another 12 VPs potentially a win in turns four or five. I do think it unlikely to win by the exit condition, I suspect it is more useful forcing the Nationalist deployment to defend against it as part of their set up and as a continuing threat throughout the game.

It is more likely you will win by

controlling all four multi hex buildings. Begin by taking a look at both boards and what you can see of the Nationalist defences. It is possible the defender has created a small fortress in either the village or around the farm with only covering forces at the other buildings. If board 17 is lightly defended bring most of your troops on through that board reducing your entry casualties, capture the village then move onto the farm. If the village is more heavily defended enter on board 43, sending a small but adequate force to take the farm whilst you develop an attack on the village. A third alternative is a forwards defence on or very near the AA hexrow. Counter this by attacking both flanks, destroying or causing the ELR replacement of some enemy troops then push on towards the village and farm. The last defence I can think of is a moderately strong defence of both the village and Farm. Bring your troops on through both boards attacking the village first then the farm.

That's pretty much the plan in overview. Two factors make entry very difficult, boresighting and the need to rout. You really cant tell were the Guns are making it impossible to enter armoured vehicles without the risk of losing a platoon to each gun. As you can enter on or after turn one, you can reduce the damage by entering a pair of armoured cars first to tempt the guns, bringing on more vehicles later when you know were the guns are or have a decent idea of where they are not. by staying in motion you reduce the risk of mechanical breakdown and decrease the chance of being hit. The terrain is not too bad for tanks, but not to friendly to the armoured trucks. Off road movement will be very slow. I cannot see any good reason for entering using riders, the gains are slight, the risks are great, not only would anti tank guns have better targets the passengers themselves could be targeted by machine guns or even mortars. If you have a hunch about the enemies gun placement or are unconcerned about the threat you could bring all your armour on in the first turn, spread across the board or focused in one fairly small area. Once on the board the armour is useful for restricting rout paths and movement, creating cover, occupying the defenders attention. If you are unlucky and a vehicle burns make use of the cover the smoke provides. The chances of bailing out are remote make use of any crews that survive. effective use of the armour can go a long way to winning you this scenario. This might sound brutal or even defeatist but I would expect to lose most if not all of my armour. Casualty VPs are not a factor, allowing the tanks and armoured cars to be expended to help your Infantry or hurt the enemy.

Entering Infantry is a bit easier than armour. to begin with you can chose any one of twenty entry hexes, and can even decide when you enter. Hexes GG4 and GG7 are brush on both boards, you can assault move and remain concealed possibly using half squads as mortar crews to create "stacks". These might be boresighted locations finding that out is worth the risk. Next start moving on a few squads. The 43GG7 leads to a grainfield that makes a decent route to the western flank of thevillage or initial moves towards the farm. Leave the Leaders off until the advance phase or the next turn. If the Nationalist reveals all his weapons early there is scope for charging onto the board. Armoured assault could work. Try to avoid stacking or bunching up underneath a spotting round.

What happens next depends a bit on luck. With next to no real cover or fire support for your attack you could be shot to bits on turn one, or even be unable to bring troops on to develop an attack. With a fair run of the dice this should not happen. If all seems lost play another couple of turns, conceding the game if you can't develop an attack but play on if your enjoying the scenario anyway! Odds are you will get onto the board with some casualties but have enough troops to develop a credible attack. As you work your way into the village you gain better cover, and rally terrain for your troops. In the middle game this should be a fairly even firefight were numbers, and troops quality, plus armoured support should win for you. As the game ends half expect a ferocious fight for the Farm.

Expect a really hard fight to win this. The pronounced lack of hard cover makes entry difficult, routing and rallying problematical, whilst the terrain slows your attack to a crawl. For all that if you make it into the village in reasonable strength you have a better than average chance of a win.

### SCW10 Conclusion

I'm sure this scenario has been extensively play tested and is pretty evenly balanced. On some occasions the defence will get close to a win on turn one shooting the attacker to bits on the board edge, other times defensive first fire will have little effect and the OBA will not arrive, in most games the attacker will suffer some casualties but still have enough to make a game of it. I would happily play the defender but would not be overly keen on playing the attacker- I should stress this a personal preference and nothing to do with balance.

### SCW11 NOI SIAMO



### ITALIANO DI GARIBALDI SCW11 Republican Set up.

At first I missed the SSR "All Orchards are Vineyards" a howler as Vineyards are bog terrain and its presence makes a big difference to defensive options! Vineyards are not impassable but with the risk of bog deter Italian Vehicular movement through them.

In order to win outright you need to control Building 42V1, and two out of four other designated buildings. If neither side can win on building control Victory is decided by casualty Victory points. Prisoners will count double for VPs' , Vehicles will also be counted for CVP.

This presents at least two strategies. One is to control 42V1, and two other buildings maybe Y6 and X2 for an outright win. The second is to control either 42V1 or three of the four objective buildings and gain more CVP than the Italians. In the second case the idea is to bump up CVP by destroying armour.

Enemy forces are actually number by your eighteen squads to their sixteen. Leadership is comparable, ELR is the same, the Italians have the edge in support weapons and Armour. Without the armour you would expect to win almost all the time. With three L3/35 and a single Lancia IZM the CTV is back in the game. The armours highest AF is one, barely adequate against you 50mm Mortar and Machine guns. To kill rolls will mostly require a four or five, with the odd six at one hex range, in other words a kill every five or six hits. Over the course of the game uninterrupted machine gun fire would be just about sufficient to kill all the armour. There is a chance of not killing a single AFV in the entire game or conversely taking the whole lot out on turn one. I think it makes some sense to think of the primary role of the MGs as Anti tank fire. There will be some exceptions to this, for example a stack of squads and a leader moving in open ground is worth thinking about as would be defence against a massed infantry attack. The enemy Infantry is less of a threat, you can beat them in a firefight, you can beat them in close combat even without factoring in favourable TEM for trenches or buildings.

Italian entry is limited to the north

edge of board seventeen. Infantry can enter using armoured assault, or through brush or woods hexes. At the game start the enemy must decide to enter east or west of the woods that bisect the southern part of board seventeen. This is important as it is hard for the Italian to switch armour from board seventeen to forty two and vice versa.

On board seventeen deploy a squad or two from the International brigade. The Vineyard serves to slow infantry movement and to delay or bog tanks. There are still some risks setting up in the Vineyard but I think they are offset by the advantages specifically being able to oppose Italian entry and creating some problems for the Italians. One possible set up would be squads in foxholes in F4, F5 and G6, backed up by a Leader pair of half squads, MMG and 50mm Mortar plus foxhole in G5. This is a fairly strong position able to hold out for at least two turns more if it is attacked piecemeal. The other MG and a leader plus a squad or half squad begin in F1 to oppose entry on the eastern side of the woods. The remaining squad or squad and a half could begin in F2 and/or F3. This whole set up could be criticised as being too far forwards and vulnerable to an Infantry armour blitz by the end of turn two. This is fair criticism, the potential benefits are the chance to inflict substantial damage to a rash attack on turn one, or at least imposing a brake on the Italians'. Setting up in the G hexrow could work, as could starting in the woods ready to fall back to 42V1. Building O6, or the woods in N8 could be defensible. Pick the opening that suits your style of play. Later in the game these troops will fall back to help defend Board 42, this can be a rout, a rapid withdrawal or even a gradual falling back in bounds with units alternating movement and covering fire how you do it depends on how the enemy is attacking. Give ground in exchange for casualties taking four or five turns to get back to 42V1.

On board 42 there is a gap in the woods between 42W1 and 17K1 through which armour attacking 42V1 will need to move. This could be defended by a *Dinamitero* in the Y1 woods or even building V1, the unit could assist in the defence of 42V1 from Infantry. The LMGs' can be used against Infantry, although I believe they are more valuable as Anti Tank weapons. Building 42X2 makes a good MG nest, the upper level of 42V1 is as good or even better, many other places are reasonable. The rest of your board 42 troops should be split between a number of defensive outposts. The most important location almost certain to see combat must be 42V1, a platoon of three or four squads and the Commissar supported by the *Dinamitero*, and any LMG nests

makes sense. The remaining two Leaders and six or seven squads can be split between two of the following positions, Building Y6 and the nearby woods/brush, Building DD4 and DD6, or the T0, U1, V0 woods. The forward deployment in DD4/DD6 is a bit of a gamble to lure tanks into the vineyard, and delay Infantry movement. The woods by 42V1 is intended as an intermediate position either to reinforce the board 17 defenders or fall back under fire to 42V1.

If there is a perfect defence then I have not found it! the above outline is a good foundation. As usual it could be improved by changing the number of squads in each sector, switching Leaders or support weapons between platoons until you are comfortable. As the Italian move on you need to preempt his moves. Fall back under pressure trading space for casualties. Gaining CVP wins if you can hold on to 42V1 or three other objective buildings. Killing armour really bumps up the casualty VPs. A battle of attrition might leave the Italians too weak to take the buildings. a work of caution. The Italian can win, if overwhelming force is brought against your defensive outpost they will fall, the trade off in CVP can be swung against you by prisoners creating options for the Ities.

Expect to feel you are winning most of the time in this one, the Italian has to enter under fire and is up against the clock to win. Sooner or later you will kill a tank, a couple of turns later another maybe all four by the game end. This is good news, it helps with CVP and makes the building harder to take. Do not become obsessed with Killing tanks you will probably win by gaining CVP and holding 42V1 at the game end. Watch out for the 9-2 Leader and the HMG/MMG they can do a lot of damage very quickly.

### SCW11 Italian Set up and Attack

Your mission is to control 42V1 and two of the other four objective buildings at the game end. Or prevent the Republican controlling the required buildings, and gain more CVP. Start by a taking a good look at the map and what you can see of the Reds set up. Entry is restricted to the north edge of board seventeen. All your units must enter on turn one but you can decide who, what, how, where and when. There are three main areas you can consider entering from east of the Woods that run from 17AA4 to 17J2, west of the woods, simply through the woods or any permutation of these areas.

If you are aiming for a CPV victory and the Reds are in the Vineyard around G5 entering along the western part of the board is good. The idea is to attack an isolated position in superior strength butchering the Defenders and any reinforcements that come

to their assistance. On turn one you should have sixteen squads, four leaders, six MGs, three *L3/35* and a *Lancia IZM* against a maximum of six squads and two leaders with a couple of MMGs'. If the reds have set up further back getting on to the board is easier and you can still engage in a firefight with the odds in your favour later. This works even better if a MG or couple of squads are set up in the Woods to the east. Make use of the Woods in A4 and A7 bring on a concealed squad to draw enemy fire then move units through to B4 and B6, using double time you can get to C7 and C4. As soon as the Republicans open fire opportunities for movement are created exploit these. Keep out of residual fire unless it serves some greater purpose. Bring leaders on when it is safe to do so, even if this means waiting till the advance phase. There is scope for using armoured assault, an *L3/35* platoon of three tanks could enter on A8,A9, and A10 moving south or into the Brush. The *Lancia IZM* can support this move or enter as an independent unit. Establish fire groups and take any reasonable shots in the advance phase, with a SAN of 2 taking a few unreasonable shots is acceptable. This should get you on to the board with some casualties ready to fight and win a firefight over the next couple of turns. If the enemy pulls back, push to get to 42V1 and the other objective buildings. Gradually you will pull ahead on CVP. If things go well you will hurt the Republican so much you can start taking buildings and win that way. Slightly less well and you can gradually push to 42V1 for a win. Things can go wrong, losing armour is expensive in CVP. If this happens without some corresponding losses for the Reds you are forced to take objective buildings. Winning the firefight could be the answer, it might be possible to run east through the woods to pick up a couple of buildings. Sadly on some occasions there is no counter for bad luck.

A closely related alternative to this plan is to use the armour to attack or at least move adjacent to the Vineyards defenders. Overruns risk defensive fire, bog and weapons malfunction, and against troops in foxholes are a bit desperate. Moving adjacent to the Defenders is slightly more sensible aiming to use MG armament in subsequent fire phases. This is a gamble trading the tanks to create opportunities for the Infantry to exploit. If the absolute worst happens presto instant smoke screen from burning wrecks. It is not something I would consider but as an attacker you need to be aware of the option.

