

# VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

Issue 47/48 Jan - Apr 2003

UK £4.00

US \$10.00



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**COVER:** Avalon Hill's *Kampfgruppe Peiper I*, which has an after action report of its CG in this issue.

### THE ASL MAILING LIST

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*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 49 should be out at the beginning of May 2003.

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

Back issue prices are:

*VFTT Special Edition 98* £3.50 (overseas £5.00)

*VFTT 95* £4.00 (overseas £6.00)

*VFTT 7 - 9* £1.00 (overseas £2.00)

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VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

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# PREP FIRE

Welcome to yet another double-sized *View From The Trenches*. I was on track for getting the new issue out just after Christmas but real-life took over and suddenly the time for *VFTT* was spent on other things. The next issue should be on time as I have the next part of Michael Davies' look at *Dien Bien Phu* module ready for it and all that is needed will be the report from BERSERK! 2003.

Issue 50 will have the final part of Michael's look at *DBP* but there are still about 8 blank pages that need filling, so get writing!! I don't need them until June so you've got plenty of time to write something.

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps

### 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

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# INCOMING

## MMP REPRINT AND GO TO KOREA

The first issue of *Out Of The Attic*, the periodic magazine reprinting out of print material and fanzine material, is due to be printed soon. Although no release date has been announced, it will retail for \$16.00. A rulebook reprint is in the pipeline, while a *Beyond Valor* reprint is on hold while MMP solicite bids for a new board printer. The reprint is also unlikely to include *Red Barricades* or the Finns to cut costs, although *Red Barricades* will be reprinted separately.

Of the original work in the pipeline playtest work is continuing on *Armies Of Oblivion* and *ASL Journal 5*. 10 of the AOO scenarios are done with between two and six more to be finished. MMP are currently aiming to have it out by ASLOK. *ASL J5* has four of its 12 scenarios finished with the rest close to being done. It is possible it may be available at WBC. Scenarios are also being designed and tested for Action Packs 3 and 4.

Barely into the pipeline is a Korean War module. A group of designers have started work on this which will be submitted to MMP for publication. All the combatants are represented, including the North Koreans, Communist Chinese, Americans, British Commonwealth, South Koreans, and even the smaller contingents in the United Nations Command. New rules for the rugged Korean terrain will be included and portrayed with new mapboards and overlays. Among the new equipment to be included are American LMG (the M1919A6 on bipod), the BAZ50 (M20 3.5-in bazooka) as well as a variety of American SW in British/Commonwealth and Communist colours, the M46 Patton tank, M39 armoured utility vehicle, Centurion III tank, and AD

Skyraider airplanes.

## CALIFORNIAN MELEE

The Southern California ASL Club has released *Melee Pack I*, a collection of six colour scenarios. 5 of 6 feature OoB choices and/or FoW options for one or both sides. Also included are Scenario Cheat Sheets, which depict vehicle and Gun notes based on a scenario's OB, the date of the scenario and any special rules for the scenario. MP1 costs \$11.00 including shipping and handling (\$14.00 for non-US orders) and is available from Matthew Cicero, 1810 Chantry Drive, Arcadia, CA 91006, USA. You can also order online at [http://208.252.203.252/cgi-bin/oecgi.exe/INET\\_socalasl\\_melee\\_pack\\_main](http://208.252.203.252/cgi-bin/oecgi.exe/INET_socalasl_melee_pack_main).

## HEAT OF BATTLE IN FIREFIGHT

HOB have released their first *FireFights!* scenario pack. Designed to be played in an evening, each scenario has a variable Order of Battle and most have variable entry turns and reinforcements. Fog of war is also enhanced through set up and Scenario Variables. As a bonus each scenario comes with its own historically based 8½" x 11" map. Pricing has yet to be announced.

HOB's upcoming project *Kampfgruppen-Commander* (former *Company Commander*) is a game system which can be used to simulate more mobile battles then is possible using the existing *Red Barricades*-derived CG rules. The basic game will include Basic and Special Rules, a Strategic map, Scenario Generation Tables, coloured Reinforcement Group cards, coloured Luck event cards, and play aids such as the Core Force Organisation sheet.

The first campaign game, which will also be included, will be 'One French Summer', which covers the drive of the German 7th Panzer Division (Rommel's Ghost Division) through Belgium and France towards the English Channel. No release date or

price has been confirmed.

## LSSAH TURN THE TIDE

The Canadian ASL Association have released *Leibstandarte Pack 4- Turning of the Tide*. This latest scenario pack in their ongoing history of SS-PanzerGrenadier Division 1 Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler covers the actions of the unit at Kursk and Russian to the end of 1943. There are also a couple of scenarios covering the units actions in Italy following the Kursk offensive. Details of the 10 scenarios can be found at <http://ca.geocities.com/gckelln/lssah4.htm>. LSSAH4 is available for CA \$13.00 from George Kelln, 1637-8th Avenue, Wainwright, Alberta, Canada, T9W 1H6. US orders are US \$10.00, non-US/Canadian orders are US \$13.00. All prices include shipping and handling. George can be contacted by email at [gckelln@telusplanet.net](mailto:gckelln@telusplanet.net).

## THE FRENCH RETURN

*Le Franc Tireur 8* is now available. Although the 92 pages are in French the 11 scenarios are in English. Priced •27 including shipping and handling it can be ordered from Xavier Vitry, 3 Rue Louis Mercier, 92240 Malakoff, France. He can be contacted by email at [xavier658@wanadoo.fr](mailto:xavier658@wanadoo.fr).

## 16<sup>th</sup> BUNKER IN MARCH

Issue 16 of *DFTB* is due to be released at the Nor'Easter 2003 Tournament), and will feature three East Front scenarios; 'Packing a Punch', 'A Hotly Contested Crossroads', and 'The God of War'. Also inside will be a Jim Torkelson analysis of 'Acts of Defiance', Tactical Tips for Veteran's and Novices, a preview of Nor'Easter 2003, and all the usual features.

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



## THE TRENCHES



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# Achtung Panzerfaust!

Michael Davies

Recently at the bottom of the wardrobe I happened across an old favourite originally published in the *ASL Annual 1992* that provides a good introduction to new players and a challenge to older ones. 'ASL 49 Delaying Action' features a defence by a tiny German infantry force against seven Russian tanks. At first glance the German position looks hopeless, the crews of the tanks actually outnumber the defenders and would be better armed if they managed to scrounge MGs from their vehicles. Three things give the Jerries a fighting chance, hidden status and a good supply of Panzerfausts and a few Heft Hohladung Granate (ATMM).

The Panzerfaust story begins in 1942 when the Germans sought to develop a hand held weapon for Infantry to use against the T34 and KV series of tanks. A rocket propelled hollow charge weapon proved the answer. An unpromising start of a short hand held tube without any sights was improved to create the Panzerfaust 30 with a range of around 30 metres in production from October 1943 capable of destroying any tank in service. Another Panzerfaust the 30 Klein was smaller and lighter with a less destructive bomb was also manufactured. I have recently seen a documentary including a five second clip showing a Panzerfaust Klein carried by a German Soldier at Arnhem (1944). Later models extended the Panzerfausts range to a nominal 60 metres in 1944, and 100 metres in November 1944. In the field the PF 60 could range to 90 metres and penetrate up to 25 cm of armour. The PF 100 could hit targets at 150 metres by using two spaced propellant charges. Both the 60 and 100 metre versions were produced and served alongside each other. Two final versions of the Panzerfaust with nominal 150 and 250 metre range did not see front line service. Although about 100,000 PF 150 were produced it was not possible to transport them to the fighting areas in time to see action thanks to the efforts of the RAF, USAF, and to a lesser extent Red Army aviation. Thanks are also due to the Resistance movements of a number of European countries. The PF 250 did not reach the production stage. *ASL* accurately reflects the range and destructive qualities of PF weapons.

The Russians, British, Americans and Japanese all developed anti-tank grenades of varying effectiveness, every army used regular grenades and demolition charges against armour on occasions. In the German Army a very effective magnetic grenade was designed. Powerful magnets fixed the weapon to an enemy tank, whilst the attacker ran for cover. Placed on top of the engine any tank would be destroyed. The ATMM had a secondary use against bunkers or strongpoints, either placed on a flat surface or hung on a brass hook and chain already fixed to the mine. Remarkably effective the Germans expected the Allies to develop their own ATMM, as a counter painting their own tanks with Zimmerit an anti magnetic paste. As no Allied ATMM were

developed this proved unnecessary, and was discontinued.

Against these weapons the Allies relied on infantry in close support or improvised spaced armour. The Russians used salvaged, requisitioned or rather looted mattresses and bedsprings to deflect shaped charges. The Americans and some British tankers favoured sandbags, welded tank tracks or general kit for some protection. I have seen photograph of British tanks with metal mesh serving as spaced armour in 1945 but am not sure if this was a widespread practice, or the earliest date for this modification. My brother came across an account of an American field modification... welding the glacis of a Panther to the front of a Sherman, used to lead columns when attack was expected.



Returning to the scenario in hand both ATMM and Panzerfaust are crucial important. There really is no substitute for reading the rules for these weapons, the scenario special rules, and the Chapter H notes for IS-2m and T34/85 Tanks. Also essential reading the rules for Marsh and Woods with particular reference to vehicular access. Apologies for repeating some of this information in the analysis that follows.

## German Set and Initial Plans

You win by preventing a Russian victory. He needs to exit his entire force of seven tanks off the North edge less one tank for each of your half squads or SMC eliminated. As you start with three half squads, two Leaders (a 7-0 and 9-2) and one Hero your opponent will have to exit at least one tank unless you generate another leader or Hero. Although it might be possible to delay the Russians and win, it might be easier to trade your units for tanks at a favourable rate.

Enemy forces are impressive. Four T34/85, is scary enough, three IS-2m with 122mm guns add impressive guns and protection. The Russians strengths include awesome firepower,

numerous machine guns, good mobility, smoke dischargers, and in the case of the IS2-m frontal hull armour that can resist a direct hit from a Panzerfaust! Perhaps the greatest Russian asset is range. At three hexes he is impervious to PF fire but able to dish out strong attacks. The enemy does have some weaknesses. Without infantry support your hidden troops will be hard to find. It is difficult for him to move through buildings, woods or hexes adjacent to marsh. Time may become your ally, your opponent has a lot to do in the time available.

One and a half squads, two leaders and a Hero must be one of the smallest OB in *ASL* to date. Troop quality is excellent, an ELR of four, all your MMC are 8 morale and elite. Rule C13.311 is in effect, you can carry PF equal to your units usage number. With nine PF its possible to destroy all seven tanks without recourse to ATMM or close combat. Unfortunately PF range is limited to two hexes. Basic to hit numbers are reasonable at point blank and one hex range but you will struggle to hit a moving tank at two hexes range. Most opponents will try to keep you at a distance, eventually you will be presented with some chances. Once you hit, destruction is very likely. A T34 should burn, a IS2-m is a bit tougher but still vulnerable. Watch out for bailing out Russian crews they can fight you in close combat or scrounge MGs to shoot from a distance. Remember you have a sniper, relocate him if the Ruskis are buttoned up, pick off tank crews if they are exposed.

Usually terrain is fixed before play starts. Here you decide the location of a marsh overlay, which is not revealed to your opponent until he is actually adjacent to it rolling for bog. SSR 3 allows you to do this, and at your discretion to reveal the Marsh location earlier. It is important to site the Marsh effectively, keeping the Russians ignorant of its location makes sense to me. There might be scope for a cunning ruse, if you reveal the Marsh at the game start it might channel the Russian attack away from it. Hard to judge which is best, both ideas have some merit. The only really daft things to do are either completely forget to place the Marsh, or fail to reveal its hidden location, before watching a column of vehicles drive over the proposed site of your obstacle.

Terrain is really important in this one. Both players need to study it, with a view to attack and defence. Marsh is impassable to tanks, woods can be entered risking bog to create a trailbreak, buildings risk bog and cellars. Hexes adjacent to Marsh also require a bog roll. Chances are few Russians will enter buildings without a good reason. Woods will probably be avoided early in the game, later on a column might try to exit through a newly created trailbreak.

Use the terrain to plan or rather guess a likely route for the Russians off the board. Looking at the H, I and J hexrows the tanks must pass through either I3, I4, I7, I8 or I9. An ambush party in the I5 woods area could contest this move. Placing the M1 Marsh on the F hexrow complicates enemy movement. F3 is a good spot, as is F9, F8



and several others further north. The woods in F4 are an unusual and effective spot, that the SSR does not prohibit. It might be controversial to site a Marsh in woods. To spare an argument about SSR3 or protracted whinging by an opponent robbed of victory by alleged sleaze F3 is almost as good. An ambush in this area makes a lot of sense. The forces used could range from a lone SMC up to a pair of half squads and a Leader. Remember you can move in the advance phase and retain hidden status, allowing you to start in H5 then position yourself as the enemy attack develops. Further south the woods around K9 and M1 have potential, with good cover, some room to manoeuvre and possible rout paths. Looking towards the enemy board edge, the Marsh in U8/V7 suggests enemy movement will avoid the western edge of the board. T4 is not a bad spot to exploit this, as might any woods around V3 and/or W1.

If you choose carefully and enjoy some luck, you will find a number of suitable spots for your ambushes. Try for concealment terrain, with viable rout paths, and if possible a hidden spot behind the front line to wait before moving into the firing line. It would be nice to set up mutually supporting positions. The short range of the Panzerfausts and size of your force makes this difficult. It should be practical to plan rout paths towards friendly support, which is the limit of the help each Island of defence can provide.

Another hard decision is the strength of your ambushes. You can create up to six hidden anti tank teams. All ready to try a shot then run for their lives. Another option a killer stack of most of your troops in the ideal ambush position. Not my choice but ideal if you pick the right spot against the right opposition. A half way house would be three areas, with a squad and SMC each. The choices are many and varied. In practice luck will play a big part, and Victory will be earned by exploiting this or working against it. Set up is important but there really is no ideal set up for this scenario. Just try to avoid a really bad one!

Panzerfausts are lethal. Expect them to destroy a T34 on anything other than a dud, and ice an IS2-m most of the time. Target selection is important. Choose a T34 if you have a choice, select close range shots when you can, go for static targets in preference to moving ones. After firing off your 'Fausts run away, head for cover deeper in your position. Later you may get a chance for a close combat attack, through choice or when being overrun. A SMC and half squad, have a reasonable chance of a kill even without an ATMM.

Avoid pointless fights with vehicle crews. Try not to waste PF shots against immobilised tanks or enemy crews in buildings or behind walls. Entrenching will not work too well, your troops best protection is hidden status. Admittedly fox-holes provide some protection against overrun but against this is the near certainty of drawing lots of gun fire. Most important of all be mentally strong. This is a tough scenario. Expect to agonise over enemy movement, the success or failure of your fire and any bog rolls the enemy make. Hope for tank armament low ammo and malfunction rolls, whilst hoping to avoid box cars yourself! You should destroy some tanks, if you do enough damage you will enjoy a win. Finally watch out for those rear machine guns on IS2-Ms.



### Soviet Entry and Opening Moves

Your objective is straightforward, exit all seven tanks off the north board edge. Even better each German half squad or SMC eliminated counts as an exited tank. Playing on a Desert board a win would be almost certain, the terrain of Lithuania and the calibre of its German make this more of a fight.

Enemy troops are limited to three half squads, two leaders and a Hero, bolstered by nine Panzerfausts. If you expose your crews to small arms fire or sniper attacks you could be affected by IFT attacks at up to eight hexes range or sniping anywhere on the board. Buttoned up close combat at 0-1 hex range or Panzerfausts out to two hexes represent a very real danger. Another enemy unit to consider is overlay **M1**, a Marsh that behaves like a fortification.

The terrain is not quite neutral in this scenario. Even without the German troops you could lose against an opponent who remains totally hidden if you blunder into a Marsh and bog, and later immobilise or simply fail to remove bog in the time available. This is unlikely as most German defenders will want to make their presence known

by destroying at least one tank and there are a limited number of places to hide. Woods and Buildings also restrict movement. Due to the risk of bog, immobilisation or even total loss, moving through them should be avoided. Begin by looking at the map and deciding roughly how you will either move to exit the map or manoeuvre to destroy the enemy.

It is hard to see a route north that does not pass through V5. There are a series of bottlenecks between rows R and L where you will have to move adjacent to concealment terrain which may contain German troops. After Row L you have a choice of moving north east or north west past the woods around I5. Next you will find the Marsh or avoid it completely, apologies if that sounds trite. Finding the Marsh as you exit is annoying, not too bad if you have time on your hands and have wiped out a number of German units, frustrating if you are unable to accept the delay.

I can't guarantee where the Germans will be. By plotting your movement before the Game starts you can guess where he might be and attempt to counter accordingly. For example to hit you in V5 expect units in the V7 Marsh, or the Woods in T4 and V3. By searching these locations with fire you can improve your survival chances. In effect you can use tanks as fire and manoeuvre elements, one platoon moving forwards in bounds covered by probing fire from the other platoon. This simple plan can be fine tuned. There are judgements to be made on the composition of each unit, when to limit movement to one or two tanks and when to rush all seven forwards. This approach can be repeated at the next set of obstacles.

If you are lucky you will hit the entire ambush party around V5, more often you will not! Keep a record of the units you find your options improve as more German units are discovered.

A few minor tactics help. Make use of smoke dischargers every turn you can, there must be somewhere you would like to place smoke! Keep your turret covered arcs and vehicular covered arcs different allowing you to shoot at different targets or potential targets. Stay in motion unless you plan to fire accurately in the next player turn.

A few opportunist ideas might be worth considering. Bailed out crews can help by searching for enemy units or fighting known ones. By all means try to scrounge a MG from a wrecked vehicle, destroy any Panzerfausts you capture.

Close combat threats can be reduced by avoiding known enemy locations, and skirting suspected ones. Similarly Panzerfausts are less effective at longer ranges, against moving targets without Leadership or Heroic modifiers. Stack the odds against your opponent by giving him no shots to take or ones that are very low odds. Avoid sarcasm, if your opponent misses an advancing phase shot against your moving T34/85 at two hexes range. The game is not over till its over.

Assessing your own units read, and reread the chapter H notes for the IS2-M and t34/85. Gen up on rear machine guns, smoke dischargers and low ammunition rules. Check the Panzerfaust to kill tables and appreciate a hit is almost certain death in a burning wreck. Except for the IS2-Ms' really thick turret armour which will stop a fair percentage of shots.

With enough time you could almost guar-

antee a win, searching carefully every location with fire, moving slowly forwards killing units or locating the Marsh for a glorious win. In seven turns you will have to take some risks. It will take three or four turns to move north. Even if you kill the entire German OB you need to exit a tank unless he generates another leader or Hero which you subsequently kill!

If the Battle goes against you and defeat looms do not give up. Some German units could be lost a Panzerfaust malfunction casualty reduces the firing unit, or you could have a run on the dice with you MG or gun armament.

### Conclusion

Although I really like this scenario I'm not sure it is suitable for tournament play. This is only a personal opinion which could be entirely wrong. I do think it is good fun to play, suitable for quick play in 30 minutes to an hour with replay value immediately afterwards. The scenario could be used to introduce the use of Panzerfausts to new or developing players, with a good chance of a well earned win to the less experienced player.

Personally the attractions of the game are varied, ranging from the IS2-Ms, the effectiveness of infantry against tanks in close terrain to the psychological grief that trying to get inside your opponents game plan creates. Both sides will work hard for a win, in some respects the German has an easier task by a whisker.

There is scope for scenarios to be designed along similar lines, perhaps including PIATs firing from buildings or an early war action using ATRs or LMGs. I've a few ideas along these lines but am a bit short on the skills to develop them!

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## VICTORIA CROSS MEMORIAL APPEAL

The 16 living holders of the Victoria Cross are attempting to raise £250,000 to build a memorial at Westminster Abbey to commemorate those awarded the VC and the George Cross.

The VC has been awarded 1,354 times since it was introduced 146 years ago.

Donations can be made to:

The VC and GC Memorial Appeal  
Horse Guards  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1 2AX



## Operation Veritable Playtester Comments

*The following comments about OVHS were posted to the ASL Mailing List by MMP.*

I conducted a quick survey of the playtesters for Operation Veritable. You have seen some of these comments on the preorder page itself, but here are some more responses for everyone to review. I will follow this with comments from game developer Ken Dunn on what the development teams goal's were when they started the module in another email, as this one is lengthy.

### Playtester Stephen R Trujillo:

It is a great module that has it's own challenges for both sides. The terrain, order of battle and choices make this a completely unique experience from any other historical module. It is also a very balanced campaign that keeps you on the edge of your seat until the last day.

Of the four different campaign games that I have played, this is one of my top two along with Red Barricades. It is challenging, fun and the replay incentive is great.

### Playtester David Reenstra:

OVHS continues the trend started in OWT where MMP expands the scope of the project by including scenarios played off the historical map on the geomorphic boards. Some of our favorite scenarios are "Water Foul", "The Good Shepard", "A Few Rounds" and "Lawless Ways."

"Water Foul" is probably the most unique scenario in the entire collection of official scenarios, depicting a night assault (but without the night rules) on a flooded village, depicted entirely with overlays. "The Good Shepard" is a tight deluxe scenario which is destined to become a tournament favorite. "A Few Rounds" features the SturmTiger, and "Lawless Ways" is large enough to accommodate three or more players.

### Playtester Guy Falsetti:

I think the heavy mist and the use of "reverse slope" defenses make for interesting combination. As a player you have to decide what areas you can defend and in what depth. As the attacker, you need to look at what areas you can overrun without leaving your flank open to counter attack.

### Playtester Observer Oliver Giancola:

The CG simulates late-war German Panzergruppe/counterattack tactics, as the German player typically assembles a Lehr strike force off board, pounces, then withdraws the bulk of his armor. I think this is unique.

### Playtester Paul Sidhu:

The night, amphibious-assault-on-a-flooded-village scenario is a total blast. Of the nine scenarios I played, seven are first class gems.

### Design Comments -Ken Dunn

"When we started out we (the design team)

were looking for a unique battle that seemed to offer something different from what had already been done. We had no preconceived ideas; we simply went looking. It could have been early war Philippines or Poles/Germans or French/Italian or anything as long as it met the following criteria: 1. Created a campaign game that was playable in a reasonable amount of time; 2. Fun; 3. Different enough from other available modules.

So how is it different? Well, from my point of view, the main thing is the terrain. It's a lot of open ground and with the large caliber weapons we have in OVHS that's creating a challenge that really has not been seen yet in a HASL. This HS will force the attacker to think differently than previously in order to cope with the open ground."

On the geomorphic scenarios:

"We tried to be creative and provide 'different' scenarios than what you might be used to. I'll admit to a bit of chrome when designing but in my opinion these geomorphic scenarios are well thought out and fun. The chrome just adds to the experience."

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## The Time Scale In ASL

John Overton

This is a call for ideas. As a long-standing solo gamer I am always looking for good rules systems. With ASL, as with most smaller scale games, the time scale doesn't add up to reality, with whole scenarios happen in a few minutes. To some extent, so what!; however, more solid problems are that it can take most of the scenario to bring up reinforcements, and flanking attacks are often a bad idea as you run out of time. In real situations you get lulls with rushes of activity. So does anyone have any good ideas to help with this, or know of rules sets with good ideas or suggestions.

This is not a criticism of ASL, the system is more than adequate for the task.

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VIEW FROM

# FKaC Scenario Errata

(Scenarios are listed by their old ID with the new ID in parentheses)

*The following Scenarios are being updated and re-released in For King and Country with new scenario numbers. This errata to the previous incarnation of the scenarios incorporates previous errata and new update changes, but does not include some minor word-smithing. The new scenario number is listed after the scenario title.*

## A1 Tavronitis Bridge (93)

Add a 4-6-8 and a glider to the German OB.

## A2 Bofors Bashing (94)

Add a 4-6-8 and a glider to the German OB.

## A3 Descent Into Hell (95)

Add a 4-6-8 and a glider to the initial Turn 1 force and also to the Turn 4 reinforcements.

## A15 Stand Fast the Guards (92)

In SSR 2 delete and one AT Gun (and its crew) .

In SSR 4, change dr to DR.

Replace British balance with SSR 4 and 5 are NA. .

Replace German Balance with In SSR 3 replace DR with dr .

## A22 The Crux of Calais (96)

Add a 4-5-7 and a LMG and 6 ? to the British OB.

Replace the British balance with Add a 4-5-7 and an ATR to the British OB. .

In German balance replace three 4-6-7s with two 4-6-7s .

## A24 Regalbuto Ridge (100)

Shorten Game Length to 7 turns.

Replace the Victory Conditions with the following: The Germans win at game end if they have more Good Order squad-equivalents than the British on hill hexes of board 2. Good Order MMC on Level 3 hexes count double.

Replace SSR 4 with the following: One German 8-0 possessing the radio must set up HIP to direct the fire of a single offboard 75\* leIG 18 INF Gun (German Ordnance Note 15). Radio Contact must be gained/maintained normally, but Battery access is NA. The 8-0 serves as a spotter (C9.3) and all principles of spotted indirect fire (C9.3-.31) apply [EXC: *Gun Malfunction is NA*], including ROF decrease (C3.33) and target acquisition. For TH# determination purposes, range is counted from hex 3A5. .

In the British balance replace 7 Turns with 6 Turns .

## A35 Guards Attack (108)

Add a 2-4-8 to the German OB.

## A38 North Bank (110)

Add 8 ? to the British OB.

Add the following SSR: 5. Prior to play the British player may secretly record which units possess PIATs. The presence of a PIAT will be revealed when the possessing unit fires/transfers/drops the PIAT in LOS and within 16 hexes of an unbroken enemy unit, or is no longer Good Order. .

Replace the British balance with Add one 3-3-8 to the British OB. .

Replace the German balance with Delete the 8 ? from the British OB. .

## A40 Ad Hoc at Beaurains (91)

In Victory Conditions replace 35 VP with 30 VP .

## A43 Probing Layforce (99)

In Victory Conditions replace 20 VP with 17 VP .

Reduce British OB by one 6-4-8.

Replace German balance with Delete a 9-1 from the British OB. .

## A102 On Silent Wings (98)

Add a 5-4-8, a LMG, and a glider to the German OB.

## G22 A Day By the Shore (103)

In the VC add assembled after Good Order .

In German Turn 3 reinforcements replace enter on Turn 3 with enter on/after Turn 3 .

In German balance replace on Turn 2 with on/after Turn 2 .

## G43 Kangaroo Hop (106)

In SSR 6 replace 150+mm OBA with 100+mm OBA .

Replace British balance with In German setup, delete using HIP (regardless of terrain) and delete SSR 5. .

# Clash At Stoumont

## A VASL Replay of the KGP / CG

Steve Crowley and Mike Essex

This was our fourth VASL campaign game; having tried *Red Barricades* three times we graduated to the misty Ardennes in December 1944. We decided to use the historical weather. The X-Heavy Mist is a must play and the feel of the historical events were best met by this option. The Germans didn't suffer from ammunition shortage throughout the game but the chances are high by the final scenario: 20AM chance of shortage 12(2d6), 20 PM – 11, 20N – 10, 21AM – 9, 21PM – 8.

German: Steve Crowley (*comments in italics*)

US: Mick Essex

### 19AM

US at start: 6 Infantry platoons (1 elite, 4 first line and 1 second line, 2x 10-2 one of which ultimately became a 10-3 superhero, 9-2, 3 x 7-0), Med Tank Platoon (all M4A3s) 3 other M4A3s, AT platoon I (forgot to deploy these), 90L AA gun and 4x 76L AT guns, M4 tractor, 2 M8 Armoured Cars, 15 1 Squad foxholes.

US purchases 25CPP: 5x fortifications, SAN increase, 2 infantry platoons (one of each 1<sup>st</sup> Line, 2<sup>nd</sup> Line 8-1 and 7-0), and a Jeep section (I counted on getting the MGs with the rarity factor rolls) 1 CPP saved

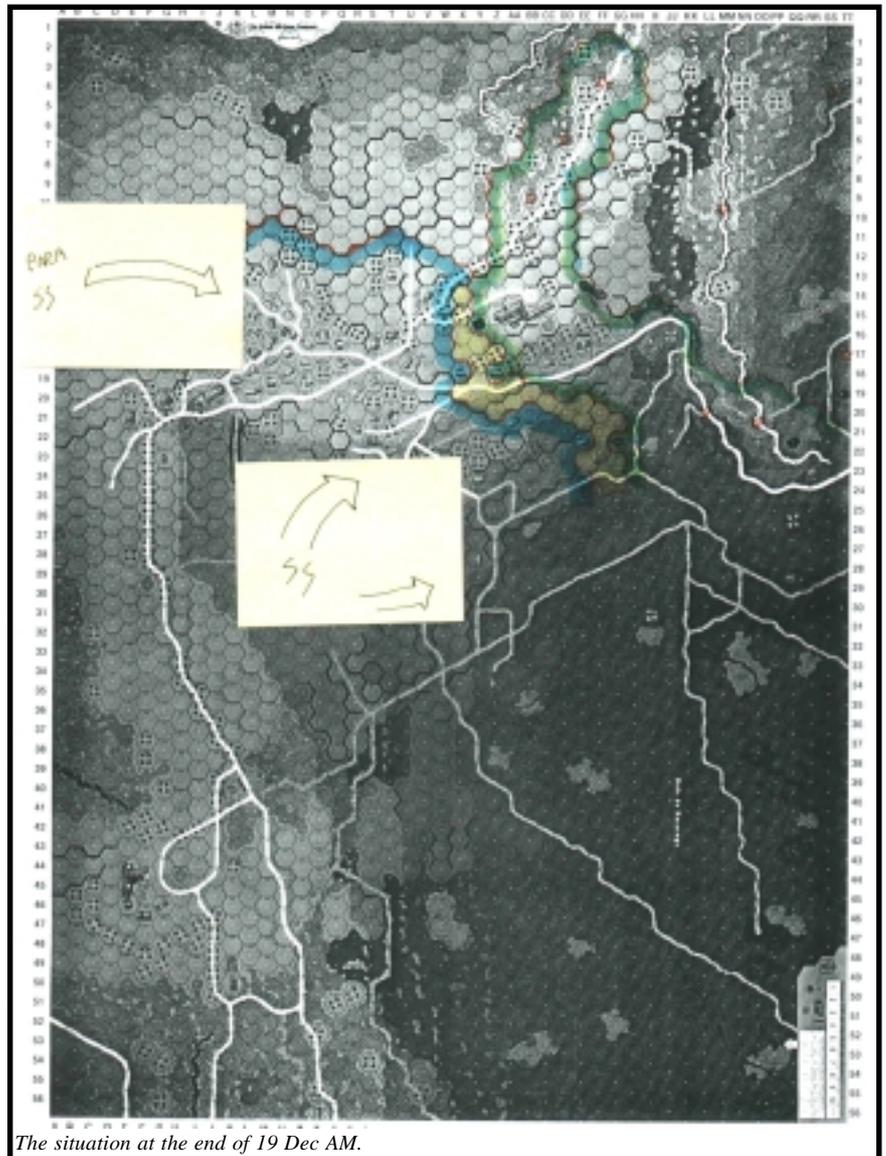
I took the US and for my at start forces I had 6 Infantry platoons with excellent leadership rolling for 2 10-2 and 1 9-2 leaders as well as 3 x 7-0 ninety day wonders (What more could I expect from the Old Hickory 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division). I thought I set up a solid defence with three AT guns forward and two were further back as was the deadly 90mm AA gun, I think in the excitement I forgot to deploy the extra AT gun team (57mm AT guns) but they would probably not made much of a difference as I had placed all the AT guns too far forward. In spite of the numbers my troops were thinly spaced infantry although I did try concentrations on the right (north) in the wood line and in Roua, a small platoon and a host of dummies were in Stoumont proper together with the flamethrower tank. This was not as bad a set up as it may seem as I misunderstood the potential of the Germans to come in from the rear southern flank on turn one and this would have been a more devastating move

if more men had been concentrated there.

