

# VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

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## IN THIS ISSUE

**GUN-PIT ON THE SOUTH COAST** - Paul Case reports on INTENSIVE FIRE 03

**CRUSADERS LADDER** - updated

**THE SCENARIOS OF IF03** - a look at some of the scenarios used at IF03

**THE DEATH OF ASLOK** - the action at ASLOK

## IN THIS ISSUE

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| PREP FIRE                            | 2  |
| INCOMING                             | 3  |
| GUN-PIT ON THE SOUTH COAST           | 4  |
| THE CRUSADERS OPEN                   |    |
| ASL TOURNAMENT LADDER                | 7  |
| THE SCENARIOS OF INTENSIVE FIRE 2003 | 9  |
| THE SCENARIOS OF INTENSIVE FIRE 2003 |    |
| PART 2                               | 30 |
| THE DEATH OF ASLOK                   | 37 |
| “THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!”          | 38 |
| ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL              | 39 |

*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 54 should be out at the beginning of March 2004.

*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 are now out of print but can be downloaded for free from:  
<http://www.vftt.co.uk/vfttpdf.htm>

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# PREP FIRE

Welcome to yet another *View From The Trenches*. Later than planned but I wanted to include the news about Blackpool 2004 here. And then after I had sorted that out work sent me up to Penrith for a month! But at least they put me up in a pub for some of the time :-)

Unfortunately my work schedule probably means that the erratic *VFTT* schedule is going to continue for a while :-)

While working on this issue of *VFTT* I was looking thru what I had written in the past (a laptop while you are staying in a pub has it's advantages) and I came across what I wrote back in the very first issue of *VFTT*:

**I'm open to contributions on any aspect of ASL, but don't expect to get rich out of submitting stuff. All I can offer you is the satisfaction of knowing you're helping to keep the British ASL scene alive. So, whether it's an article on general tactics, a scenario dissection, a rules discussion, a variant, or a humorous look at ASL, write away.**

It's as true then as is it now. I have a few pages of the next issue filled up but am still looking for a few more articles. And the future of *VFTT* definitely depends on you lot writing stuff, especially now that I am doing a lot of travel for work.

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps

**COVER:** Indian troops in action.

### THE ASL MAILING LIST

The ASL Mailing List is devoted to discussion of *Advanced Squad Leader*, and is run by Paul Ferraro via a listserv program at the University of Pittsburgh. To subscribe send email to [majordomo@multimanpublishing.com](mailto:majordomo@multimanpublishing.com) with the body of the message reading:

**subscribe advanced-sl**

You MUST use lower case letters!

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

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

**subscribe advanced-sl-digest**

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

### EMOTICONS

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

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

:-) humour or smiley

;-) winking

:-> devious smile

<g> grin

:( sad

:-o shocked or surprised

#-( hung-over

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# INCOMING

## AXIS MINORS COMING

*Armies of Oblivion*, the long awaited module covering the Axis Minor involvement in World War II, is now available from MMP on pre-order. *AoO* contains the infantry, vehicles, and ordnance necessary to simulate actions involving Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria. Twelve scenarios give *ASL*ers a chance to try out the sometimes odd mix of infantry and vehicles used by the Axis Minor allies, while comprehensive Chapter H notes for the vehicles and ordnance allow *ASL*ers to play DYO scenarios involving these rarely-used nationalities. The module also includes four mounted mapboards (48, 49, 50 and 51), six counter sheets (including the infantry reprinted from *Partisan!*), and several overlays (including a board-length river!). The pre-order price is \$84.00 plus shipping and handling while the estimated retail price is currently \$112.00 (likely to be around £90 in the UK).

Out now is *For King and Country*, which contains the British infantry, vehicles and ordnance, along with four mounted mapboards (1, 7, 8 and 12), six counter sheets and 20 revised and updated scenarios which appeared in past magazines or modules that are now unavailable, as well as the second edition Chapter H notes. The retail price is \$80.00, with the UK price being around £64.95.

## FANATICS BATTLE IN BATAAN

Fanatic Enterprises has released *Fanatic Pack 3*; which contains a dozen

scenarios covering a variety of unique actions.