There are alternative attacks. A broad attack using the whole width of board 17 can be a cautious approach through woods,

brush, or dead ground, making use of armoured assault or it could be a wild charge with tanks and infantry through open ground. This attack works best when the defender is set up way back in the extreme south. It will fail against a strong forwards defence.

An attack towards DD4 and DD6 with a platoon of Infantry and a pair of Vehicles could serve as a distraction for the main attack. Even just the tanks or just the Infantry is an option. This is practical against light opposition reckless and even pointless against a strong one.

Probably the attack down the western flank of the woods is the best in most circumstances. Try to gain ground when you can, even if it is only movement in the advance phase. Use the 9-2, and 9-1 Leaders with the machine guns. Take prisoners to gain CVP. Avoid melee most of the time, the odds are stacked against you in CC.

If you capture 42V1 and are way ahead on CVP give serious thought to consolidating your gains rather than trying to gain more buildings. Secure your win but resist the temptation to do more than you have to.

Expect a stiff fight. Coming on to the board is difficult but for the next two turns you will have the upper hand until the Reds redeploy to face your attack. Against a hesitant opponent or one who loses the initiative against you there is every reason to expect a win. Against a dangerous foe whose troops melt away before they are annihilated and reform defensive lines two or three hexes back you will work very hard to win.

### SCW11 Conclusion

For a few reasons I rather like the look of this one. The opposing forces are finely balanced, numbers against quality, and light vehicles against MGs', and the terrain creates opportunities for attack and defence. Adding to the attraction is some cover for the Italians movement onto the board and the defenders limited resources around the entry area. In some ways this plays more like a meeting engagement than a point defence scenario.



### SCW12 RING OF IRON



### SCW12 Republican Set up

With a large area to defend, a decent selection of units and the promise of a powerful enemy attack it is well worth spending some time spending an hour or two considering your defence.

You win at the game end if the Nationalist controls less than three of the six Level two Hills. Another way to win is inflicting forty five or more CVP on the Nationalist. It makes sense if this condition is applied immediately, occasionally both players might want to play on just for the fun of it? Forty five VPs is a lot of units, it is just about possible to destroy this much by picking off tanks, and killing leaders. If you take prisoners then these will add to the total when they are either moved off board or at the game end. Keep an eye on CVP but give more attention to developing your defence.

There are a great number of possible defensive set ups. Some are complete non starters, for example a massive defensive position on the SCWN5 Hill designed to cut down entering Nationalist troops with defensive fire into bore sighted locations. This should be overcome by OBA, and a pincer attack. Another poor choice defending only the four Hills on Board three. This has some value but should fail if the Nationalist send small forces to occupy undefended Hills and makes a maaive attack against a Hill or two on board three. Possibly better to defend SCW2N5 and four other Hills, or even defend all six Hills from the outset.

My own choice would be to defend five of the six hills, leaving Hills 498 (3DD2) undefended. There could be a case for staying off board 18, or even Hill 547 (3E3). If you have a strong preference for set up it is your decision, a crafty set up will not win the game for you, and even a bad one would have to be pretty bad to hand victory to the Nationalists!

Begin by organising your forces into five or six platoons of a Leader and three to five squads, plus a share of the support weapons. These will set up on the Hills forming weak defensive Islands. Note they are not able to support each other strongly, this is less than ideal it is also unavoidable.

Hill 498 (3DD3) is protected by its distance from the Nationalist entry areas. It is a small bare Hill which doesn't need to be strongly defended. A trench in 3DD3 occupied by an 81mm Mortar and crew or even a squad and 50mm is enough. Adding another squad in building 3CC5 helps complicate any attack. A Nationalist attack will have to cross open ground to get there under fire from Hill 522, with the chance of a swarm of Red your tanks arriving any time soon. The Hill can be taken at a cost in time and resources. Obviously a full platoon

would hold out longer, I think the troop are needed elsewhere.

Hill 522 (3W6), should be stronger with trenches in W5,W6 and W7, manned by three squads a Leader, HMG or MMG, LMG, and either a 50mm or 81mm Mortar. Mortar fire can be used as support for other defensive, particularly effective against troops moving through woods. Outlying buildings 3Y8 or 3S8 make fair spots for small outposts in front of the Hill, if you have a spare squad or two left over after set up. Line o sight is restricted, ideally mortars should use direct fire, very rarely using an adjacent spotter will help extend field of view.

Further west Hill 534 (3J7), could very easily use six squads and six trenches if they were available. Due to limited resources three or at most four trenches can be used, say in 3H7, 3I8 and 3J7 or 3I7. A well led platoon, MMG, LMG and Mortar should be strong enough. Building 3I10 is a fair spot for another squad and MG or even an Anti Tank Gun.

Hill 547 (3E3) can only be reached through board 18, or Hill 534. If the Nationalists get this far things are already bleak. A pair of trenches occupied by two or three squads and the remaining 50mm mortars is all that's needed. A green squad stacked with a Leader can man up to two mortars with no detrimental effects to either rate of fire, range or to hit rolls. If you do not see any value in defending Hill 547 add the troops to Hill 534 or the Hill on board 18.

The board three village could be entirely ignored or alternatively used as a starting point for a small reserve of troops ready to support whichever areas are attacked. Three or four squads dotted around the village ready to move to the most useful point in the defence is enough. Possibly they would be better used in or around a Hill, its a case of balancing mobility against position. Placing the Artillery observer is another judgement call. I'm rather taken with the second level of 3N2 using this to shoot onto Hills as they come under attack. The usual worries of the phone breaking and red cards are present reducing expectations of too much from this unit. Set up Hidden in concealment terrain as protection from snipers and to confuse opponents who enjoy counting the counter in stacks.

On SCW2 the Hill features some stone buildings. These are concealment terrain and fair protection against OBA or overruns. I think the position merits a strong commitment. Certainly four squads, maybe as many as six, even seven. Mortars are not really practical but three or four machine guns could be used. MGs on the first floor

of the M5/N4 Church contest enemy entry and can help defend board three Hills. I think all the fanatic squads should start in the Church with a Field Chaplain and/or leader. The steeple makes a good observation post more aggressive than starting on board three. Tank defence is hard. A gun in a building is an idea, opting for long range support from board three positions could work, OBA will help. Remember all the Nationalist Vehicles are vulnerable to MG fire, can be destroyed in close combat and have limited capabilities. Woods hex 3U8 can hit about half the Hill, many other spots are worth considering. You cannot make this Hill impregnable, you can make it expensive to take in terms of both time and CVP

The sixth Hill is on board 18, it is a candidate for a weak defence, maybe two trenches, a pair of squads and a LMG and/or Mortar. Almost certainly this Hill will fall to any attack, again at a cost in time and CVP.

This should leave you with five or six spare squads and a few support weapons. These can be added to any of the five or six defensive Hill positions, be placed in position to support a Hill or be kept in reserve to move to the most threatened area.

The plan is to give up Hills only after causing significant casualties, to make enemy attacks take one turn longer than they should and win either by hitting the Casualty cap or ending the game a half turn before the Nationalists could take the last Hill...doesn't this sound easy!

So far I've not mentioned your tanks. The worst news is they might not ever arrive. Even without then you can win, obviously the sooner they arrive the better so do try to roll a one or two early in the game. Your armour can provide anti tank defence, or take an offensive roll to destroy enemy armour. Against infantry overruns will work disrupting attacks with casualties and time delays. Machine gun armed aircraft will make short work of you armour, as will OBA. Avoid swarming in big clumps.

Remember to make use of MGs' against armour. Destroying or stunning one tank in a platoon restricts the movement options of any other tanks.

Expect a fierce fight. You can win by reaching the CVP cap, or you can win on Hill control. Time is the biggest problem the Nationalists face, even without your Hostility he would face a difficult task moving onto all the Hills required. The terrain makes this a difficult scenario to plan a defence for, set up is a bit difficult but you should enjoy the game once you get started.

### **SCW12 Nationalist Set up and Attack**

Your objectives are to capture three

or more of the six Hills in play, whilst keeping below a casualty cap of 45 CVP. The casualty cap is extremely important, without it you would expect to win most playing of this scenario. With the cap in place you need to be a trifle cautious crossing open terrain to assault fortified positions in a hurry.

Before play or even set up starts have a long hard look at the map. At first glance the six Hills look daunting. A closer inspection reveals they are mostly bare devoid of concealment terrain. Lack of concealment makes placing OBA, sighting checks and fire combat easier. Also important is the distance between the Hills makes it difficult for 3-3-7 and 3-3-6 Squads to support their neighbours using their inherent firepower. Further good news comes in the form of woods, brush and grain providing cover for your movement onto the board and during play. Admittedly there are some terrain problems. Woods mean airburst, the bare Hills are difficult to assault and the distance between Hills complicates your attacks. On the upside the Reds artillery support may never arrive, even when it does 70mm OBA is basically a 12 IFT attack that effects an area. More worrying are the six Republican Mortars with their rate of fire of three, this gets worse when you factor in target acquisition and bore sighting. Another two problems are Time and distance. Eight turns is a decent length for a scenario, unfortunately the playing area is huge. Your attack is constrained by a casualty cap but needs to cross open or lightly covered terrain quickly. An attack on Hill 498 (3DD2) could easily take five or even six turns leaving little time for exploitation, at a squeeze you might manage an attack against Hill 522 (3W6), but not much else and possibly not even that! The Nationalist balance is an extra turn for very good reasons.

From the above it appears you really need to decide early in the game which hills you are going for, roughly how you will do it and what forces you will allocate to each attack. This should not be a detailed unit by unit plan for all eight turns what's needed is a list of three or four Hills, a division of your forces to attack each, and a roughly planned rout to each objective from your points of entry. It is all too easy to say "plans do not survive first contact with the enemy", this is true but they do tend to survive a lot better than no plans at all.

Your own Infantry do not outnumber the enemy. You have a lot less in the way of support weapons' and even have lower ELR and SAN ratings. Note your troops are of better quality, possess a marked superiority in firepower, and some advantage in range. As for Leadership the Reds have two Field Chaplains and a 10-2 Leader, a decent initial

advantage, console yourself knowing one Leader will be tied up operating the Field Phone. On balance the news is "bad", to win you need to redress this by attacking where the enemy is not concentrated. If you do this skilfully your troops will enjoy local superiority in a series of firefights that engage the reds piecemeal perhaps with some of his units never contributing to the action.

As far as armour goes analysis is a shade more difficult. You begin with nine tanks and an Armoured Car. All are subject to platoon movement, some to mechanical unreliability, all have very light armour. They are vulnerable to OBA, Mortar fire, MG attacks and close combat. Most worrying are the two 45mm Anti tank guns, with a basic To Kill of ten and a ROF of three it is fortunate there are only two of them. The tanks are able to reduce the risks by using dead ground out of sight of anti tank weapons, staying beyond range of MGs and out of fire for effect areas. Unfortunately there is a need for the armour to help the attack, this can only be done by exposing them to fire and possible loss. Expect to lose some armour, two or three tanks is acceptable, maybe a couple more if you have had unrealistic luck on survival rolls. Lose too many tanks and you have thrown the game. The biggest threat comes from the Anti tank guns, these will most likely start the game hidden on board three. Until you know where they are the best defence is to stay in motion to reduce the chance of a hit. by moving in small platoons you risk only two tanks at a time. Once the guns are revealed they can be avoided or countered by OBA, Aircraft or Infantry attack. This is very difficult to do well. Once the guns are countered Mortars and MGs' still pose a threat but with markedly lower to kill numbers. At some stage enemy armour will appear. If it arrives on turn one the game gets a bit harder. Ideally it will not arrive at all, bad would be a late arrival allowing an armoured assault on a Hill you have captured. Expect to see tanks arrive on turn three or four, five at the latest. Try to stay out of tank duels. The Reds would be delighted to trade tank for tank until you go over the Casualty cap. Instead use your air assets against the armour, make use of MGs' and Mortars even OBA if it will effect several units at once. If the armour arrives fairly late it may be able to assist the recapture of a Hill from you, watch out for this. Try not to attach too much importance to the CVP associated with the loss of a tank, some risks are necessary, without the armour the task of capturing the Hills is too much for the Infantry alone.