The plan was to withdraw slowly while taking some Germans down with me but the X-heavy mist was difficult to defend against. This experience needs to be played to appreciate as the US firepower is completely negated by thick mist. German troops overran the outer lines and I was saved by greater losses by a skedaddle manoeuvre which got most of the infantry back to the Sanatorium. I did lose a 9-2 and a platoon when prematurely turning and fighting just behind Roua. Most effective was the AT Mines which knobbles a couple of Panthers and killed a PzIV (these tanks are very frail

in this kind of late war battle). The deadly 90mm AA gun was quickly disarmed when revealed as it literally blew apart a blundering Panzer IV, which just happened to be going that way.

Another mistake was to throw the first lot of US tanks away for limited gain. The flame tank went down in the village the other two on map at start tanks died in Roua and the five reinforcements tried to stem the German tide in a large group and paid the ultimate price. I didn't make enough of the M8 armoured cars either, which were quickly dispatched by German infantry these are toys which might be better saved for the



The situation at the end of 19 Dec AM.



comeback scenarios.

*German purchase: 3 para infantry, sniper, King Tigers, engineers, flamethrower halftracks, 2 SS infantry, 1 PzGr*

*Purchases reflect the need I felt for bodies on the ground. The Germans start the campaign with a wealth of vehicles so I wanted more infantry. Engineers in case I could get to the Sanatorium early, the paras for the outflanking ability (by SSR). Flamethrower half-tracks are just too cool to ignore and what's a Bulge game without the Tigers? In truth, more Panthers would be a better buy since the only Tiger advantage is an 88LL v 75LL (16FP v 12) against infantry and slightly better side armour. As it was, this last advantage became very important in our game.*

*My overall plan for the first date was simply to find the US forces and destroy them where possible. I reckoned the villages of Stoumont and Roua would then fall by default. I was hoping for an early chance at the Sanatorium but Mick is too good a player to allow a first scenario loss so although I kept it in mind I didn't really think it would be possible.*

*The first scenario ended up with a good German victory – hardly surprising given the juggernaut they have. Loss ratio was particularly good especially in vehicles. Although I lost a few tanks to AT guns and mines, I felt that Mick committed his armour too quickly and I was able to knock out the bulk of it using Panthers and the Tigers. It was apparent early on that the mark IV's were not really up to this battle.*

*I fell short of the Sanatorium but the surrounding villages and much of the higher wooded area was taken given me a good jumping off point for the afternoon*

## 19PM

US Purchase 24 (yes we rolled 11!) : 2 infantry platoons (2<sup>nd</sup> Line 9-2 and a 8-1 which briefly raised to a 9-1 then finally elded to a 8-1 again), 5x fortifications, another Jeep section, 2CPP saved.

I foolishly tried to hold on to the Sanatorium during this one and lost 8 or so elite 667 squads as well as leaders (including one of the 10-2s) and vital support weapons. They then realised that resistance wasn't going to do any good against fanatic SS troopers and were caught out by the attacking mechanised German force. Some losses were put on the German force. One Panther went down to a side shot from the only surviving AT gun, which was latterly knocked out and another was caught by a Bazooka rear shot as it overran a US position with a HIP hs in

it. Of the surviving troops from the first scenario, not one made it away off board and the air power failed to turn up when the mist cleared (for only one turn).

While trying to make the most of the threat of air power this scenario was a bad one for the US. The loss of such numbers meant that a night counterattack was impossible. Subsequent experience was to show how important that was.

*German purchase: 2 SS infantry, OBA mortar, one fort point.*

*The plan here was to put a massive assault against the Sanatorium so I bought extra infantry, more to protect the flanks and clear up the northern woods than anything else. My forces went fanatic for this battle to ensure that the Sanatorium was taken. The OBA mortar was meant to soften up and then provide smoke for the infantry assault. With contact and access problems it only got off one mission and was a bad buy. The assault cleared the remaining approaches to the Sanatorium easily enough and here I think Mick made a bad mistake in hanging around for a turn too long. The German power is awesome in this stage of the battle and a lot of good quality US units were eliminated for fr. Good scenario for the Germans this – although a few loses among the previously untouched Panther force were embarrassing. Also the few infantry losses I took seemed to come from the engineers who couldn't pass a MC to save their lives (literally). They were down to half strength by the end of the scenario. Good idea by Mick to buy the air support – would have caused quite a few losses I suspect.*

*Scenario ended with the Germans in complete control of the map.*

## 19N

US Purchase 44, plus 2 from before: 3 Infantry platoons (2 1st line, 1 Green, 1x 8-0), Platoon of 1 M4A3(76)w and 4 M4A3(75)w with 9-1 armour leader, 2 M10 Tank Destroyers.

US played a Pass here to lick their wounds and get a force together to take on the Germans. There were only 9 and a half squads surviving from the days battle and there were no forces on the map at all.

*German purchases: SS infantry, 3 fort points, sniper.*

*Here I go idle and basically dig in and fortify. Complete waste of fort points here as I build a belt of about 4 hexes of mines in the woods to the north of the san. Complete waste since the Germans do not have many fort points although they may have slowed*

*the American assault thru there for a turn. Given the way the LVPs are not mounting up, I reckon the US will have to attack next day even though he may not be ready since it will be an uphill battle from then on. My idea is to delay as much as possible and force him to play for the Sanatorium, hq and church VC's which I feel will be very difficult for him. My final attack chit is not needed for this night scenario, which is a huge relief. Unless desperate I will save it for the remaining night action*

## 20AM

US Purchase 58: 2 infantry platoons (both Green!!, 9-1 and a 6+1, he eventually got promoted through to 8-0), Platoon of Combat Engineers (with 10-2), Bombardment, Platoon of 5 M4A3's, Platoon of 2 M24 Light Tanks, 1 load of Fortifications (for the dummies largely).

Dawn broke on the Ardennes front although you weren't sure you could make it out in all the mist. Two converging attacks were now tried by the US. Along the main highway came one platoon of M4A3 and the M10s with 5 infantry platoons. From the north through the narrow defile came the M24s and 5 more Shermans along with the Assault engineers and 2 more infantry platoons.

The preliminary bombardment was not all that effective but did succeed in rubbing much of the Sanatorium (3 hexes) and a King Tiger was immobilised. The main thrust was reasonably successful along the highway; a German halftrack got knocked out trying to counter the move and although one Sherman became bogged in the woods the rest made good progress. However, the M4A3(76)w with 9-1 armour leader and an M10 both gacked their main armament and retired to try to repair it in the interphase (and yes neither returned to the fray). Unfortunately the northern defile was a nightmare. Three Shermans went down quickly and a Panther moved into the flank of the attack and forced the rest of the force to retire, only 1 and a half squads exited successfully with the new M24 Chaffees and two M4s. Four more of the squads and the 10-2 leader of the engineers joining up with the US troops moving upstream from the road.

*German purchases: PZGr and 2 forts.*

*The forts were foolishly used to extend the mine belt and to dig foxholes to join up the set-up area. I had already done this by the night but now added in some more foxholes for redundancy in case a vital position was lost.*

The initial bombardment was well judged and caused a few casualties. With more luck Mick might have bagged my ht mounted reserve as well. I resolved to keep the ht reserve further back. Throughout the game I kept quite a large force of infantry/leaders and sw on ht's along the main roads to help seal off any breakthroughs.

The one thrust from the north was easily blocked – I had the fords covered and I managed to get a Panther around the US flank with a good LOS to a large part of the American tank force. Coupled with an assault with PSK toting infantry, the US position fell apart quite rapidly here although loses in Mk IV's were again heavy. I developed a heavy respect for the BAZ 45 and a near loathing for the Mk IV too of which 2 had MA malfs and one only had one mg functioning!

I didn't set up too far forward so the main US effort established themselves on

board although a few loses were inflicted when I set my MG team up in the san with the best leader I had (a 9-2).

Although my loses to combat were not that high, the number of units which were malfed or immobile were starting to take their toll. The refit phase saw a Tiger and a Panther become mobile while the other Tiger repair its MA. 2 Mk IVs didn't repair their MA so became MG platforms.

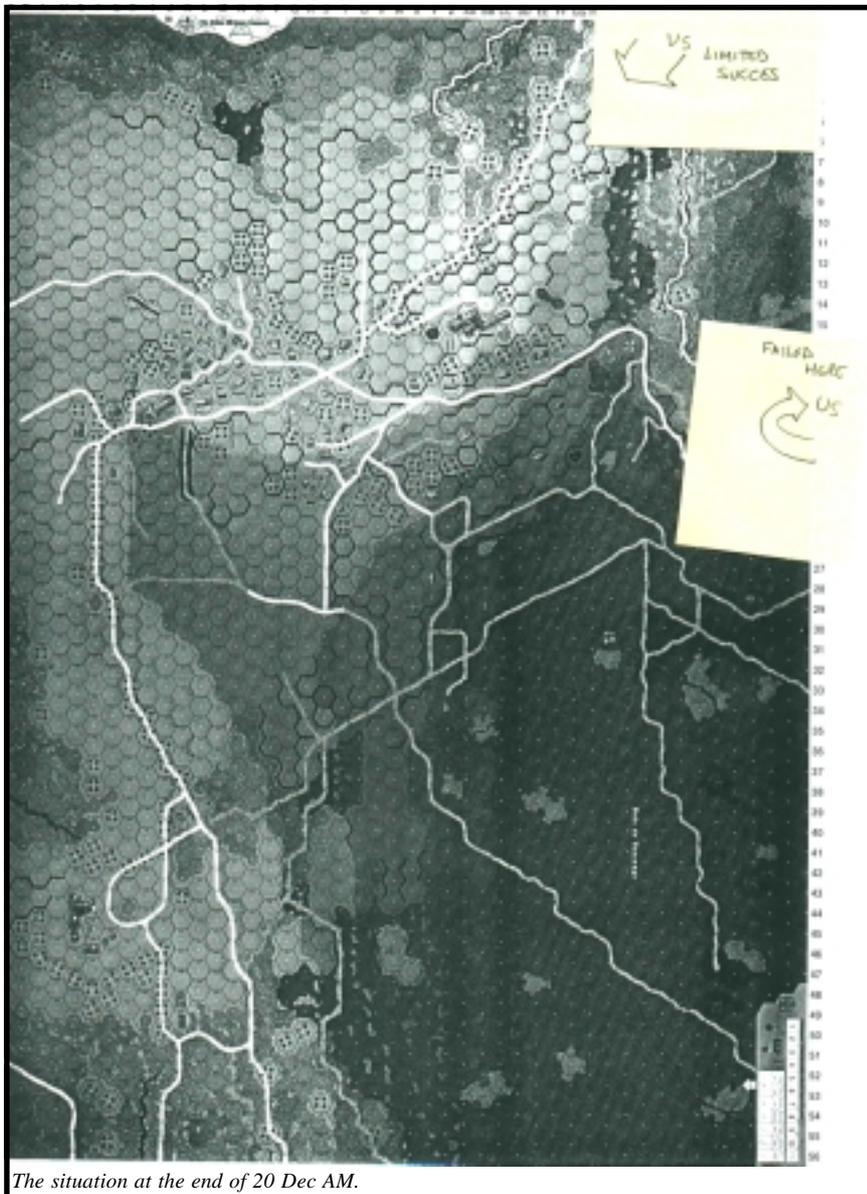
## 20PM

US Purchase 38: 2 infantry platoons (1 1<sup>st</sup> Line, 1 elite, 7-0 and 8-1), Bombardment, 5 M4 Shermans.

Abandoning the defile the US concentrated on moving on from the western edge frontally assaulting the German positions astride the road. The bombardment succeeded in revealing a large German Anti-

Personnel minefield but not much else. It became apparent that the King Tigers had regained their mobility when the US Sherman force tried unsuccessfully to swarm attack one of them. Three point blank rear shots from the puny 75mm guns bounced off the flank and rear armour. The King Tigers became a real problem. They just couldn't be killed and although both main armaments were broken at some point in the campaign they were both repaired.

A German force on the north side of the stream were causing some problems to the infantry trying to link up with the north but a reinforcing group arriving late in the afternoon consisting of the remnants of the TF Jordan troops pushed back in the morning caught 5 SS squads for failure to rout. This is the biggest success to date for the US army. There are still no VP locations captured although now the two flanks were joined together and the sanatorium in sight.



German purchase: MG section (HW1) and 4 forts.

The MG section was bought to bring more infantry on and to give some long range SW support. My tank force was starting to feel the pinch but I've had good luck with the Tigers. The US opened up a massive assault with what looked to be an attempt to link the 2 American set up areas. This they managed early on in the scenario and then a swirling tank battle ensued. How one of the Tigers escaped I really don't know. Mick did everything right but couldn't seem to penetrate the side (and in once case rear) armour of the Tiger. I managed to inflict a few tank loses on the US force but good use of motion status and smoke coupled with the mist meant that most got away. The Tiger was riding its luck in this one and really should have gone down.

I am down to one Mk IV with only MGs after I lost the remaining MK IV's to tank fire and to BAZ fire. For the rest of the game I will have to rely on the big cats – and one of the Tigers has again broken its MA. Third time that has happened to the Tigers to give some indication of how much fighting they have been doing.

Late on in the scenario, I pull some of my force away from the northern edge to help the Sanatorium hold. Mick puts in a limited assault in the north to gain ground and manages to break a few units. I rout them and create a stack to rally which is then surrounded by US forces which were still off the northern edge of the map. Good move by Mick and it cost me 5 squads a leader and some SW. Ouch – that really hurt - would gladly swap both Tigers for that little lot. Stupid move by me there. Despite all this, the US has still to capture any VP locations

and I reckon he will be forced for the 3 buildings now as his only way of winning the game. The Tiger saga continues as it repairs its MA and I get another immobile Panther free although there is another immobile one close to the front lines which means I will lose that one next turn I think.

## 20N

US purchase 46: two more infantry platoons (1 1<sup>st</sup> line, 1 2<sup>nd</sup> line, only 1 7-0!), 1 Armoured infantry Platoon (1<sup>st</sup> Line), 1 platoon of M10 Tank Destroyers, some fortifications.

Night, both sides go active so as to remove the No Move restrictions of the Germans. This saved them some severe grief. Night with both sides firing starshell and with limited movement is a special ASL experience. There were gasps of frustration as first one side then the other failed to make

the most of firefight opportunities due to wayward Starshell placement. At one point I lit up my entire position as my guys covered underneath the converging beauty of 4 starshells.

We did however take the first victory locations for the US on the northern side of the woods. One more Panzer IV goes down (the last) to a critical hit from a Sherman lurking at the base of the slope below the Sanatorium. Some Shermans are trying to move through the woods through the south flank of the main road below the sanatorium. The blazing wreck made progress more difficult in that area as it lit up the road like a torch. Elsewhere a powerful thrust from the defile area north of Sanatorium was more successful crossing into the trees and capturing the northern clearing around QQ28. Unfortunately the Sanatorium hung on and was well defended by tenacious Germans.

The night scenario was fun. The US made good territorial progress and for fewer casualties than in the previous day. It became apparent that the first night scenario should also be made better use of by the US. Daylight attacks even with mist are less likely to yield good results than two night scenarios one of which the Germans will almost certainly be with No Move restrictions.

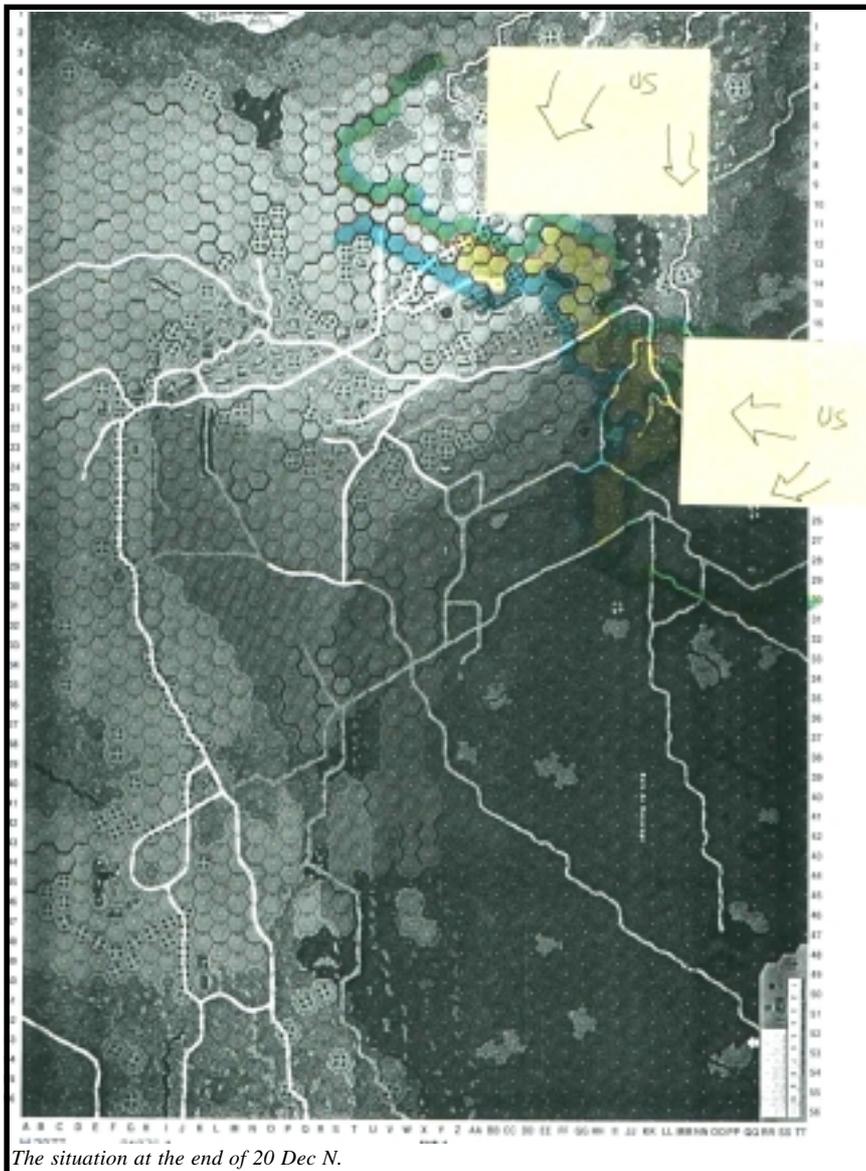
*German purchase: 2 SS PzGr, HWI (mgs), sniper 2 forts.*

*Again my purchases were to get bodies into the battle. The SS PZ Gr would arrive mounted on the ht's and form my reserve. The MG section was meant to help build a kill stack but this was scuppered as they arrived depleted. The forts were mainly used for dummies to try to conceal my true strength. My remaining attack chit is thrown in to avoid the No Move restrictions. Proves to be a good move as the Americans infiltrate all along the front. I keep moving back and inflict a satisfying amount of infantry loses but the exposed immobile Panther goes down. The US forces are in a good position to encircle the san the next day I dread to think what could have been accomplished by the Americans if the Germans were operating under No Move. Those US infantry loses and first day tank loses are coming back to haunt him I think.*

## 21AM

US Purchase 51: 2 infantry platoons (2 elite, 2 x 7-0, where were those guys earlier?), 1 Armoured infantry platoon (1<sup>st</sup> Line, 7-0), M36 Tank Destroyer, last Bombardment

The penultimate scenario started with a pretty effective bombardment, which bagged one Panther and immobilised another. The US objective was to clear the woods and take the Sanatorium. Both of which were achieved. The Germans had left a small rearguard force in the sanatorium and some dummies, which delayed its occupation until about turn 2. Both King Tigers were up front, and menacing one near the main road crossroads south of the Sanatorium covered the approach to Stoumont, the other on the tree line above Roua. This one demolished the M10 supporting the woods attack, which had also been supported by virtually all the halftracks. Two other halftracks plus some Jeeps were detailed to seize a springboard in the woods and orchards due west of the Old Chapel in Stoumont for the final afternoons assault on the town proper. Unfortunately these were shot up by the German Sniper (now on SAN 5), which recalled two halftracks and killed



the 7-0 "lootenant" commanding the force.

In the centre the occupation of the sanatorium was completed by the third turn and with the M36 supporting an attempt was made to prize open the centre of the German defence. With several tanks converging on one King Tiger it looked to be in trouble but once again shrugs off various attempts to get in a side shot. One of the M24s also got killed by a determined bunch of SS troopers in close combat.

On the US Left flank the forces advancing through the woods take a lot of casualties from the other King Tiger. Most of these are halftracks. The US bazooka teams took on and killed at least two German halftracks in return but the KT proved obdurate. Three 60mm mortars are sent to take on the King Tiger first with WP then looking for a critical hit. One long series of multiple hits is rewarded in the last turn of the scenario with a 1,1 followed by a 1,2 goodnight Herr King Tiger.

*German purchase: Panther (depleted), 1 fort, sniper.*

*Yikes - I get few reinforcements now and the panther section is depleted. Ouch. At last a Tiger succumbs - not to tank fire but to mortar fire. Amazingly the other survives as Mick once again can't roll low enough to get thru side armour of the few shots he managed to get on him. A light force mainly made of dummies puts up light resistance for the san while the main force centres on Stoumont. The roads leading to the HQ are covered with PSK toting teams as an armour thrust seems to be the only way the US will make big territorial gains here. I lose a lot of halftracks but not much in the way on infantry and big cats so I'm relatively happy at the end. To win, the US will have to take a multi location stone building off me and move a long way to try to get the HQ from me - all against fanatical SS. A lot of work to do but certainly possible.*

## 21PM

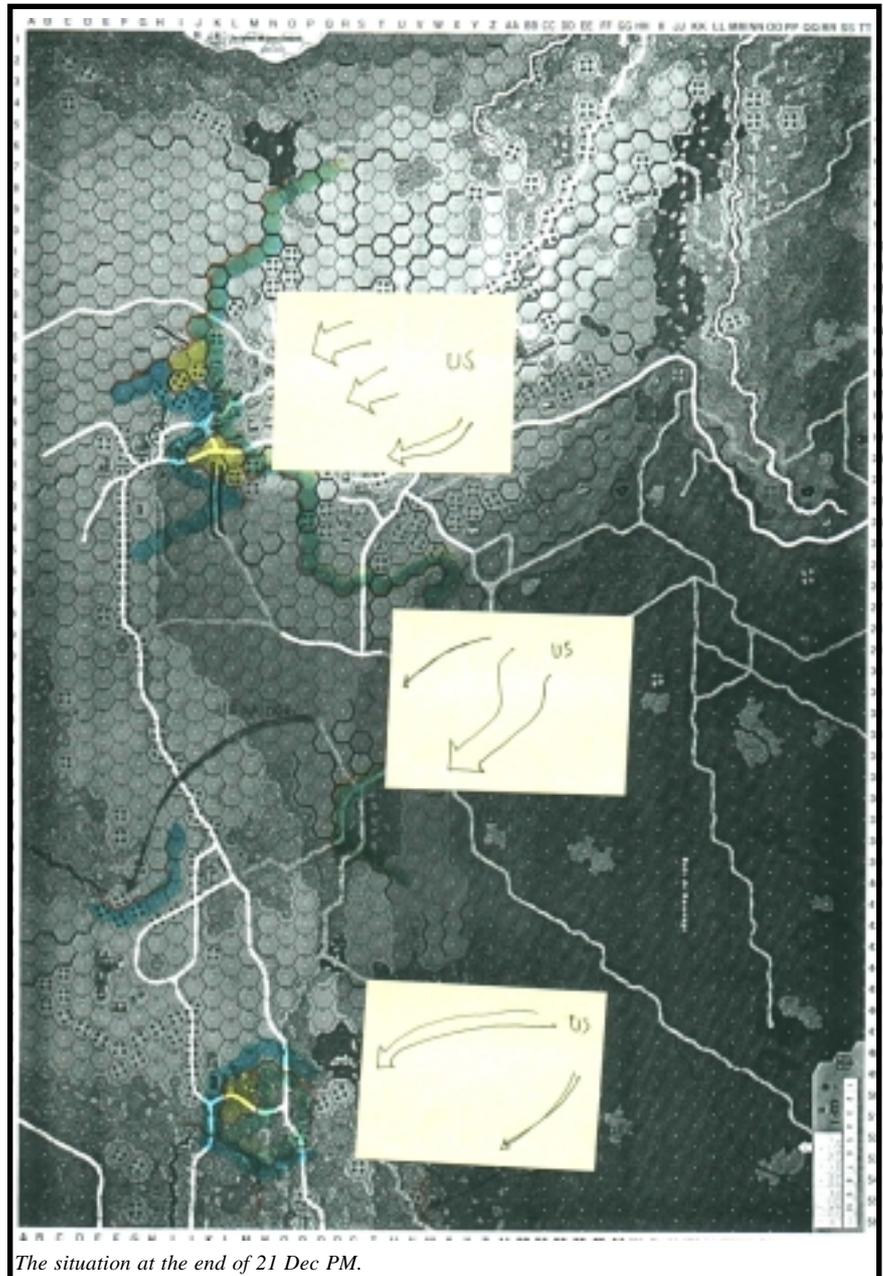
US Purchase 68: Infantry Platoon x1 (1<sup>st</sup> line, 7-0), 1x HMG platoon (on map), 1 assault gun, 1 medium Tank II (4x M4A3(75)w and 1x M4A3(776)w), 1 Medium Tank I (5xM4A1) 1 x fortification for 15 dummies.

The last chance to reach the victory locations, we have 45 LVP but require an impossible 130 so have to go for the Buildings in AA15 (the sanatorium), J19 (Stoumont Church) and P56 (the Chapel St Anne). I suspect this is often the prospect confronting the US in a KGP I campaign. The Church in Stoumont is defended by lots

of infantry and three unknown vehicles which turned out to be a King Tiger and a Panther covering the rear (as well as a FT halftrack). The Tiger sits on a ridge line next to the church with both flanks covered by buildings. The Panther eliminated my remaining M10 when it drove forward to interdict the two positions but not until after a brilliant bit of shooting took out yet another of those immobilised Panthers in Roua. Most of the Germans in Roua turned out to be dummies and the drive into that village was successful. The remaining Germans were killed and captured allowing the advance to continue from there.

Further east the objective was a long way away but a flying platoon of two halftracks and a jeep were detailed to work their way around the woods and to try to seize

it until reinforcements arrive. I lost one jeep and a 347 here transferring into the road area, which had been secured towards the end of the morning fight by a 7-0 and a 346. The other vehicles arrived and they set off to try to turn the flank. Unfortunately the jeep got shot up and the two halftracks unloaded the troops who decided it was better if they went on foot. The reinforcement infantry platoon entered from that road with the aim of linking up with this platoon to secure the road edge. Some halftracks were lost on both sides. The Germans had two Panthers in the area but local intelligence uncovered a 75 infantry gun in woods in the north of the German position which was taken out by mortar fire from the treeline. A US hero captured the weapon and silenced it. By the end of the day there were two Sherman Tanks edging



The situation at the end of 21 Dec PM.

their way into the woods supported by the HW platoon led by Major Easy (the unit CO and superhero 10-3). Meanwhile around the Chapel the two platoon co-ordination failed to bring the two attacking formations into position together in time. With only 20 men closing in on the St Anne Chapel these suddenly faced a vastly superior force of SS, I counted 12 squads maybe more in the area including a Flamethrower and DC assault engineers. Clearly Steve wasn't going to be suckered in that area. If I loved my 60mm mortars he was very keen on the FT halftracks one of which was parked next to the St Anne Chapel while the other turned out to be behind the Stoumont Church.