*Fanatic Pack 3*, *Fanatic Pack 2* and *Fanatic Pack 1* can be purchased for \$12.00 each while the *Battlin' Bastards of Bataan Pack* can be purchased for \$10.00. Shipping is \$2.00 for one pack and \$1.00 extra for each extra pack. Outside the US these costs are \$4.00 and \$3.00 respectively. Payment should be sent to Paul Kenny, PO Box 644, Haddonfield, NJ 08033. You can also order online by using PayPal and sending payment to [Homeracles11@hotmail.com](mailto:Homeracles11@hotmail.com).

## NEW CRITICAL HIT

Critical Hit Vol 7 No 1 should be out now. Inside is a map of Vroenhoven near the Albert Canal which is the scene for several of the 18 scenarios in the issue and a CG based on the German glider attack in May 1940. Among the others scenarios are several for CH's *Dien Bien Phu* module, some set during the Irish Civil War and one featuring a French attack against Egyptian forces during the Suez Crisis. Also included in the issue are two counter sheets for some of the nationalities featured in the scenarios.

The UK price should be around £19.95.



## THIRD PARTY PRODUCERS UK AVAILABILITY

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

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

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| <i>Leibstandarte Pack 1</i> | £9.00  |
| <i>Wacht Am Rhein</i>       | £14.00 |
| <i>Canadians In Italy 1</i> | £9.00  |
| <i>Canada At War 2</i>      | £6.00  |
| <i>Melee Pack 1</i>         | £10.00 |

Add 50p per item for postage and send your payment made out to PETE PHILLIPPS to 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, England, LE4 7PY.

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

## UK RETAILER STOCKISTS OF THIRD PARTY PRODUCTS

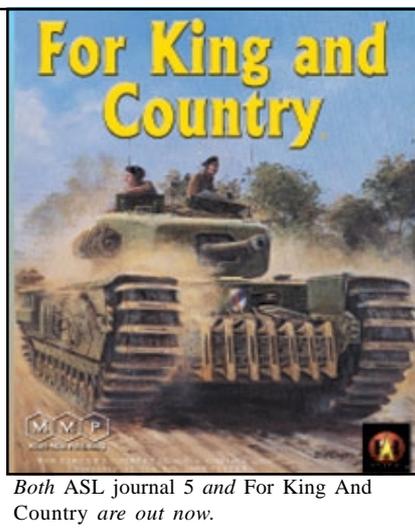
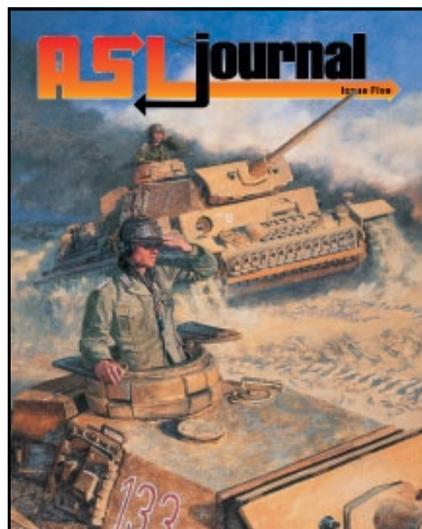
To purchase other third party products such as Critical Hit, Schwerpunkt or Heat of Battle contact any of the following shops.

**LEISURE GAMES**, 100 Ballards Lane, Finchley, London, N3 2DN. Telephone (020) 8346 2327 or e-mail them at [shop@leisuregames.com](http://shop@leisuregames.com).

**SECOND CHANCE GAMES**, 182 Borough Road, Seacombe, The Wirral, L44 6NJ. Telephone (0151) 638 3535 or e-mail them at [sales@secondchancegames.com](mailto:sales@secondchancegames.com).

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

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



Both *ASL Journal 5* and *For King And Country* are out now.

# GUN-PIT ON THE SOUTH COAST

Paul Case

Welcome to another Gun-Pit installment of total, and utter, rubbish. I am writing this short report on this years 'Intensive Fire', held at the Kiwi hotel in Bournemouth, Dorset. That, ladies, is why you have South Coast in the title!