There is a really good chance of receiving 150mm OBA, allowing attacks on

the 30IFT table. Two red cards would entitle anyone to some serious sulking. With reasonable luck you should get some fire missions. Any Hill hit by 150mm fire can expect a share of morale checks, some destroyed trenches and a few shellholes. With absurd luck you could get seven consecutive fire missions cover the map in Shellholes, and win comfortably. Use the OBA against any Hill you are attacking, or against Red armour if it is creating problems. Have an idea of which targets you will try to attack and the order you will attack them, be prepared to adjust this if your attacks are not going to plan. For example your first target might be the SCW2 Hill, but because you have either taken the Hill or are on the Hill adjacent to enemy targets switch to your next target.

The Republicans can get 70mm OBA directed by an onboard field phone. This is not particularly deadly compared to the mortars or anti tank guns in the Red OB, unless you start moving in clumps through woods. What you might find is 70mm fire pinning your troops down in front of a Hill, even harassing fire is enough to do this by discouraging movement. Try not to worry too much about this, press attacks in other areas, renewing your attack when the OBA has to shift.

Local Republican Armoured Reserves are curious. Very rarely they will never arrive. Most of the time they will be onboard by turn four or five causing grief. The Reds can choose where to attack, and do so with all their armour. It makes sense to support each of your Hill attacks with some Anti armour units. These can of course be your own tanks, or MGs', Mortars, OBA or even Air assets. Aircraft are very useful in this role, strafing platoons usually allows two attacks on tanks with a small chance of a Kill or Stun result. If you receive just one plane it won't do the job on it's own, three will still need less help. Try to avoid the temptation to get into a tank fight, although you will win the cost in CVP will be high. Watch out for a Republican massed armour attack against your Infantry caught in open ground they will be massacred without friendly support.

Finally how to attack. Begin by organising your tanks and Infantry into platoons. An Infantry platoon should be around three or four squads, a Leader and a couple of support weapons, a tank platoon can be two or three Vehicles of the same or similar type. Deploy two or three elite squads to man support weapons or make bold moves. Next study the map after the Reds deployment. Much of your assessment will be inspired guesswork, it's impossible to know where the hidden units are or the enemies precise dispositions. With skill your

guess will be reasonably accurate. Look out for hordes of Infantry on one or two Hills, defences spread over all Hills, or defences or a line of three or four Hills.

Some Hill positions will stand out as less strongly defended by others. Pick on the two or three Hills you can most readily attack. Aim to have a superiority of two or three to one in attacking forces, counting AFVs as one or two squads for this stage of the planning process. The broad aim is to gain local superiority in two or three attacks, then push hard with the ones that are making progress before making a final effort to gain the remaining hills required.

An attack could go something like this. Start two weak platoon or one strong one, supported by a pair of light tanks head for the board 18 Hill. Another two platoons head for the Hill SCW2N5, entering using concealment, cover and is possible deployed. Take your time doing this, some casualties are expected, try not to make these a stack of three squads a Leader and some of your support weapons! A third platoon acts as fire support, three tank platoons help the attack. Using riders is reckless trading mobility for protection. Platoon movement and armoured assault are very practical particularly for getting infantry onto the board. Artillery will target N5 until your attacking Infantry close for the Kill. Everything else starts further east, making its way carefully towards Hill 522. Later in the game you will have taken Hill SCW2N5, be moving onto Hill 522, and also the Hill on Board 18. OBA should switch to supporting the next attack, almost certainly a Hill on Board three. After taking SCW2N5 move up the support platoon, reorganise the attacking units and push onto board three. Overhead air support looks for tanks, keeping any broken units under desperation morale if possible. Later on aim to have a strong presence on three or if you can four Hills. Do not be tempted to go for five of six, aside from being very difficult this is not necessary. In the last couple of turns the Reds will try to push you off one or two Hills to rob you of your well deserved Victory. Any Infantry assaults you should be able to defeat. There is a danger is a combined arms assault involving late arriving armour, Artillery, mortars, long range machine gun fire and an desperate Infantry. With luck some elements will be missing, OBA will probably have been used earlier in the game, and enemy Infantry should be in short supply. The armoured threat is real. With the exception of units driving straight from off-board to attack Hill 18Y7 the tanks will take a turn and a bit to be in position. This gives some time to preempt the attack. If your OBA is still around use it to support the defence. If your

boys are in trenches harassing fire can work if placed on top of their positions. This isn't something I am too keen on myself. Much better would be placing OBA in front of the position or on top of the Republicans as they form up. Air support if available can sweep the Hill approaches with fire. All this is a bit abstract, the one thing you can count on is your opponent will interrupt this outline plan with ideas of their own.

I would expect to get two Hills after a stiff fight, SCW2N5 would be one, the other probably 18Y7 or Hill 522 (3W6). A third Hill should come after a stiff fight. That's just about enough to win, but I would aim for a fourth Hill to improve my chances. most of the time this will come down to a hard fight for the third Hill, on occasions you will do everything right but lose on CVP. It could be worse you could play very badly and still lose on CVP.

## SCW12 Conclusion

This really is a great big scenario. Folk who like Monster scenarios will play this first (unless they enjoy playing scenarios in number or date order-yep I do that myself a fair bit) and enjoy it. Although play time is over three hours the action is interesting and I would encourage playing this one. There might even be some scope for playing this as a multi-player game. Amongst the attractions are the masses of armour, biplanes, OBA and the lessons you learn about bald Hills. I think it takes a lot of skill to play either side well. This is probably a good scenario for players of roughly equal ability even better for a stronger player taking the role of attacker and the other as defender.

After playing this I had another look at the *Guerra Civil* rulebook; I had not appreciated you can exchange Republican Leaders for Commissars. This helps the Republican cause a lot in most scenarios, apologies for my error. I'm sure there are a few other howlers I've not spotted again apologies.

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# Ben's Reacharound

Ulric Schwela

Having looked forward to this increasingly frequent event with great anticipation and fervour all week, planning an early dart seeing as my boss wasn't even in the office on Friday, I ended up leaving just after 5 pm after all as last minute requests came in for help at work – that's sod's law for you!

The number 10 bus from St. Helens dragged me through some of the most insalubrious parts of Liverpool (and lets face it there are a few!), but I eventually arrived safe and sound at Ben's for 6 pm.

First off, after grabbing a beer and beginning the complex balancing process of winding down the 'work' brain and activating the 'ASL' brain (I am after all a man and I can't multi-task), I checked out the oppo :

Ben Jones, not to be confused with the Welsh git despite also having a respectable collection of ladies' underwear. Now affectionately known as Mr. Benji Stick, by the way he wields a rather long metal rod around the living room!

Dave Murray, the oldest chap around on the Friday but with a cracking personality. This guy is so optimistic he can't loose and he proceeded to win all his games. Except one, but being an optimist he forgets about that one!!! A born dictator, Mussolini would have been proud. Secretly smuggled in a set of Italians despite specific prohibition by the Benji! My man, 10 style points.

Gary ?. I am terrible with names – but then this chap buggered off first thing Saturday morning so I only had his surname repeated to me 10 times!! We ended up facing each other for my first game after he'd finished being pummelled by the Murray.

Later Trevor Edwards turned up (I think?) and made one of his tangential puns about Posh Partisans... Might have been Saturday morning! I got stuck in to a round of It'll be Hot in the Town Tonight with Gary, just to practice night rules and introduce them to Gary, who, like Dave, is supposedly a newbie. Ha!

Gary set up his Germans mostly HIP and chose to keep some units Concealed to go with his Dummies – good idea I suppose! I plonked myself all over his '?' and as fate would have it, one of his '?' only covered a lone 8-0. Guess where my 9-1 went with 2 ×

458+LMG's? Things were mega-paranoid for me, with Germs potentially hidden anywhere whatsoever on the map. Run & Search, run & search, run & search, puff, pant, puff (those are sound effects by the way!!!). I ended up finding all but one 467+MMG & 8-1 that he kept hidden adjacent to one of my Lt. MTR squads – things went both ways, with a 467 accounting for 1½ Gurkha 458's in CC (mean dude!) and my 9-1 stack breaking easily, while Gary gacked one of his TFT on their first roll, against a DC toting squad coming out to dish out some punishment and me placing some Smoke in the Heavy Rain. 8) Other notable mistakes we made were allowing the 228's as Riders (NA by SSR), not applying the extra MP per hexside for the BU AFV's and halving their NVR. Also the Germs did not make use of Cellars in their set-up, which would have slowed me down by not being able to get into CC.

We packed it in by turn 3 or 4, when I had my 22 buildings and my defence was still looking fairly strong. Shame, but it was hard work in the wee hours on a brain fatigued by a week's work so some sleep was very welcome. A cool scenario that definitely deserves a re-match.

Believe Ben & Dave had another go at some scenario, but I can't think what that would have been. Or was it Dave & Trev while Ben GM'd so to speak? Obviously my game was very absorbing, so much so that I didn't even get some pics of it! It was hectic.

Saturday morning saw the classique humungououous cooked breakfast à l' anglaise par Benji baton. A good scoff was had which set us all up for a day's hard slaughter.

Ben picked a fight with Dave (again) at Rushing Hill A. This time I noticed what was going on around me because I had a date with Shaun who had yet to arrive. Besides, Shaun had recently got me interested in Crete and I had actually read about the

background to the scenario's action just the previous week! Dave took the Brits and Ben the Lambs for the slaughter (woolly creatures that drop from the sky suspended from silky parachutes). Well, no paratroop was involved but a good massacre was had nonetheless, although it would appear to have been a close thing, with Ben seemingly getting half the VC Locations required.

'Speedy Benji' managed to stretch his setting up for the attack over 2 hours+, ostensibly to do other stuff like trundle off to Lime Street station to pick up Shaun, my date. It's got to be said, Ben does look after his guests pretty well! He must do, as we figured out that, apart from Ben himself of course, I am the only guy who has the dubious honour of having been to every Naked event!! Must be the Scandinavian blood in me, maybe Ben & I are kindred spirits after all, he does after all have blondish hair and the Vikings did sow their wild oats around Liverpool in yonder days. In fact, Ben looked a bit like a Viking in his diving days!

Shaun arrived all right and we soon got stuck in to a play-test of Snow Chance. Good gutsy game in swirling snow at Night! NVR of 6 meant Starshells were a bit pointless, except when trying to 'blind' your opponent and perhaps prevent straying. As it was I only strayed once, but my T-34 M41's either left the workshop in a hurry, or in their rush to attack they over-stressed the tracks – two of the bastards failed their Mechanical Reliability DR. That was another feature of this game, I got so excited and wound up about my precarious handling of



Dave battling Gary on Friday afternoon, over Urban Guerillas.

my AFV's that the air got a bit blue, so much so that Shaun complained about my calling his empty trucks all the names under the sun – after all they were only poor defenceless trucks! Whatever, two of the little shits got it up 'em!!

As Shaun pointed out later, my poor handling of the tanks was somewhat made up by my Cloaked infantry making a mess of the Romanians. Like red wraiths out of the swirling snow, the ghostly Cloaked counters Ambushed the defenders time and time again. Mean – didn't help that the Romanians were constantly fumbling around for their Very lights instead of just firing the bloody things. Good defence by Shaun though, couldn't fault it (perhaps except for the Foxhole behind the hedge back-firing).

I used his hedgehog defence principle later on to good effect...

After Shaun taught me about how not to use tanks (this includes him throwing away his own best tank – cold comfort!), I settled down to a game of Twilight of the Reich with Shaun, this time with him attacking. This time I was lucky, because time flew and after setting up, Shaun decided he did not have time to play and quit while he was ahead! Instead Dave, flush from his victory over Ben, came to give me a quick spanking. Just as well, as I had initially misread the Russki entry areas available and took West for East – talk about getting yourself flanked! After a quick re-shuffle of my set-up and this time hiding the fortifications (!) before Dave set-up, things went fairly well for me as Dave took the approach of recon by [drawing] fire. Run the units up ahead as far as possible until they get shot at. If they die, they die.