The assault on Stoumont was to be helped by the surviving armour from the previous fighting (an M24 and a M4A3 both with Girostabilisers). However the M24 gacked his MA and then tried to repair and got recalled. There might have been some merit in having the tank as a mobile smoke wagon but I felt the risk was worth it. The SM8 capability is very impressive. Although held up by the buildings in the ridge line persistence had placed the US force in Stoumont by turn 6 but without having inflicted much damage on the Germans. A German halftrack moved around the US flank only to be taken out by one of the US assault guns. One idea I had had was to try and skirt the right flank south of Stoumont in Jeeps armed with Bazookas and the flame thrower but this was shot up by the Germans in the bell tower. Firing White Phosphorus from the M4/105s compromised the steeple position in Stoumont. WP was running out in the mortars when the first Shermans drove into Stoumont. We had 8 driving into the area as well as 3 M4/105s. Two of the lead Shermans were destroyed by the King Tiger one came to grief on the wire fence a Sniper bagged one of the M4/105 commanders and the other tanks tried to skirt, sneak and otherwise close in on the formidable position.

By Turn 7 the US forces had made their way into Stoumont and with 30FP under a 9-2 leader and another hero in the advance guard had forced the retreating Germans at the base of the church. The final throw was a 2DC totin' half squad trying to put a payload into one of the German stacks. This was stymied and attempts to close further were foiled. The final assault engineer squad also went down to heavy German fire earlier trying to place. By the end of the afternoon a melee at the base of the Church tower was as near as we got to the victory location.

*German purchase: Panther (depleted) with 8-1 armour leader, Inf gun (depleted)*

*fort*

*Another set of depleted reinforcements. Getting painful now although I manage to avoid low ammo and get an armour leader t last. My main defence will be based on Peipers HQ with about 16 squads scattered around the woods. The best leaders will go here including a 10-2. 3 Panthers and a supporting FT HT will provide the armour support. I still have a lot of halftracks and I will use these to bolster the FP of fire groups and to get behind the US positions to cause a nuisance. The san went last turn so I put a string holding force of 11 or so squads plus a panther, the remaining KT and another FT HT around the village near the church to hold on as long as possible. The right flank here is held largely by dummies but with a few HIP to provide surprise. I've spent too much on forts so the final scenario leaves me with few choices for HIP and dummies. Bad choice early in the CG by me there. A small mobile reserve is set up but the 2 positions are really in isolation. The usual PSK teams are set up interdicting all the paved roads.*

*The initial assault moves in against the villages and quickly captures them. My HIP works in one or 2 paces but this is a major US attack and all I do is create a few speed bumps. I fall back near the church and fight toe to toe where the fanatic SS in stone buildings prove difficult to lodge. However, US firepower is enormous as every squad has either a BAZ or a MMG and I can do more that fall back, rally and fall back again. The attack founders getting close to the church as I have a kill stack in it and also the KT and Panther start coming into play. Mick runs out of time to take the church (and a little luck with some of his tanks going down to snipers and MA disablement).*

*I expected a bigger attack against the HQ but this never materialised and the closest a US unit got to the HQ was about 3 or 4 hexes away. Barring the path at that time was large stack with an 838 +ft, a ft ht and 2 Panthers plus a MG support team. This area was quite easily held although the nip and tuck in the woods around the HQ was good fun. Game ended up as a German victory with the US gaining one of the 3 buildings he needed for victory.*

## AFTERMATH

Well it was bloody wasn't it?

I started with 6 infantry platoons, bought 16 more Infantry Platoons, 2 Armoured Infantry Platoon and an Assault engineer platoon. For a total of 77 squads, 28 half squads and 21 leaders. These had 22 MMG, 24 Bazookas, 24 Mortars a

flamethrower and 2 Demo charges. as well as 1 50cal HMG and 3 other HMG.

That's losses of 13 leaders out of 21 and 65.5 squad equivalents out of 91. I also lost or broke the flamethrower, 11 MMG, 18 Bazookas and 18 Mortars.

Armour was also significant. I started with 8 M4A3s and bought 5 more Medium platoons for 28 Sherman Tanks in total. These were made up of 5x M4s, 5x M4A1s, 2 M4A3(76)ws and 8 M4A3(5)ws and 13 M4A3s in total. I finished up with 8 so lost or had recalled 20 Shermans and 1 out of 3 M4/105s. I lost all the tank destroyers and M24s as well as all save one of the 8 halftracks I had.

*It certainly was. I started with 12 squads and bought a further 41 squads including the 2 HW support sections and 3 para infantry. By the end of the scenario the surviving 447 para infantry had been battle hardened to 468 – a useful little force. So of 53 squads I had about 28 left. Until this calculation, I really didn't think my infantry loses were that bad. Ouch. Leadership throughout the game was pretty much a mass of 8-1 but my prize assets were a single 10-2 defending the HQ at the end and a 9-2 acting as a rearguard defending the church. Of the tanks, I was frankly too timid with the flamethrower halftracks and they survived. One KT survived the game – incredible with all the pressure Mick put them under – they almost became the focus of the game at one point. I started with 8 Panthers, bought 2 sections more, which only resulted in 2 more and had 3 left at the end. 7 out of 10 lost. I didn't buy any extra MkIVs, I realised early on that this was not their battle and the losses of 8 out of 8 would seem to bear this out. I'm sure Mick was licking his lips in anticipation as soon as he discovered one of these tanks.*

*Most potent memories of the game:*

*1] The German fanatic assault on the Sanatorium – awesome power from the Germans Coupled with a too late withdrawal by the US resulted in a significant German victory. A lot of good quality US squads went down the tinny and a few leaders as well.*

*2] Mick's assault on one of the King Tigers in the mid game. He did everything right and after I had fired the MA, MGs, etc to change CA numerous times, the covering infantry had fired their PSK and PF he was left with a few nice shots in the side armour. They all bounced. I remember at the time, across the havoc of war, thinking "You deserved better there Mick". That's ASL though.*

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# A BERSERK!er at Intensive Fire

Trev Edwards

I travelled down to this year's INTENSIVE FIRE with Ben Jones since we're both from the NW of England. Bournemouth is a long way from home by British standards and there's no motorway, no equivalent of an interstate, for a good proportion of the journey approaching from the direction we were coming in from. A pleasant enough journey, although we were stuck for what seemed like an age behind the same lorry on the windy A roads in Wiltshire. After we arrived, Ben and I sat down to a playtest of an Ian Daghish's scenario set in Normandy. I don't think Ian was entirely convinced that our very one sided result reflected the balance of the scenario as it stood.

The thing I like about INTENSIVE FIRE, apart from the ASL, is its vicinity to Bovington Tank Museum. I usually try to pop over on the Friday and I was able to take Luis Calcada, his fellow Portuguese ASL player (whose name I think was John) and also Ian Daghish. I went round Bovington with my new camcorder. However, I'm not used to this piece of kit and the tape needed some editing. I had not pressed stop after recording the Hanomag half-track and there was a lot of tape of nothing but the ground with my legs and feet walking along as I moved from tank to tank. What I was doing was stopping taping as I pointed the camera at the tanks and starting it as I walked to the next! "D'oh!" Fortunately I corrected this pretty quickly but the footage of some of the big cats I was filming was lost.

Speaking of big cats, I was really pleased that I went along to the Tank museum that day since they had put the largely restored Tiger I on display. One of only 6 in captivity, this was the first Tiger captured intact by the western allies. I was regaled with the story by a veteran who was on hand at the museum a couple of years ago: The tank was apparently being delivered by a supply crew when, on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1943 it was engaged by Churchill tanks from 48RTR on the Djebel Djaffa in Tunisia. The Tiger is pretty much immune to 6pdr AP shot from the front in real life, as in ASL, but a wild fluke followed by another no less lucky shot meant the tank was effectively disabled. The first shot ricocheted off the underside of the barrel of the 88, caught the bottom of the gun mantle and then embedded itself side-on in the turret ring. You can still see the

imprint of the tiny 6pdr shell at the join between the hull and turret and the marks left under the gun by its passing. The second shot hit the port side lifting point on the turret and again ricocheted, this time killing the commander (the book by Fletcher reports the commander as being wounded). The crew surrendered and the Tiger was now in British hands. The tank was pretty much stripped down by the allies and very detailed report produced by the School of Tank Technology. The Tank has been in disrepair for the decades since then and has spent a lot of its time with the turret set up alongside the hull on a special stand. I had never seen the tank with the turret in place and was really pleased to see the now restored and repainted (in an accurate colour) sat in a large sand tray. The museum has examples of most German tanks and CT guns but the Tiger II is a Porsche turret and the Panther was built in the UK from parts recovered after the war. Somehow that Tiger I manages to be the star exhibit.

Back to the Kiwi hotel and my first competitive game. I met Nigel Blair and we settled on 'Assaulting Tes' from *Schwerpunkt 8*. I'd had this issue for less than a week and was itching to get a game in. I spoke to Ben before I played and he warned me that his experience of the playtest was the Russians shouldn't set up just in the village or the German firepower would take them apart at long range because there are very few blind spots where the Russians can hide. Having passed this snippet on to Nigel and having got the German side I was surprised that he didn't take the advice offered. He also hadn't taken the opportunity to set up the Su-100 HIP. Since the time Ben playtested this scenario, which sees an assault over the board 50 hill into the board 48 "crossroads" village by a strong force of SS including four Jagdpanthers, the German set up has been moved back so that only a couple of setup hexes on the hill can see the village. I set up two of the Jagdpanthers there and didn't fail to kill the SU100 with the first PFPh. The scenario went all my way as far as luck was concerned. Nigel's Russkies had a good (by Soviet standards) OBA module because it has a pre-registered hex. Nigel was very unfortunate, pulling two red cards right out of the 6-and-2 mix. It didn't take too long before I was into the village and a fairly straight forward win. I didn't particularly enjoy the game and felt bad for

Nigel because he hadn't had much chance.

That evening I got to play Simon Croome. I had played him before, I think it was last year when I was soundly trounced in a game of 'The Last Tiger'. In that game some really bad play on my part followed by a little bad luck saw me lose heavily. We settled on 'Husum Hotfoot' from by brand spanking new *Schwerpunkt 8*. A late war attack by a combined arms British force against the board 10 village. The main feature of the British OB is the presence of two Wasps, the carriers with a FT as MA. The carrier crews were pinned several times but never suffered more than this. It seemed each time the FT fired the result was a KIA as my dice were really hot. I'll not forget stupidly running a stack up a road covered by the German HMG, which caused casualties (I just overlooked the Germans covering the roadway) and I guess I was pretty lucky. We also completely zoned out the bog checks my vehicles were due to make for passing next to the marsh hex on the right flank. Derek Tocher pointed this out after the game was finished because he knows I loathe kibbitzers. We rolled the dice a few times Simon and I, just to see but no high rolls came so we agreed that the win was fair.

The next morning it was the first round of the team tourney. I was in a team consisting of myself, Dave Schofield and Michael Davies, one of the players who had been new to ASL tourneys at our last BERSERK! event in March.

In the first round I had the pleasure of playing a Dane with whom I have played at least three or four times before at past IF tourneys, Michael Hastrup-Leth. He is a really good player so I was expecting a competitive game. The best scenario of the first round was 'CH41 Test of Nerves', a tense scenario from the golden era of early Critical Hit magazines, which had been used at IF before. Well this game went all wrong for me. Playing the Brits, I responded to probing fire on the position of my HIP Firefly by firing in the AFPh. I got one hit on Wittman's tiger with a 17pdr but it failed to kill. Everything that followed went Michael's way pretty much. He made a methodical, carefully executed attack, which really paid off, not least because nothing I did worked. I recall not breaking a single enemy squad during the whole of the game. A good example of what as going on: A German

squad runs in the open, right in front of my hidden Cromwell, at one hex range in the VCA and TCA. I get nothing from the PBF (12 at -2) of the MGs and neither of my shots with the MA (including IF) did as much as pin those Jerries. His AFPH sees a successful PF and a dead Cromwell. I have little doubt that Michael would have won anyway, his attack was flawless. My whining about the dice on this occasion is only because I didn't give him a very good game, Michael was embarrassed for me. Still an enjoyable experience because he is such a nice fellow.

Round two that afternoon and I'm playing my old friend Derek Tocher in a game of 'First and Inches'" a truly excellent scenario. A light force of US infantry tries to stop a strong German force from seizing a city board. Then a lot of US forces enter and try to take as much of the board back. Each stone building next to a road that the Germans hold counts a point per player turn. My attack as the Germans went really well and Derek's counter was fierce, but I was successfully holding him off at first. In the mid-game I'm faced with a tough choice of moving an encircled squad and leader into CC with an important, pinned enemy unit. To advance, I have to go CX, my ambush fails and I lose my stack in a subsequent turn. I'll also not forget in a hurry my losing my Whirlwind FlakPzIV, trying to move it away rather than shoot at the Jackson that had a bead on it. I made smoke and it was whacked as I tried to start it. Derek played a good game, aggressively hunting StuGs with his Hellcat. It came down to the last turn, although my penultimate turn effort of trying to secure new buildings with a few HS was pretty forlorn. I took Derek quite close and we both acknowledged it as having been a good game. It would prove important to the results of the tourney as well.

The next morning I find myself paired up against Luis Calcada, a long time acquaintance from Portugal. I have to say that I found the final round's choice of scenario to be somewhat limited. I'd have chosen 'High Danger' as being the most balanced of the three on offer, but Luis wanted to get away sooner rather than later. I agreed to play 'Batterie du Port' and was very lucky to have the Vichy French. I set up with the wire denying the oncoming US the far side of the hedgerow. Luis overran my token "speedbump" squads without incident. He then rolled his tanks around behind my guns. I'd turn, fire and then IF the guns, trying to take as many shots as I could. I was fortunate because none of them malfunctioned. Luis' infantry was having a hard time making progress as well as my HMG rained down fire from the top of the tower. By the end of the third Vichy turn,

my guns had eliminated two of the Stuarts, caused the crew to abandon a third and I had caught a US infantry stack moving in the open with the HMG in the tower which caused havoc. Add to this the poor RPh rolls Luis had and it isn't difficult to understand why he quit. I think that this scenario was a rare unbalanced effort from *Schwerpunkt 5* pack and I feel that getting the French gave me the win.

The tourney was a close run thing. Despite my losing my first two games, my team was still in the running for the main prize. If Dave Schofield had managed to win his game of 'High Danger' we'd have taken first, but a final CCPh didn't go his or our way. I recall David as being up for the individual prize as well, so it was a double blow for him to lose.

The team tourney is split into two, an Elite and a 1<sup>st</sup> Line division. The Elite team prizes went to Luis Calcada, Paulo Ferreira and Russell Gough, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Line team prizes went to Tim Bunce, Paul Kettlewell and Graham Smith. The top prize, for the best individual effort was won by Derek Tocher. Adds significance to the game I lost to him since two prizes swung on that result. This means Derek has won both IF and BERSERK! in the same year, an outstanding performance. He is the first person to do the double. I personally enjoyed myself a great deal, it is no shame to lose to players who are stronger than yourself, so I don't mind my record coming away from this event. Next stop BERSERK! 2003.

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

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# Dien Bien Phu

Michael Davies

*Dien Bien Phu* (DBP) takes *ASL* to Vietnam. After resisting the Japanese for several years the Vietnamese next struggled against the French. The game provides a large map of part of the Dien Bien Phu battle site, with plenty of counters, overlays and even some brand new maps.

The main map is good, featuring a number of hills, covered in wire, shellholes and sparse vegetation. Three new board sized maps are added, mostly open terrain with some vegetation. In addition there are two new overlays, a village with rice paddies, and a landing strip. The landing strip is a four hex by seven hex runway. The last map is a compact micro hex copy of the main map useful for planning or post victory tale telling. Trust me it will be a big hit with the ladies!

The counters are nicely done. At some stage in the planning or production process Critical Hit decided to issue the game with two sets of counters, a good idea and hopefully not too expensive. As a result we end up with a lot of ace stuff! In *DBP* the North Vietnamese (PAVN) have a similar counter range to WW2 Russians, with access to some captured or donated American equipment. This ranges from M2 Mortars and Recoilless Rifles through to two types of Bazookas. For some support weapons and concealment counters you will need Axis Minor counters, most players will already have these, apologies for those who do not. The Vietnamese are Stealthy, can use Human Waves, and receive very gentle Commissars. For certain rules they are treated as Japanese, allowing them to create DC Heroes, benefiting from inflicting a +2 search DRM in certain terrain on their opponents, 10% HIP benefit for daylight scenarios, 25% at Night, and free Tunnel with every Pillbox benefits. The bad news is limited to an inability to deploy or recombine, and a restriction on multi-hex firegroups, specifically they cannot form them! The rules are consistent with accounts of the PAVN in action.

French troops turn up in British colours! A bold decision that improves the broken side morale of French troops. New counters are provided for French paratroopers, leaders, several AFVs, and some support weapons. The French paratroopers are very tough. ELR of 5, underscored morale, 6-4-8s with higher broken side morale. A good selection of SMC give distinctive Leadership to "British" counters. Helping the French are T'ia Irregulars, good guerrilla fighters, who proved weak in a stand up fight.

The rules book gives a good account of the siege of Dien Bien Phu, equipment descriptions, and rules for a Campaign Game using the large historical map. As the map represents part of the entire base the French do receive some choice of reinforcements. Looks like fun, and will appeal to players who excel at planning.

Moving on to the fifteen scenarios, these

range from small scale actions to massive monster games on the main map. PTO rules are in play, with SSRs affecting terrain in some cases. Before play it really pays dividends to brush up on Chapter G, and the rules for Concealed and HIP units, searching and fortifications. Some scenarios employ Night rules so a brush up on those is a fair idea. As always read the Chapter H notes for any AFVs or Guns!



## DBP1 Bruno's Flak Attack

This is a combined arms French attack, with paratroopers, armour, artillery and air support, against a portion of a dug in PAVN Flak battery. The French force is very strong, this is partially offset by the strong Vietnamese position and HIP status.

PTO is in effect, Brush replaces woods and Bamboo, with the other terrain present being Kunai, Huts and Irrigated rice paddies. The latter resemble gentle marshland surrounded by paddy banks that act as hedges. The Chapter G rules give good coverage, and are a bit easier to understand when you have a defined paddy type. Shamefully I have yet to use a paddy bank counter, and generally avoid the bits they surround. It is crucial to note entrenched infantry treat bank hexsides as hedges under G8.4, this has a significant effect on play.

Have a good look at the rules for Air support, Napalm, and Creeping barrage particularly if you are the French.

## DBP1 PAVN Set Up

If an Oerlikon or DSHK 38/46 Flak gun survives you win, you do not even need to have another unit in play. Very simple victory conditions, but a tough fight to achieve them. Another way to win eliminate the entire French OB; erm moving on!

French forces are very strong. Elite paratroopers with ELR of 5, underscored morale and a broken side morale of nine, they outnumber you roughly two to one. Support weapon allocation is about equal, with a slight edge in your favour if you factor in the flak guns. Leadership is about even. Stacking the odds against you, Air Support, 105mm OBA and three light tanks, each with a 75mm Gun.

Your own troops are tough; Elite, stealthy with an ELR of four. Further you can human wave, exchange two Leaders for commissars, and have the benefit of twelve trenches. Flak Guns can be emplaced and of course hidden in concealment terrain. Up to 10% of your force, well in this case one squad, can set up hidden in concealment terrain. The rest of your infantry can be concealed, Trenches can be hidden in Kunai.

Terrain is mostly favourable. It is unlikely you will need to trudge through a rice paddy, your opponent must either go through or round one. Irrigated paddies slow movement to a crawl. It takes 3 MF to move into an irrigated hex, with a +1 for crossing a paddy bank. Moving on top of the banks is quicker with less cover. Tanks risk bog on entry/exit for no real advantage. Banks provide a +1 DRM against fire, and restrict the line of sight of entrenched troops in a similar way to a hedge. Expect tank movement to be either north of or between the two paddies. By guessing how the Chaffees will move West after passing the Paddy you can make reasonable guesses as to Bazooka placement. Up front in a hut or a trench if you are aggressive, further back if you are more cautious. In most games you will have the choice of long range shots, offset against the loss of concealment. Even when you do manage a hit game mechanics drop to kill numbers down considerably to reflect the historical loss rate of Chaffees. A BAZ 45 has a to kill of two for a frontal shot, the 1950 Super Bazooka a rather better six. Side or rear shots get you into higher numbers. Even with low to kill and to hit numbers some French players will not want risk a tank, destruction is unlikely but deliberate immobilisation is a real threat. Aiming to kill all three tanks would be ambitious. A more realistic plan is to deter deep penetration or rapid forwards movement by armour. I would be happy to stop the tanks driving through the huts searching for me by causing PTCs.

The huts do provide concealment and light cover. Given the expectation of 105mm OBA, making a stand in the village is hazardous. It is almost certain the barrage will hit the eastern edge of the village then move west. Attacks on the 16FP table can be resisted if you are entrenched. The real risk is concealment loss either through MCs or PTCs caused by collapsing huts. There is a slight risk of blaze followed by spreading flames. Despite these harsh observations there are some benefits in setting up in the village. Most are to do with interdicting French entry or delaying subsequent movement. Also worth considering you can emplace guns in hut hexes, or use trenches there either as a feeble anti tank obstacle or to have a small presence up front to slow or kill the French. As PAVN you can set up 10% of your force, one squad, hidden This is not an especially good idea in brush, the only reason for doing it in a hut would be to give a better line of sight into the rice paddy. Although this is an option it might not be a really good idea.

Some terrain is confusing. Orchard hexes appear on the map, presumably they are not in play, further a swamp hex might also be open ground. This is a point to clarify before play starts. I suspect orchard and swamp are open ground. This means less cover to complicate French entry and to make the end game searching for your last unit a bit easier. The swamp would be missed as it restricted tank movement.

Summing up terrain helps by restricting French movement options, providing concealment terrain to allow you to set up hidden or concealed, and plenty of potential locations for your units to make search difficult.

Your set up options are diverse. The best set up anticipates French plans and counters them. An absurd example of this would be a lone gun hidden in an area you know will be bypassed by the French, later causing carnage or staying put to satisfy the victory conditions. Planning is complicated by OBA and air support, both of which are variable in effect. OBA punishes concentrated defence, and provides some cover by a +1 DRM for lines of sight through FFE. Without artillery you can move more freely and are spared a number of 16 or 20 IFT attacks. Air support is very variable, most welcome if a mistaken air attack happens, less so if it starts a fire in the middle of your chosen Kunai patch.

If boresighting was in effect a serious attempt to kill or hurt the French as they enter play would have an excellent chance of working. Without boresighting it is difficult to see a forwards defence doing massive damage on turn one. I am not sure an aggressive defence is the way to win. There are a lot of factors to consider. First the benefit of trenches, good leadership and high morale/ELR give your small force resilience. With reasonable luck you should stand up to quite heavy French attacks whilst inflicting damage. Against this you have to consider bad luck. A single broken squad weakens your force, break two or three in one turn and French chances of Victory will grow. Rate of Fire is another variable. With hot dice or well thought out fire lanes French entry can be hazardous. With average luck a viable proportion of the French forces will survive, to move against your newly revealed positions. Firing the flak guns would reveal their positions exposing them to IFT, OBA, Napalm, tank gun fire for the best part of seven or eight turns. Despite my reservations it could work, amazing luck would help, French troops moving in stacks would help even more!

If you see an aggressive defence as the way to go, set up in platoons with good lines of sight to the Eastern edge. This doesn't mean a neat line of Trenches on row H, instead aim for carefully sited spots with good lines of fire to the French entry areas or spots they will move through. The guns can join you in the front line or start further West.

With the certainty of a serious attack developing another option is to remain concealed as long as possible, with the Guns Hidden. There are a lot of places to hide - something like 55, hut, Kunai or Brush hexes, and even the dried out pond for 56. Probably locations further West are more practical than those in the Village, certainly the best place to hide is anywhere the French do not look! Brush and huts are easier to search, with hidden units being revealed by

Infantry moving through them. Kunai must be searched or troops therein revealed by fire. OBA, Air support, and IFT attacks are unavoidable, concealed troops in trenches can soak up a lot of fire, high morale and Leadership will help survive as well. There is a high chance of hurting searching units and remaining concealed. A few sniper attacks might discourage masses of low odds IFT attacks by the French, chance of this is slightly below 2% or 1/54 (always seems higher on the receiving end).

If hiding is favoured plan you still have a lot of decisions to make. A twelve trench complex or twelve separate outposts are poor choices. Three or four small defensive groups has a better chance of a win. At least one will avoid being hit by OBA/Air support, tensely awaiting arriving paratroops and tanks.

It can help to think of set up in terms of groups of units. With six squads and three guns thinking in terms of full strength platoons is not very helpful. One idea is to plan in terms of individual guns and three two squad units, then plan defence in terms of six areas of resistance. Generally the guns should be in the back field West of row L. All three guns on row L is playable if you aim to open fire early in the game. If you plan to win by hiding one or two guns further West staying silent till later in the game has a good chance. The pairs of squads or weak platoons start two or three hexes in front. Tailor dispositions to terrain. If really stuck maybe one platoon in the middle flanked by another on either side. Give each platoon a LMG, and a bazooka, give two a Mortar the other a MMG, add a Leader for a very basic set up. That is good enough to play a credible game. If you really want to win a bit more work is necessary. Make decisions about the location of support weapons, hide a squad in a clever ambush position and link your dispositions by the spare trenches. Avoid a linear defence, it begs to be hit by a creeping barrage, go for a staggered defence as far as possible. A deeper level of planning gives thought to rout paths, and how the defence will hold together as units are broken or disabled. All sounds very simple, trust me it isn't. Even an expert player will work hard to pull this off. Weaker players like myself will struggle, but I play this game because I enjoy it not because I'm good at it!

Before play starts, give thought to exchanging two Leaders for commissars. This is an option to consider in every scenario. PAVN commissars are kindly souls who use sarcasm rather than bullets, there are no deadly penalties for failing to rally. A slight downer is commissar quality, basic morale is an excellent nine or ten, unfortunately half of your commissars will be penalised by a +1 Leadership modifier. My own choice is invariably to exchange the maximum number of Leaders for commissars. Give thought to spotted fire for the mortars. Assigning support weapons to Leaders. Setting up a Leader with a gun crew. As PAVN you cannot form multi location firegroups, French troops in Kunai are similarly restricted. Try to avoid the barrage impact area, it is likely to start on the F hexrow and move forwards through part of the village. Despite this an entrenched unit forward of your main position is helpful. A difficult decision as the post is isolated but commit to your choice once you have decided.

During play, be alert. Look out for fleeting shots at stacks of units. Seek to inflict search casualties, withdraw concealed units, blaze away with any that are exposed. One way to look at your squads is as mines. Any hex adjacent can inflict casualties on searching units, moving onto their hex Kops for a TPF attack including any supporting MGs. Try to avoid or survive the OBA. Hope for two red cards or a series of failed contact rolls. Good luck with the Hell diver, Napalm is awesome. Aside from damage at ground zero, fire will spread to adjacent hexes an excellent way to flush out your troops. After one bomb run and a quick 16 IFT strafe the plane disappears, a mistaken air attack is possible, very helpful if it happens.

Expect a very difficult game. Keep good records of your hidden troops dispositions, and remember where they are. Do not give up early in the game, do not give up part way through the game or even on turn eight just one gun in play earns you a win, anything other than the last gun is unimportant, you don't even need a crew for it!

## DBP1 French Entry And Attack

To win seek out and Destroy the PAVN Flak guns. OK you can also win by capturing them, or by the guns malfunctioning then becoming disabled. To achieve this you must coordinate a fast combined arms attack against a small but tenacious defender.

Enemy forces have been described above at length! With PAVN forces setting up first you will gain some information from looking at concealed stacks of defending units. Admittedly this will not tell you where the guns are but should give a few ideas as to the best approach to the Village and almost as important a reasonable spot to start aim creeping barrage. With three hidden guns and a hidden squad plus SMC and Support weapons it is still possible to identify potential gaps in the defence. An obvious weakness would be a line of concealed units on a single hexrow that simply begs for an artillery attack. Do not expect this too often, and keep in view the defenders could be entrenched which offers some protection against OBA.

A Creeping Barrage can vary considerably in destructiveness. The rules are similar to the regular OBA section, with a few twists. In this scenario a barrage has potential to do a lot of damage, though more often it will help by discovering some concealed or hidden units, destroying huts and worrying your opponent. Barrage will always arrive, a black card coincides with your attack, an initial red draw starts the artillery preparation early. Premature arrival might help by sweeping forwards enemy positions with fire before you arrive, the downsides are it puts your plans a bit out of schedule and might be past the enemies' front line when you arrive. On balance a timeous arrival is better, an early arrival makes you attack a little bit more difficult but doesn't mean you've lost! Planning when to lift the barrage is hard to judge exactly. Keeping the FFE ahead of your troops is important, to assist entry, next use the module as OBA to hit concentrations of enemy troops. My best guess is to convert on turn three or four. I could easily be wrong and creeping across the board to lift on turn seven or eight be a better tactic.

Having planned your artillery support give

thought to entry. Suspected enemy dispositions are important. If a horde of stacks are on hexrow H a cautious entry will work. Make use of smoke, assault movement and entry in the advance phase, any cover provided by hindrances aiming to lose a small proportion of your troops to enemy fire or failure to rout. If PAVN forces appear to be concentrated much further West a more aggressive entry can be risked. Don't run merrily on in stacks, instead bring on one unit at a time pushing as far as you can. If any hidden guns open up try to limit the damage they inflict then direct some resources to destroying it. Being hit by all three guns on turn one should be unpleasant. As the noise of Automatic fire dies down gather your troops and try for a win by turns three or four. Once you have found the guns you are well on your way to destroying them.

Irrigated rice paddies' are difficult to sprint through. They do restrict the line of sight of entrenched troops and hinder that of others. This is helpful as the bulk of your troops will enter on open ground. After you move through the paddy work your way through the Kunai, huts and brush moving West. Keep moving forwards. At least half of your troops should move in the movement phase, almost everyone should advance. There are exceptions to this. Avoid open ground in front of automatic weapons, and think carefully before you advance into combat with a concealed enemy unit. A frustrating way to lose is to concentrate on the concealed PAVN units, soundly thrash them then run out of time to find the hidden guns.

Most players will already know how to win firefights. Given the limited time available push your attacks hard. With numerical superiority you can risk a few charges through smoke against pinned or broken defenders.