## Thursday

I, being the good guy that I am, provided the Recce Group, to scout out the hotel's layout (in other words, I got there first, just like at 'Berserk'). After unloading my equipment, I recced the main attraction, the bar, and found it closed. Upon further scouting, I discovered it will open at 1730hrs. Reinforcements arrived (the Danes), but they scouted the town. It was not until the command scout group (your editor, the Hippy) arrived was that VERY SAD state of affairs changed. The bar opened at 1400hrs, with us two degenerates doing our level best to keep up the bad name of ASL players. Yep, we checked out the local beer supplies, and was proud to report that there was some Newkie Brown in the bar, along with other alcoholic thirst-quenchers. During the day, other members of the Advance Party arrived and reported in. With Pete and me continually checking out the beer supplies, and scouting for an outside-the-hotel eating place (a Pub), we never got to play with our pieces of cardboard. So, no games to report. Of note today was published author, Ian Daghish (yep, our Ian has got a book published!), turned up, and

proceeded to sell 'personally sign' copies to any-one mad enough to buy one. Now, I ain't saying I'm mad, but at 10% less then what the normal people pay, your hero naturally acquired one (as a side note, Ian asked how he should sign it? The reply being 'not including the word 'love'').

## Friday

After stuffing my face at the 'Queens Parade' (Breakfast), I eventually got some action, as Tim Macaire decided to push some cardboard around a map, against your resident '4+3'. Having played Tim before, I knew he knew a couple of the rules. We proceeded to play a Christmas scenario, ASL23 'Under The Noel Trees'. Tim's defending proved to be good enough, and the game ended the way it did last time I played him. (0-1 so far). Of note in this game, was the fact that your '4+3' stumbled into one of his HIP Tank Destroyers, and destroyed it in CC. His other TD was killed by a 'Drive-By-Shooting' move in one of my magical moments. The game rested on me getting 3 vehicles off, but as each needed an ESB roll, the dice would play their part. So, first one moves up to his place, needing 1MP to exit, Tim declines to shoot at it, and so the roll, needing 9 or less, a bloody 'Boxcars', immobilised, and a loss.

Ian Daghish's 'Fog Of War', to which I foolishly put my name down for, and completely forgot about, reared upon me. So, to battle again, in a sce-

nario from Ian's warped mind. This time, on the Eastern Front in 1942, I think! Well, I had chose to play the Allies against Graham Smith's Axis forces, and was given the simple task of ??????. I am obeying Ian's wishes, and not giving too much away, but I lost. (0-2).

Of note to every-one at 'IF' was the absence of the following :- Trevor 'Berserk Big Guy' Edwards and his partner in crime, Steve 'Photo Expert' Thomas, what were the 'Preston Two' doing, not going to 'IF'? Also, the travelling game show, Second Chance Games, failed to show up, preferring to travel to Germany instead. Weird!!

## Saturday

Breakfast and paper buying done, it's down to business.

The Tourney, with 'Team Crap' actually doing well, which makes a change for any team I'm in!

First game was against Chris Ager, at OB7 'Where's The Beef?' with me taking the Commies again. The game did not go all the way, with Stalin's boys deciding they had had enough. Well, with only 2xT.34/76's left, I did not hold out much hope. Chris had 2 turns to hunt my tanks, and kill one. As he had 2x Panthers, it would not be much of a contest. The adjudicating team (Neil Stevens, Dave Schofield and the hippy) agreed with me. (0-1) (0-3 overall). The bit that stands out for me, was my 2 berserk squads. One achieving sod all (state normal), but the other one being reduced to a  $\frac{1}{2}$  sqd, and going into CC with a 9-1,468 and a 248. The result of which was his death, along with the 9-1,468 and 248. A result of sorts!

Game 2 of the Tourney sees John Kennedy against your '4+3', in the scenario ASL77 'Le Herisson', with me taking the French. John is at the same dizzy heights on the ladder as me, so a fun game.

Rules question: when is a Fortified Building revelled as such? Answer :- according to the ASLRB, rule B23.911 '...A Fortified Building is not revealed until an enemy unit attempts to enter it, or it is successfully Searched (A12.152) or fired on with a



The recon elements of IF03 in action!



result which would be different due to the increased TEM of a Fortified Building.' So, that means that I won by fair means and not foul (I believe that this was not crucial to the game, but I suppose it might have been). Yes folks, the '4+3' has won a game.(1-1) (1-3 total) Apart from that question, nothing really happened in the game, except that I did destroy one of John's sIG's with a LMG (that's a first for me, you know).