So after loosing his two ISU-152's (Dave doesn't rate them – gun's too small! Honk?) to PF shots, Dave did better with his T-34/85's and eventually hosed the first JgdPz V for the loss of just one T-34. No sweat, got another two coming. The Russki infantry fails to take hold under fire from assorted MG's and falls back in disarray – except for the 9-1 leader, in the open, more of which later! The two reinforcing JgdPz V's enter covering separate flanks. The right flank one stimulates the lone T-34 to get back into Motion and it drops some Smoke, OK. T-34 later does a little run around and comes back to flank the JgdPz V, but is nailed unceremoniously. Now there is no other AFV to take advantage of this 'investment', but the lone 9-1 who just so happens to be adjacent, advances into CC and takes out the JgdPz V with a 2. Shit happens eh?

So suddenly the VC are all down to the last remaining PgdPz V remaining mobile and with functioning MA!! But did I

just do in the previous DFPh like a true divvy? Yep, feeling cocky I Intensive Fired and gacked the gun. Needless to say for no reward. So provided I could keep it alive, I had four RPh to try and repair it. No repair, no win. My infantry ran to screen the tank while it went into hiding in the Gully. Infantry didn't quite get within PF cover range, so it was all down to a long shot with the PSK for protection. Last two T-34's (one of which had just repaired its malf'ed gun to add insult to injury) run up adjacent, but JgdPz manages to spin around by firing BMG. One T-34 (also in gully) was CE, so it wasn't totally sleazy! In fact, the MG attack Stuns the T-34 (cool!), but in ensuing MPH when JgdPz tries to escape, the last T-34 gets its DI shot in. Game Over. Another win for 'newbie' Dave!

Mistakes made : (enough!)

forgot to roll Bog Check every time VCA was changed adjacent to Sand when not in MPH – misinterpretation of the rules (thought Bog Check was just in MPH) – rather naughty!

well, not a rules error but certainly a mistake: don't be CE if there is a chance that infantry will get into CC with you – both for the modifier you give them as well as for not being able to use your sN. Academic in this case, but still painful.

if someone is going to try and nail you, even just with DI, don't forget to pop sN Smoke first thing before starting up. Doh... Especially when you need an 8 or 9!

Last but not least in any way, shape, or form, Ben and I settle down for a play of That Damn Bridge! August 1944, the Germs try to re-take a bridge from the Yanks so they can blow it up. In fact, they *have* to blow it up to win!

I set up my hedgehog around the Roadblock guarding the bridge approach, although Ben talked me into giving my Guns a good area to take pickings from. So one Gun stayed next to the bridge, the other moved off to the side. As it turned out, my misgivings were correct – Ben shoved 90% of his stuff down the dummy flank not covered by the other Gun. Great! There was just one hidden 346+BAZ team over there, who failed to nail anything and bust the BAZ. To make up

for it, they proved a worthy distraction by holding up a few squads for several turns – tough lads! The bulk of the Germs got into town pretty quickly. My last-ditch MTR cover on the Bridge was picked on by Ben's two StuH 42's at 27 hex range and got sucked into a duel. Fortunately they had dug themselves in on their first PFPh so they had some shelter. Things looked good when they Shocked one StuH, but then the other one got the CH in first and the HS and MTR were vapourised by the ensuing 36-2!

Ben got some further luck when one of my Weather rolls made the Wind change to North, so any Smoke he dropped on me would drift straight towards him – so I couldn't see a bloody thing! His StuG's and JgdPz IV's did well to start with, one of them breaking my guys with an AP shot into a building. Another overruns the other MTR HS in the open (they had to leave their Foxhole to cover the new flank) and grinds the MTR into the ground! The BAZ squad in the centre misses, breaks on a K/2, ELR's and finally suffers CR. Another takes up the reins of the BAZ and goes skulking with the 8-1, but still they can't hit anything. They even go into CC a couple of times with Street Fighting Ambush advantage, to no avail. Finally, another lowly 666 does the business on a StuG in the street (well, he Immobilised it!). Who says they can't pass patsies?

By now Ben had found my first Gun by the bridge, by driving up to the Roadblock and parking two tanks sideways to the hidden Gun. ROF did the business and one tank burned, one didn't. OK, next!

Ben's Elite troops were now brought on later and run down the middle of board 44, which was now left uncovered. Again I am caught with my trousers around my ankles, as I forgot to compare what he brought on initially against what he still had available from his OB. Might seem like cheating to some, but that's whingers to you



Dave and Ben in the middle of their tussle for Hill A.

– it's the game, fair and square and I forgot to check! One 548+LMG gets creamed in the open by long distance shot from the .50 cal 9-2 combination, excellent – stops Mr. Clever from using the road. The rest come on safely and his killer MG stack starts off by clearing my Dummies, then finds my BAZ squad and 8-1 and punishes them. This is when it is definitely too late for my other 57L to make an appearance – it could have engaged the StuH 42's at long range but I like to keep things like that for more opportune surprises later on – now I was beginning to regret that because any appearance would now be short and not so sweet thanks to Ben's buzzsaw!

So hidden it remained, but due to cooking duties Ben passed responsibility over to Chuck and the flavour of the game changed. Chuck got a couple of StuG's to hove into frontal view of my 57L. Not the best and lack of ROF didn't help, but we nailed one. The Gun was lost when it rolled 12 on it's Intensive shot (it was going to die soon anyway), and true enough in Chuck's DFPh his MG stack did the business again by KIA'ing the Crew. Bad, so bad! Now Chuck's Assault Engineers came to join the fray, but my aircraft finally made their appearance with the Shermans.

He Smoked one 20 FP stack of mine with a StuH and then turned up to drop a DC on the very same stack. The stack defended itself, badly, two Shermans fired everything they had but Chuck's 838 hung on in there passing several tough MC's. Oh well, I thought, tough shit for my guys! A StuG rolls up to surround them and a FT squad gets in there too. My aircraft make themselves felt by Stunning a CE StuG as it rolls over the eastern bridge on board 41, but rolls 12 on the following MG attack, drat. Still, the Stunned StuG blocks the one-lane bridge and bottle-necks another two tanks for another turn on the wrong side – cool!

The other 'plane guns a PSK squad in the open but only Pins it, but breaks an 838+DC squad about to deliver the *coup de grace* to my broken BAZ & 8-1 team (mind you, the 838 did roll a 12 on its MC!).

AFPPh, and the FT squad rolls 11 on its 24 FP attack. Unfortunately, there was also a +5 DRM for Smoke!! :) :)

The DC then blows up and, rolls a fair 4 MC. Shite. One squad rolls a 5 so doesn't ELR, big deal its surrounded, but the other BH's to a 667! Ha!

That's when Chuck, well, chucks it in, for want of a better expression! With just 3 turns to go and an intact 667+MMG, 666+666+.50c+9-2 and

666+666+HMG+7-0 plus another couple of squads and a 57L and two FB's with bombs (OK, one without MG's) between him and the bridge, plus 4 Shermans running riot behind him, he gives up.

Oh yeah, I also had OBA of which I got one mission off, which had no effect except making Ben miss on one Smoke placement shot due to the FFE Hindrance. I didn't employ it well, but then I struggled to see how I could best employ it.

So all in all a damn good weekend, sandwiched in between work from Friday evening to Monday morning. Got to meet 3 new players, Chuck, Dave and Gary and learnt some useful stuff. I should actually write it down before I forget it!

Alla prossima, Beniamino!  
Sempre fedele

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### 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>	O/S
<i>Leibstandarte Pack 2</i>	O/S
<i>WinPak 1</i>	O/S
<i>Gross Deutschland Pack 1</i>	O/S
<b>O/S</b> - Out of stock temporarily	

Add 50p per item for postage and send your payment made out to PETE PHILLIPPS to 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, England, LE4 0GB.

For the latest on stock availability telephone me (as usual evenings when Man United are not playing are your best bet!), or email me at [pete@vftt.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:shop@leisuregames.com)

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



Shaun Carter (right) teaching me how to use tanks.

# Desert Island Scenarios

Andrew Dando

Or perhaps I should say top ten scenarios for our American readers before anyone thinks this is some weird desert/pacific beach landing article. From what I remember of the Desert Island Discs radio program the situation went something along the lines of the aeroplane engines had failed/you had bought a ticket from EasyJet (no corporate slander intended...) and ended up consequently stranded alone on a desert island with nothing but a fully functioning gramophone and your ten favourite records (which you have to name). I always thought this showed such remarkable foresight that you wondered why they had got on the plane in the first place or why they hadn't brought some food instead?

Anyhow, as ASL is the best boardgame in the world I'd happily ditch the gramophone in favour of my rulebook (admittedly ten times heavier which could be difficult when you ditched in the sea but just think of the benefits if you made it to dry land). So all you would need then to live out a happy existence whilst awaiting rescue is the perfect opponent (she would be incredibly clever, stunningly beautiful, a good loser, dark haired...) and your ten favourite scenarios. Initially I was tempted to restrict myself to desert only scenarios so you could ditch the boards and play on the beach. However, in the interests of making the article a bit more interesting let's assume that you could give Ian Thorpe a run for his money in a swimming pool and hence make it ashore with a full set of mapboards strapped to your back.

On a serious note I've always been fascinated by articles on peoples favourite scenarios and had some great games because of their recommendations. Having played about 150 different scenarios I feel that I can begin to offer an opinion so here are my favourite ten (plus some close contenders) in no particular order:

## *Best Classic Scenario*

I reckon that Beyond Valour gives all the other modules a run for their money with its scenario content. I would be happy to play The Fugitives (8) or The Citadel (10) anytime but for sheer classic enjoyment I can't argue with the first scenario in the system, Fighting Withdrawal (1).

## *Best Both Heading in the Same Direction Scenario*

Many of the worst scenarios I have played have involved an assault against a fixed position, which can be very boring for the defender. I think many of the best scenarios pose moving or shooting questions for both sides (hence my choice in the previous category). I like Jungle Fighters (MMP1 or J12) and think this is an excellent introduction to the Japanese as it cuts out the difficulties of pacific terrain. Armoured Probe (CH 6) is also great although a little hard on the Japanese but my favourite is Abandon Ship (WCW 5). I've played it twice as the Germans and been stuffed by Dave Schofield and Martin Mayers but would happily take them again. Both times the game has ended with three or four separate battles in the village (incredibly complicated routing) and units from both sides CXing and making mad dashes for the American rear.

## *Best Playtest Scenario*

The best scenario I have had the privilege of play testing (by some way) is Unhorsed Todforce by Ian Dalglish. I have seen articles by scenario designers saying they put this or that feature in to insure replay value. Frankly this leaves me nonplussed as I've got enough scenarios I'm desperate to play for the first time to keep me busy for two or three years. I replay about one scenario in twenty so the fact I chose to play this twice in one night (I've only done this with one other scenario and that was merely to define my idea of a balanced scenario – one I can lose as both sides within three hours) speaks volumes (fog of war, having to dig out West of Alamein to punch some weird vehicle counters, great situation, trucks, what more could you want?). My question to the editor is did this ever get published? PLEASE say yes and virtually unchanged.

## *Best Micro Scenario*

Big is not always beautiful. Among my tiny favourites are Over Open Sights (SP32), worth learning the cavalry rules for and the best scenario published by Schwerpunkt? The Puma Prowls (T2), it

doesn't have to be complicated to be good, but my vote goes for Frontal Collision (ASLN 65). It has got night, armoured cars, motorcycles, a truck, 3 player potential (the Dutch player could almost roleplay!) and a set DC. All that with only 2 ½ squads per side!

## *Best Combined Arms Scenario*

You've got to love those halftracks! Hill 253.5 (T7) has more toys to play with than any other medium sized scenario I can think of. I like the ebb and flow of the battle in Winter Gewitter (A70), but my vote goes to Eye of the Tiger (WCW 7). Almost worth it for the NOBA alone but this is a well thought out scenario.