The Tanks help a lot. They can drive through huts collapsing them to discover enemy units, provide direct fire support, and interdict PAVN movement or routing. Low gun breakdown numbers and mechanical reliability are bad news. This is offset by the fact your losses do not matter. Lose all three tanks and you can still win! Not sure if that is historically accurate. In the game you can drive all three tanks adjacent to a tough enemy position taking a risk to help your infantry. If you discover the Bazookas early and neutralise them the tanks have more freedom of movement. The plan isn't to throw the tanks away, rather to risk them aggressively in attacks where they will draw enemy fire away from the paras, creating opportunities for other troops to exploit.

Expect air support from a Helldiver with Napalm and 16IFT cannon armament. After two turns the Helldiver must leave, but will have caused some damage! Napalm can cause fires, which may spread to reveal enemy troops or guns. With gusts and a mild breeze from the East fires will spread towards the West revealing some enemy units. Do what you can with the air support, try not to roll mistaken air attack, be very pleased if you break any enemy squad becoming increasingly happy with greater levels of destruction. Do not be too worried by enemy Flak, any shots taken will reveal enemy positions or spare your ground troops. A blinding result three malfunctioned Flak guns, a successful bombing run, a quick strafe then back home in time for coffee and croissants.

The rules for Fire in section B25 are worth

a flick through. with gusts and a mild breeze flame and blaze can spread even in Kunai. generally this will be helpful cutting down areas to search, forcing defenders to relocate and providing smoke to cover movement. A possible problem is the creation of a small area ringed by blaze counters that cannot be searched and may contain an enemy Flak unit. Your only option would be air support and OBA. The chances of this happening are slight. Kindling is an option strikes me as a daft idea, others will warm to the idea, might even be a few PAVN adherents to it. Main argument against it is you have a lot of work to do and an attempt at kindling ties up a unit for at least a turn.

It is almost worth writing "**Find the guns**" on a piece of paper and looking at it occasionally. If you lose concentration you can be drawn into a series of protracted firefights with dug in PAVN troops backed up by commissars. It is important you locate and destroy Islands of resistance, more important you slip round their flanks pushing West to find the Guns. Use spare MF to search, before moving in the advance phase if you can. Occasionally you will be hit by search casualties, losing a squad but finding a gun or the sole PAVN hidden squad (plus any SW and SMC(s)), a reasonable exchange of information for a half squad.

As long as you keep sight of the objective and push hard you can reasonably expect to win. The PAVN is tough, well dug in and hidden or concealed somewhere in a large area but you are conducting a strong combined arms attack with better troops.

## DBP1 Conclusions

Expect play as either side to be nerve wracking. Without hidden guns a French victory would be almost guaranteed. The need to locate and destroy the guns makes for a tense game. The PAVN player will be aware the last gun is close to the searching French, who in turn will be trying to guess where it is and how to destroy it in the time available.



## DBP2 Where The Buffalo Roam

Of the fifteen scenarios in the *DBP* pack five feature Night rules. Given the PAVN is attacking a trench network in very open terrain it makes sense that a number of attacks are made under cover of darkness. Despite this historical fact, a number of players will not be enthusiastic about playing some or even all of the night games. I'd recommend playing at least one or two. All five have been well designed, with interesting

features and give insights in to the difficulties the French faced.

Night rules do add some complexity to the game. Possibly the Attacker gains most from the cloak of darkness, as the Defender generally has less fun because of the restrictions on movement and command control. In most games playing the defender is "easier", with a lot of work planning the set up followed by less choices once the shooting starts.

Aside from reading the Night rules, players need to revise Mud, mines, OBA, and to read the new rules for Bangalore Torpedoes. Very briefly, bangalores can be used in the Prep Fire Phase or Advancing Fire Phase to clear wire and/or known minefields. They attack with a -3 DRM and clear wire or create a path through AP mines with a KIA result. Special rule DBP6 is pretty clear.

## DBP2 French Set Up

Your mission is a bit difficult, to prevent the destruction of both Pillboxes or to control one of them at the game end. To win you must plan your defence, counter the PAVN's initial attack and use your reinforcements to gain control of one or more pillboxes.

Enemy troops are a mixed bag. Ranging from elite sappers down to second line squads. ELR of three will result in some replacements but you should half expect enemy Leaders including Commissars to round up any strays and point them in your direction. It's an obvious statement but in the opening two turns you are outnumbered roughly four to one, not nice. Enemy support weapons are numerous, including light, heavy and medium machine guns, Bazookas, DCs, Bangalores and even a mortar. Adding strength to the attack is 100mm OBA with an off-board observer, two pre-registered hexes, and plentiful ammunition. SSR apply to the OBA further increasing the probability of its arrival.

There is a remote possibility of enemy OBA landing in E3 and achieving this objective with a critical hit on both pillboxes. The chance of this happening in a single turn will be less than 1 in 1296, the odds of losing one pillbox say 1 in 18. Over the course of play it would be reasonable to expect one critical hit, two is pretty unlikely. I do not expect many players will simply bang away at the Pillboxes throughout the game but keep this in mind as a possibility; unfortunately there is no real defence against this except luck!

Your own troops are rather good. Elite squads who are also Fanatic, led by fanatic leaders including a 10-2, backed up by an 8-1. Support weapons are reasonable, including a mortar able to fire illuminating rounds and a fair selection of machine guns. Wire, trenches, pillboxes and anti personnel mines also help. On turn four you will receive reinforcements; more on these later.

The limited NVR of two hexes is a problem making covering the Wire more difficult. On the up side mud slows PAVN movement.... unfortunately it affects French troops and tanks later on! NVR does tend to decrease after combat is joined; a NVR of Zero makes this a much tougher fight for you.

To an extent your defence is predetermined by the terrain and SSR. One MMC and the HMG must set up in a pillbox. All other units must start in Trenches or the other pillbox. This calls for some tough choices. First decide if you will defend

both pillboxes from the outset. Next how you will organise your other troops. A wide range of choices from two squads, MGs and both Leaders in the pillboxes down to just a half squad can work. Personally I'd probably just put a half squad in one with the HMG leaving the other either empty or manned by a squad plus LMG. A Leader there would weaken your defences elsewhere. The rest of your troops need to screen the pillboxes from direct Infantry attack. A very simple plan would start six or seven squads in adjacent trench hexes on the I hexrow. A MMG and Leader at each end, LMGs slightly off centre and the mortar a bit further back. More cunning plans will have some gaps in the front line one of which will be covered by a hidden squad and LMG or MMG. If you are less keen on winning go for a pair of adjacent stacks three squads high next to a gap in the wire. There might be a good case for some units further west ready to neutralise a PAVN encircling movement.

Next consider where to gap your own wire to allow reinforcements to enter. Too far East and the area may be covered by PAVN troops or fire, further West increases the distance you will need to travel and makes requires you to move through brush. Keep a careful note of the hexes selected, be prepared to gap wire and mines with tanks if you really, really have to!

You can set up to 25% of your OB hidden. Although you are still limited to Trench/Pillbox hexes this can help. You can cover a gap in the wire in greater strength than your opponent thinks, or keep him guessing about the Pillboxes contents, even keep a minute reserve ready to bite at a critical moment. A rule I often forget is the tail end of E1.2, which allows for SMC and SW to start HIP. This should complicate opponents counting counters as their view will be restricted to six identical stacks. The illusion should not last for long, any confusion or worry caused is helpful.

A well planned set up helps, more important is how you control enemy attacks. The game plan is pretty simple. Try to prevent the enemy creating gaps in the wire. Shoot gooks with Bangalores or DCs' or those attempting clearance attempts. There isn't much you can do about OBA created gaps or by shellholes placed under SSR2, other than try to cover them with fire. Expect to win most firefights but avoid close combat by falling back. If the enemy gaps the wire and overwhelms the defence it will be very hard for you to win. If you can delay the attack and hit it with arriving units just before your initial forces collapse you can win.

Starshells and illuminating rounds are useful. Potentially every SMC and MMC can place them subject to a brief availability check and accuracy DR in the case of Starshells, or To Hit roll for IR. The Chapter E rules are very clear and easier to understand when you are actually using them. I think you should try to place Illumination early in the game, then shoot at your best targets. When you catch troops moving in the open even squad inherent fire will be effective. A MMG and 10-2 Leader can also do a lot of damage. Go for the sappers' if you can before they can use their bangalores, Leaders, Mortar or MG crews, or the closest most threatening units.

Later on do not stick around for close combat. Fall back towards the Pillboxes, or move out of the way along a trench then return to harry

the PAVN. Until the reinforcements arrive this is a scary fight. Obviously you could do with more squads, more leaders, more support weapons. Console yourself with the morale of the troops you have, the strength of your position, the prospect of reinforcement, and the slow progress the PAVN make through Mud.

### DBP2 PAVN Attack

Destroying or capturing both Pillboxes earns you a win. As noted above this can be done with your artillery assets, you need to be very lucky and its not an exciting way to win. Rather better would be a well planned determined thrust into the Heart of the French position, screened by a covering force, followed by a still fight and eventual victory.

If you opt for a win using your artillery assets, pre-register E3 and roll snakes eyes to destroy each bunker some time during the game. Against a French set up that's starts two squads, two MGs and the Leaders in the Pillboxes this really is a reasonable opening! Against a weaker allocation of forces (say just a half squad and HMG) this really could be a mistake. It is also a reasonable strategy on turn seven or eight if you see no other way to win.

Plans B, C, D etc are a deal more difficult and complex. Broadly speaking your options are a charge at the French, a slow steady push up to and through the wire followed by a charge or push, or wiping out the French onboard forces using artillery and firepower before taking the Bunkers. In all cases you can also decide to ignore or oppose French reinforcements.

Within each of these basic plans there is room for variation with some similarities. Key to victory is limiting the opportunities for the French to place a starshell under rule E1.92. Until you fire at the French, place a Starshell/IR, resolve a FFE, move within an illuminated hex or are within NVR the Frenchies cannot roll for Starshell. Assuming you attempt this you might get right up to the wire and set off your Bangalores before the French realise an attack is coming. You can choose not to do this by using your OBA from turn one onwards and engaging in a firefight. A difficult choice. Very briefly the chances of winning a firefight are remote, you are facing fanatic Infantry in Trenches with longer range, support weapons and decent leadership firing from open terrain in poor fire grouping. A push to the wire under cover of darkness has better prospects.

Begin by placing shellholes under SSR2. Choose between guaranteed gaps in the wire, weakening the French trench network, or a bit of both. Gaps in the wire are a fair idea, but they will still need expanding with Bangalores or DC. Destroyed trenches make approaching wire hexes easier but offer no guarantees of a gap. On balance a gap in the wire is more use than a disrupted French position but follow your gut feeling on this choice it really is pretty crucial. Next, an almost no brainer, exchange some Leaders for commissars you will need them! Rallying at Night can take a while, ignoring DM really speeds up the process. Next pre-register selected hexes. Maybe D2, E3 or a couple of key spots in front of your main line of attack.

As you enter the artillery can range on the French trenches aiming to open fire when the

bangalores are set to keep the French heads down, pin a few or even break a squad. This can just about be done ready for turn two if you use Leaders to move the sappers forwards, turn three if you are more sedate. On turns three or four there is an almighty bang as some wire hexes are cleared, FFE lands, MGs and mortars open up, some DC heroes head for the wire, followed by wave upon wave of charging PAVN seeking to engage your troops in close combat.

After a quiet opening, turns two or three will be very noisy. A vicious fight will continue into turns four or five. Try to slip some troops past the main line of resistance towards the Bunkers to determine what faces you. Next fend off the French reinforcements whilst controlling and subsequently destroying the bunkers.

A significant part of your remaining forces should go for the bunkers. Six squads and one or two leaders with any remaining DCs is about right. Expect losses. Try to reduce these by keeping out of the line of fire and a resolute charge. If the HMG rolls rate or just lucky and low you will need to throw more troops at the position. Seek out close combat then wear the defender down. Occupy the Pillboxes or attempt blowing them up with your remaining DC.

Whilst this frantic attack is developing the remainder of your forces is tasked with delaying the progress of the French reinforcements. All remaining bazookas should form part of this screen. Along with HMG/MMGs teamed up with the mortar firing illuminating rounds. Mostly position yourself in trenches, with some troops up front to impose further delay. All remaining OBA missions should attempt interdiction.

The tanks represent a real threat. Some help comes from the Bazookas, mechanical reliability and the chance of Bog in mud. Crossing Trenches or even wire carries a risk of bog, ideally leading to immobilisation, always causing some delay. OBA, or any remaining DCs can be used, if not allocated to another task. The guns are likely to be busy elsewhere, the DCs used to gap the wire or in the assault on the Pillboxes. Close Combat is an option a bit desperate but risking a squad for a tank is a fair trade.

As soon as you identify the French pre-designated gaps in the wire, cover them with fire as best you can. Given more time the French reinforcements would be able to develop a more leisurely attack and shoot you to bits. Aim to win by preventing the French attack retaking the last pillbox.

On the last game turn a 2<sup>nd</sup> line squad in a pillbox can survive to engage in Close Combat keeping you in the game even if every other sector is collapsing.

A few quick thoughts. Draw fire with your weaker units specifically rifle squads, conserving the SMG squads for close combat. The fanatic French are hard to kill by fire combat, slightly easier to take on in close combat or melee. The Sapper squads cannot recombine, using them to man MGs or mortars will work, but don't fall back to do this. Weigh up the risk of moving through a minefield/wire vs. residual fire. Go for open ground for choice take a gamble if you expect a big gain. Lastly accept high losses. You are charging across open ground in the early part of the attack, against a trench system fronted by wire veil of darkness helps, as does OBA, but losses

will be high. Anything under eight squads on the approach, a further eight in close combat still leaves a further sixteen squads and a proportion of Leaders to face the French counter attack.

Also worth mentioning some dead ducks of ideas. I've not mentioned human wave. The wire and small minefields make this difficult to pull off. It is a good use for some of the sapper squads, or any other half squads you pick up. If an opportunity arises go for it. Not sure its a game winning tactic though? A flanking attack moving further West to avoid the Pillboxes covered arcs and hit a weaker part of the French line, loses valuable time. It would be a goer without the mud but movement is painfully slow in this one. Besides once the shooting starts expect to see Starshells and suffer long range attacks from the outflanked French.

The French troops are very tough, well led and well equipped. They represent a significant threat, almost as dangerous any form of illumination. Starshell and illumination rounds will transform Night into day and make a cunning charge with the prospect of a concealed advance a hazardous run through open ground. Factor illumination into your plans and be prepared for turns when it has little effect or alternatively when everywhere you want to move is lit up.

Quite a lot of choices to make. You start with careful planning of the approach to the wire, a flurry of activity to breach it. A mad turn or two of charge and close combat, then defence against a French counter attack. Win or lose really good fun you might even forget you are playing a night scenario.

## DBP2 French Relief troops

On turn four you receive either reinforcements or a counter attacking force depending on how successful your defence has been. With luck the PAVN will be struggling across the wire, in less ideal circumstances the Foreign Legion will be fighting hand to hand or already eliminated. In all cases you need to move quickly across board D1 and reach the Pillboxes.

Enemy forces can vary immensely from a small scattered screen of three or four squads, up to a company strength supported by a number of MGs' depending on the PAVN's assessment of the threat you pose. Very rarely will more than a company oppose you, less likely is a free run to board D2. Even if the way looks open remember the PAVN have OBA support, starshells and a considerable number of MGs ready to target Illuminated Locations.

Your own forces are admirable. All French troops are Fanatic, making Les Paras 6-4-9 squads with an underscored morale, ELR of 4 (unless DBP5 applies and ELR is 5?), and a broken side morale of 10. Four LMGs, an HMG (.50?), two MMG and three decent Fanatic Leaders are supported by three tanks. This is one of the toughest companies ever seen in ASL.

The main difficulty they face is to cross board D1 and get into the fight. With mud and night in effect movement is slowed. This creates a temptation to run everyone on board in big stacks on turn four. Well, it could work, particularly if you cannot be seen and are not subject to OBA. If caught on the runway by OBA or MG fire you could lose a lot of troops. A more cautious entry trickling troops on to the board

might be your only option if the PAVN have formed a large firing squad at the other end of the Runway. Hopefully this will reduce the pressure on the legion.

In many games moving most of your force onboard using the runway with tank support will be practical. Some enemy fire is expected, some casualties, more often broken squads with the odd kill occasionally. In subsequent turns push hard. The one rule I really like about night is the resilience of broken units, they do not have to rout and are not eliminated unless attacked or mopped up. This lets you take some chances you just could not risk in daylight games. As long as you do not try this in Illuminated Locations expect some favourable results.

When rolling for starshells PAVN qualify for a +1 DRM, halving the chance of a MMC placing a Very Light anywhere. This does help you cross Open Ground. Chances are NVR will have dropped making infiltration or approach to PAVN positions easier. If NVR has increased and 165<sup>th</sup> Regiment places accurate Starshells, play can get difficult.

The Chaffee, Bison or Oxen can support the Paras movement of rush ahead to help the defence. Aggressive movement is less of a risk if you have encountered most of the Bazookas already. Even if they are out there waiting for you how dangerous are they to a small moving target at night? That is the sort of statement you make before losing all three, but if you are that lucky winning would only ever have been a remote possibility. A degree of caution is commendable but do not conserve the tanks, Paras or even the Legion at the expense of victory. Making use of the runway reduces the risk of bog and hastens movement. Operating crew exposed adds a MG to your firepower, a trade against the risk of SAN and Infantry fire.

For all units have a basic idea of the route you will take. Passing through the wire at the pre-existing gaps or newly created ones, using tanks to create new trailbreaks if you have to. Stick to the plan if you can, deviate to exploit an opportunity or to recover from a near disaster.

If you push hard, fight hard and concentrate your troops will reach the Trenches. Once there movement becomes easier. Exploit trenches for the cover they provide and their assistance when moving. Engage in fire combat to weaken the PAVN, whilst pushing towards the Pillboxes.

Towards the game end both sides will still have a mass of units on the board. Your intention is to have more close to the Pillboxes. If you hold one or both on turn Seven then fend off the last PAVN attack relax you win!

## DBP2 Conclusion

The chance of a "lucky" PAVN win by destroying both pillboxes using OBA is remote. It can happen, I'd be embarrassed to win that way particularly against a better player or thinking about it someone new to the game. More often this will be a much tougher fight.

The burden of clever play falls mostly on the PAVN who must organise his forces to gap the wire, overwhelm the defence, fend off the reinforcements and destroy or control the bunkers. The French have a slightly easier job and leading the Para Company should be fun.

I'm not a great fan of Night scenarios, this is definitely worth a look if you are, both sides Infantry OBs are impressive with added spice OBA, Armour and even Bangalores'. I'd ask anyone not too keen on night scenarios to watch some other players enjoying a game sometime. Before too long you will be thinking about Starshell placement, NVR, Freedom of movement and how you could do a better job than one or both of the players are doing. If I'm wrong you've lost half an hour, but it could add another dimension to an excellent hobby.



## DBP3 Down and Dirty

This is an interesting scenario. Plays more like a cityfight than a battle in the jungle. The French already hold some trench networks, if they can gain another they win. Heavy rain is falling at the scenario start, and mud is in effect. A read through of the Weather Section in chapter E of the ASLRB will pay dividends. Very briefly, heavy rain restricts smoke to burning Chaffees, and provides a LV hindrance. Mud really slows movement, creates a risk of bog, and lessens the effect of HE attacks.

Slopes are sprinkled on both the D1 and D3 maps. This has an effect on movement, and can provide a +1 TEM against some direct fire. Slopes have no effect on same level line of sight. there is a depression on and around DIC3 which can be seen from some upslope locations. It is worth brushing up on the slope rules. Spending hours tracing hypothetical lines of sight to and from the depression is not necessary. It is worth having a good look at the map before you set up though.

## DBP3 PAVN Set up options

At the game start you control four Trench networks, if you lose control of just one you will lose unless you recapture it by the game end or gain control of a French Trench. Your task is complicated by a restriction on the number of squads or squad equivalents that can begin play in the two Trench networks closest to the enemy.

Your opponent, even with his reinforcement is numerically weaker than you. For his attack to succeed he will need to exploit higher troop quality, ELR, and raw firepower advantages backed up by a couple of Chaffees and the advantage of seeing your set up before he starts.

Your own troops are a reasonable force. Raw numbers are generally useful in a firefight or melee, even when other considerations make enemy units more effective. Leadership is good, with four Leaders including the option to exchange for one or two commissars you have

the option to create four strong defensive outposts. Up to two squad equivalents can set up hidden with the RCL and crew counting as a squad. Note the RCL cannot fire from within a Trench or when emplaced, cannot boresight and is not granted HIP except by virtue of the PAVN HIP bonus.

The dominant feature of the terrain must be the Trench Networks, The practice of naming trenches makes a lot of sense, dating back to the first world war or earlier. In later paragraphs networks will be referred to by the first letter given in their set up instructions. Some brush and a lot of shellholes are present providing limited cover. There is a small depression in and around DIC3 that will not have a great effect on play, and a small three hex orchard around D3F5. Mud rules are in effect which slows movement and creates the possibility of vehicular bog. It is raining, heavily, effecting fire with a LV hindrance.

So how to start. The set up restriction of only six squads South of row T really hurts. Starting twelve squads in the W3/U3 trenches would be a better start. An early decision must be what force to allocate to each of the forward trenches. There really isn't a glib answer to this. Both need some protection or the French will concentrate against one and capture it. A weak garrison is not much use, I think you need to start about three squads and a Leader in both the U3 and W2 networks. Maybe three squads at the apex (pointy bit) of each triangular position with a leader or commissar at its base. Add a Bazooka for Anti tank protection and an LMG or two to beef up raw firepower. There are many alternatives. A four two split could work, substituting a MMG for a LMG, sticking in a Mortar, even not using your Leaders in forwards positions'. Daft ideas include putting an RCL in a Trench, where it is well protected but cannot fire, neglecting to provide anti tank defence and abandoning the forward trenches seeking to prevent their occupation by strong defensive fire. Deciding which squads to use up front is tricky. Opinions differ, I would not use second line squads myself, most likely using three 1st line SMG and Rifle squads. The SMG squads have better close range firepower, and can be more effective in close combat. Rifle squads have a small range advantage. I'd listen to an argument for choosing 2nd Line SMG squads over rifle squads, but would be less receptive to using 2nd line rifle squads as front line defenders. Personal choice plays a big part in your ultimate decision.

Next decide what you will do with the rest of your OB. Certainly part of your OB will provide fire support from the Trench networks in I6 and Q1. There might be a case for attempting to reinforce the forward Trenches by setting up nearby then moving into them. This is very risky. The cover approaching the forward areas is limited to shellholes and some brush with the odd slope hexside, and the rain LV hindrance. If the French shoot up your troops in the open then exploit with their armour you could lose a chunk of your force. Routing units can be interdicted as rain causes a LV hindrance not a LOS hindrance. with low crawl it will take a long to rout to cover and rally. The benefits are a stronger garrison and some psychological benefits if the French didn't foresee the tactic. Risking a large proportion of your troops is reckless but two or three squads might be a decent gamble. There is a shellhole in D3/T3

that provides good cover for one squad. Another couple could hide behind brush and hope for the best.

The DSHK 38/46 is a Gun and can set up emplaced outside a trench still benefiting from a +2 TEM. This allows set up closer to the forward trenches than would be the case in the other Trench networks. The only bad news for the DSHK is the need for a crew to man it, and the lowered ROF when using IFE rather than to hit procedures. Starting hidden, and emplaced in a brush hex say D3O5 strikes me as jolly clever. As soon as you fire the French will know where you are. Before you do that small doubt as to your location complicates his set up slightly and will occupy his thoughts when planning turn one. When to open fire is a judgement call, whether to start on turn one or wait till the French leave the trenches.

Siting the RCL is difficult. It cannot be fired from a Trench or if emplaced leaving us with a shellhole, brush or behind a slope as set up options. The 75mm gun can fire HEAT, with a TK of 13, effective against a Chaffee. Choose a spot that appeals, if really stuck my own choice would be Shellhole D3R6 which is protected by brush and heavy rain from French fire, at the expense of some harder to hit rolls for its own fire. As always use your own ideas if they are as good or better!

Which still leaves us with a sizeable force. The Mortars can start in trenches firing long range speculative shots, expecting at least one critical hit some time during the game. The MMGs, can be grouped for effect against troops in Trenches or kept separate to contest French movement. It is unlikely a serious French effort would be made against the I6 network. The rules do not prohibit a French tank crew dismounting to claim a network, three second line squads or even just two are a reasonable insurance policy.

Network Q1 deserves a larger garrison. Troops there might be able to advance to W2 to assist the defence and even counterattack against BB7 if the French mass on the Eastern flank to take U3. Although you are on the defensive stay alert for small counter attacks. A single squad could run from W2 into the BB7 trench for a sneaky win.

A few loose ends. I can't see a use for the HIP entitlement of the PAVN in this scenario. Starting the DSHK in Brush makes sense, maybe the RCL belongs in brush hex D3L3? high rollers (or should that be low rollers) might want to mass their forces ready to reinforce the forward trenches on turn one. Stay alert for opportunities. A human wave late in the game could be a winner, earlier on a way to cross ground in a hurry.

Set up is important. During play concentrate on gauging the French players intentions and thwarting them. To win you must reduce the French force or cause him to be just one turn to late capturing the last Trench hex.

Expect a well focused attack against just one trench network be slightly pleased if he splits his attack and goes for two. Above all enjoy the game, in real life when it gets dark you would be back in force to reclaim any temporary losses!

### **DBP3 French set Up and attack**

At the game start you control three Trench networks. If you can hold onto these and gain just

one more you win. The dispositions of enemy forces do have an influence on how you can achieve this. The most accessible Networks are W2 and U3. A determined PAVN opponent could fill one or the other trenches with six squads and a horde of support weapons, and cover the easiest approach with fire to make a single network almost impossible to take. The trick would be to go for the other position! It is worth remembering the PAVN actually outnumber French troops, are well led and have a very fair selection of potent support weapons. The enemy does have weaknesses. set up limitations prevent massing of troops in the forwards defences. Weapons are all B11 or X11, troops quality and ELR are poor, range firepower and fire discipline are even worse.

Although a PAVN point defence could be encountered it can be overcome, not easily but by applying the principals of attack outlined below. An easier defence to overwhelm, is when your opponent abandons the forwards networks seeking to dominate the approaches to them with fire. This should fail, even if you just advance a few half squads in the advance phase, gain the trenches then hold on against any counter attack.

More realistically you will find both forward networks defended, some units positioned to reinforce them and others placed in reserve or ready to fire in support from a distance. Some enemy units can set up hidden, most of the PAVN will be in plain view. Before committing to a plan of attack have a good look at the PAVN set up. Look on this as analysis of earlier reconnaissance of the PAVN positions. Identify a weakness then focus your attack to exploit this.

You are looking for either an undefended or inadequately defended set of Trenches. I'll give you a clue it will either be the network in U3 or the one in W2. Begin by planning movement from your starting positions to the target trench. Look for shellholes to provide cover, and brush to hinder enemy fire as you approach the Trench. U3 is only three hexes from DD8, even with mud in effect you can cover the distance in one or two turns, four if you restrict yourself to movement in the advance phase. W2 is only four hexes from BB7 again reachable in two or three turns. In both case you would need to cross some open ground. The rain helps a bit, suppressing the enemy by fire and using tanks for cover helps a bit more. Estimate how many troops you will need to overwhelm the defenders and resist any PAVN attacks. I'd recommend attacking with a superiority of two to one, say two platoons (six squads), two leaders and all four LMGs in your at start OB. It makes sense to use your best squads in the assault, the 4-5-8s' are more resistant to morale checks and likely to survive the crossing of no mans land in better shape. Once they gain the enemy trenches they can recover from failed morale checks more quickly and stand any attack better. The tanks' should act in support staying out of Bazooka range but being more aggressive once Anti tank assets have been neutralised.

As important as your attacking element is preparation and continuing fire support. The 60mm Mortars need not be moved during play. From long range they can help the attack without exposure to short range fire. Their first target can be the RCL. This must set up outside a trench if it is to be effective and can be neutralised by breaking the crew. Other good targets include

Infantry in the open or in light cover, broken units or at worst any troops in trenches. With a ROF of three in a seven turn game expect at least one critical hit. With Mud in effect you cannot expect to do too much damage. At times it will cross your mind that the 2-4-7 half squads crews would have been more use up front helping the main attack. In truth they probably would not make that much difference and should do more good providing long range fire support. If you are not convinced ditch the mortars and prove me wrong!

The MMGs are important units. Teamed up with the 9-2 Leader and a couple of squads they can project 12-16 IFT attacks into U3 or W2 and 8 IFT attacks out to 12 hexes, beyond that a 4 IFT attack at -2 or thereabouts is pretty good. For a Death Star stack to work you need to pick a spot that it is difficult for the PAVN to hit with return fire, particularly RCL shots, and DSHK fire. Splitting the MMGs spreads the risk, and generates credible fire attacks from two positions. Using the 8-1 to direct the second MMGs fire could work. A difficult choice as he might be needed for the main assault.

Going over the top on turn one might be a bit premature. I'd suggest organising your troops into platoons with the assaulting platoons in the Trench networks closest to their target. Fire support elements are placed to direct fire onto known or suspected enemy positions with the tanks two or three hexes from the Bazookas. Open up with lots of prep fire. Go for any troops in the open trying to reach the forwards trenches then shoot up supporting MGs' Mortars, weapon crews, and finally the occupants of the target trench. On turn one any lucky kills or casualty reductions are welcome. Break results particularly with ELR reduction are helpful. In subsequent turns gain acquisition, keep units under DM, seeking to wear down the enemy. Bring on the reinforcements through the DD8 network either to consolidate your own positions and/or to free up troops to attack the enemy.