## *Best Tournament Scenario*

I think I've played Zon With the Wind (A32) more times than any other scenario in the system. It's a tight little scenario and depicts the size of battle that I think ASL captures the spirit of best. However, my vote goes for the Lighthouse (CH 34) – even tighter, a bit shorter time wise and an almost guaranteed nerve wracking finish.

## *Best Weird Scenario*

Three nominations in this category: Firstly Forth Bridge (BB14) which I rate as weird as much because the German AT guns struggle to penetrate the frontal armour of the British tanks in this Western European late war scenario as for the presence of a bridge layer. Unfortunately for the British those super tanks are Churchills so they are only about half as quick as your infantry, and it's muddy so you need to get that bridge down! (For our American readers – be wary with your terminology if playing this scenario against a British opponent – comments like 'I need to take this bridge out and lay it', may cause mirth). Secondly Surprise Encounter (A 88) because it has a nice piece of psychological warfare before getting down to a good old ASL bloodbath. Thirdly Hilfe Kommt (SP 16) where the Germans are trying to rescue some prisoners! This produced a wild whirling battle with my guard unit CXing through the middle of it daring the Germans to shoot at him and risk losing the game by whacking the



prisoners. Overall a close call but I'll give the edge to the last one as it is the one I'm keenest to replay.

### *Best Japanese Scenario*

I think it is worth learning ASL to play with the Japanese alone. I like The Waterhole (A118) which is a classic jungle scenario but my choice came down to a decision between two city battles. Mayhem in Manila (A 103) [Deluxe boards and an absolute bundle of toys] just edges out Shanghai in Flames (A 110) even though I think it is a little tough on the Japanese.

### *Best Desert Scenario*

West of Alamein is another module with cracking scenario content (much of it underplayed). Khamsin (37) is widely regarded as a classic and Point of No Return (42) is a blast (not often you get Rommel and a bunch of Bren carriers). However, I'll go with Turning the Table (39) which is a good set piece attack. The Germans get Stukas but the Brits get decent AA fire, the Germans have some mobility but it doesn't feel like enough – every vehicle that goes down is really going to hurt, the Brits get mines and wire but the Germans have sappers – a well balanced scenario and of course some interesting desert conditions thrown in.

### *Best Big Scenario*

I don't like big scenarios where you have to manoeuvre fifty pieces around the board for five turns in order to set up a decent end game. I like plenty of action up front so Merzenhausen Zoo (J 19) scores highly with plenty of neat tanks around. I prefer Crossing the Gniloi Tikitsch (A 98) which is an excellent river crossing but for the one flaw, namely the Germans can win without crossing the river. In fact I think the German has to try for the early win and has got the power to succeed. So my vote goes for Stand and Die (WCW 10 – does this make this Windy City Wargamers offering the best scenario pack ever?) which pits the Japanese against the Chinese and when I played it had some classic point blank tank battles where nothing but a bit of scratched paint was inflicted on the opposition.

And if I was waiting for a message in a bottle I would be hoping it would contain a copy of The Puma Prowls (T2) but she'd have to let me have the Germans.

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# Double-Blind ASL

Based on an article in the General (Vol 19, Nr. 2)

by Ed Rains and David Pope  
modified by Eric Brünner.

## 1 Introduction

*The following text is the original introduction from the article.*

The article was based on SL only, and the authors had FTF play in mind. The rules from chapter 2 on are nearly a complete rewrite, but I tried to keep the "spirit" of the original authors as much as possible [Eric Brünner].

Of the many games that we own and have played, SQUAD LEADER and its descendants are among the very best. In fact, we believe that the SL/COI/COD system constitutes the most accurate, realistic, and complete tactical wargame system for WWII-era land combat that has yet been devised. However, even the best is still not perfect, and the SL system shares a flaw common to the vast majority of wargames. As most players realize, the realism of almost all wargames is severely limited because a player can usually tell at a glance what units his opponent has and where these are located. Tactical-level games suffer most from this omniscience on the part of the players; SQUAD LEADER is, unfortunately, no exception. Several significant rules innovations (such as concealment to name just one) have helped to minimize the problem; but the fact remains that a SL player still has far more knowledge of enemy forces, dispositions and activities than a real commander would ever have had. The problem of recreating a realistic level of limited intelligence in a game is as old as the hobby itself. Game designers have experimented with many solutions and partial solutions to this problem, with varying degrees of success. It seems to us that the original solution is still the best: employ a judge or referee to decide what the two sides know and can discover about their opposition. Even though using a judge is a relatively easy thing to do, it's admittedly not the "Final Answer". A game with a judge requires three players, two copies of the game, and a larger table with a screen to separate the two game boards. The judge must be quite familiar with the game being played and, in the case of SL particularly, must have a flawless, intuitive understanding of the line-of-sight rules. Finally, games with judges often move more slowly than their two-player versions.

Now getting a third player to judge a blind game of SL might not appear easy at

first; but, after they have done it once, most people decide that judging isn't all that bad. It's obviously more fun to play than it is to judge, but being a judge in a blind game of SL has its own rewards. You get to see everything that's going on, how the players interact, what mistakes they make, and the uncertainty and surprise on their faces when something unexpected happens. You get to watch them sweat.

Having said all this, we wish to present our system for blind play of SQUAD LEADER. Our system utilizes a referee, two players, and two copies of the game. Few changes are required in the original rules and mechanics of the game, and the system has been found to be simple, playable, exciting, and extremely realistic. The heart of the system is the Sighting Table. The ranges in the table were derived by studying an article by Lorrin Bird (CAMPAIGN #95), which reports the results of an actual experiment on just how far away targets can be identified and the results of our own experiments, especially regarding height advantages.

Players using this system will find that less movement and combat will occur on any given game turn, because players will have fewer targets to shoot at and will suddenly find themselves much more cautious about their own movement and about revealing their own positions by firing. Losses will be lower, and individual game turns will take less time to play. However, due to the reduced amount of combat and movement per game turn, we strongly suggest that the total number of game turns per scenario be doubled. Because of the shorter game turns, a twenty-turn blind scenario doesn't take much longer to play than a ten-turn two-player scenario. We also strongly recommend that players and judges make their first few blind games of SL small and simple affairs—preferably one or two mapboards, flat terrain and no vehicles or artillery. Complexity and size can easily be added after everyone is familiar with the system, and should be worked in gradually. Starting out too big will only confuse the players and the judge, and will cause the judge to make errors.

Not knowing where another player's units are and what he's doing is a whole new experience for most gamers. Furthermore, the excitement, uncertainty, and realism are greatly enhanced if the players have only a vague idea of their opponent's order-of-

battle. This can be done if the judge draws up a DYO scenario or modifies a pre-existing one, or if both sides purchase their units secretly from an assigned total point value.

## 2 Mapboards and enemy units

Each player has his own mapboard, on which his own units are placed. The judge places enemy units on the map only when they are spotted. Fire at spotted units is never halved for concealment, even if they could be considered concealed by ASL rules. Fire at non-spotted units (i.e. empty hexes, or unseen units in a location with spotted units) is halved as though they were concealed.

All other HIP / Concealment rules do not apply.

All normal LOS rules are in effect. Units can never be spotted if no LOS exists (exc. detection by sound).

## 3 Spotting

As stated above, enemy units are placed on a player's mapboard only if they are spotted. An enemy unit is spotted if it conducts certain actions within the sighting range of eligible friendly units (as detailed in the sighting table below), or if it is detected by sound.

### 3.1 Who can spot

Good order infantry and CE AFV can spot in all directions, with no restrictions (other than normal ASL LOS). BU AFV may only spot within their TCA or VCA. Passengers or riders may not spot.

### 3.2 Sighting Table

<u>Target</u>	<u>Range (hexes)</u>
Infantry stationary in cover	2
Infantry stationary in clear	* 5
Infantry moving in cover	5
Infantry moving in clear	* 12
Infantry moving in cover CX	12
Infantry firing (SW or inherent)	* 12
Gun in cover	5
Gun in clear	12
Gun firing	* 24
Vehicle stationary in cover	12
Vehicle moving in cover	24
Vehicle in clear or firing	* 24
Fortification in cover	5
Fortification in clear	* 12
CE status	* 5

"clear" is any terrain which gives no positive TEM by itself (e.g. wheatfield, orchard, marsh and gully).

"cover" is all terrain which has at least +1 inherent TEM (such as shellhole, crag, hedge, vehicle etc.)

If the observer has a height advantage

of at least one level:

wall/hedge/bocage, shellhole/crag and vehicle/wreck do not constitute "cover" (even if their TEM is not negated by the HA).

and

the sighting range is doubled if it has an asterisk (thus

LOS is not necessarily reciprocal any more)

Infantry units using AM or moving during the APH are considered to be stationary.

Guns Emplaced in cover are treated like Infantry as long as they don't move or fire.

PRC are spotted along with their conveyance.

### 3.3 Revealed Information

If an enemy unit is spotted, the following information is revealed:

unit size (squad, HS or SMC)

exact type and number of SW, AFV or Ordnance when they fire

With regard to ordnance and AFVs, here some discretion by the judge is needed. Basic AFV or gun type is revealed, as well as barrel length, but the exact information (number of MG, exact type etc.) cannot be determined by sight alone.

The following is never revealed by spotting:

unit status (broken, stun, non-burning wreck etc.)

unit strength factors

Armor leaders

SMC while stacked with MMC (SMC can be spotted only if they are alone in a Location)

### 3.4 Regain hidden status

A spotted enemy unit is removed from the map when it is isn't within LOS of any eligible units, or when it would not have been spotted for one whole player turn.

### 3.5 Detection by Sound

Some units or activities may be detected by their sound alone, according to the table below.

The detection range is counted in infantry MF, not using bypass or road movement. In all cases, the judge should point out the approximate direction of the noise (within about a 90 degree arc). The unit or units which hear the noise may then request a Position Check. Each unit is

entitled to one Position Check per fire phase (for weapons which fired that phase) and one Position Check per enemy Movement Phase (for vehicles which moved that phase).

Position Checks are conducted in the same manner as a Sniper Check (A14.4), except that no LOS is required, and the checking unit does not become TI. Units located by a successful Position Check are placed on the map as though they were spotted, and remain spotted until one turn after they cease firing within the "earshot" of at least one enemy unit.

Vehicles and PRC may not detect enemy units by sound. If a Position Check is made on any hex in which a vehicle spent MPs, then the entire path of the moving vehicle spent within "earshot" (12 Infantry MFs) of the hearing unit is revealed to the "hearing" player.

### 3.6 Weather Effects on Sound

During atmospheric conditions of Falling Snow, Rain, or Heavy Wind, all sound detection ranges are halved, thereby becoming 6 Infantry MFs for weapons and vehicles, and 3 for horses.

## 4 Fire Combat

The results of fire combat are not revealed to the firing player, unless enemy units which he had previously spotted rout or are removed/reduced as a result of his fire. The firing player may roll his own dice, but the judge (or the target player) rolls all MCs.

The target player is informed only roughly about the amount (FP) of small arms fire, but SW and Ordnance are revealed with exact number and type. The DR of the attacking player is not revealed to the target, only the result.

The origin hex for incoming fire is only revealed to the target player if he can sight it according to the Sighting Table and other pertinent rules. If the target unit breaks, and it was the only unit capable of sighting the firing unit(s), the firing units are not spotted (since only GO units may spot).

## 5 Vehicle Combat

The firing player makes his own TH roll, and thus will know whether he has hit, but the target or the judge make the TK / CS rolls. The player being fired upon should not

<u>Noise source</u>	<u>Range (inf MF)</u>	<u>Derived information</u>
Fire / artillery impact	12	approx. number of weapons, type and calibre
moving / motion / non-stopped vehicle	12	approx # and type: 1. Tracked and half-tracked 2. Heavy wheeled (trucks and armored cars) 3. Light wheeled (jeeps, motorcycle)
Mounted cavalry / horse drawn	6	Type of moving unit wagons expending more than 6 MF in one MPH



be aware of the TH number rolled by his opponent, but the judge informs him when he has been fired upon, by what, and from where (if the target player can detect the firing position).

The firing player, although aware of hits, should not be informed of kills unless the vehicle burns or one of his units can observe the crew bailing out (treat as infantry moving in the open for observation purposes).

Final confirmation of whether an enemy vehicle is a wreck or not may be obtained by attempting to move a friendly infantry unit into the hex with the vehicle during either the MPH or APh, on the assumption that it is a wreck. If the vehicle is not a wreck, the move will either result in a bounce (as in A12.15) during the MPH, or a PAATC will be required (APh).

## 6 OBA

The presence and location of a player's AR counters are not revealed to the opponent. SR and FFE counters are visible to the opponent, if the opponent has a unit with a clear LOS to the impact hex (regardless of range under normal visibility) or a unit which can locate the impact by sound. The caliber of the impacting shell is also revealed if it is spotted.

## 7 Night

The judge determines the NVR normally, but keeps this number secret. Under normal weather conditions, rifle and machine gun flashes from firing units may be observed along a clear LOS from a range of 12 hexes (24 from a height advantage). Flashes from weapons of 20mm caliber or larger may be observed along a clear LOS from a range of 25 hexes (50 from a height advantage).

If a unit becomes adjacent to an enemy unit which it cannot spot (e.g. due to illumination restrictions), a concealment counter is used to represent the unspotted unit.

## 8 Sequence of Play

The sequence of play is changed such that the moving player must first move all his units to their intended final locations. Then, the judge shows the defensive player the units and movement that he could observe. Defensive Fire is resolved following ASL procedures and finally the corrections are made on the moving player's board.

Optionally, this could be treated as follows: The moving player moves all his

units to their intended final locations. The judge shows the moves the defender could observe to him, and the defender conducts DFF/SFF as by the ASL rules. If situations involving RFP arise, the judge adjusts the movement as he feels appropriate (maybe using a die). After DFPh, the corrections are made on the moving player's board.

## 9 Prisoners and Interrogation

All normal procedures of the ASL rules (E2) are in effect. At the end of the phase in which they are captured, prisoners are removed from the owning player's map and are placed on the captor's map. Prisoners may not "spot" enemy units for either player, and are considered to belong to the captor for sighting purposes. Otherwise, prisoners are considered normal infantry for sighting purposes. All information which is revealed by interrogation is given to the captor by the judge. The Blind Interrogation Table is used in lieu of the E2.2 table. The DRM from E2.2 apply normally. Immediately after the DR, the captor has the option to choose a higher-numbered result instead of the one he rolled.

The captor automatically gains the information what type the unit he captured formerly was (exact strength factors). Except for the result concerning reinforcements, all information revealed on the Blind Interrogation Table would apply to the situation as of the time that the prisoner was captured. If the situation has changed significantly since the prisoner was captured, the information should be as accurate as the judge's memory allows.

### Blind Interrogation Table

#### DR Information obtained

- 0 Location of all enemy units and SW within 12 hexes of the Location where the prisoner was taken
- 1 Arrival time (or conditions for arrival), location of entry, and exact unit type and number of all enemy reinforcements, including both those that have already arrived and those that have not yet arrived
- 2 Exact number and type (but not location) of all enemy units and SW
- 3 Type and number of enemy leaders
- 4 Types and numbers of all enemy AFVs and/or Guns present
- 5 Number and OBA calibre of all enemy radios and/or field phones
- 6 Location and strength of all minefield hexes
- >6 none

## 10 Special cases and Examples

### 10.1 SW crews

Personnel manning a SW gain and lose

spotted status along with their SW, so if a SW is fired and the firer doesn't / cannot use his inherent FP, the SW operator is still spotted.

If a spotted SW is recovered by an unspotted unit, the unit becomes spotted.

### 10.2 Broken units

As broken units don't spot, situations may arise where they get captured without the owning player knowing who got them or why.

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### 52 Go BERSERK! in Blackpool

Continued from page 6

flew in especially!). We counted 52 as our total attendance, with a record (for us) field of 40 in the main event plus a four man mini-new-player contest. I counted two Yanks, four Israelis, one Frenchman, an Australian, a South African an Irishman, plus us Brits. Outstanding.

## LOST AND FOUND

Someone left two acetate/Perspex sheets behind. Both big enough to cover a three board game. Very nice. If you can describe the damage that one of them has suffered at some point, I'll return them to you when our paths cross at a later tourney. I also found, a "Shakespeare" fishing line, used probably as a LOS thread.

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Derek Tocher accepts first prize.

# CAMPAIGN GAME REVIEWS

Chris Riches

Within VFTT, one often sees hot-off-the-press reviews of Campaign Games, especially 3rd party products. Their focus is on “what’s in the box”: maps, counters, scenarios etc, and serve a good purpose for info on products you might want to buy. What hasn’t happened until recently is anyone giving their thoughts on how the campaign games themselves play, which set me to work on compiling my notes on CGs I have played. Coincidentally, in the May/June 2001 issue Toby Pilling gave us his thoughts on Campaign Games. So here is another article in a similar vein, but I have deliberately avoided the official CGs as these get enough press already and it would duplicate part of Toby’s article.

It has to be said that I prefer ASL with some continuity, be it Leader progression, Company Campaigns (per SASL), or Campaign Games. Thus, I play CGs much more frequently than stand-alone scenarios, although I do agree with Toby in that I have rarely had to play a CG to its conclusion before one side concedes.

I have aimed the following comments at those who own the game (hence references by hex) but also added some general comments for those who might be considering buying them. Experienced players of the CGs may well say “well, if you went about it like that, then of course you lost”, but at least a gamer has a chance to replay it, unlike our historical counterparts, and I look forward to any more CG summaries from people out there.....

## Stonne

One of my favourites, even after having to re-start the first CG. I had carefully driven vehicles up through the woods, creating TBs and take Bog checks and avoiding double crest-lines, only to find this was prohibited by the special rules. Oops!

The Germans have enough strength to pursue various approaches, so I sent a left flank force to the hilltop (Y11) in halftracks as far as they could, a small force up the road (which got held up fairly easily around P7/O8), and the main infantry attack up the steep hillside to I8 and K8/L7.

The French were able to hold out in the rowhouses and foxholes around Q10, supported by a trench in O10, and also in the buildings in the area I10-K9-N10, but were under fire from V10/V11 as well as the

town. The French counterattack I found difficult to execute. Again, because of the strength of their force, various routes can be used, but for many of these they are dangerously exposed. The left flank via entry area D was a sacrificial diversion, and got cut down in open ground. From areas E or F through Le Champ Carre is funnelled into a small front aimed at G10-H11 and is easy to counter, hexrow N is very exposed, and the right flank from area G was held by German forces of better quality in the woods at Y12.

In the midst of all this the village was OBA’d and set on fire, so the tenuous French hold was again threatened, although I must say it had the feel of the damage the town must have taken in the real battle. Eventually the combination of fire and firepower forced the French out back to M17 and the F19 area, and then the combination of German strength and exposed attacking routes made it obvious which way the result would turn.

I really enjoyed the first three scenarios, but then the quantity of items able to be purchased seemed huge - how many killer stacks of HMG/MMGs do you want? A counterattack with 2 Companies and 6 Tank Sections in addition to any surviving forces just seemed too much. Hence I now replay with about half the CPPs and it still has a good feel to it. As a French player I also tend to use more OBA, particularly smoke, and to preserve a dug-in presence on their right flank as a way to funnel forces back into the fight.

I found the map a bit strange - how can someone playtest the map and end up with crest lines exactly straddling the centre hex dots - blame the printers! This has been corrected by an essential errata sheet, so you know what height various hexes are and where the double crest lines exist that are otherwise obscured under the woods.

## Pointe du Hoc

Again, a strong favourite and a clear map (maybe too glossy for some). I played the first couple of turns about three times, both to understand the amphibious rules, and also to work out what the Germans were supposed to do to defend the area. I’m still not sure they can do a lot if deployed forwards other than get shot up, but aiming to pull back and conserve forces is dangerous in giving up ground too quickly.

Ignore the captured French Guns - these are going to get discovered no matter where you put them. My preference is to keep them in the fields to the south, so at least they aren’t discovered and captured along with the rest of the defences, and are another thing marginally on the mind of the US player.

On the last occasion, I deployed German heavy weapons on the rising ground to the south (rows C/D) and was able to do a good job at curtailing US movement. I also aimed to set up two defensive positions somewhere on the road - the US will take out one with their strength, so went for a concealment strategy with the intent of whittling them down prior to a tough fight for the second.

The US landed on a wide front with substantial NOBA and direct fire to keep the defenders from responding, rather than a concentrated attack on one side of the headland. This fairly swiftly overcame the Germans, including some excellent NOBA KIA results, and the forces raced up to try and take good positions before the German reinforcements arrived. They got a good hold in Le Guay after a struggle, but a parallel thrust to Le Manoir was stuck for some time (aided by the fire support from the south) until finally pushing the Germans across the road.

On the east flank, the US struggled to clear St Pierre du Mont, and were hit by a German counterattack, with the forces ultimately squaring off around O23 and with a German presence around R27. Good firefights then occurred on both right and left flanks, with reinforcements being thrown in as they arrived, and the Germans doing their best to infiltrate through the fields to the front to cause more nuisance. Ultimately the US reinforcements tipped the balance and the Germans were pushed aside.

The initial assault takes some time to refresh the rules, but is a good chance to try a small fairly unopposed amphibious landing, which I hadn’t done via other scenarios. The new fortifications seem to take up lots of rules for minimal use in the game (you could do far worse than treating them as 1+5+7 Pillboxes - at least it will get you starting the game quickly), and the French artillery is not worth getting excited about, wherever you put it. Then it settles down into a good scrap over familiar terrain, with both sides able to muster forces to

attack.

CH also issued a version with scenarios (no CG) and a larger-hex, matt-printed map (but reduced overall area, no sea, cliffs or forward defences) as Busting the Bocage. This is a neat little package and again has some fierce local firefights in very close terrain.

## Scotland the Brave

I played CG II of the 3 in the series, and enjoyed it more than I thought I would, given the level of armour (which isn't usually to my taste). Also only having 3 Firefights means you can re-try it again easily.

The Germans had an easy ride in the first FF due to British positions being not well placed, but there were plenty of talking points, and some interesting duels between FFE and vehicles. The Germans launched their attack to the right of Granville sur Odon, and were able to get infantry into the village by the end of the scenario. Once this had happened, the British force from there can get easily whittled down, so the British attempted a counterattack using the AA Crusaders (nice to try different vehicles), but botched it. This left the Germans a fairly easy task of rolling up the map and the British conceded.

The contents are good, and with various options for both sides - German attack possibilities, and a wide variety of forces to purchase, one that I will replay.

## Hell's Bridgehead (Kursk)

Appealed again, with relatively low counter density and some good variety with the river crossing, a few buildings/woods, and some excellent tank country.

I tried the first time to build up Soviet forces in reserve, but the Germans were able to make too good progress, cleared the village immediately, established themselves on the heights and the Soviets conceded.

The second time I invested fully in fortified buildings and mines and held the village in Firefight 1. Firefight 2 saw additional reinforcement of the village with more defences and an on-map setup Company (sadly only 4-4-7 quality), with the intention of using it as a counterattack base. The Germans weren't sure for the night scenario whether to play idle, to reinforce with infantry the village attack, screen it and bypass the Soviet forces there, or make an armoured/haltrack thrust to capture good positions for the following day. In the end, they managed to surround various Soviet groups and force them out of the village, with heavy casualties. The delay gave the Soviets

time to rush reinforcements onto the plateau, but by using Tiger frontal armour the Germans cleaned up and still won.

I need to play it again to see what will be better for the Soviets. There are few positions for concealed guns for flanking shots, and in a head-to-head confrontation the Germans have the edge. The map is excellent.

## Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works and Valour of the 37th Guards

The 37th Guards covers the same subject as DTW and is much better. It has larger hexes and a smaller geographical area, which I think creates a better focus on the factory itself.