Before long the PAVN will start to wither. This will be dramatic if you kill or wound enemy Leaders less so if your fire is poorly directed, enemy forces are well handled or you are dogged by less than average luck. By turn four you should be in a position to launch an attack. Even if you are not ready at least some troops need to go over the top this turn to try. Against a fragmented force normal movement or armoured assault is practical. Faced with a strong defence advancing in the assault phase might be as much as you can do. Even a single squad will provide a distraction for the enemy and start him worrying about the next player turn.

In subsequent turns push forwards a bit more if faced with horrendous firepower, drive hard if the enemy are caving in. It can help to test the water with a half squad, gauge the strength of enemy fire then build up the pressure when it is weak, slow down the attack if hit by accurate and sustained fire. This is very difficult to do, some people are naturally good at probing a defence the rest of us make mistakes and miss opportunities. Less than perfect play will still earn you Victory.

Once in the Trench, a turn or two are needed to occupy the whole network, killing, capturing or chasing away any defenders. At this point or perhaps a turn before the PAVN player

will aim to contest control of your target. fire will switch from your supporting positions to the newly acquired trenches. A massive attack will follow. A human wave is difficult to stop if you are mixed up in melee, a bit easier if you are well established. Bring the armour forwards. Aside from the physical effect of its fire, the presence of armour will discourage a reckless attack, slow down a more methodical one and complicate enemy rout possibilities.

As the PAVN attack this create an opportunity for your fire support units to move forwards. In some games the other forwards network can be vulnerable, if you can charge with a superiority of two or three squads to one without being hit by covering fire this is very tempting. More often it is better to reinforce the main effort.

Watch out for creating an opportunity for the PAVN. For example a drive into U3 could leave DD8, AA6 or even AA6 at risk of attack. All a bit obvious and fairly easy to judge during play. The tanks can help at this stage if they are still around and retain mobility. Even if immobilised they should be able to throw firepower into the balance.

On turns six or seven Down and Dirty will be interesting. In some games a clear winner will have emerged. Otherwise a desperate positional scramble will result. One common criticism of ASL is the last turn rush for a key location in positional scenarios. Having played read some Regimental Histories I think the last turn scramble captures some of the confusion of the closing stages of a firefight. Exciting when you win, totally unrealistic when you lose!

A few lose ends. When to use close combat requires careful judgement. Generally fire combat is better for you, but not in every case. Trust your judgement in borderline cases. Make use of captured weapons, particularly MGs'. Do not go for more Trenches than you need, overextending yourself is likely to result in defeat. Vitaly important to accept a Trench network must be free of good order PAVN MMC to be controlled, a single Conscript half squad that runs in on turn seven will rob you of victory. If the rain stops use smoke, including WP. No rain makes crossing open ground more dangerous, increases the effectiveness of IFT attacks, and improves to hit numbers. Whilst you are moving, rain helps more than it hinders, once you have captured an enemy trench network it would be nice if the rain stopped to make a PAVN rush much harder.

In brief, identify the enemy's weakest Trench network, occupy it, then hold it against any and all counterattacks. Turn seven will be a bloody fight, the Legionnaires' should remember Camerone, the Algerians' should fight harder to prove Colonel Lalande wrong!

### DBP3 Conclusion

This is really good fun. An exciting trench fight, effected by the presence of Armour but not entirely dominated by the Chaffees. Both sides have a variety of set up options and there is scope for careful planning and some repositioning of forces during play. Luck will play a part, if there is any justice miserable luck whilst moving a tank will be offset by PAVN support weapons breakdown and more frequent sniper attacks. I am hopeful of Critical Hit developing a Great War ASL module with similarly interesting scenarios.

I can't see an easy way to win this one for either side, even against a poor set up this will always be a stiff fight for both sides.



### DBP 4 Escape from Huguette

A trench fight with a difference. Mist covers the playing area reducing the effectiveness of most IFT attacks. The French need to leave one Trench network in a hurry, break through or over PAVN lines and gain the safety of another trench network.

Before play, its a good idea to read through the Scenario special rules a couple of times and set up the trench networks and overlay on the Map. A rather obvious statement, for which I apologise. It is critical both players appreciate the effect of mist on IFT attacks, mud on movement, and the principals of firelanes. Of these firelanes are the most important for the PAVN, and to a lesser extent the French. It is also worth having an understanding of the terrain, paying particular attention to the depression, brush, slopes, Hills and that the H1 and H2 Trench networks do not connect.

The SSR are generally very well explained. The H6 garrison gain a +1 DRM against IFT attacks by virtue of improvised flak jackets made from sandbags, which will help them a great deal. Other rules cover Mist, restrictions on the French troops starting on D1 who must remain in Trenches, French OBA and a Morale check for the PAVN before play starts to simulate surprise.

The pregame morale check will not be to everyone's liking. There is a slim chance of huge gaps appearing in the PAVNs' defences and an easy French win. In fact this is horrendously unlikely. The PAVN are elite troops with a basic morale of 8. To fail an unmodified morale check they need to roll 9 or more. This should happen on ten rolls out of thirty six say 27 or 28% of the time on average. A casualty reduction result will happen once in 36 rolls, similarly a HOB result has the same chance something in the region of 3%? A pin occurs five times in thirty six rolls say 13%. No ELR reduction results are possible. Most HOB results will be favourable for the PAVN, maybe battle hardening or a Berserk squad. Applying these Statistics to the fifteen PAVN squads you could expect three or four broken squads, with an even chance of a casualty reduced or HOB effected unit. There will be extremes ranging for no adverse effects for the PAVN all the way through to fifteen casualty reduced broken half squads. If the results are extreme either too good or bad I'd suggest restarting the game. I'm

sure this view could cause some arguments! Finally do not be put off by SSR 2 it helps add spice to the game and doesn't unbalance play.

## DBP4 PAVN set up

This is pretty scary, rather than a last stand the French have opted for a breakout, catching you by surprise. To win you must either kill a lot of H6 troops or at least stop them moving into the French trenches on D1 or off the Southern edge of that board in strength.

At the game start the French have eleven elite fanatic squads, three fanatic Leaders, a fanatic Hero and a few MGs on D2 poised to break out. Further troops, specifically eight squads, two leaders, an MMG and LMG support them from the South with long range fire, and a safe haven if they break through your lines. Expect some irritation from a hostile 80mm Module which probably will not hurt you in a trench but is very nasty if it catches you in the open.

Your own troops are not a bad lot. Fifteen Elite squads, with a high ELR of four, three Leaders, one of which you can exchange for a commissar, two 60mm Mortars, a HMG, MMG and two LMG. All start in trenches. Due to the sudden French breakout, your troops must take a normal morale check before play starts. Your guys are pretty solid, most will pass the test, maybe three or four squads will break, one or two other pins. Be proud if your lads prove solid, do not think you have lost if six or even seven squads unexpectedly break.

Terrain and environmental conditions do work against you a bit. The ground is pretty open which helps as you gain clear fields of fire with few hindrances. Your own troops start in Trenches and can even remain there. The French must move the H6 garrison South to win. Mud hinders their movement giving you more time to shoot at them. The worst effect of mud for you is a reduction in the effectiveness of your Mortars. Mist is a very mixed blessing. On the plus side it protects you from the French relief force whose fire will be almost ineffectual, barring some pretty low DR. It is also useful if the H6 garrison plan to prep fire and shoot you up for a couple of turns before heading South. The major inconvenience is when the French move South you start racking up positive TEM for hindrances. In truth there is not much you can do about the environmental conditions other than try to use them to your advantage. Keep in view the Airfield is a runway, allowing faster movement in exchange for a -1 TEM if the French use it to head South. Also worth noting the trenches in H1 and H2 do not connect. This is ruddy inconvenient, making lateral movement from East to West or vice versa more difficult.

So what's the plan. One idea is killing seventeen or more VPs of units from the H6 Garrison for a win. Difficult to do, although just about possible if you get lucky. The best ways to kill French troops are to catch them in the open moving in front of your units and shoot them, fight them in Hand to hand or prevent broken units routing. Going all out for this from turn one would argue for substantial firegroups and attempted double break results. It could work but I'm pessimistic given the plentiful cover, Mist and high morale of the H6 troops. It could work and the set up is similar if you go for a more defensive

strategy as outlined below. Key differences would be going for double break results and massing more units in firegroups. The best arguments against this plan are the creation of one or more gaps in your defence by concentrating units in larger firegroups, the very high morale of French troops, and even the +1 TEM they receive for improvised flak jackets.

The overall aim of plan B is to accept killing more than half of the H6 garrison is both difficult and unlikely. Instead aiming to kill some, break other and always seeking to delay French progress. There is a real difference between these two plans, but do not feel committed to one from turn one through to turn six. A few lucky shots in the opening turns may prompt a change of tack, as could a string of pin results.

So far no dispositions have been suggested. To begin with your choices are limited to trench hexes, and shellholes that formerly were Trenches. Begin by considering exchanging a commissar for a leader. Not an easy choice as you swap an 8-1 Leader for a 10-0, or 10+1 Commissar. I'd always go for a Commissar, although would respect anyone's choice of retaining the leader and am reasonably certain neither choice would in itself lead to ultimate victory or defeat! Next split your troops into three big "platoons" of three four or five squads and a Leader with an optional weapons platoon of Mortars and MGs. In my opinion the support weapons belong with the platoons rather than grouped in a separate area. A slight problem is the actual composition of platoons; is it best to form a SMG unit, or split the squads into mixed formations. A mixed organisation appeals, again there is plenty of room for variation.

Start one squad on eastern flank, another in the west, and the third in the middle. Now this might come across as fairly lame advice. Accept my apologies as it is pretty bad. Alternatives could include a more central set up, or conversely cover both flanks and leave the centre relatively open. Anything is valid so long as it is an organised defence ready to keep ahead of French thrusts and not simply a loose skirmish line of units.

There are arguments for leaving the eastern flank fairly open as the French would need to make a time consuming detour to move there then run down the runway. By running along the trenches you should be able to catch them as they start running south and the mist clears?

Site your mortars in the Trenches from H2-N3 to take advantage of their range limitations. The MGs should be sited to provide interlocking field of fire. Fire lanes really are lethal especially in LV conditions such as Mist. There are many good spots, some very good. Make your own choices, but if stuck G2, K2 and B2 are my favourites. Add a Leader to prevent cowering and to exploit any Leadership modifier. Teaming up Mr 9-1, a squad and the HMG has to be a good idea.

Set up is only the start of things. Before play starts you need to survive the SSR2 morale checks in reasonable strength. It may create a few gaps; look on these as particularly effective Prep Fire attacks or the result of a gentle bombardment. Plan any routs, and mentally reorganise your defence to cover any gaps broken units create.

French dispositions and to an extent plans should be revealed on turn one. If the French make

a dash try to shoot them up, survive advancing fire then win any melees or close combats that develop. In subsequent turns move troops in front of French probes. Use trenches for this, moving when you desperately need to cover a lot of ground, Advance Phase movement for firing units or weapons teams. This is not at all easy, and gets more complicated when being shot at or shelled.

In subsequent turns as you lose units and French penetration becomes a more serious threat keep your chin up. Win some small firefights, keep rallying units and moving in front just to the sides of French probes. As time runs out French options diminish. At some stage in the game the distance between the southern edge and current positions will become too great, a turn later reaching the southern trenches becomes hard, then later still impossible. Calculating movement opportunities for the French is tedious but necessary. Particularly late in the game you need to concentrate your fire against units in danger of moving south off the board or into Trenches instead of killing or breaking squads that cannot possibly move off the board.

French probes are a bit vague. Primarily because the French can choose where to attack, also they can choose to attack in one big block or split across your front. You have little influence on this but must exploit any weakness or miscalculation in the French plans.

In planning your own set up it can help to look from the French side of the board. If you can see gaps so will the enemy. There is scope for considerable creativity and guile. Set traps, tempting an attack in an area of apparent weakness, lure the French onto the runway then mow them down with MG fire if you can predict the weather, kill, break or pin the French leaders to slow movement, there can be a number of sub plots to your basic defensive plan.

If you predict the direction and strength of French intentions you have a good chance of a win. Some French troops will escape but not all, some will be poised to escape on turn seven or eighth but that is too late you will already have won. Be gracious in victory, show respect for an opponent who earns ten or eleven VPs which would earn a win if the balance conditions were in place. Remember to blame any defeat on the abysmal luck you suffered due to SSR2.

A nagging doubt persists about a quick run south to the French Trenches with some or all of the PAVN force on turn one. Although not too keen on the idea myself it might just work as a surprise tactic. Hopefully you could gain the trenches as the mist clears, wipe out the relief force, before catching the H6 garrison in the open under the sights of your own and any captured MGs. Not a strategy for the faint hearted but worth a try if you are convinced the mist will clear, French OBA will not arrive and your middle name is Lucky.

## DBP4 French Escape or attack?

In most games of ASL one player is the defender the other the attacker. Escape from Huguette 6 is a bit different. One way to view the scenario is as a French attack driving South to the relief force then either exiting or occupying the "safe" trenches. Another approach is to psyche yourself up a bit and view the scenario as an

escape visualising certain Death for any troops trapped in H6. Regardless of your motivation to win you must earn 12 or more VPs for units exited off the South edge or in the relief forces trenches at the game end.

Elements of the elite 308th Division hope to stop you. They occupy a chain of trenches between the H6 garrison and safety. Fifteen Elite squads, three Leaders and seven support weapons dug in is a strong force. In a protracted firefight they would regularly lose against just the H6 defenders, particularly as the game is preceded by a compulsory morale check. Unfortunately you will not have time or the environmental conditions to shoot the PAVN to bits. Further you need to leave your trenches and move South opposed by PAVN fire and their physical presence. After PAVN set up look closely at their dispositions we will look at terrain later but you are looking for gaps in the Defence. On occasions very obvious gaps you can exploit will be present, particularly if the PAVN player has started with units closely grouped in killer swarms three squads high in the most obvious spot for your attack. More often you will encounter either a linear defence or a sprinkling of platoon sized units across the front. Other possibilities are a strong centre with a lighter screen on the flanks or the complete opposite, strong flanks and a weak centre. Pay particular attention to the location of leaders, and SW. Of particular importance the location of the MMG and HMG's. At this stage you should be looking for fundamental weaknesses in set up, or at least a favourable spot to attack.

Terrain helps your decision. With Mud in effect movement is slowed to three hexes per turn for a lone squad not using CX. The most direct route to the Southern edge will take four or even five turns. One idea is a wide movement down the Eastern Flank using the Airfield to rapidly move South. If PAVN set up is very weak on the Eastern flank this could be a goer. The presence of a MG backed up with three or four squads make this less attractive. The real danger is PAVN reinforcement from other sectors catching your troops in the open running down the Runway as the mist lifts. Keep this idea alive but consider other options. There are other spots that might offer greater chance of success. In the West there is a sizeable depression behind the front lines that offers the best protection in the game against hostile fire, yep it is out of line of sight. South of the depression is a stand of Brush and some shellholes all providing cover to get to the safety of the trenches. Again this is not ideal if a large proportion of unbroken PAVN are covering the sector. In the Centre a double line of trenches looks less promising than either flank maybe its a good spot if lightly defended.

Summing up an attack down either flank or the Centre is doomed if faced by an unbroken strong force. Equally an undefended or lightly defended sector offers some real hope of success. Making the best use of your own troops to break through will keep you in the game. For choice I'd probably go for a thrust down the Western flank, into the depression, through the brush into the Trenches then off the board assuming a fairly even spread of Vietnamese units across the whole front. The relief force has a role to play in this. They have at least two responsibilities to attrit the defenders in your chosen sector of attack and to

interfere with movement of PAVN forces trying to reinforce the threatened sector. The gap in the trenches between H1 and H2 can be covered with fire, both residual firepower and more effectively a firelane from the relief forces MG. Simply keeping PAVN troops out of the sector you are attacking will help, it is as good as a break or even a KIA/K result. The wounded French Hero in the North can also hit this hex or the approach to it. The PAVN might try to "balls" it by running through the open hopefully he will suffer for it. Make use of OBA to try and interdict movement. Against troops in trenches 80mm OBA is not tremendously effective, some PAVN troops will be reluctant to run through the FFE area, again this is as good as a combat result. Other French relieving troops can take speculative shots when the mist starts to clear. At long range against troops in Trenches with thinning mist or brush in the way you can't expect too much a few broken or pinned squads would be good.

Although the relief force can fire furiously from the safety of the Trench network it cannot jump out to close with the enemy. The H6 Garrison really must make a move early in the game. Early on you should identify the sector you will attack or escape through, revise your plans slightly if the PAVN suffer terribly from SSR 2 morale checks, before climbing out of the trenches on turn one. Under cover of Mist, with sand bag flak jackets (+1 TEM) and a basic morale of nine due to basic morale and fanatic status it is very tempting to charge. Attempt this with some units, go for assault movement with others. Walking into a firelane is bad news try to avoid this by skirting around them or keeping the small hill on D1 between you and Charlie. If the Mist starts to clear on turn one staying in the trenches just isn't an option. There is a strong case for some of the H6 troops using prep fire to soften up the Defenders, with differing opinions as to the size of this force. About 25-30% seems right making use of the MMG's and wounded Hero. Make sure you fire in the advancing fore phase, before advancing going for Close combat if the opportunity arises. I think the spearhead of your attack should be the 6-4-8 squads, they have better raw firepower in the advancing fire phase, and are awesome in close combat.

On turn two. You should be feeling more confident whilst the PAVN begins to sweat. If you can occupy a small sector and build a bridge for your troops to run South his chances of Victory will depend on closing the gaps and quickly! You must resist this with IFT attacks, OBA if it is sighted and accepting close combat if offered. Trickle troops South always maintaining a sense of urgency.

This is very tricky to do, the gifted amongst us will get it right either through a deep understanding of the game blind luck. everyone else, myself included will make mistakes, firing too soon, delaying Southwards movement or fighting for too long. Do your best, it is reasonable to expect the PAVN play to also include some mistakes. Perhaps the worst mistake to make is being drawn into a successful firefight, killing PAVN but losing sight of exit requirements.

Before too long you will have some H6 troops in the Trenches. Moving them off board immediately protects them from enemy fire. A Sniper attack that kills Mr. 10-2 and robbed me

of Victory would be infuriating, with a SAN of 4 and lots of DR it is not impossible. judging when to fight and when to withdraw needs careful planning. Once you have twelve or more CVP in the Trench move off, passing any SW to the remaining troops as you go. If before then you can provide fire support do so to give others a chance to escape.

A few lose ends. An 80mm module is always welcome, with three red cards in the draw pile, mud and trench networks don't expect too much from it though. Make use of smoke! Obviously when you are charging the Trenches, also when crossing open ground. An unusual use is for the relief force to smoke adjacent hexes to give cover. Keep a side record of any relief force troops that become fanatic to avoid the embarrassing error of exiting one off-board in the belief that it was a H6 unit. I've not encountered anyone who would knowingly do it, but would be profoundly miserable if I did it myself. Moving on, half expect the PAVN to launch a desperate attack in the closing stages of the game. Either to stop units exiting or reaching trenches. This will require careful target selection and a cool head stay alert till the end of turn six. Finally stay focused on the objective, don't become distracted, note the turn record and the movement abilities of your units.

Although turns one and two are a bit hairy, once you reach the first trench network you should gain confidence. If you can restrict or oppose the lateral movement of PAVN troops you can reasonably expect a Victory. Win or lose spare a thought for the French Sergeant who helped give his comrades a fighting chance in real life.

## DBP4 Conclusion

Not everyone is going to like this, personally I think it is a very good scenario with an interesting OB and challenging Victory Conditions. SSR 2 the PAVN morale check has a big effect on balance, SSR 8 the +1 IFT modifier for sandbags is controversial. Even so Escape from Huguette 6 deserves to be played at least once as a friendly game. A lot of thought has gone into the design and the Historical write up is exciting.

This is probably more fun for the French, with a seriously strong force and a just cause to fight. Everyone should experience mounting excitement as turn six approaches.



## DBP5 Langlais on Hill 781

This scenario features a French attack up a Level four Hill against a larger PAVN force preparing to either counter attack or resolutely

defend the Hill. Dense Jungle, double crests, French assault engineers and the appearance of the T'ai Irregulars make this an interesting Fight.

For French players there is the added attraction of Lt. Colonel Pierre Charles Langlais, a 45 year old Breton who broke his leg on landing. Scary looking bloke from the few photos of him I've seen.

Looking long and hard at the map will help both players. Less than half of board 39 is in play, rows R to EE. The entire central Hill is covered by trees, as open ground, brush, and Orchard hexes on the Hill become Dense Jungle. In R2 crag is present which may be significant when planning PAVN set up. Key features include the Path from R8 to U4, and the outcrop at V7 and W8. It is also worth noting only 20 level four hexes are available for PAVN set up, complicated by Dense Jungle limiting penalty free stacking to two squads or equivalents per hex. As Dense Jungle is inherent terrain lines of sight are very restricted, most fire combat will take place at one hex range.

The French player benefits more from very close scrutiny of the map. Most of the PAVN moves will be down hill costing less MF than ascent. Uphill movement requires 4 MF into Dense Jungle 4 MF, across a double crest this rises to 8MF! SSR 5 helps advances up a single slope but does not help when double crests are crossed. Key spots for French study are the Path connecting R8 and S7 for a quick route onto the Hill, Hexes U7 and W7 if you fancy a fight to control the spur from V7 to W8, and the hexes around BB5 the Northern end of the Central hill level four area if manoeuvre against a flank appeals.

If you have two copies of board 39 use one to help calculate movement costs. The artwork on the Hill is good, unfortunately with a liberal covering of counters it is difficult to check elevation without moving stacks.

## DBP5 French set up

This is a very difficult scenario with considerable scope for making snap decisions during play. A bit of pre planning and assessment of the PAVNs' strengths' and weaknesses does help a bit. The mission objective is to gain more VPs' than you lose. Points are awarded for CVP, and control of Sangars. You effectively lose VPs' when the enemy gains control of foxholes. The fortification control is interesting. Sangars are worth more than foxholes, giving you a very slight edge before the game even starts. Look very closely at the set up conditions, Sangars' are limited to level one or two hexes, which cannot be adjacent. This spreads them out nicely. Foxholes are also limited to non adjacent placement on level one or two hexes but you can bunch them together more easily due to the geography of your set up area. This makes defence slightly easier. Trust me this is easier to see if you start placing counters on board. The Viets end up with a spaced line from say R1 to AA3, compared with your choice of either a cluster around CC8 or a line of your own.

Enemy forces slightly outnumber your own, by twenty two squads to twenty. You have a slight advantage in Leadership, better support weapons, flame-throwers, demolition charges, and generally higher ELR. Your usable firepower is much stronger, particularly at close range. The bad news keeps the Viets in the game. All 1st Line

PAVN are stealthy, up to 10% FRU of his force or three squads can set up hidden, as can the DSHK 38/46. Another problem is the T'ai irregulars. Their ELR is very low, with six morale expect to see some disrupted units! In melee or Hand to hand the PAVN have a slight edge due to stealth and generally being uphill of your troops.

Before playing against a live opponent try a bit of solo play advancing up hill against a concealed PAVN squad in dense jungle, chances are you will lose more units than the enemy do. A firefight works better for the French. PAVN cannot form multi location firegroups, cannot recombine and lose disproportionately when casualty reducing. If you can draw the enemy into a six turn firefight you have a very good chance of a win!

To draw your opponent into a firefight you need to manoeuvre against a weakness in his defences. Setting up across the entire hill will tempt the PAVN into a down hill charge against part of your force. With luck you could emerge Victorious but there are rather better alternatives. Concentrating in a line of seven or eight hexes with some troops covering your flank or flanks makes the hexes in front of you very dangerous. Even against a concealed stack you should be able to get something better than an 8 +2 IFT attack, rising up to 16, 20 or 24 IFT attacks at +2 TEM once concealment is stripped. Bring DC and Flame-throwers to the Party, factor in Leadership and suddenly this doesn't look like an easy PAVN win. Higher ELR will reduce the incidence of replacement, higher morale will also do this and makes breaking less likely. As for rallying, well here Commissars really help the PAVN, a bit of bad news, try to keep them busy rounding up conscript half squads.

Thinking about individual firefights, aim to KIA, K or double break units. As the PAVN cannot recombine casualty reduction really hurts. First line rifle half squads are 1-3-7s' feeble in a firefight and none too deadly in Close combat. A French half squad will have 2 or 3 firepower and importantly can recombine. The T'ai are an exception to this being more like PAVN. Keeping the T'ai in reserve and using them in close combat makes a deal of sense.

Although a firefight is offensive by virtue of killing enemy units at a faster rate than you lose you cannot really expect to stay in one spot and win. Some offensive movement is essential. This might just be contraction or reorganisation of your skirmish line, but at some stage moving uphill or round the flanks of the summit might be viable.

When this happens watch out for hidden units. Any hex you have plastered effectively with fire should be clear of enemy troops. Any hex where you have seen two enemy squad equivalents is also safe, as are any hexes below level four. Keep in view if you are already winning by five or more CVP there is no real need to go looking for trouble! If you are down by a similar amount well really you do need to risk it.

Before play read the rules for Dense Jungle. They are really easy to understand and you do need to know everything. For example recovery is less likely to happen, entrenching is pretty difficult (and pointless?), and you just might want to hack a path through the undergrowth.

So far I've make no specific mention of

where to attack. There are three main areas to consider. The Southern and Northern map edges and around the V7, W8 spur. To my mind the Northern flank looks the most tempting as you can overlap the defences there and try to gain a Sangar. The Spur allows easier access to Level Four at some risk of wandering into hidden units. The Southern flank offers a rather useful path, tainted by the prospect of PAVN reserves arriving just behind you. Pick a spot that suits then set up to attack it. You can even split your force if you have a strong yen to do so.

I favour using the T'ai on the flanks. The cutting edge of your force will be a line of six or seven hexes with two squads and a couple of support weapons in each hex. There is no ultimate set up which will win the game, mixed stacks of paras and Moroccans will work, concentrating the MMGs or splitting them up is workable. Mostly this comes down to personal choice or style. I'd suggest keeping two Legionaire half squads together, maybe a FT for one a DC for the other. Later these can recombine as a squad. Stick Lt. Colonel Langlais near the middle and a -1 Leader on either flank and you are ready to fight.

A few quick ideas and loose ends. Generally avoid CC particularly Hand to hand, you are stronger in a firefight. The T'ai are weak in a firefight, but can defend reasonably well in close combat. Don't get too aggressive. You only need to be a VP ahead to win. Being a glory hound and charging up the Hill risks all. Expect some bad luck, some gacked rolls, adverse Close combat results and the odd sniper attack. Use the concealment counters to confuse the enemy when he try to determine the composition of your stacks and to create sniper bait. Remember Human wave cannot be launched from an adjacent location, so you are spared it unless you move too far East. Once you start winning the firefight expect to see Hidden units appear and reserves shift laterally. Watch out for concealed units drawing fire sometimes these will be dummies. Finally keep a grip on your own morale. In scenarios like this one, fretting or worrying, or just losing heart can rob you of Victory. Take a break if you are getting a kicking, conversely pile on the pressure when you gain an advantage, don't reduce the opponent to tears but make them sweat.

The first turn will be nerve wracking. After that you should settle and go on to win. Half expect a close result and a few grey hairs.

## DBP5 PAVN set up

To win you need to amass more VP for fortification control and CVP than the French do. There is a chance you might equal the French total in which case you have earned a legitimate draw, not something you see very often in ASL.

Enemy forces range from T'ai Irregulars through to seasoned French Paratroopers, Legionaires with FT and DC, and some Moroccans who are decent enough troops. In terms of raw firepower the French have a big advantage, the T'ai are conscripts so cower more than regular troops, but even they have firepower equal to the majority of your own forces. Enemy morale is better than your own, as is support weapon allocation when you take account of breakdown numbers is slightly superior. Engaging in a protracted firefight probably isn't the way to win, unless you are very lucky.

If fire combat might not lead to a win, the alternative is close combat. The good news is you are Stealthy that gives you a better chance of an ambush. In Dense Jungle normal French troops will struggle to ambush you due to the stealthy modifier and a +1 for advancing in Jungle. On the offensive stealth and the Jungle DRM cancel each other out. An exception to this rule is the T'ai who are also stealthy. Unfortunately whilst you have some advantages in close combat there are some problems. Top of the list is basic strength. your troops are 5-3-7s' and 3-4-7s' taking on 6-4-8, 4-5-7, 2-4-8 and 3-3-6 units. For the best results you need to seek to fight the enemy on equal or superior terms, say SMG squad Vs Moroccans or T'ai, or two Rifle squads against a lone Moroccan or Legionnaire Half squad. Against the Paras, well, it's best to avoid them unless they are pinned, counter exhausted, you have the advantage of concealment or most of these circumstances apply.

Summing up both fire combat and close combat are not ideal. To win you need to use a very carefully organised combination of both. Some help comes from the French set up. Ideally a dispersed set up across the entire board would allow you to defend in some sectors by concealment and skulking, whilst concentrating for a win in other sectors. More likely the French will have massed in one or two areas for an attack. By carefully studying board 39 we should be able to find spots where the PAVN can fight at a slight advantage. A good example of what we need is hex U7. If occupied you could start the attack with a fire attack from U6 followed by further fire attacks or close combat initiated by units in T6 and V6. It may even be possible to assault move safely to V8 to capture retreating units. If this attack works skulking in other areas could consolidate a slight gain. If the French are not present in this hex look at W7, Z7, even BB7 for a similar opportunity.

French set up can frustrate your plans, your opening volley might fall on stack of dummies, or robust units that shrug off your fire. Play requires some very swift reaction to disappointment and a plan B. Keep in view the French too will have a plan. This could be a drive onto level four hexes or a movement round the Northern flank. The flank attack can be slowed by concealed units, or opposed in strength. It really isn't possible to stop a determined attack gaining at least a foothold on the hill summit. One idea makes use of the 12.7mm MG, and its ROF of two to oppose a French assault. Probably not a good idea to put this in the front line as its loss could give the French some easy points. If you see the HMG as not very effective placing it way back in R3 ensures only a deep penetration by the French will get anywhere near it. An added advantage your opponent will be wondering where the HMG is, perhaps moving cautiously until he finds it?

If a gap or weakness appears in the French line a flanking attack could lead to captured units or even foxholes. Certainly worth a try if you are opposed by only a small stack of concealed units. Even more doable if you have found most of the dummy counters or stacks and can identify roughly what opposes you.

If all this seems like hard work and you like a gamble a charge on turn one has potential.

This could be preceded by prep fire, an attack in the advance phase by concealed units or a mix of both. A nice simple attack if you are in a hurry. Against a dispersed force there is a very real chance of success. It will not work too well if the enemy opens up with effective fire in the defensive fire phase or is strong in the areas you attack.

In addition to setting up the HMG emplaced and/or hidden you can use HIP for 10% of your force FRU. Up to three squads is a reasonable force. These units can be used to screen defensive areas, to hide reserve units behind your front line or set cunning traps. Most traps require French troops to be moving or on the summit, but if this becomes unlikely there is no harm in exchanging hidden status for concealment and moving forwards.

During set up it is important to plan rout paths that take account of Dense Jungle stacking limitations. By exchanging one or two leaders for commissars you can plan to return broken units to the battle as soon as possible. I'd be inclined to take two commissars, other players might opt for one or none. Really this is down to personal choice and should reflect your own style of play rather than my own preferences.

At some stage expect reinforcements. These can range from two to three squads with or without a leader, not a bad little force that may scare the French away from the Southern edge of the board. If this catches a partially completed enemy attack in the flank tremendous. Almost as good drawing enemy troops to oppose it, or gaining a fox hole or two. Chances are you will get something early in the game. If you are unlucky you might roll high till turns five or six. It doesn't mean you have lost the game, particularly if fear of the threat has done some work. I might be missing something, how does the dismantled MMG assemble in time to make a difference? In brief roll low.

In some respects the terrain should feature in your plans. Being uphill in dense Jungle makes you hard to shift. Dense Jungle negates your inability to form multi location fire groups and gives some discouragement to French close combat attacks.

This is a tough fight, which is difficult to win. Due to your up hill position and first move, plus the advantage of setting up second you do enjoy more initiative than the French. A win would be nice but settle for a close game and a lot of fun if you are dogged by unfriendly dice or exceedingly good French play.

### DBP5 Conclusion

Another scary scenario. Both sides have strong forces, the French have the edge in firepower, the PAVN in close combat if you allow for stealth and the high ground. Not for the faint hearted, this really will provides a test of players knowledge of the rules, ability to plan and to make snap decisions. A variety of stratagems can be adopted by both sides ranging from blood curdling charges, intense fire fights, through to manoeuvre to gain the foxholes or Sangars.

Only slight disappointment is the terrain, or rather the limited lines of sight, which prevents a human wave attack by the PAVN.



### DBP6 Route 41

This is a nicely designed scenario, a classic ambush which starts well for the PAVN then gets harder as the French recover. Both sides get some pretty serious OBA, plenty of support weapons and enough troops. One slight snag is terrain, Palm trees and buildings are treated as open ground, walls and hedges are ignored. Most players will cope with this easily, a few will be discouraged. It is practical to cover buildings on board 16 with open ground overlays, you only need three, and if needs be place overlays over some of the other buildings as well. I find it helps to think of the non existent walls and hedges as being very low, too low to influence play.

Before play starts, before you even open the bidding for a favoured side have a long hard look at the map paying particular attention to lines of sight, ranges and set up areas. Also refresh your knowledge of the rules for OBA, particularly Pre registered hexes.

### DBP6 French set up

For the first couple of turns you face some very rough treatment, to win you must preserve some of your forces to the game end. The only criteria for Victory is your own casualty cap. Consequently enemy casualties are not important beyond the fact the more you kill the less PAVN there are to attack you. Prisoners are also rather important, a captured Para trooper squad earns the PAVN four VPs', a captured 10-2 Leader a whopping six. So the mission is to avoid being killed or captured in great numbers. Fortunately the casualty cap is very high, twenty eight points or thirty two if you have blagged the balance. Your entire at start order of Battle totals twenty eight CVP. Whilst you can expect a kicking on turns one and two, if even a small part of your initial force survives you can win.

Your initial forces are impressive. Ten squads, four Leaders and a sprinkling of support weapons. The paratroopers are superb, expect their broken side morale of nine to keep them in the game longer than you might at first expect. French Artillery has long been impressive, perhaps going back to the days of Joan of Arc. If you can call down 105mm OBA on troops in woods even harassing fire will cause some casualties or at least provide a hindrance to IFT attacks. Giving the radio to Mr 10-2 is an idea, another Leader might do an equally good job though? It is possible PAVN attacks will prevent any fire missions ever being resolved. The mortar just needs assembling then it can start to hit any troops in Jungle with lots of small attacks helped by airdrops. Pay

careful attention to SSR 3, it keeps your troops in the game and will greatly frustrate enemy units rushing out to take prisoners.

Set up is limited to the twelve contiguous road hexes between 16N4 and 16Y4. Setting up a squad or half squad per hex is a very reasonable idea. Stacking is a bit more of a gamble. Admittedly a stack of three squads and the 10-2 Leader is tough to break by IFT attacks, with 81mm OBA, high SAN and some pretty serious IFT attacks your opponent will have a decent stab at doing it! Worth trying if you are a very aggressive player but not for the faint hearted.

If you decide on a column, split leaders and support weapons evenly. Taking a tip from the British navy your better Leaders should be near the front and back of the line with either a LMG or dismantled MMG. The Mortar makes sense just about anywhere, maybe towards the Southern board edge. The radio with an 8-1 or 7-0 Leader can start near the middle. Nothing too clever there, and plenty of room for substituting units or even some stacks.

In some respects the terrain is rather hostile to you. At start you are in open ground trudging down a road with some signs of recent shelling (PAVN spotting rounds). On either side are high hills partially covered with Jungle. No spot on the road cannot be hit by fire from a number of PAVN set up locations on turn one. The only cover nearby is some Kunai, well lots of it really. This provides a very useful ground level hindrance, negates FFMO, and if you are looking for more good news, well it doesn't cause airburst or make critical hits any worse than they already are. As Jungle is a level two obstacle to LOS, the number of decent locations for PAVN set up is limited, even so they will be able to hit any hex on the road they choose on turn one.

Enemy forces are pretty substantial. Twenty squads, four leaders, four 60mm Mortars, four MMGs, and four LMGs'. Rather worrying is an 81mm Battalion Mortar with a pre registered hex. It is worth reading chapter C as not only does a pre registered hex add a black card to the draw pile, and increase accuracy you might also be shocked to see your opponent place a SR on turn one and convert this to a FFE 1 in his prep fire phase. If he has opted for harassing fire upwards of five of your units could be hit by a 4 IFT attack. As PAVN Battery access and Radio contact is automatic on turn one you are almost certain to be hit by something. There is a very remote chance of this first attack being slightly off target, be very pleased if it happens. Expect some grief from the MMGs', a lot of Mortar attacks which will not be discouraged by your SAN of two, and some low odds IFT attacks from inherent squad firepower. Enemy leadership is nothing special unless you have conceded the balance (try not to!). ELR is pretty average, and enemy inherent range does not exceed your own. If you do get drawn into firefights settle for ELR replacement results if they happen, its generally better to break enemy units rather than concentrating force to kill them.

You can make some guesses about enemy deployment, but as PAVN sets up second and enjoys some HIP and a lot of concealment this is not too easy. On board two Hill 621 is likely to be occupied by enemy mortars, the radio and most if not all of the MMGs'. Most of the remaining units could be in Jungle or even on level one Hill

hexes as these still provide a +1 TEM against your fire. On both boards some units may be positioned to oppose or delay the arrival of reinforcements. On board sixteen most ground level locations have their LOS hindered by Kunai. At Level 1 hexes S8, R8 and Q9 are tempting, for the Mortars and MMG. At ground level I10 is a fair spot for the MMG. On both boards a proportion of enemy units might plan to charge through the Kunai to capture some of your troops. Regardless of set up, you can expect lots and lots of enemy attacks in the opening turns. I'd be surprised if hordes of enemy units remained concealed or hidden and frankly would rather they did!

When your reinforcements arrive some of your at start forces will be already dead, other will be rallying a few will be fighting and trying to move away from OBA or enemy infantry concentrations. Keep in view the reinforcements will also count as CVP. Plan your entry carefully. Run if you have a clear way onto the board be a bit crafty if you are walking into a Mortar and MMG ambush. Remember you have smoke and can enter concealed if you assault move or enter in the advance phase. Probably you will need to use the arriving troops to cover the withdrawal of broken squads. If you can help prisoners escape it will frustrate your opponent and keeps you in the game.

Keep a close eye on the clock. Turns one through to three will pass very quickly and be fairly unpleasant. The remaining turns should be less hectic but may feature relentless mortar attacks and the unwelcome attentions of enemy Infantry. After fighting a way out of the initial trap you must survive to the game end, in quite a long scenario.

In summary, there are hordes of PAVN Infantry, really nasty OBA, and difficult starting position to contend with. I think it is worth playing the French for precisely those reasons.

## DBP6 PAVN Set up and Ambush

Earning twenty eight or more CVP by the game end earns you a win. If you wipe the floor with the French and destroy 28 CVP earlier in the game it might be worth claiming a Victory? The casualty cap is rather high. Earning all the points through unit elimination will require the destruction of the entire 1st Company. If French balance is in effect you will also need to kill another four CVP.

Killing the entire force will not be easy. Some of your fire attacks will be KIA or K results which will generally earn one or more VPs'. More often an attack will result in a morale check which eight morale Parachutists are apt to pass. A double break will casualty reduce a squad, or eliminate a half squad, but this is hard to achieve against troops with a broken side morale of nine. SSR3 doesn't help as broken French units can low crawl away from adjacent units towards other PAVN troops.

To increase your chance of a win tow basic tactics will help. The first is to take prisoners whenever possible. This earns double CVP at the game end. Prisoners can be escorted off a friendly board edge, in this scenario I would guess any edge other than the South is friendly but discuss this one with the French before play starts. If you declare no quarter early in the game, Route 41 becomes a lot harder.

The second key rule is encirclement. If you subject the enemy to consecutive attacks within inherent range from opposite directions an encirclement counter is placed on all units in the location. Several benefits accrue, French return fire is less effective, effective morale drops and, if I understand SSR3 correctly, still forces broken encircled units to surrender. Another benefit is the doubling of movement cost for units exiting an encircled location. Section A7.7 of the ASLRB is worth studying before play! In practice aiming for encirclement is easy if you organise your fire attacks. Begin by firing from one board then fire another unit from the other. If your first fire attack results in a kill a follow up attack might not be needed, anything less and a subsequent encircling attack moves you one small step closer to Victory.

The Paras are a tough bunch, all are Elite, with an ELR of five and adequate support weapons. At start you outnumber the French by two to one, this soon drops as another eight Para squads enter the fray as early as turn two. T win you must carefully pick your targets. I believe the most dangerous French man is the chap with the radio. Given time he will call down 105mm OBA using a draw pile of nine black and two red cards. You can hope for red cards, and failed contact rolls, but there is a case for trying to kill or break the guy. Most opponents will use Mr 7-0 as the observer, some will use an 8-1, a very few Mr 10-2. Next on the most dangerous list is the 10-2, assuming he is not operating the radio. After him all other Leaders are dangerous, followed in descending order by any squads with MGs', the mortar and crew, squads, and finally half squads. In the first couple of turns you need only worry about the !1 st Company. Later French reinforcements will be an issue of which more later.

Your own troops should be pretty pleased with themselves, they outnumber the French by two to one, have the advantage of a better position and shooting first. You start with a fair selection of support weapons, reasonable Leadership and the very important 81mm Mortar module.

The most important man on board two is the Artillery observer. Decide where he will start the game and how he will be used in the first couple of turns. Pick a spot for the Pre registered hex. To do this you need to make some assumptions about French set up. Although restricted to the road, French troops can stack up to three squads in a single hex with all the Leaders. It would be nice to preregister a hex occupied by three squads with another six in the adjacent locations, rarely will you be that lucky. Options include a central spot like T4 or further South say Y4. Any spot is a gamble, be pleased if it was a good choice don't despair of it wasn't too clever. Make sure the observer has a line of sight to the chosen spot. SSR2 allows for HIP. Due to line of sight obstacles there are not too many clever spots for the observer. Jungle hexes R8, S9, T9, X8 and X9 are all worth a look. If you can accept setting up in the open and forgoing concealment or hidden status have a look at level three hex O6. This has the best line of sight available paid for in terms of vulnerability to enemy fire. Trust your own judgement in choosing a spot that fits in with your plans. If the enemy avoids your pre registered hex and you are also unsighted remember you can relocate to a better spot. On turn one you would

like to see French troops standing around your preregistered hex. This allows for placement of a spotting round and immediately converting to a FFE 1. If accurate you start hitting the enemy with 16 IFT attacks at zero TEM. Given French set up along the road as many as three hexes could be effected. Harassing fire is an option, attacking on the four IFT column, over a bigger area. What to use is a judgement call. If you are inaccurate and very unlucky instead of flattening French troops you will be hammering open ground or Kunai. This should not happen too often. correct the Artillery in subsequent turns.

The rest of your troops on both boards two and sixteen have a number of options. The extreme choices are to aim to destroy the French through long range firepower or seek to overwhelm or capture them in close combat. Massing your troops for a human wave on turn one is pretty silly. So too is over reliance on raw fire power to kill the French. Admittedly even the most bizarre stratagems can work in ASL given the right opponent or a string of lucky die rolls but usually there are alternatives.

Personally I would use some troops as a fire base and other as an assault force. Mortar and MMG crews are the teeth of the firebase. Against direct fire light Jungle provides equal protection compared to Infantry height advantage. Against OBA or Mortars height advantage has an edge, trading concealment for protection. On board two any of the locations given for the observer are valid. On level one hills, look at O9, P8 and Q7, a bit restricted but not too shabby. Fortunately you can decide which spots to use after the French have set up! The assault force can start in the same hexes. Generally locations closer to board sixteen are good. Open ground is not out of the question, remember you move first and shoot first and the Frenchies are also in the open.

On board 39 line of sight is hindered at ground level by a huge swathe of Kunai that gives the French the same protection as wooden or stone buildings (+2 or +3). At level one there are some reasonable spots for a MMG or Mortar. Jungle hexes S8, R8, and Q9 are fair. At ground level light Jungle in I10 is an interesting spot for a MMG team. A firelane here would greatly complicate movement across the Y hexrow on board sixteen. This is an important row for troops moving North or South. There might be a case for using an MMG or mortar on board 39 to slow the movement of French reinforcements. Tricky choice as the more units used for this the less are available for hitting the onboard troops in the first two turns.

With Mr 7-0 tied up with the radio, you are a wee bit short on Leadership. Exchanging one or two Leaders for commissars can improve your ability to rally troops. On board thirty nine you can hold your force together reasonably well and even attack in more than one place. On board two effectively there is only one leader available and you must choose whether to have him stay in a fire support role or move forwards with any assault troops.

After a fusillade of shots on turn one assess the damage you have caused in the prep fire phase. with accurate artillery, and some better than average rolls the French might be weakened. If most units are broken a charge to exploit this can work. If you have done less damage a more cautious approach can be better. In all cases try to

keep the French from the Southern edge.

I've not said too much about concealment. In addition to the observer, up to two squads can start hidden in concealment terrain. There might be a case for using this allocation to hide some troops to oppose the rapid movement of Reinforcements. Other ideas include cunning traps for the opponent, erm I'm not too sure what these might be though. Possibly the Jungle in 39I10 is suitable for both purposes, it can oppose movement on the Y hexrow and might spring a surprise on a routing unit.

If you do not need to conceal units make a few dummy stacks to draw sniper fire, particularly around the observers location. Try not to conceal just for the sake of it if you plan to move and/or shoot on turn one. Similarly conceal units that are out of the French line of sight.

A few loose ends. Go for close combat when you can. Nearly always take prisoners. Half expect the French to use inherent smoke, pass morale checks you would not believe and give effective return fire when you least expect or appreciate it! If your MGs' or Mortars break join the fight in the middle your own CVPs are unimportant. In similar vein you can lose your entire force, some of it can be captured and still win if you hit the French CVP Cap. I'd be disappointed to come close to victory, and still lose with an intact PAVN OB, its not unlucky I'd have done something wrong!

Finally keep an eye on the clock. Have fun for the first two turns, start to feel the pressure as the relief force arrives and chips away for the rest of the game. The first turn should always be fun, afterwards the game gets harder but remains enjoyable.

## DBP6 Conclusion

I do like Route 41 as an ambush scenario. It is hard for the PAVN to win unless they move forwards and attack at short range or in close combat. The French are very resistant to all forms of attack and have to be as they start in difficult circumstances.

For the French in particular there is scope for very rapid thought and action in response to the effectiveness of PAVN attacks. This also applies to an extent for the PAVN who must exploit any good fortune to build a win.

Possibly this is more fun for the PAVN than the French, although I think it is fairly balanced and might even favour the Paras.



## DBP7 Castor's Opening Act

Rather like the look of this one. The French must push through the PAVN lines to catch the

HQ of the 148th Regiment to the South before it can escape. Before play chapter H is worth reading, also gen up on Recoiless Rifles. A long hard look at the map in conjunction with the SSR will pay dividends. Grain and orchard are open ground, the only terrain in play is limited to Huts, Brush and hex upon hex of open ground.

## DBP7 PAVN Set up options

One way of looking at the Victory conditions is territorial simply to limit the exit of French forces to eight EVP. Alternatively by reducing the French force to seven VP or less you will win as long as your opponent doesn't benefit from leader creation or a Battle hardened Leader. Limiting French exit is more realistic than a win by massive attrition but keep the idea in view in case you quickly gain the upper hand in a firefight and can capitalise on it by using your reserves.

Set up options take account of these two ways to win. If your aim is to reduce the French by firepower you need to prepare a killing ground, draw him into it then kill as many troops as you can. If you favour this approach setting up on or close to row F to hit the French on turn one offers the best chance of success. I'd agree a set up further South could do the same to a rash French advance but it would give your opponent more opportunities to rout, and present him with the opportunity to spoil your fun with smoke and speculative fire. On turn one the French can move on in the advance phase but more often will present targets moving in the open covered by patchy smoke.

Several problems complicate this strategy. Top of the list must be raw firepower, closely followed by range, troop quality, leadership and terrain. Your own forces have a raw firepower including MGs' of 60, backed up by a mortar and 57mm Recoiless Rifle. Unfortunately four squads are 5-3-7s' and eight are 3-4-7s' which can reduce your firepower by a whole 12 FP factors, down to 48 Factors. Bring range into the equation and firepower drops again. Take into account hindrances from Brush and any French smoke and suddenly a board edge massacre becomes less realistic. In the advancing fire phase any remaining French troops have a raw firepower of 4 Factors, totalling up to 48 factors if you have achieved very little on turn one. Making use of the cover provided by huts will help, even concealment in brush conceals your intention to make a fight of it. Worth using HIP and Concealment counters to disguise your plans-you have a better chance of wiping out French units if enemy forces misread your set up as a delaying action. One other idea to consider, stacking concentrates your force and maximises the raw IFT firepower you can use. The downside is greater vulnerability to return fire and a more predictable set up.

Potentially you could kill or break a lot of French in the opening turn and do more damage in your prep fire phase. By all means try an aggressive opening if you feel lucky, but consider other options before you do this! Plan B is an extremely defensive set up, far to the South, concealed in Brush. The plan is to complicate French entry. Your own forces are not drawn into a firefight early in the game, whilst your Mortars and MMG/HMG' can deter rapid French

movement. With proportionately much smaller forces this would be an excellent plan. One difficulty you hit is a limited range of locations to hide, with the distinct possibility of French troops taking the huts and commencing a brief firefight to shoot a hole in your defences. Routing presents problems for your troops which will only partially be offset by exchanging a leader for a Commissar. A slight variation on this defence uses hidden units and perhaps a few concealed units mixed with dummies to discourage rapid French movement by starting in the Village. Against very cautious opposition this highly defensive set up will work very well, certainly worth considering if your opponent lacks dash. Against stronger opponents there is an alternative.

The basic idea is to form the defence around two small defensive Islands with some associated outpost or sub units. Another Leader would be very helpful allowing a third Island to be formed. Begin by forming two platoons of three squads, a Leader, HMG or LMG, and position them in the Village. Decide on rifle or SMG squads once you have loosely fixed the units location to take account of the range you will be firing at. Tend towards having two squads forwards, one back with the leader and MG so you can try to rally broken troops. optionally you can add an LMG or another squad to these platoons. The remaining five or six squads need to be used creatively. Lots of ideas are practical. A mortar and crew in the back field ready to offer fire support and create a tactical problem for the French. A hidden unit concealed in a startling location. Intelligent use of concealment counters to create dummies or beef up small stacks. Even a couple of squads up front seeking to scare the French on turn one. The Gun can be tricky. Firing it sends a jet of flame out of the back. Anyone immediately behind the gun risks injury, with a further threat of flame. A lone brush is an obvious but effective spot for the gun. There are plenty to choose from P1, N0, even N4 look good, many others are decent enough.

On turn one contest French movement with firepower. Long range MG fire, RCL and Mortar shots are worth taking, the risk from return fire is minimal. Although this exposes your units to fire this is an acceptable risk to slow French movement. In subsequent turns give ground slowly. Be a bit stubborn if you are presented with a chance to prevent the rout of some French units, being careful not to be drawn into firefights you will lose. Think carefully before you reveal any hidden units be very please if you inflict search casualties.

Keep skulking or moving units back gradually always seeking further delay. With a reasonable set up, fair run of the dice and some quick thinking during play you should pull off a win or come very close to it. If you can keep track of French units exited this will help anticipate French moves to a limited extent. Certainly on the last turn you will know if a frantic dash is needed or if you have already lost.

Never give in before the French have won. Some crazy things happen in ASL. The best obstacle to movement is not a massive fire attack, a lowly conscript squad will block movement of good order units. Make use of firelanes, final protective fire, intensive or sustained fire anything that might break, pin or divert an enemy unit.

Fight hard the fate of your friends in head quarters is at stake.

### **DBP7 French entry and Attack**

This is a tricky scenario to win, play starts moving onto the board in the face of a well armed enemy resolved to prevent you exiting eight or more EVP. At game start you have a total of thirty one EVP, you can just about afford to lose eight squads and three Leaders and still win as long as the rest of your troops exit on time.

Enemy forces are numerous, with plenty of support weapons including a 57mm Recoiless Gun and a Mortar. Troop quality is lower, with an ELR of three there is a chance of second line squads or conscripts appearing. PAVN Leadership is a bit sparse a 9-1 Leader and an 8-0 or more likely a commissar. enemy firepower is limited, a bit more scary a SAN of five, a lot more scary two squads and their accompanying leaders or support weapons can set up hidden. Due to some hidden status the approximate positions of some enemy units can only be guessed at.

Your own troops are simply outstanding, three Leaders, one of them a 9-2, twelve Paratrooper squads, and a sprinkling of support weapons, including a pair of mortars complete with WP 8 (7+1 for elite unit).

Three factors make this scenario a challenge, enemy troops, terrain and time. In my opinion the most hostile is the terrain. There is very little cover available for your troops and just about enough to hide the enemy. The highest TEM in play is for huts! Scattered brush prove some cover and hindrances to fire. Along the North edge where you enter two brush hexes afford cover, a problem if enemy troops oppose your entry. Time is also a consideration. Without much dead ground or cover you will be tempted to limit movement. To cover sixteen hexes in six turns will require more than assault moves and advance phase movement. Enemy forces will be totally opposed to the idea of a French win. They will seek to inflict casualties or delay, conduct a stubborn defence hit you with a few surprises during play.

Despite all the bad news there is a very good chance of a French win. Consider the basic points value of the Infantry involved, PAVN SMG squads are worth 12 points, Rifle squads 10 for a PAVN total of 128 points, against twelve Para Squads at 16 points each for 192 points. A reasonable argument for playing the French, even allowing for Support weapons, concealment and hidden status.

One of the fundamental principals of war is to gain the initiative. When attacking a defensive position that should not mean a detailed plan of attack that does not vary in relation to enemy dispositions. For Castors opening act you will have to make a judgement of how the PAVN is prepared, then make plans to exploit any weaknesses or work towards your ultimate plan for Victory.

The enemy has three basic strategies. A deep defence aiming to allow you some freedom of movement in the opening turns before strongly opposing your exit. A layered defence to delay your advance and inflict casualties or thirdly a Stonewall defence aimed to stop you on the board edge.

All three defences have strengths and weakness, a big problem though is the difficulty

in guessing which one your opponent intends to use. With two hidden units, concealed units and some dummy stacks there is some scope for being misled. There is scope for some miscalculation particularly if you avoid moving in stacks, running through open ground and make use of smoke, search, and your firepower.

A deep defence concentrates most of the enemy troops near the exit area. Some forces will oppose your entry and subsequent movement with a larger portion retaining concealment of hidden status until you are nearly ready to exit. If you are excessively cautious or deceived by dummy counters or small screening forces a win become very difficult. Ideally you need to anticipate this strategy and move further and faster across the board. Once you have determined the PAVN strategy occupy the Village, set up your Mortars and MGs and shoot a hole to exit through. Routing enemy units will struggle, pick up a few prisoners on your way out. Your chances of a win against this defence are much better than average, don't blow it by being excessively cautious.

A layered defence that seeks to contest your movement and/or inflict casualties is more of a threat. Rapid movement will be countered by fire, a cautious build up by a slow PAVN withdrawal. Although difficult to beat there are tactics that will work. Manoeuvre against any weakness in the defence, use WP from the Mortars to reveal units or even break them follow this up with fire attacks or aggressive moves if you are screened by smoke. Sounds easy, well it can be sometimes, other times it will all go horribly wrong, running out of WP, a series of painful SAN attacks and tenacious defenders being encouraged to rejoin the fight by a commissar. A creative attack taking advantage of small opportunities as they arise requires concentration. If you organise your forces as platoons and assign them an approximate route over the board you reduce the burden of planning the activities of all your units every turn. Most important the location and activities of Leaders. With very low TEM any Leader with a Negative modifier in a small firegroup can destroy enemy units. For example a six IFT attack directed by Le 9-2 causes a kill on a four or less which is six times more effective than an unmodified attack. A casualty reduced result is also more likely occurring on a five or six. Anything less than a nine causes a morale check or better. All very obvious but worth emphasising in an unusual scenario were the strongest defensive terrain is a flimsy hut! Add an LMG to the party and you become slightly more lethal. Provided you work hard to win firefights and keep moving forwards you can reasonably expect both a tough fight and a rather satisfying win.

A less effective defence, a "Stonewall", might be more commonly seen particularly if your opponents are aggressive. The PAVN might go for a quick win, opposing your entry onto the board with his entire strength. In a just world this should not work, unfortunately it can. If you enter in stacks running through open ground you will be subject to numerous fire attacks from a defensive set up on the Northern edges of the Village. Hidden and concealed units make it hard to realise this is the enemy's plan, look hard for subtle clues. There isn't any real way of knowing where the hidden stacks are, they could be tucked

away in a distant corner, right in the middle of a defensive position or even under a dummy stack or in the same hex as a real unit. Impossible to tell on turn on. The concealment counters can be used to create dummies, pad out other stacks. At most three enemy "units" can be created. Use these small pieces of information to try and gauge the strength of the enemy in the Village. With practice you can make fair guesses of the location of Leaders, particular types of support weapon and even the recoilless rifle. Sometimes you will be wrong or perhaps badly wrong but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try! Be careful not to use wishful thinking, placing enemy units were you want them then being indignant when your opponent hasn't fallen in with your ideas. Avoid spending too long doing this, add to your estimates of enemy dispositions as units are revealed.

Having guessed enemy plans and some dispositions organise platoons ready to attack. The only terrain on the board edge is brush in A4 and A7. If you enter units on these two hexes using assault movement you may get a chance to place smoke and retain concealment. If you draw fire it might spare other troops moving in the open, unless your opponent retains ROF. If smoke is placed the next unit can enter benefiting from the cover it provides placing smoke to cover the next unit to enter. A lot can go wrong, ROF, low rolls, failed morale checks and elimination for failure to rout. Expect some losses. Up to four squads is possible but still leaves you a respectable force. Limit your movement keeping out of normal range when possible. In the advancing fire phase shoot back, settle for breaking units is you can, enjoy any more serious casualties. Priority targets should be Leaders, support weapons crews and stacks of units in that order. Somewhere on the list fire attacks to give units a valid rout path. There is a plan B, entry in the advance phase. Definitely a sensible option for your Leaders. Has some merit in so far as you are spared enemy defensive fire, some units will gain concealment and your return fire in the first volley of a firefight will be stronger. Definitely an option, less aggressive but still viable, it might unnerve or annoy an aggressive opponent....which is not a problem! Once you are on the board, win the subsequent firefight then dash off the board. It is very tempting to stay and kill Vietnamese if you are winning, do not lose sight of the Victory conditions.

In all cases. Do not be scared of close combat. Trading squad for squad makes sense if you have numerical superiority, maybe avoid it if you have had bad luck and losses early in the game. Don't dig foxhole, avoid kindling unless you really have to. Make use of cover. Search for enemy units. Stay focused on the Victory conditions. Roll low and retain ROF.

Whichever defensive set up the PAVN are using expect an interesting fight. Things will look bleak to start with, and can appear to get worse on turn one. As play progresses the effectiveness of French firepower and resilience of elite troops with an ELR of 5 and underscored morale will start to earn you a win. With only two leaders, lower morale and an ELR of 3, the PAVN force should melt away.