In my first game I let the Germans gain the west side buildings of the first 4 hexrows too easily, and they were then able to rush across the street and gain a foothold before I had strengthened the defenders. This then led to German on-map reinforcements appearing well forward without having to run the gamut of crossing exposed streets. So in game two I put more into row C, but even then only a few locations held out at the end of firefight 1. So next time there'll be even more defending up front.

The Germans have first to clear the west side of the main street, then get across it. Debris helps somewhat, but the distances to go are significant, and despite substantial fire support which the German can muster the lead elements can get cut off and picked apart. In the north, taking J8 is critical, then M6 can be pinched from there plus a left flanking attack from I4/K5. This allows domination of the northern end of the board. Alternatively, strike for J12 and then into the heart of Russian positions in the north in M10, which allows you to turn north or south.

The northern area can be linked to the central area, where buildings C17 and B19 can be used to keep the Soviets under fire. G22 is tempting for a Soviet player as it has good fire lanes, but can be dominated from several buildings and is too exposed for reinforcement, so expect people there to fight gloriously to their death. However, without it, Soviet defences can easily be too far refused at row M.

The South, particularly for the Germans, is cut off from the other areas and must stand or fall on what initial forces and purchased reinforcements are sent there. At its northern end, the rush to the wall in row F, followed by a move to H26 area can be used. Further south, the choice for assaulting the factory in N34 is whether to go for the

mad dash behind smoke or slowly pick your way through the debris and utilise armoured assault.

The Russians have a tough time, as the front can be stretched thin by the Germans. It can be difficult to move forces from one threatened area to another in the face of German fire superiority, so good placement of foxholes, trenches, vehicles (wrecks!) etc is important. Also, reading RB articles gives good ideas for use here (Sov 60 Mortars on rooftops).

Whilst my preference is for 37th Guards over DTW, it does require some interpretation of applying RB to the CG, and in fact I prefer to use game info from the original DTW CGs. A shame that it was nearly excellent, but just fell short. However, there is no difficulty in retro-fitting as you see fit.

## Grain Elevator

This mini-CG came in the Critical Hit special issue, and is a great little city training CG. You get the refit phase aspects of buying reinforcements (which I enjoy - if only all the plans made then come to fruition!) together with small scenarios. I made an additional map to attach to the western side, as I found it a bit strange to have the Soviets set up on the very edge hexrow onto which the Germans must enter. It allows you to experiment with the best placement of fortified locations, defending the exposed front of buildings, or the rear, although the Soviets do have a tough time. The Grain Elevator itself is easily neutralised through Smoke or direct fire weapons, and isn't any special prize under the victory conditions, so I'm not sure it really reflects the historical situation but who cares, a fun game!

There are two phases of play - firstly the Germans getting established on the map, and then pushing down their chosen flank to clear the board (the central approach to the Grain Elevator is too open to stand much of a chance). G14 is a key building for the Soviets, but is easy to soak up too much resource. J11 is also a key location that is frequently Fortified. F3 can be a useful alternate building for a stand (and field phone), as it can restrict German pressure on that flank.

## Berlin Red Vengeance

I've not yet played Rev 2 (with bigger hexes), but this was fun driving "Big Red" over nasty Nazis. There are some interesting late war vehicles and a city with some tricky open spaces to cross. The Soviets got on board well and were able to concentrate their

fire on buildings protecting the H9 bridge, from E9 and heavy artillery and their JS tanks (despite low ammo restrictions). Infantry crossed and entered buildings to both right and left. This left the Germans isolated in M10, N8 and M14.

Meanwhile, the Germans had managed to place 2 DCs on the EE16 bridge, but only one caused damage. Coupled with a fallback defence from in front of the bridge, this side was well held throughout the game and proved very important in causing the Russians to have to attack the Reichstag from the open ground.

The third bridge (W10) also fell to a Smoke-covered attack, but after a tough fight. The Russians then holed up in T10 under fire and even after linking up with the H9 forces struggled to make progress against the Reichstag at the same time as having the German pocket holed up between them and the river.

More and more artillery and tank firepower was required, and this build up took time, which ultimately resulted in the assault being too late to meet the historical end date, although German survival would have not lasted much longer.

This is certainly a different game from RB although still in a city environment. I particularly liked the options available to each player, and the contrasting flow of the game from quick advance through areas where the enemy had vacated to brisk firefights over key buildings. For the Germans, delaying and hitting the enemy, and knowing when to pull out and preserve forces or to dig in and extract a high price for clearing that last unit are important decisions.

I hope this was of some interest to players, and apologies if it was a bit incomprehensible to anyone who hasn't got the CGs. As I said earlier, other experiences of CGs I would be interested to hear about.

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# Combine Or Separate

## Fire Group Rules of Thumb

“Against a squad with a ML of 7 and no DRM, are two 6 FP attacks better than a single 12 FP attack?”

Whether or not to combine two attacks into a fire group is the oldest dilemma one can encounter in ASL, stretching all the way back to ‘SL1 Guards Counterattack’. The question was addressed by Bob Medrow in his article “First Impressions: An Introduction to Advanced Squad Leader: Infantry Training” (which can be found in *The General Vol 22 No 6* or the *ASL Classic*). He listed the following rules of thumb:

**1. An IFT shift of one column right is about as good as an additional -1 attack DRM. Never add strength to an attack unless the column shifts gained exceed the DRMs lost, by at least one.**

This is a good rule of thumb, but remember that in some cases a -1 DRM offers a better chance of getting a KIA over the 0 DRM shot on the next column up. For example, on the 6FP column you need a 2 to achieve a KIA. With a -1 DRM this can be achieved by rolling snakes or 3 Swapping the -1 DRM for a column shift still leaves you needing a 2 to achieve a KIA. This is worth considering against high morale troops.

**2. An improvement of one in morale is equivalent to getting a +1 DRM on all attacks against the unit. It may help the player to think of “8’s” as “7’s with an extra +1 protection factor.”**

Again As above you should consider about the extra chance of a KIA. A KIA gets a result whether you fire on a 5 morale squad of a 10 morale Berserker.

**3. Two attacks are sometimes better than one stronger attack. The simplest rule is: never throw away a favorable DRM or inflict an unfavorable DRM upon an attack simply to make one stronger attack.**

In general a 0 or less DRM means dividing a shot, +1 or higher means FG. As usual this sometimes has to be modified according to the situation.

**4. The advanced version of the prior rule is: provided the rules prior are not violated, if the net DRMs are**

**zero or negative, divide the fire, otherwise combine.**

**5. The probability of ill effects owing to Covering are too small to merit consideration when determining leader usage.**

I disagree to an extent here as the chance of covering is 16.7%. While it may not be a problem, on the initial shot it can cost you the loss of fire lanes and Subsequent First Fire opportunities.

**6. Do not resign too early from any scenario where the opposing force is “brittle” owing to low ELR and/or a “short” MMC replacement sequence, especially if Battlefield Integrity is in effect.**

**7. Leaders worse than 9-2 offer no significant help, vs. IFT attacks, to units stacked with them. In fire combat, such units are helpful only on offense.**

This is not always true. A -1 leader means that units crossing Open Ground suffer a -3 DRM, which greatly improves the chances of a KIA.

Hopefully the above will be of help to some people. And the answer to the opening question would be two 6FP attacks are better than one of 12FP (per rule of thumb 4).

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# SSR Rules Reminders

Ian Daghish's scenario from the last issue of *VFTT* (V22 Unhorsed Todforce) caused a bit of a controversy due to his inclusion of two rules reminders in the SSRs for the German player. For those who do not have the scenario to hand the SSRs were:

**3 Reminder:** OB-given "?" counters may be set up as 5/8" counters even if a player's OB only shows 1/2" counters (A12.11 and 12.2)

**4 Reminder:** the SdKfz 251/10 has a PSK which may be Removed (D6.631) by the crew or Passengers.

David Schofield commented "I'm not too sure about this idea [as he knows from my editing comments :-)] and I was wondering whether others had a view on this? I've noticed one or two other designers going down the same route."

Trev Edwards noted "I know Ian means well, but I do find it a tad patronising. That well meant helpful hint you have supplied is really saying, 'Don't read Chapter H, I've saved you the bother,' which is not a philosophy I could subscribe to. Similarly, the use of 5/8" counters is something that makes up part of what it means to be a good player which should arise from understanding the rules and experience, not from an SSR."

Several others felt similar, believing that the mark of a good player is his rules knowledge, which only really comes through reading the rules and articles on play to help you grasp important concepts and options. For these people, one problem with putting reminders in the SSRs is, "you are implying that these issues are particular to this scenario only. Now, for an experienced play this is no problem, but then an experienced player doesn't need the reminders. But the newbies could walk away from this scenario with the misunderstanding that the PSK and 5/8" dummies were only allowed in this scenario."

For many the question is "Where do you draw the line?" Tate Rogers said "a note about 'fausts and ATMM would be just as valid as the two that were used.", which prompted Tom Repetti to put forward a list of things he would consider valid and not valid:

"If there's an 88L ATG, one might be reminded that it can't set up in a building. Would kind of suck to get 3 turns into the game and discover that such an important piece was illegally set-up. Ditto, perhaps, for OT AFV setting up in a building - did that with one of my Jacksons in A Breezeless

Day.

The potential for Rain to come and go during Overcast conditions, and the effect of Mud on Smoke. These can have such a huge effect on the way the scenario goes that I find myself taking extra care to understand the potential for their coming and going during the game. OK, I know Mud can't come and go, but you get the point. Ditto for Mist turning into Rain or whatever - the varying effects of LV hindrances can matter enough that it's worthwhile to remind the player.

Things that shouldn't be hinted at would include HtH being in effect in various situations like *DASL*, PTO, etc. People really should remember this, but if they don't, they'll be rudely reminded of it the first time it comes up.

Reminding the Germans to use ATMM or PF. Sorry, that's something that they gotta remember for themselves.

Reminding the IJA about TH-Heroes or DC Heroes. Again, that's too basic to playing the IJA.

The fact that 2nd Line and Conscript British can cover. It's something that a lot of people forget (maybe because we rarely see this quality of British unit), but it doesn't have a huge effect on the game. Again, once it happens the first time, the player will be reminded of it.

Reminding the Russians about the potential for Commissars in the early war - maybe. It's part-and-parcel of playing the Russians to know about this potential, but the presence or absence of a Commissar can have such a big impact on the scenario that I almost think it's worth it to remind the player."

Most of those against the idea felt that the best place for such hints and reminders would be in an accompanying designers notes article.

Robert Wolkey felt that the goal of the scenario was important in the validity of such SSRs. He asked "Should the scenario offer the participants the utmost competitive environment? Or should it be a well balanced, down to the last die roll exciting nail biter? If during the playtest it is discovered that a lot of the playtesters are forgetting a key rule and the results are coming back skewed if that rule is not used, then what is the designer to do? If he adds a reminder he is insuring balance, but he is reducing the skill level. Part of me wants my experience to be used to hopefully gain an

advantage. Isn't this why we read and re-read the rulebook, and play lots of games; to get better? The other part of me sees this as a game and I cherish and remember those fun scenarios that come down to the last Close Combat Phase."

Finally Ian replied "As I made clear in my accompanying Designer's Notes article in *VFTT* 42, I do not expect to see this idea adopted in MMP -published scenarios. I recognise and respect the view held by many that this would be wrong.

However, *ASL* is a broad church. For every player who (correctly) sticks to the letter of A2 and enforces the Advanced Sequence of Play rigidly, there are others who in friendly play will permit limited backtracking, correcting of fatal mistakes that would spoil a game, etc. I am not condoning this, though I confess to doing it myself occasionally.

If Pete Phillipps will forgive the comment, I sometimes feel it is appropriate to experiment with new ideas in scenarios for *VFTT*. This particular scenario involves a secretly-selected German OB. Key to making this work was preventing a "counter counting" British player working out what mix of Germans lay under Concealment counters. And key to this was players realising that they could exchange 1/2" OB Concealment counters for 5/8" (to create extra dummy "vehicles" where no or few real ones exist). Having decided on a reminder, I noticed that some playtesters ignored (or forgot?) the PSK inherent in the 251/10, and so gave a reminder for this as well.