### DBP7 Conclusion

Expect the French to exit at least some units after a stiff firefight. Some of the excitement

will come in the closing turns as the French plan their exit, and the PAVN scratch a force together to prevent it. The opening turn can be hectic or a test of French nerve depending on PAVN set up. Given you could play this one in an hour easily, playing both sides is an option or even a quick replay if you think your opponent was just plain lucky! I liked the narrative on this one. Exiting units are not moving off the edge of the world but attacking a Headquarters, capturing maps, destroying radios, shooting a few REMF and reducing the combat effectiveness of the 148th Regiment.

Which covers the first half of the *Dien Bien Phu* pack. I'll try and write up the other scenarios for the next issue.

## DEBRIEFINGS

This following Q&A and errata has been posted the Internet ASL Mailing List by various publishers in recent months.

### ASL Journal 4

**JM2 Bloody Omaha** In MSR 6.31, replace the three instances of "pillbox" (but not "pillboxes") with "Trench".

**The Fine Art of Bushwackin'** On page 12 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column about half way down it says "You will be able to roll for Ambush without taking a PAATC (assuming it's an AFV) even though you've lost concealment." This statement is only true if other Infantry actually Advances into CC. The editors are sorry if this has confused anyone.

### Fanatic Pack 2

**FE 17** Philippine Scouts at Mabatang delete one Japanese crew.  
**FE 20** Collision Course the Germans move first.

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## New German SW Info And A Startling Conclusion!

Rusty Witek

Experts on WWII infantry weapons have long been impressed with the battlefield performance of German machine guns. Although the German infantry soldier was usually saddled with an obsolete rifle, the superb MG-42 gave the Wehrmacht formidable firepower and unprecedented tactical flexibility.

Recent research by noted small-arms expert Gus Klim in his magisterial magnum opus *Small Arms of the Wehrmacht, 1937-1945: Apotheosis and Transcendence* reveals a hitherto unknown aspect of the MG-42's performance – in early 1943, German designers converted all their machine guns to "never" guns. As suggested by the name, "never guns" **NEVER** run out of ammunition, making squad resupply a thing of the past. In the annals of modern warfare "never guns" previously had been used only by small children playing army men and cowboys and Indians, in order to redress the problem of some kids having revolvers and therefore running out of ammo after six "bangs." Transferring this concept to modern armies was typical of the brilliance of Teutonic weapons designers.

In fact, the accumulated weight of evidence now requires a radical revision of many historians' views on the war. According to most experts in ordnance and tank design, the conclusion is obvious: Germany won World War II.

"Just look at the facts," says Jurgen Fliedermaus, author of *Turns Out There Weren't So Many Russians After All* (1999), "the Tiger and Panther tanks (especially when retrofitted with the super-secret "Zip-a-Gun" turret traverse) were unsurpassed in power, armour, and sheer coolness. Kids today are still building plastic models of the ME-262, and if any of those big stupid Shermans or Stalin tanks would get close to a German infantry squad, Pow! a panzerfaust right in the kisser! And don't even get me started about the flak 88s."

Historians now conjecture that German armed forces were victorious around December, 1944. "It must have happened," says Klim. "Add up the MG-42, the fast turrets on those groovy tanks, throw the cool SS uniforms in there, and it's the only thing that makes any sense. But the Americans, Russians, and British just kept bleating about 'freedom' so much that this mistaken impression of German defeat somehow took hold."

Even after almost 60 years, the ramifications of the German victory in WWII are expected to be wide-ranging, including massive linguistic changes in Central and Eastern Europe and a radical revision of the situation in the Middle East. Fortunately, changes to the *Advanced Squad Leader* wargame system are expected to be minimal.

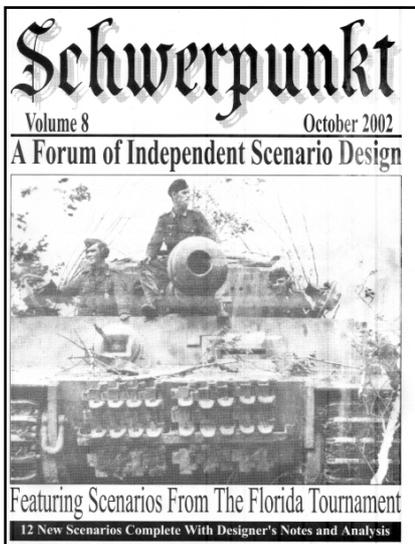
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# An Armful of ASL Stuff

Trev Edwards

The week before and including INTENSIVE FIRE 2002 was like Christmas come early for an ASL nut like me. A friend returned from ASLOK with an armful of new ASL stuff – although in the present climate “ASL Compatible” is probably the better description of these. *Schwerpunkt 8*, *Onslaught to Orsha* from HOB, several scenario packs from the Winnipeg ASL club and something from a newcomer, the *Fanatic Pack*. Since then we’ve had the new *ASL Journal* and the second Historical Study *Operation Veritable*, both from MMP.



## SCHWERPUNKT 8

The first I opened was of course the new *Schwerpunkt*. Anyone who has read my earlier reviews of the *Schwerpunkt* series will be aware that I hold these in the highest regard. I’m sure that there will be no surprises from our friends who will attend the seventh annual BERSERK! tournament in March this year when they see the scenarios we’ve set, because, as ever there will be a fair number of these scenarios included. As in the previous issues, *Schwerpunkt* is a magazine style publication with at least one article included, this time a look at the make up of the Russians in ASL. It has been along time since the first examination of the Soviet OB was written in the first *ASL Annual* and Brook White goes into considerable depth in his discussion of how the reality of the Soviet forces in WWII should be translated in ASL terms. As occurs in many such articles, Brook recommends that certain SSRs be applied to more accurately represent certain aspects, such as the poor training and experience of crews, leader ratios and so on. Whether any scenario designers will be persuaded we will have to wait and see.

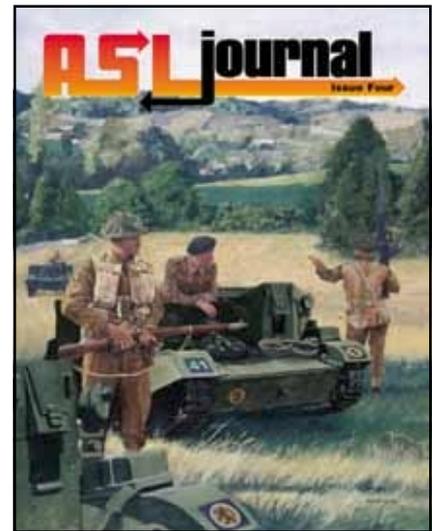
## THE TRENCHES

The scenarios – as always twelve of them – seem to be a good batch. I have been fortunate to have played most of them by now. The only one I have found so far to favour one side (admittedly after only one playing) is ‘SP91 Show A Little Guts’, where I found the palm trees that the Japanese attackers approach through gave them so much cover that the US firepower had little effect in the game I played. The other PTO affair is ‘SP95 Burn Gurkha Burn’ which is a really well paced scenario. A small force of really good quality Japanese engineers are assaulting and trying to clear three hills of Gurkhas (also very good quality troops) with a sizeable flanking attack from a reduced strength first line company. The Gurkhas get reinforcements including a 9-2 and the fight for the last hill is a tight, tense way to end the scenario. I really like this one and think it is a classic.

I played ‘SP89 Assaulting Tes’ against a weaker opponent (yes Ben it is possible) at IF this last year and I think it has the makings of a classic also. See my write up of that tourney for a description of this gem, which I hope to play again soon. By now I have played and won SP96 ‘Husum Hotfoot’ both ways, as the SS and the Brits, so I’m bound to find that balanced (I love Wasps!). ‘SP87 Fangs of the Tiger’ is a lot of fun. Hulldown positions for T-34s trying to stop Tigers moving down a one-road axis to exit or destroy all the enemy armour on the road. Very enjoyable. ‘SP85 The McCown Encounter’ sees a scratch force of Americans trying to stop a company of SS, all of whom are in halftracks, from exiting off the far side of a full board (or scoring kills on M10 TD). It is tough for the SS because there are inherent pinch points and mines, as well as the US personnel and vehicles to deal with. Just a touch too big for BERSERK! we felt. ‘SP94 Out of Order’ is set during the same operation as the HOB scenario ‘FF14 Operation Rosselsprung’ and is a fight over a large building held by Yugoslavian partisans. Beset on all sides by SS paratroopers and a platoon of Bosnians they are in for a surprise because the Germans have special ammo which can fire up through floorboards to higher floors, even if there is no stairwell! This really needs you to set up extra boards or other representations of the building so that you can see what is going on (at Berserk! we are providing copies of the building so the payers may use them to represent the higher floors – an idea we nicked from the Kinetic Energy boys). I have also recently played “Seelow Seesaw” which is like a later war version of “Hill 621.” A horde of Russians charge across board 44 at their enemy supported by some impressive heavy metal of the Red variety. However, the Germans get a 128L AT gun which they can place atop the board 9 hill. This is a death ray and I seemed not to miss at all when playing Ben at it. Given the height advantage the German’s enjoy and the LOS available to their

numerous MG’s the SMOKE from the ISU 122’s is going to be the difference between a win and a loss for Ivan here. The other scenarios I am yet to play, but they all look very promising, except perhaps for an all armour affair with IS2s slogging it out with King tigers – looks like the player with the most turret hits will win that, making it appear that the dice will determine the winner more than skill alone perhaps.

I know some players who may bemoan the fact that the scenarios are light on chrome or anything particularly memorable. That is, there is no night, exotic terrain, desert or anything more spectacular by way of weather than a little wind, twilight, mist, LV and snow to be found here. Vanilla is the usual descriptor used in a derogatory tone. Well, I like flavoured ice cream, but what I really enjoy is a really well made Vanilla. In ASL terms, I am perfectly happy running a small to moderate sized combined arms affair in NW Europe as long as the scenario is otherwise sound. Throw in a couple of PTO scenarios (as here) and I’m well happy. My one note of concern would be the prevalence of the SS in this pack: Aside from the two PTO scenarios, six of the remaining 10 scenarios depict the SS in some situation or other. The allure of the SS never seems to fade in ASL terms. That being said, you’ll be hard pressed to find a better value for money product that this latest issue. It gets my endorsement.



## ASL JOURNAL 4

The new *ASL Journal 4* was published late last year and my initial reaction was pure pleasure at the quality cover illustration which is the best yet by far. Ken Smith’s painting of Scottish Recce soldiers and carriers in a moment of calm in Normandy is very nice. The soldier in the

foreground, loading his SMLE like he means it and looking into the distance is the best rendition of a soldier we've seen on an ASL product since George Parrish died some years ago.

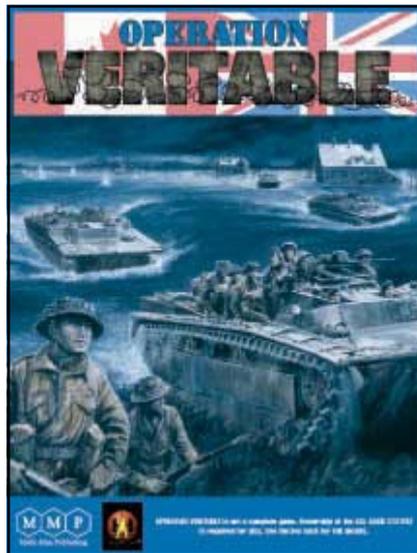
48 Pages with only two ads for upcoming attractions – unless you include the page with the tournament listing and the appetiser for *Operation Veritable* (a sneak peek at the Stürmtiger from *OVHS*). This follows the formula of recent years. The cover gives away the hint that Carriers are the flavour of the month (year). No less than six of the 12 scenarios contain carriers of one type or another. Ian Daghish's opening article is heavy on the history side and isn't quite as essential a read as the really excellent breakdown of the bocage he gave us last year. It does make fascinating reading however because the way ASL has us use carriers doesn't sit well with the reality. Ian has provided some of the scenarios as well and we liked one of them, "Unlucky Thirteenth," so much it found its way into this year's BERSERK! tournament. Shaun Carter and Charles Markuss write about the India Pattern Carrier (not a true carrier in ASL terms) and again there's an illustrative scenario (which I have only played very ineptly as the British myself, sad to say).

Laurent Closier has written a piece on an aspect of the war, or rather an arena, which was a closed book to me: the fighting for SE Asia and there are three of his scenarios set there. Japs vs the French will be a bit of a change. An excellent analysis of how light mortars work has made me realise that I haven't been factoring the effect of the small calibre at ranges over 12 hexes properly, thus justifying that article in my book. There is a large SASL scenario set on Omaha Beach which I can't offer any insight into, since I've never played any SASL.

I wasn't particularly amused by the gag rules for lighting strikes, nowhere near as funny as the counter for the piper and not a "patch" on mine dogs (sorry). I also found the choice of scenario for the analysis article – 'J24 Smashing The Third' – to be a strange one because it occurs to me that each side's strategy is pretty straightforward and obvious, having played it a couple of times. I'm sure there are many better potential subjects waiting to receive such a thorough work through.

One thing that is a "must have," is the set of hedge overlays. These are going to make it possible to make any half board a dense bocage maze, or to restrict LOS across otherwise open boards. I think we'll see a fair few of the *Tactiques* scenarios published by in the near future since these new overlays are reproductions of those originally published in that venerable publication. One scenario using these overlays 'The Lawless Roads', is also a scenario used at BERSERK! and we were able to use 'Roses For Vandervoort' from *Tactiques* as well because of the overlays being officially published. Great timing.

I like the new Journal overall. There's plenty here for you to get stuck into and it was well worth the money (seemed a lot cheaper to me than last year's only £12.99!).



## OPERATION VERITABLE

After an agonising wait, the universally unpopular pre-order number was reached and MMP went ahead and printed their second *Historical Study: Operation Veritable*. I'll be abbreviating that to *OVHS* from now on. We're back to the quirky artwork on the box and it looks like advice from some players has prevented the gaffe of the wrong Canadian Flag being used on the cover (the original publicity shots of the cover showed the modern red and white flag, not the one in use in 1945). The box will probably be thrown away pretty soon anyway.

The format is just like the *Operation Watchtower* module for last year. Incidentally, having played that more thoroughly I'd change my very hesitant endorsement of that to a recommendation to buy because it turned out to be a great experience! The effects of the combination of night and Jungle on ASL is quite striking. Also, in the review of that first MMP Historical Study, I overlooked such gems as *Berlin Red Vengeance* and *Fortess Cassino*. In both of these Heat Of Battle OB had already used the combination of scenarios and campaign set on a historical map along with geomorphic map scenarios depicting actions nearby, all in the same module.

You get a 28 by 46 hex map (similar size to the *PB* map) of the terrain straddling the road that ran between the border villages of Goch and Kalkar which was the site of an intense battle in early 1945 between the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (pronounced as "Riley" which gives the map and CG its title - "Riley's Road"). The Allies were pushing to gain territory in the area to the south of the Reichswald and the Germans put up some stiff resistance, throwing in some of the best units they had left bay that late point in the war. The map depicts gently rising terrain with farmhouse and barns (*ASL* factories). The dominant ridge and most of the terrain represents recently ploughed fields. Going is soft and on one particular day of the battle it is so bad (following overnight rain) that any vehicular movement up-slope garners a Bog check. Familiar to owners of *KGP* and *PB* will be the wire fences and slopes,

while the cellars for *ABTF* are also present; the rules for all of these are reprinted in the 18 Chapter Z pages that come in *OVHS*. The map does immediately strike me as having sweeping fields of fire across acres of what is essentially open ground. The defender will certainly be favoured if he is in good terrain, but that is scarce. My main gripe with this product is that the artist who drew the map has applied shadows to the buildings. This will only serve to make LOS thread checking harder, something I'm not keen on. It's also odd that the woods don't have shadows if the buildings do have them. On the other hand, the crest lines, running as they do through terrain such as the ploughed fields, have been picked out with a fine but clear line which makes it easy to see the terrain. I can remember having to go over previously issued *HASL* maps with a fine point pen to pick these out. Nice work this map in this regard, having played a scenario on that northern portion of the map I found that both my opponent and myself were never confused about levels.

The combatants on the scenarios and CG set on the map are amongst the best each side had to offer: Canadians against a previously unmolested German Paratrooper division and the Panzer Lehr. It is the latter who make up most of the German counters provided in *OVHS*. In order to distinguish these from other Wehrmacht units they have red ID numbers. At first I just thought this a weak excuse for selling us more Panther counters, but there is a perfectly valid reason for supplying these counters in this form. The Lehr units will always be withdrawn after a CG scenario because they were only to be used in attacks, not in defence. The counters do look rather smart, the red-on-blue is striking, although I note that we have some already familiar names on the SMCs (when are we going to see a 10-3 Von Edwards counter I wonder). The in-crowd of MMP and co. get their names on the counters again. The star of the piece is the new Stürmtiger counter, the first time the beast has appeared except in a Kinetic Energy rare vehicles pack now long out of print. It has a 380ml MA, can not use Bounding Fire and can only fire once every other player turn.

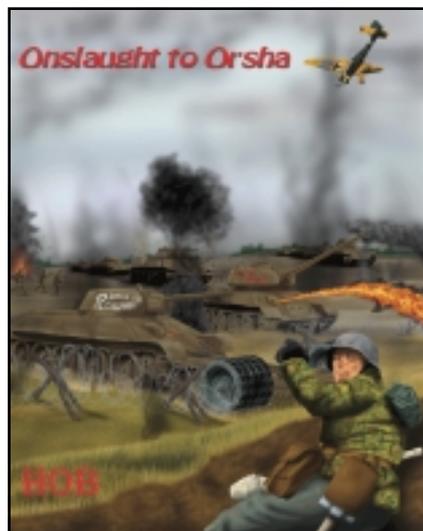
The British get a load of extra Ram Kangaroos, some Shermans, Wasp carriers, SMCs and AT Guns plus an extra set of "normal" 458 squads (ie not the airborne types from *PB*). Oh, and we get lots of PIATs. All are welcome additions to my counter mix. As ever, the publishers are trying to supply enough kit that the prospective buyer will not have to own more than the core modules to pick this historical study up and play it, which is fine except that you also need a lot of the geomorphic boards not contained within *Yanks* and *BV* to play some of the scenarios not set on the Riley's Road map itself.

You get a total of 16 scenarios, five of which are played on the *HASL* map, the rest on geomorphic boards, including two on *DASL* boards. One is played on an ocean overlay with building and sand dune overlays representing the flooded town of Niel. As in *Operation Watchtower*, there is one scenario we have seen before, "Tussle at Thomasof", which is reprinted here in a revised format. There is a real mixture from night, to amphibious assaults in DUKWs. I

have only had time to play two scenarios so far, but both were really good. 'Bewildered and Belligerent' sees British units set up in a partially rubble city board. The Germans can enter from any side and their VC are to exit off the opposite side. This really has a lot of replay value as the way the Tommies react to the line of attack will make all the difference. They only have one 6pdr and it could find itself out of position. The other I have played is 'The Good Shepherd' which is a *DASL* affair involving an attack by a company of Canadian infantry supported by three Shermans and a Wasp of the 1<sup>st</sup> Hussars into a built up area. Entertaining, well paced and ideal use of the *DASL* map as fights for buildings would cause stacking problems. We may have found our first two scenarios for *BERSERK!* 2004.

You get a nice enough booklet containing an historical overview which shows how the scenarios fit into the overall history of Veritable. There are designer notes and an article on the "funnies" which are largely underused in *ASL* as far as I am concerned. Plenty get used in the scenarios here, especially the AVRE and Wasps.

I have had a look at the CG and I note you buy units of up to Company strength. There can be air support, night fighting and variations on artillery (creeping barrage and so on), but otherwise I think this should be extremely accessible to most *ASL* players. Even though I have just begun to delve into this new module, I can recommend this wholeheartedly to all. It is well worth the £35 I paid for it.



## ONSLAUGHT TO ORSHA

Heat of Battle have a well earned reputation for producing excellent products, but with *Onslaught To Orsha* they have outdone themselves. *OtO* is essentially their take on the Historical study and actually comes across as two linked but distinct products, one is based around a large (73 x 142 cm) historical map (that's the *Onslaught to Orsha* part) and the other is a battle review (the "Operation Begration Battle Review"). The overall result is a pretty thorough examination of what was going on in the high

summer of 1944 on the Minsk-Moscow highway (and along the Minsk-Smolensk railway), as the irresistible red tide crashed against well prepared German positions across a wide front. As soon as I mention that the whole thing was put together by Chas Smith, you'll know you're on to a good thing. Chas was responsible for the *Hell on Wheels* pack, the best of which ended up in print by MMP and also the unpublished *Herman Goring* pack, scenarios from which were again published in the earlier *ASL Journals*. This has a pedigree that is hard to beat.

The product comes in a cover which doubles as a CG force organiser and contains a full colour chapter divider (the map side is monochrome to aid copying), something neither *OVHS* or *OWHS* from MMP had. The fact that it doesn't come in a box is also worthy of praise because the outer packaging isn't going to end up in a bin once the other components are stored.

The map is really big for one sheet and has oversized hexes (always welcome in my book) I can't say I'm wild about the flecks of dark green in the pale OG hexes but I don't think it will detract from play. The playing area is 52 x 30 hexes and represents a plateau with some higher terrain along one flank. The battlefield is dotted with shellholes and there are gullies, but there is little really defensible terrain present. I note the presence of slopes and some unique combination hexes (shell-hole-orchards and grain-road). The playing area is split right down the middle by a railroad.

The counter sheet is pretty impressive. The AFVs and aircraft are all in colour, although to be honest the plans of all the T-34s look the same pretty much (ie the turrets on 76L and 85L seem the same). You get a collection of what I can only describe as "Red Funnies," which include variants on the flamethrower T-34s including better armour than the ones in *BV* and also T-34/85s and KV-1s with FT SA. Another welcome addition to the Soviet OB are various different types of T-34 and KV-1 mine rolling tanks, all of which will feature heavily in the CG because the Germans laid vast quantities of mines in this area. There are included also a lot of lend lease vehicle to supplement the Shermans already in the Russian colours. We get two variations of "75" Shermans, Valentines, MatildaIIs and US Trucks and AA half-tracks. The most striking counters are the air support counters. The rules allow for six variations on the air support available to the Russians, all represented by differently armed IL-2 Sturmovik counters. Most welcome of all is the return of a favourite of mine from the *COI* days of old-school *Squad Leader* – Stukas with 37LL cannons. Throw in some cupolas, some German OP tanks and some extra Russian Armour leaders and you have your counter sheet. As described above the plan views of the vehicles (AFV and planes) are in colour. The letters HOB appear in grey on the background on both sides. They are distinct from the "official counters" but they won't look too much out of place on the board. The counters are really robust and very well die cut, taking little effort to be taken off the sprue.

Inside the folder you get a 52 page chapter

which divides into several parts. The first 22 pages make up a familiar looking Chapter Z clone like you'd get in any *HASL* module from MMP, including the CG rules. I don't know whether it was intentional or done on purpose but I got an extra copy of pages 11 & 12 which have the available purchases, the reinforcement groups, printed there. Tidy. I note that you buy infantry in companies, which gives an idea of the size of the forces involved. The CG rules look very like that we've seen before. The illustrations for rules and counters are in full colour throughout. Production values are superb.

The next section is a Chapter H style presentation giving you the gen on all the different ground vehicles in the game, again in full colour and with well illustrated examples of the use of mine roller tanks against combinations of mines and wire as well as against just mines. The you get two *SASL* missions (still mean little to me) and then you get into an annotated "Map Study" in which the strategic picture is laid out along the same lines as we have seen in the MMP studies with the scenarios mentioned as you go along. There then follows a discussion of the forces involved, again illustrated, this time with photos and computer graphics. And then you get a rundown of the OBs involved in Bagration. Whew!

And then there are the scenarios. 22 of them divided into two groups. OB 1-14 are the Operation Bagration set which are all set on geomorphic maps. Each scenario card has the familiar (by now) HOB layout with the vertical turn record track and I am pleased to say that the board layouts still contain a rendering of the terrain (the boards themselves), making the card easier to read without getting the boards out. Print quality is excellent. OtO 1 – 8 are all set on the big map and represent the *Onslaught to Orsha* aspect. Once again the terrain in play is reproduced in miniature.

Bearing in mind that I have not yet had time to sit and play any of this yet, having been busy getting *BESERK!* ready this winter and acknowledging that the only real proof of any pudding is in the eating as ever, I can say that this must be the single most impressive "third party" product I have ever seen. It loses no ground at all to the MMP *HASL* modules we have seen recently in all but one respect, that of price. If you aren't keen on Eastern Front battles, you aren't going to think that the £50.00 price tag will be worth it. But it really looks like you're going to be missing out.

This summer is going to be a great one for the *ASL* player with all the excellent new material to play. I have several other products on my desk which I haven't the time or space to review this time, which is a shame. I'll do my best to have something ready for Pete's next edition.

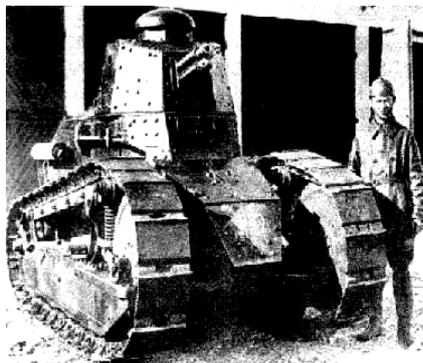
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# FANATIC PACK #1

## Designer's Notes

Paul Kenny

Here are some designer notes on each of the scenarios from *Fanatic Pack 1*. Try to give you an insight into the mind of the madman that is me. Hope you enjoy.



### FE 1 A Victory for Early Polish Armor

This scenario resulted from a reading of an article in the TANKS online magazine located on the TANKS website. It features an action between the Polish Army and the invading Russians. The article was fairly detailed with regards to the action and included a map of the battle. I like esoteric subjects and early war stuff so this was a natural fit. On top of that the scenario features the FT-17 a vehicle that doesn't often get much use.

I tried to keep the units fairly simple. Instead of designing a whole new system/counter set for one scenario I decided to use the existing counter mix. The relative strengths feel right given the situation so that works for me. Removing the special Russian Characteristics of Human Waves and Commissars seemed logical and worked from a design standpoint. Having the Russian tidal wave across the boards would certainly effect balance in this scenario. The article I read indicated that the MG's had been removed from the tankettes, thus the SSR on CMG. The +1 for the PAATC should represent both the hesitancy and unfamiliarity of the soldiers with tanks and prevent the tanks from being swamped too quickly in the village.

The scenario should play out fairly historical. The Poles were able to push into the town with their armor, the infantry may find it harder to get in. The Poles should be

somewhat secure in the town before the reinforcements come on which historically resulted in the tanks being pushed out of the town.

The design of the scenario was fairly straight forward except the board layout. The action occurred across gently rolling hills into a small village. Although the boards as represented to sort of provide this feel it is not the perfect fit. I just don't get the feel of gently rolling farmland from any of the boards and IMO board 46 just doesn't cut it it seems too contrived, but since board 10 gets so much use and 46 was fairly new when I started the design I went with it.



### FE 2 Dans La Bataille, Pour La Patrie

This scenario arose from reading an article on a Modeling website. The action details a part of DeGaulle's counterattack that although was very promising did not have the punch to slow down the Germans. This scenario features a large French tank force trying to force their way through a small at start German force reinforced at mid game by a substantial German armored force. The action described in the article had the French armored force pushing up several roads into the HQ of the German 1st Panzer Regiment.

The article provided me with a fairly accurate OOB for the French vehicles and I researched a number of sources to find out typical armor that would have been in the area. I think this resulted in a nice action that is relatively rare in ASL an early war armor/infantry battle.

This one will be tough on the Germans. Not only do they have to prevent the French from exiting they have to protect their fairly vulnerable armor from becoming

easy CVP. The German will have to strive to fight like their real world counterparts, outmaneuver the French with their great MP and get in close rear and side shots, blow smoke and hide. The lumbering French monsters will fall, slow and steady and if you can pick off a tank a platoon will slow down considerably. Use your infantry to target the French motorcyclists, hope they dismount as this will slow them down too. Try to get long range early shots on the riders to break them early and get some bailing out MC's. Protect the at start tanks from early kills, use them against the infantry and to lay smoke in front of the heavy tanks to allow your stronger armed and armored tanks to rush in for a kill or two.

The French should just push, get forward, don't worry about getting CVP they will come naturally, keep together and keep the exit in mind. The scenario is a lot shorter than you think.

I found this one to be deceptively tough for the French. They appear to be able to walk across the board and initially I had a VP requirement of around 75 but I consistently found the French moved way to slow, especially with tanks failing nonplatoon movement DR as these become a factor. The German must be cautious but will be able to, if he uses his assets properly to slow down the French.



### FE 3 The Border Forts

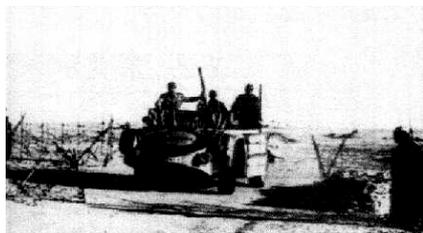
This scenario arose from an article in World War II magazine that described the troubles Italy had in November 1940. Desert has been an area of ASL that has become somewhat neglected in recent years and I fear with the lack of availability of the desert boards etc, will continue to be. This action

occurred in East Africa and features some early war armor, which is always a favorite of mine. Throw in both sides getting Aerial Support and WAY COOL!

The design of this one came relatively quickly. The Italians were defending a fort. Well how does one best represent that? I think the trenches and wire nicely present an obstacle to the British similar to a fort. The British "broke" into the fort so that is represented by them getting through the fortifications. Earlier I had the British entering from offboard but too much time was spent traversing the board, which is boring and resulted in a few picked off British tanks, thus I decided to start em right close to the fort.

The Italian units are fairly typical rear area defenders, not the best Italian available but the 7 morale should allow them to stand up a bit to incoming firepower, the 2 ELR seems about right. The AT Guns seem appropriate and since this is East Africa I went with the ancient 70\* INF Gun. Remember you don't gain acquisition with that bad boy.