In my notes I also make the point that with so many scenarios around, a designer can no longer rely on a scenario being played several times before players solve the tactical puzzles presented. Quite the opposite: players who miss a vital rule in their first playing, and so unbalance the game, are likely to walk away from it as an unbalanced "dog".

Which leads on the issue of scenario balance. I set very little store in listings of scenario win-loss statistics. It seems to me that in all likelihood the majority of players having a bad experience with a scenario will not go back to it to explore whether they missed a key rule or winning strategy, but will blame the scenario for being unbalanced. This is sometimes justified. But not always, and the raw data do not tell us."

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# High Danger

Matt Romey

I just got finished showing Scott Faulk the ropes in North Africa with 'V1 High Danger'. I had never played it, but always had wanted to see if it is as a good a desert primer as it looks, and even if it is... is it fun at all?

The verdict: I think this is a classic desert scenario, and is of a manageable enough size not to intimidate the uninitiated. I won't go into the gory details of scenario analysis, but instead will refer you to an excellent (unattributed) article in *VFTT10*. I will add some thoughts to those in the article.

## Fun factor

If you don't like this, you probably don't like desert scenarios, so all you desert-phobes can stop reading now. It is a very representative desert clash, as it has most of the things that I think make desert scenarios fun: tanks on each side; some AT Guns; a combined arms attack; light dust and vehicle dust and Smoke and wrecks cluttering the battlefield in random fashion; helpless infantry defenders that will, nevertheless, fight to the death to defend their castles made of sand. It also is reasonably easy on the overlays. Only the diers and the hillock come into play very much. No wadis! The most legitimate criticism of this scenario is that, as someone said, "it ends up as a pig-pile on the VC hex." To which someone responded "yeah, so what?" I agree with the "yeah, so what" guy, but I can kind of see the other point, too.

## Aussie

I would definitely opt for the "concentrate the infantry in trenches on the hillock" defence. Scott used it in our game, and found it was effective for a number of reasons. Mostly, the trenches allow for easy shifting of forces into/around the VC hex, which effectively means that the Germans have to take care of all the Aussie infantry if he wants to Control the hex at Game End. The trenches can also keep the halftracks out of some of the hexes adjacent to the hillock summit (the VC hex). Halftracks PBF added to firegroups are 6fp each - not shabby.

Scott also put a foxhole w/ ATR a little to the front of the hillock, which could attack the flank of the inevitable sideways attack (inevitable because the German will almost certainly attack through either one of the diers). It was small enough to not attract the

German's attention, but a major nuisance nonetheless due to DI attempts and shots vs. the halftracks.

You could perhaps put a Gun on either side of the hillock; there are scrubs on either side that allow for HIP placement. I would prefer, however, to put them in an entrenchment in order to get the -4 from the bombardment; perhaps on the hillock, where they can see everything. I don't think HIP status is too important in this case, as I will open fire immediately, especially on the vulnerable halftracks.

The Valentines are nothing special, expect them all to be gone by Game End. But they will at least keep some of the German armour occupied for a few turns. The German can't afford to run around willy-nilly before dealing with the Valentines, as a side shot from a 40L is nothing to sneeze at. You can enter them anywhere on the east edge



on turn 3, so if the German ends his turn 3 in disarray or with a vulnerable flank, then enter ready to take advantage of his mistakes.

Don't forget that the MTR has Smoke. I'd save it for game end to shroud the VC hex in Smoke.

## Jerries

The German player must be very comfortable with combined arms tactics, and must use Vehicular Dust and sD's to their greatest effect. It's no easy task co-ordinating an attack under these circumstances, because the Germans have a pretty small force relative to what they have to accomplish. There is little room for error. VD must be placed in just the right spots; you must know when to stay or not to stay in motion; you must plan to be in one of the diers by turn 3, stopped and ready to fight off the reinforcing Valentines; you must disembark the German infantry in just the right place, and create a mega firegroup with the halftracks (ideally, this would be done behind a screen of VD,

which will lift in your PFPh).

I would recommend sending everything down either one flank or the other, ending up hull-down in one of the diers. I prefer the north one, as it is closer, but the other will probably do just fine. I don't feel comfortable going down the middle - there's no cover, and you will receive concentrated fire from the entire Aussie OoB.

A lot can go wrong, including some nice ROF from the 40Ls. Expect losses. Just remember that your Infantry most likely will take and hold the VC hex, so keep them alive. To this effect, I would Deploy as much as possible - 1 squad At Start, another in every RPH after that. Keep the LMG guy whole, but other than that I want nothing but German half-squads on the board by turn 3. Once you are disembarked, gradually armoured assault towards the hillock. VD and Smoke can help this along nicely. Don't forget smoke grenades from the halftracks - they are essentially free, so why not?

Try to keep both 76L Guns alive until the Valentines are dead. Especially the thin-skinned Marder, who should get hull-down and stay there. Let the 76Ls take the Valentines on, and surge the PzIII's ahead to swarm the infantry. Target the 40L crews first, then pounce on the hillock. The tanks are expendable, use them to intimidate the hell out of the Aussie infantry. The more he fires his infantry at your tanks (sleaze freeze included), the less he is firing at your precious infantry.

Expect to have your infantry, tanks, and as many hts as feasible adjacent to the hillock summit by turn 5 or 6. Surround it and blast it to kingdom come with firepower, eliminating the occupants for FTR. Then waltz in and take it. If you can't advance in with infantry unimpeded by turn 6, then get a tank in there in motion, and hope to break everybody in the hex by game end. That way the tank will remain by himself, and Control the hex!

## Summary

I think that 'High Danger' is a VERY good example of what is fun about the desert. It's on the small side, but that makes it manageable. Of course, the real glory of desert scenarios is that they are BIG and CRAZY, but this will do. It may not be BIG, but it's CRAZY! :-)) Highly recommended.

Ω

VIEW FROM

# "THIS IS THE CALL TO INTERNATIONALE ARMS!"

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

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

Ω



VIEW FROM

# ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL

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

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

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

## JULY

### HEROES 2002

**When:** 19 – 22 July.

**Where:** Chamberlain Hall, Birmingham University, Birmingham, England. Room rates are £23.00 per night for a single room or £20.00 per person for a double room. En-suite rooms are also available for £28.00 per night.

**Fee:** £8.00 per day or £16.00 for the weekend.

**Format:** Three rounds, two on Saturday, one on Sunday. There is also the chance to play friendly games during the weekend.

**Notes:** Manorcon started as a pure Diplomacy convention many years ago, but now hosts a wide range of games; Heroes is an ASL tournament held there. The aim is to show ASL to a wider gaming audience and maybe attract some new players.

**Contact:** Anyone wishing to attend must contact the Manorcon organisers; Kath Collman (14 Westover Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, B20 1JG, UK. Tel (0121) 554 9401) and Steve Jones (59 Sudeley Walk, Putnoe, Bedford, MK41 8JH, UK. Tel (01234) 405878). You can email them at [manorcon@diplom.org](mailto:manorcon@diplom.org) or visit the website at [www.diplom.org/manorcon](http://www.diplom.org/manorcon). You will also need to contact Steve Grainger (23 Winterton Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham, B44 0UU. tel (0121) 355 6374), who is running the ASL tournament.

## AUGUST

### WILD WEST FEST VIII

**When:** 23 – 23 August.

**Where:** Shilo Inn, Tualatin, Oregon, United States of America. There is a special room rate of \$79.00; just as for the Wild West Fest or the Berserk Commissars.

**Fee:** \$20.00 in advance, \$25.00 on the door.

**Format:** Open format, with the winner being the only undefeated player at the end of the weekend – a minimum of four games must be played between Noon Friday and 11pm Saturday to qualify.

**Notes:** WWF has the dubious distinction of never having been won by anyone other than Steve Pleva! (Well, except the first year. That was Brian Youse. Not to detract from Brian's considerable ASL abilities, but Steve didn't come that year).

**Contact:** David Hauth, 1717 NE 159th Ave, Portland, OR 97230 or tel (503) 233-2968 or visit <http://w3.gorge.net/pro6man/wvf8inforpage.html> for more details.

## SISSUKONI 2002

**When:** 30 August – 1 September.

**Where:** Parola Finnish Armor Museum, near Hämeenlinna, about 50 miles north of Helsinki, Finland.

**Fee:** About 20 Euros, which includes bed and breakfast, tournament entry, sauna and a tour of the museum.

**Format:** Five round tournament with the first round starting at around 1800 hrs on Friday, three on Saturday and the final round finishing by 1500 hrs on Sunday.

**Notes:** Among the vehicles on display at the museum is an ISU-152.

**Contact:** Tuomo Lukkari by email at [asloser@nic.fi](mailto:asloser@nic.fi).

## SEPTEMBER

### CANADIAN ASL OPEN

**When:** 13 – 15 September.

**Where:** The Viscount Gort Hotel, 1670 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Attendees can contact the hotel by telephoning (local) 204 775 0451 or toll free at 1 800 665 1122, or by email at [infor@viscount-gort.com](mailto:infor@viscount-gort.com). They can also be visited at [www.viscount-gort.com](http://www.viscount-gort.com).

**Fee:** Canadian \$20.00.

**Format:** Five rounds starting at 1300 Friday afternoon and ending by 1600 Sunday afternoon. There will be two rounds on Friday, two rounds on Saturday and one round on Sunday.

**Notes:** Plaques will be awarded to the top three finishers and other ancillary prizes will be on hand for those excelling in CC, Snakes, Snipers and Boxcars. And, being the final tournament of the CASLA tournament season, the top Canadian ASL Player for 2001/2002 will be named upon the conclusion of the tournament.

As per usual, the CASLO T-shirt and beer mug will be available for those who wish to purchase them.

**Contact:** Jim McLeod, Box 31, Group 8, RR 2, Dugald, MB, R0E 0K0. Telephone 204 444 2583 or email [jimcleod@mb.sympatico.ca](mailto:jimcleod@mb.sympatico.ca).

## OCTOBER

### OKTOBERFEST ASLOK 2002

**When:** 6 – 13 October.

**Where:** Radisson Inn, 7230 Engle Road, Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130. Telephone 440-243-4040. Room Rates are \$78.00 for 1-4 occupants.

**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 [aslok@nwsup.com](mailto:aslok@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, Bournemouth, 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, 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, LE4 0GB. Phone (0116) 233 5896 (evenings only) or email [if@vft.co.uk](mailto:if@vft.co.uk).

## GRENADIER 2002

**When:** 31 October – 3 November.

**Where:** Jugendlandhaus, Hergarten, Schulstraße 8, 52396 Heimbach/Hergarten, Germany. Tel 02446 – 519. The site has accommodation for 40 players but there are a couple of local hotels also available.

**Fee:** To be confirmed but similar to last year (DM 50.00 per day including entrance fee and bed and breakfast).

**Format:** Five round Swiss format beginning Friday morning.

**Notes:** Thursday is for free playing and/or making ground visits to nearby historical locations such as La Gleize and Stoumont.

**Contact:** Christian Koppmeyer, Hagebuttenweg 9, 41564 Kaarst, Germany, or by email at [Christian.Koppmeyer@gerling.de](mailto:Christian.Koppmeyer@gerling.de). Additional information can be found on the GRENADIER webpage at <http://www.asl-grenadier.de>.

Ω

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## THE TRENCHES

# INTENSIVE FIRE 2002

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The hotel offers bed and breakfast for the special rate of £31.00 for a single room or £26.00 per person for a double room if you book prior to 1 October (just quote "INTENSIVE FIRE" when reserving accommodation). Normal rates apply thereafter. They also offer snacks during the day, and the hotel bar is open 'til late in one of the gaming rooms for those who need to drown their sorrows after another defeat!

KIWI HOTEL, West Hill Road, Bournemouth, BH2 5EG

Tel: 01202 555889

Fax: 01202 789567

**Pete Phillipps**

23 Jean Drive

Leicester

LE4 0GB

Tel: (0116) 233 5896 (evenings only)

[if@vftt.co.uk](mailto:if@vftt.co.uk)

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