The British get a decent group of infantry. I had considered using 447's but I thought with the relatively low ELR too many 436's would come into play thereby really slowing down the attack. Given the need for some strength in fighting into the fort I went with the greater range. There is a big difference between the non-covering 457 and the covering 447. The tanks are a fairly typical group of early war desert vehicles. I intentionally limited the number of Lt MTRs. I wanted to prevent a board covered with smoke blinding the Italians. That will have to be done with a liberal and intelligent use of vehicle dust.



## FE 4 Whirling Dervishes

I am especially proud of this scenario. This action is esoteric and features some rarely used vehicles in a unique action. When designing I frequently look for a "hook" for the scenario. The "hook" for this one was the rescue action. I found this action in a World War II magazine. The article was fairly

descriptive in its OOB and TO&E which was useful in developing each sides units.

I used a different technique for the "fort" from FE 3 which I believe is more appropriate for the action represented. The fort walls should prevent the French and Italian vehicles from getting into the fort. The Garrison was made strong enough to defend itself but not pose an unacceptable risk to the French.

This one will test your abilities with Chapter H. The Italian Autosaharianas have PP capability. HINT: try to use that in getting units offboard! Both sides have some potent yet brittle weapons. The light dust was added to assure that the vehicles aren't blasted away too quickly and should give each side some maneuverability with them.

This one plays out as a challenge for each side. The French have to cover a wide area, keep the Garrison contained and avoid encircling attacks. They do get the quality troops and the advantage of getting the first shot in. The Italians have a slight advantage in numbers and get EVP bonus. Look for a charge to the fort by a sacrificial lamb to release the garrison followed by a break for the board edge.



## FE 5 Beyond the Call of Duty

This scenario went through the most revisions of any in the pack, several years ago I came across a brief description in a book (the name escapes me at the moment) which I THINK was the American Army study of the German Baltic campaign by an Author named Blue, I could be wrong on that one. The reason it went through so many changes is that on the face of it a bunch of green Allied Minor squads shouldn't be able to stand up against 1st line German squads with Assault Engineers but I found that consistently the Germans were getting beaten around quite a bit, the reason primarily was the unique combination of fortifications, MG's, guns and concealment. The Germans

had a tough time of balancing aggressiveness with caution and the result is a fairly tense scenario.

Originally this scenario had a couple of hill boards on the southern side but I removed them as it took the tanks too long to get into the action. I think boards 11 and 18 nicely represent the hilly terrain in the area of the battle. The OOB's were based on my assumptions for the border guard and for a front line Kampfgruppe in early 41. I think green troops represent fairly accurate the quality of the troops in Yugoslavia at the time, even a 2 ELR seems generous but I didn't want the squads disrupting too readily. A few cheesy guns rounds out the units. The book said the pillboxes were poorly constructed as were the AT ditches therefore the reduced Pillbox TEM and my decision to give the HT the ability to cross the trenches.

The source for this scenario described the Germans as a Kampfgruppe and IIRC included some engineers. The presence of the engineers may have resulted from the description of the Germans destroying the pillboxes.

This scenario has been on the back of my computer for 4 or 5 years now and I am glad I was able to get it into print. Again this scenario really has an enjoyable level of tension in it. The Gerries are under a limited amount of time to cross the board. They will be getting hit by long range fire from nasty popguns. Hope for a tank to come in view of your 251/10 or ATR for some CVP.



## FE 6 Cavalry Charge at Mussino

Another scenario that has been sitting in my computer for a LONG time. Several years ago I considered creating a scenario pack featuring cavalry. This was one of the

scenarios. Some of its companions include Fort Kassala and Race for Freedom published by Critical Hit, both of which are cavalry scenarios. This is another one I am glad was able to see print, although this one was a lot easier to develop the FE5. This came from a Cavalry of World War 2 book which had a page or so on this battle. It generously gave both sides OOB so that made it a lot easier. I went with elite squads for the Russians as I think the Mongolians were better troops and that cavalry are typically higher caliber soldiers. That with the limited range of firepower that is think is appropriate for mounted soldiers made this a good fit especially with the design consideration that I wanted to limit the Russians ability to fire from afar. The four tanks seem appropriate for reconnaissance units at the time so thus the Russian OOB.

I chose a number of appropriate guns for the time frame for the German OOB. The supporting infantry was developed as a balancing force and changed somewhat during Playtest as I got a feel for how brittle each force was. The OBA was added to give the Germans some much needed killing power but as it is OBA it is fickle and its loss wont necessarily spell doom for the Germans.

One thing about the mist, the description of the action mentioned the mist in the area so it was included it also helped from a design standpoint in that it helps the Russians close.



## FE 7 - FE 10: The Dutch East Indies Campaign.

I had contemplated the creation of a HSASL featuring the Netherlands East Indies campaign for submittal to MMP for publication. This contemplated HSASL would feature 12 +/- scenarios along with a number of special rules and some rare Japanese and Axis Minor Vehicles. The special rules included Native Partisan Troops, Landstrom Troops (essentially

Allied Minor Native Troops) and new unit types for Allied Minor Cavalry. I believe that although the project had merit and would have presented some interesting stuff I don't think MMP would have given it high priority, considering the other interesting stuff they have going. So I decided to use four of the more interesting scenarios in Fanatic Pack #1. I tried to select a decent variety of the scenarios that I had developed for the NEI HS.

The primary source for this was the Netherlands East Indies website, which is an excellent resource for this area of World War 2.



## FE 7 Quick & Dirty

That describes both the play and the design of this scenario. The Japanese are unloading on Java and send a reconnaissance detachment to secure some bridges. The Dutch arrive shortly before the Japanese and there is a race for the bridge. The information I had available described the units and armor available so it was easy to generate the OOB.

One aside is on the armored cars used by the Dutch, they had two other armored vehicles on Java that were more prevalent than the MH-III. The Overwagewagen which is an armored truck and the excellent Alvis-Strassler Armored Car, both of these vehicles I hope will make it into the vehicle counter mix some day.

A simple meeting engagement on the excellent board 47. Smallish in size I hope this is a good tourney scenario. Don't just look at the OOB and give the scenario to the Japs, yes they are powerful but they lack AT weapons and the 8 FP on the Dutch AC is pretty devastating, try to get the Dutch ATR to a position to get a side shot. If the Jap player is worrying about the ATR he isn't attacking your infantry. A lucky break with a toss of the DC on the bridge could win it for you. That was the goal of the Dutch (to destroy the bridge) thus the sudden death VC.



## FE 8 Soebang Serenade

A redux of an Annual scenario (Defeat in Java I believe) where I utilize more appropriate units. I borrowed a couple of the boards from that scenario IIRC and added the airfield board as the action covered an assault on the airfield.

Unfortunately we don't have the Overwagens to use which were actually there but this was the only major armored engagement of the Java campaign so I put in all of the Dutch toys available. The information I had indicated there was a force of 100 Japanese in the town including a couple of Guns so that part of the order of battle was clear. The Japanese had secured the airfield then moved into the town so a significant portion of their force was still at the airfield. The Dutch attacked the town in a series of assaults and in one had reached all the way to the airfield before being pushed back. Late arriving Jap armor aided in the defense. The Japanese were initially surprised by the Dutch attack therefore the Turn 1 Pinning. The VC reflect the Dutch attempt to capture the town.

A meaty PTO scenario with realistic potential for armor vs. armor action, I really like this one.



## FE 9 Blackforce Counterattack

The Dutch weren't the only force fighting on Java. I even have a scenario in

development featuring Dutch, British and Americans fighting the Japanese! In this action the Japanese had forced a river crossing and established a bridgehead. The British tank force that was on the island launched a counterattack and push back the Japanese, wiping em out.

The OOB was worked out through Pting, I found the Japanese were able to break the Brits too much keeping em out of the victory area, so I both reduced the Jap to Brit ratio of forces and gave the Brits a couple of -1 ldrs to help with rallying. The British tanks are expendable (note the errata that dictates the tank FP is na for the Victory conditions) so they are used aggressively and tend to fall prey to the Japanese AT weapons. But again, just having a PTO armor action is cool unto itself.

Another smallish scenario designed for tourney use, I hope you enjoy.



### FE 10 An Abandoned Army

This is another one of those scenarios I am especially proud of. This one features a HIP Dutch force ambushing the Japanese. The twist is that like Urban Guerrillas (J1) the Japanese will be helped by randomly occurring partisan units popping out of the jungle and kunai. I admittedly stole the idea but imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

The Dutch are described as an Abandoned Army so naturally are depicted with mostly Green Squads. A few 457s are added to give them some muscle. This is more for prevention of ELR failure disrupting them then for benefits of range as the action should mostly be at close range. The Japanese force was a second line division used to mop up North Sumatra so thus the 347's.

Play won't generate too much in the way of partisans but a HS or hero are likely to appear at the odd time to cut routs, ambush etc. The scenario looks tough on the Japanese but if he can get a squad or two with a leader

through the defense and rush him off board he in almost halfway to the required VP and trust me there will be lots of dead soldiers in this one. Don't forget Civilian Interrogation a suddenly revealed squad could mean the difference between life and death for the Japanese.



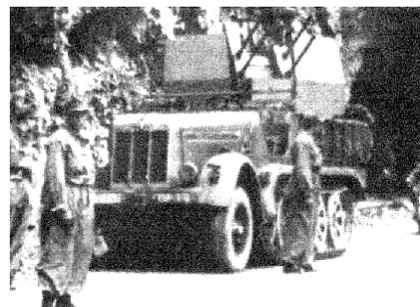
### FE 11 Italian Winter

This scenario arose from an action depicted in a book by Werner Regenber regarding the use of armored vehicles in the German Security Forces. For those interested in arcane ASL and arcane vehicles this scenario offers a lot. First you have Italian Partisans, captured T-34 tanks in German service, German and Italian troops in action together and use of board 50. The OOB's came together pretty easily for the Germans and the Italians, you have security troops and late war fascists so 447 and 347 were logical choices. The Germans get the use of some Engineers who were critical in the action depicted so thus the inclusion of the 838's. I agonized over the inclusion of 1 or 2 T-34 tanks during design. Playtesting with one tank found it getting knocked out fairly early with the 81mm MTR or with a Deliberate Immobilization, so I opted to go for two. I will discuss this in more detail later. The Partisans are your typical mixed bad of 527's and 337's. I provided them with Italian equipment and Heavy MTR and a roadblock to slow down cross traffic between the hills.

I have heard a lot of controversy on this scenario. The Germans tend to take a beating early on coming onboard across open ground but have "easily" been able to capture the necessary hexes for victory. I think though that if the Partisan concentrates early on with taking out the Tanks and not the infantry he will benefit in the long run. He should target the T-34's with the Heavy MTR and the 20L ATR and the DC if he gets a chance. The Heavy MTR will with a ROF of 3 get a few chances to shock, or immobilize which it can do on a TK of 4 or less. Difficult? Yes but odds are he should be able to nail at least one tank. The tanks will be

slowed by the hill and the ground snow and the stream so you know where he is going. And the T-34's do not have smoke to help the Attackers. Try HIP'ing a squad or leader with the DC and blasting a tank that tries to encircle. You have to be creative. If you are too intimidated by this tank vs man confrontation then give the Italians the balance. Molotov Capability will give the Partisans another weapon to fight the German tanks.

The biggest thing going for the Partisan is the early casualties the German will be taking, hit him and make him take MC's crossing open ground. Do this with inherent FP and the MG's leaving the Heavy MTR for the tanks. Use all your Partisan tricks to gain advantage in CC with stealth and attacking vs CX troops. The Attackers will be slowed by the snow and the hill. Although difficult try to keep as many good order squads in place near the peaks to hold off late game antics.



### FE 12 Once More Into the Breach

This action was described in Antonio Munoz's *Forgotten Legions* book. The Germans are on a rescue mission to help a beleaguered and surrounded garrison to get out of a trap. I like this one as it is a unique situation for ASL, a rescue operation and it is slightly different from the earlier ones in *Fanatic Pack #1* as both sides find themselves cutoff. It ends up being who is trapping whom.

The German OOB came together quickly. These were late war SS units so the 658's were used, assumptions for numbers of squads was made. The Isolated group was sized to be both a threat but not too large as to dominate the Russians. That nasty 81mm MTR will have to be addressed by the Russian or he will be taking a hurting on that flank. The two armored vehicles were listed in the book so that was easy. A smattering of SW and typical leaders flesh out the German Order of Battle. The Terrain was established to give the Russian some decent de-

fensive terrain, allow them to move laterally under cover and slow down the reinforcements.

The Russian OOB was developed to balance off the German groups. It should be strong enough to hold off the reinforcements but not too strong as to be an immovable object. The Russian will have serious decisions to make as to how to allocate forces to each flank and is the true appeal of this scenario. How much can be used to hold the isolated force and still have enough to slow the reinforcements down?

I enjoy delaying scenarios for defenders where you try to throw the attacker off base by one or two turns, enough for the victory. If the Russian can cause the Attacker to delay enough, to Prep when he should move or give him a key break he should be able to win. 18 VP is a lot of units to get across the playing area, better than 50% of his force. If he loses the HT or the AA HT he will definitely be hurting. And the late arriving T-34's could easily be enough to grasp victory from the jaws of defeat for the Russian. The German will have to allocate units to PsK or PF the Russians, but on each flank. Many difficult options for each side. A real blast and I hope you give it a try.

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# "THIS IS THE CALL TO AMERICAN ARMS!"

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

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J.J. Quinn Jr, 707 Mitchell Street, Ridley Park, PA19078  
Tod Reiser, 472 Hartwick Road, Mercer, PA 16137  
Tom Repetti, 17322 Paoli Way, Parker, CO80814  
Michael Rhodes, 850 Lincoln Centre Drive, Foster City, CA 94404  
Tate Rogers, 4930-F Corporate Drive, Huntsville, AL 35805  
R. Rossi, 30970 Stone Ridge Drive #12301, Wixom, MI48393  
Darryl Rubin, PO Box 907, Redmond, WA98073  
Robert Schaff, 2335 Middle Creek Lane, Reston, VA  
John Slotwinski, 2701 Harmon Road, Silver Spring, MD 20902  
C. Smith, 3736 Sacramento ave, Santa Rosa, CA95405  
W. Smith, 426 Beech St #8B, Kearny, NJ07032  
Jan Spoor, 2849 Woodlawn Avenue, Falls Church, VA22042-2045  
Ray Tapio, Critical Hit! Inc., 88 Lodar Lane, Brewster, NY 10509  
S. Tinsley, 8444 NW 87th, Oklahoma City, OK73132  
J. R. Tracy, 59 W. 9th Street, New York, NY 10011  
Rick Troha, 4485 Oak Circle, North Olmsted, OH 44070-2838  
W. Ulicki, 230 Washington Valley Road, Randolph, NJ07869  
Paul Venard, PO Box 1716, Bonners Ferry, Idaho, 83805  
D. Wetzelberger, 24 Dulaney Hills Ct, Hunt Valley, MD21030  
William Wiesing, 1936 Pine Meadow Avenue, Tom's River, New Jersey, NJ 08753-7823  
K. Wilhite, 121 Springfield Lane, Madison, AL35758-1973  
G. Windau, PO BOX 13134, Toledo, OH43613  
R. Wolkey, E6208 6th #D 1, Spokane, WA99212  
Paul W. Works, Jr., 12018 W. 68th Street, Shawnee, Kansas, 66216  
Darrell Wright, 1007 West Cole Street, Dunn, NC 28334  
Brian Yousse, 309 Chase Hill Court, Severn, MD 31144  
Eddie Zeman, Heat of Battle, PO Box 15073, Newport Beach, CA 92659  
Steve Zundel, 3601 Dawn Smoke Court, Raleigh, NC 27615  
Nadir El-Farra, Front Line Productions, PO Box 10345, Glendale, CA 91209-3345  
Paul Simonsen, 2118 N. Orange Grove Ave., Pomona, CA 91767  
Robert Hammond, 4414 Stay Ct., Orange, CA 92868  
Tom Huntington, 1425 Bison Ridge Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80919  
Evan Sherry, Sherry Enterprises, PO Box 3, Ruskin, FL 33570  
Vic Provost, Dispatches From The Bunker, 209 Granby Rd. Aot. 18, Chicopee, MA 01013, MA 01040  
Donald Garlit, 17430 Brady, Redford, Michigan, MI 48240  
Ray Woloszyn, 317 Kilburn Way Lane, Kernersville, North Carolina, NC27284-7104  
J R Van Mechelen, Apt 8E, 301 Heights Lane, Feasterville, PA 19053  
Will Fleming, 20455 First Avenue NE #C103, Poulsbo, WA98370

FANATIC ENTERPRISES is please to announce the release of FANATIC PACK #2, another fine scenario pack covering a variety of unique actions for the ASL system. This scenario pack contains 12 well-tested, balanced, fun and different scenarios. We at Fanatic Enterprises have listened to your concerns and have improved both the layout and formatting of our scenario cards. As always our scenarios are on card stock and per your wish the orders of battle have been included in boxes similar to other producers.

FANATIC ENTERPRISES PRESENTS

## FANATIC PACK #2



12 SCENARIOS COMPATIBLE WITH THE ASL SYSTEM

Defeat at Seroczyn  
Stab in the Back  
Contested Landing  
Where the Italian Meets the Bone  
Philippine Scouts at Mabatang  
The Bear Battalion Attacks

Lemon Bridge  
Collision Course  
Tiger of Vitebsk  
Rampage at Ritpong  
Operation Spring  
An Unconventional Attack

Defeat at Seroczyn, September 1939  
Stab in the Back, September 1939  
Contested Landing, May 1940  
Where the Bullet Meets the Bone, November 1941  
Philippine Scouts at Mabatang, January 1942  
The Bear Battalion Attacks, September, 1942  
Lemon Bridge, July 1943  
Collision Course, September 1943  
Tiger of Vitebsk, December 1943  
Rampage at Ritpong, May 1944  
Operation Spring, July 1944  
An Unconventional Attack, March 8-9, 1945

If you are interested in purchasing FANATIC PACK #1 or FANATIC PACK #2 the cost per pack is \$12 plus \$2 shipping and handling in the US. International costs will be \$12+\$4. Make checks or money orders out to Paul Kenny and mail to Paul Kenny, PO Box 644, Haddonfield, NJ 08033. I also accept Paypal under the name homercl11@hotmail.com.

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

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VIEW FROM

# ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL

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

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

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

## MARCH

### Bitter Ender 2003

**When:** 14 – 16 March.

**Where:** Ramada Inn Hotel (Blue Ridge), 1520 Blue Ridge, Raleigh, NC 27607. Tel (919)-782-7525, fax: (919)-832-4100, or email [www.blueridge.pmcproperties.com](mailto:www.blueridge.pmcproperties.com). All the rooms are doubles and the hotel rate is \$69.00 per night, which includes breakfast. The Ramada Inn will hold these rooms at this reduced rate until March 7, 2003. To ensure you receive this reduced rate, mention "Bitter Ender" when you call to register.

**Fee:** \$30.00 for players that pre-register or \$40.00 on the door. Entry for a single day is \$18.00.

**Format:** Five round Swiss format event. There will also be three mini-tournaments, two on Friday and one on Saturday. Gaming will officially begin at 0900 hours on Friday, March 14th and end 1600 hours on Sunday, March 16th.

**Notes:** The Gamer's Armory (operated by Scott Blanton) will provide the prizes for first, second and third place finishes.

**Contact:** Chuck Payne, 107 White Sands Drive, Cary NC 27513. Tel (919) 467-4129 or email [chuck\\_payne@worldnet.att.net](mailto:chuck_payne@worldnet.att.net) or [cpayne@talify.com](mailto:cpayne@talify.com). You can also visit <http://www.geocities.com/blackbeard2001> for the latest details.

### BERSERK 2003

**When:** 15 - 17 March.

**Where:** Hotel Skye, South Promenade, Blackpool, England. Room rates are £20.00 for a shared room or £26.50 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee:** £6.00.

**Format:** Five round tournament beginning Friday afternoon (arrangements will be made for those unable to arrive until Friday night), with three or six scenarios to choose from in each round. Players will be expected to have a knowledge of the first half of the Chapter G rules to play in the tournament. CG and friendly games can also be found throughout the weekend. There will also be a special three round tournament for new players.

**Contact:** Steve Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL, or email Trev Edwards at [trev@cablernet.co.uk](mailto:trev@cablernet.co.uk).

### Southern Ontario ASL Tournament

**When:** 15 - 17 March.

**Where:** Travelodge Burlington, 2020 Lakeshore Road Burlington, Ontario, Canada. Tel (905) 681-0762. Rooms are \$109.00 per night (this could include 1 to 4 people) and include continental breakfast each morning. When calling the hotel ask for "GROUP BLOCK" or quote "SOUT" to get the special room rates.

**Fee:** \$30.00 CDN (\$20.00 US) per person.

**Format:** Five round, Swiss style tournament. Three rounds Saturday (starting at 8am) and two on Sunday (finishing at 5pm).

**Contact:** Nick or Lisa Hoekstra at (905) 319-8289 or by email at [dhoekstra@cogeco.ca](mailto:dhoekstra@cogeco.ca) or [nhoekstra@vdlwengineering.com](mailto:nhoekstra@vdlwengineering.com).

### Nor'Easter VII

**When:** 28 – 30 March.

**Where:** Best Western Royal Plaza hotel, Marlborough, MA. Room rates are \$99.00 a night for up to 4 people, \$15 for a cot. Make sure you mention "Nor'Easter" to get this rate, and make your reservations at least 2 weeks before Nor'Easter - the earlier the better. The Best Western Royal Plaza phone number is 508-460-0700. If coming from the airport, or by train, make reservations with the Marlborough-Westborough Airport Shuttle 800-242-0064.

**Fee:** \$20.00 pre-registered by Feb 21, \$25.00 at the door.

**Format:** The main tournament starts Friday and is a five or six round Swiss format event, with five scenarios to choose from per round. There will also be two mini tournaments on Saturday.

**Notes:** First place gets a diorama courtesy of Joe Leoce. Second and third place finishers receive plaques, as do the winners of the mini tournaments.

T-shirts are \$18.00 each.

**Contact:** Make cheques payable to Mike Allexenberg and send to Nor'Easter VII, c/o Mike Allexenberg, 27 Juniper Brook Rd, Northborough, MA 01532. Visit <http://asl.yankeegamers.org> for the latest information.

## APRIL

### RENCONTRES 2003

**When:** 19 – 21 April.

**Where:** Namur, Belgium.

**Fee:** •12.00 (•5.00 for a single day).

**Format:** 4 round Swiss style, with 3 scenarios each round to choose from. The theme of the scenarios is 'Facing The Blitz - Allied Minors 1939-1940'. There will be one game on Saturday, two on Sunday and the final game on Monday.

**Notes:** Rencontres is part of the multi-gaming event DIPLOMAT 2003 held by the gaming club IN LUDO VERITAS.

Critical Hit will publish a special historical map for the event centred on the Glider assault against the Canal Albert's bridge at Vroenhoven on May 10-11, 1940. The admission for the weekend includes copies of the scenarios and the historical map.

**Contact:** [Pedro.Ramis@ccc.eu.int](mailto:Pedro.Ramis@ccc.eu.int). Visit [www.criticalhit.com](http://www.criticalhit.com) or [www.itv.be](http://www.itv.be) for more details.

### ANZACON 2003

**When:** 25 – 27 April.

**Where:** The Copeland Committee Room, Ashburton Public Library, 154 High Street, Ashburton Victoria. Melways Reference 60 C9. Accommodation can be arranged for interstate or overseas visitors. Please contact us for billeting arrangements.

**Fee:** To be announced.

**Format:** Four playing sessions, two Friday (two medium to short length), one Saturday (all day blockbuster), one Sunday (medium length). Two scenarios will be available at each round for selection by players with a theme based on "Old Favourites".

**Contact:** Steve Banham on 0409 775290 or [bahamsr@optusnet.com.au](mailto:bahamsr@optusnet.com.au).

## MAY

### 2003 MONTREAL ASL FESTIVAL

**When:** 17 – 18 May.

**Where:** Days Inn Montreal Metro Center, 1005 Guy Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3H 2K4. Phone 1-800-567-0880 toll free or (514) 938-4611 for rates and reservations. There is a special \$99.95/day if you reserve before April 9; mention Michelle Jodoin. Most rooms have 2 double beds. All rooms are air-conditioned and have color television. The hotel has a restaurant and is near a variety of restaurants, as well as shops and nightclubs. Indoor and outdoor parking available (charges apply for both).

**Fee:** \$17.00 (US) or \$25.00 (Canadian). Single day entry is half the full fee. Pre-registrants will receive tournament information and scenarios around mid-March.

**Format:** 5 time-limited rounds of action starting on Saturday at 8:30 a.m. Each round will have a choice of three scenarios, with scenario substitution possible by mutual player consent and TD approval.

**Contact:** Bruno L'Archeveque, Montreal ASL Festival, 2294 Fauteux, Laval, Quebec, H7T 2S6. Email [blarcheveque@aircanada.ca](mailto:blarcheveque@aircanada.ca).

### LOGCON SWEDISH ASL TOURNAMENT

**When:** 29 May – 1 June.

**Where:** Tornadoskolan, Skarpnäck, Stockholm, Sweden. There is room at the site to sleep (bring a sleeping bag!) or there are plenty of local hotels (900SKR / •100 per night) and hostels (250SKR / •25 per night).

**Fee:** 2005SKR / •25.

**Format:** 5 round Swiss format with three scenarios (and ABS) to select in each round. Thursday is available for free gaming with the tournament starting late Friday morning.

**Contact:** Peter Rogneholt, c/o Svedin, Rotevagen 4, 74696 Skokloster, Sweden. Email him at [rognholt@algonet.se](mailto:rognholt@algonet.se). The latest information can be found at [www.algonet.se/~rognholt/logcon.htm](http://www.algonet.se/~rognholt/logcon.htm).

## JUNE

### AUSTIN ASL TEAM TOURNAMENT

**When:** 19 – 22 June.

**Where:** La Quinta Inn Round Rock 2004 North I-35 Round Rock, Texas. Tel 512-255-6666. When reserving rooms mention you are with the Central Texas ASL Club and you will get a discounted rate of \$65.99 plus tax per room. This rate is good until June 6th, 2003.

**Fee:** \$27.50 prior to 1 June, \$35.00 thereafter.

**Format:** The "Team" Tournament is really two tournaments in one. The main tournament has two person teams of all skill levels compete – teams will be randomly assigned at the beginning of the tournament. You must register by 1 June to be eligible. The tournament inside the tournament has players challenging for the coveted 10-3 Award, which goes to the individual who perseveres throughout the weekend and bests all comers. For those on a tight schedule there will be a Saturday only "Texas Heat" mini-Tournament starting at 9AM – entry for this is only \$17.50.

**Contact:** Mike Senigen at [mikes@intrinsity.com](mailto:mikes@intrinsity.com). Check the web site at <http://www.angelfire.com/tx2/senigen> for the latest details.

## OCTOBER

### INTENSIVE FIRE 2003

**When:** 24 – 26 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 Phillips, 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, LE4 0GB. Phone (0116) 233 5896 (evenings only) or email [if@vfti.co.uk](mailto:if@vfti.co.uk).

## NOVEMBER

### GRENADIER 03

**When:** 6 – 9 November.

**Where:** Oberbettingen, a little town in the German part of the Ardennes. There is a railway station in the village and a train to Cologne every hour (travel time about 50 minutes). The location offers sleeping rooms for 45 persons, a huge kitchen (where our Marketenderin Andrea will continue her cooking business for us), a big playing area and an additional separate big room which we will use for eating. Rooms are mostly three and four bed rooms with shower. Bed and breakfast is •30 per night.

**Fee:** •5 per day (•2 for Sunday).

**Format:** The tournament will be again a Swiss style five Round tournament. We will offer again an event for players who don't want to participate in the tournament.

**Contact:** Christian Koppmeyer, Hagebuttenweg 9, 41564 Kaarst, Germany. You can email him at [Christian.Koppmeyer@freenet.de](mailto:Christian.Koppmeyer@freenet.de). Check out the Grenadier web site at <http://www.asl-grenadier.de> for up to date information.

## THE TRENCHES



# INTENSIVE FIRE 2003

**24 - 26 OCTOBER 2003**



INTENSIVE FIRE is the UK's longest running tournament dedicated to the play of *Advanced Squad Leader*. This year sees the 9<sup>th</sup> INTENSIVE FIRE and players of all standards are invited to attend.

## **FORMAT**

The well-established Fire Team Tournament is the main event and offers the chance for competitive play on the Saturday and Sunday. In addition, the Friday mini-tournaments offer the chance for glory in more specialised fields of warfare. Likely topics for this year include Stalingrad street fighting, 'Fog of War' and, especially for the inexperienced player, the Training Camp.

For those not interested in tournament play, or not able to make it for the whole weekend, there is always room for pick-up games and friendly play.

## **VENUE**

The Kiwi Hotel, centrally located in Bournemouth, offers both excellent gaming facilities and reduced accommodation rates (£31 per night for a single room or £26 for a double room). The hotel is within a short taxi-ride of Bournemouth rail station and ample parking is available. To book contact the hotel on (01202) 555 889 (+44 1202 555 889 from outside the UK). You can also book online at [www.kiwihotel.co.uk](http://www.kiwihotel.co.uk).

For foreign visitors, lifts can often be pre-arranged to and from major airports. For those contemplating an extended stay, Bournemouth offers an excellent base for the military historian, being within easy reach of important military museums at Bovington Camp, Winchester, Portsmouth and Aldershot.

## **COST**

Weekend registration for the tournament costs just £7. The tournament program listing the weekend's scenarios and events is available from late September to anyone registering in advance.

## **FURTHER DETAILS / REGISTRATION**

Contact Pete Phillipps, 23 Jean Drive, Leicester, England, LE4 0GB. Telephone (0116) 233 5896 (+44 116 233 5896 from outside the UK) or email [if@vftt.co.uk](mailto:if@vftt.co.uk).