At this stage, 'Team Crap' are in joint 1<sup>st</sup> place, and so Sunday will decide the 1<sup>st</sup> Division placings.

## Sunday

With 'stuffing-your-face' time finished, we precede with this years (and every years) main event, the Tourney.

For the show-down, I am playing William Hanson, a Yank who now resides in Denmark. The choice being a Schwerpunkt one, SP 91 'Show A Little Guts', with me being the Yankees. This was a close fought contest, with your '4+3' coming in second, another loss (1-2) (1-4 overall). It went to the wire, and the last CC finished not in my favour. Of note in this game was: 1; too many Palm trees, and 2; Will firing at my Broken 667 to keep him DM'd. the result was that my boys threw a 2 on the Morale Check, and promptly went berserk. (Did Trev know I was going to have this many berserk guys). Will moved a 9-0 and a sqd to reinforce his red. sqd already in the firers hex (my berserk target hex). My Mph, and the berserk guy charges into their hex and survives all fire (10 morale being good for something). CC sees every-one in the hex killed.

With one of my team-mates also losing, the 1<sup>st</sup> Divs championship goes to the other team.

Prizes were presented at about 1400hrs, as a lot of people had to leave.

Toby Pilling won the overall top prize, saying it was his first top prize at 'IF', naturally we are doubting that, as Toby seems to win everything (I believe he has just bought a larger house, as his other one was too small to cope with all his ASL prizes, a bit like Mike McGrath in the States).

Winner of the greatest prize, last place, goes to my apprentice, Wayne Baumber, whom I have been giving pointers to on losing (Glad to see it pay off).

After most people have gone, me

and the hippy have a few beers. Then decide to venture out, and find a place to get something to eat. We end up in Pizzaland (I think that's what it's called). After garlic bread, pizza and a beer, we head back to the hotel for our usual piss-take game. The scenario chosen is one from the HOB's 'Firefight' pack, FF3 'Armor Clash' (as a side note, I wish the Yanks would learn to spell!). Pete took the Russians and me the Germans. The memorable thing about this encounter was the amount of destroyed vehicles, mine and Pete's. neither of us achieving the primary VC (3x vehicles off the oppo edge), so on turn 5 Pete surrendered. The VC from T6 was the first to exit a unit off the oppo's edge. I had three vehicles able to do that, and all Pete had to stop them was a Stunned tank and one with a Malf MA. Not much of a contest in that regard, but a good game, and nicely balanced, with variable extra OB's. I doubted that I could win, with the way it seemed, but in the end, it all came true.(2-4 overall, and this year against Pete, a score of 2-0 in my favour!!!).

## Monday

Only 4 left in the hotel, Pete left as I was having Breakfast. The 2 Italian guys left while I was up in my room packing, and watching TV. So, it is as with all Recce units in the world, I am the last to leave. With no 'Berserk!' in 2004 to look forward to, Pete is hoping to organise a neo-berserk type thing in Blackpool in March.

Finally, I would like to thank the following:- 1; everyone who turned up,

## THE SCENARIOS

Here is the table of Scenario Win/Loss records - remember draws are used in the tournament rules:

| Scenario                         | Allied    | Axis      | Draw     |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 23 Under the Noel Trees          | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| 28 Ambush!                       | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| 77 Le hérisson (The Hedgehog)    | 4         | 4         | 0        |
| A104 In Front of the Storm       | 9         | 7         | 0        |
| A32 Zon with the Wind            | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| A69 Broich Bash (IC5 repub.)     | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| A70 Wintergewitter (atp2 repub.) | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| A89 First Day of Diadem          | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| AP1 The Ring                     | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| Buck1 Welcome To The Jungle      | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| FF1 Rabka-Mszana Road            | 1         | 1         | 0        |
| FF3 Armor Clash                  | 0         | 2         | 0        |
| FF4 Walk In The Woods            | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| FF5 The Sound Of Guns            | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| G35 Going To Church              | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| G6 Rocket's Red Glare            | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| GtF5 Wrong Battle                | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| HB2 Battle At Arm's Length       | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| J22 oh Joy!                      | 0         | 2         | 0        |
| J51 Camicatti                    | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| J76 Ultimate Treachery           | 4         | 2         | 0        |
| J9 A Stiff Fight                 | 4         | 4         | 0        |
| MP1 The Wolves Last Tooth        | 1         | 1         | 0        |
| OTO3 Close Quarter               | 3         | 2         | 0        |
| OTO7 Where's The Beef            | 4         | 10        | 0        |
| OTO9 Oriola Force                | 2         | 5         | 0        |
| RB3 Bread Factory #2             | 1         | 4         | 0        |
| RB6 Turned Away                  | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| SP100 The Attu Climb             | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| SP102 Le Diable Noir             | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| SP45 A Stroke Of Luck            | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| SP76 Flaming Of The Guard        | 1         | 0         | 0        |
| SP91 Show A Little Guts!         | 5         | 5         | 0        |
| SP97 Twilight Of The Reich       | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| SP99 The Feineisen Factor        | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| T2 The Puma Prowls               | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| T4 Shklov's Labors Lost          | 0         | 1         | 0        |
| <b>TOTALS111</b>                 | <b>47</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>0</b> |

2; all my opponents, 3; the organisers, and , last but not least, John and his staff, who put up with us degenerates, for a great week-end. I shall say this again, if you ain't been to a Tourney, get off your arse and get yourself to one. You do not need to be as good as Toby (hell, I ain't!), but what you do



The tournament action in full flow.

need is a sense of humour (that is VITAL!!), and a willingness to learn a bit of this game. Of course, beer tokens help a lot, but if you do not drink beer, that's OK, I'll drink yours.

Of note to you lot was a question I put to our regular 'ASLOK' goer, Shaun 'Treadhead' Carter. We were discussing Ian's book, when I put the famous saying to Shaun "Why don't you write a book?" Shaun basically said

that if he did, he would do one on Crete, and one on Kohima (which is closer to my heart, as my step-father served in Burma during WW2). On the subject of Kohima, Remembrance Travel (part of The Royal British Legion, a cause well worth supporting) offers a trip to Calcutta, Imphal and Kohima next April for £1,995 (£270 for War Widows on Grant-In-Aid Scheme, which none of you lot qualify for!!), so, can anyone give me Two Grand? Of course,

other tours are available.

Whilst on the subject of Ian's book, I do have a slight gripe. Why don't the authors put an appendix giving the OoBs at the back, like in 'The Island' by Tim Saunders, which happens to be by the same publisher as Ian's 'Operation Bluecoat'. I hope in his next one, 'Operation Goodwood' he will (by the way, I shall also be buying a copy of that one as soon as it comes out, as I hope you lot will too!).

Until next time, Gun-Pit fans, keep on losing.

Ω

## BETWEEN IRAQ AND A HARD PLACE

THE SEARCH FOR WEAPONS OF MASS DISTRACTION

Those of you who have attended IF in the past couple of years will have noted that a 'Heroes' event has taken place on Saturday night. The first was run by Mad Vet Iain McKay, while last years was run by Ben 'Naked ASL' Jones. With neither attending this year I volunteered to run the event and over a couple of beers down the pub Thursday night the event began to take shape.



The players gather as the hunt begins!

For those of you who don't know, a Heroes event is a GM'd event with each player getting a Hero counter to represent himself in achieving the goal set by the GM. The rules are also a bit free form, with DRMs in particular being awarded for doing things in style. To enter a player must have consumed at least two beers prior to play and continue to drink during play - a £1 fee is placed in the pot and goes to the winner.

This year the players had to search the expanses of Iraq where suspect sites were marked by ? counters. The player investigating the most sites at game end would be the winner.

As usual there were a bunch of counters scattered on the desert boards, including bikes, planes, camels, and SW. The game board was split in half with board 7 down the middle as the Euphrates.

As the game progressed the players learned that some of the suspect sites were actually hiding members of the Iraqi ruling elite but no-one knew who it was until they drew a card (from the US pack of course, which Keith Bristow had

brought with him) to see who you pulled from the deck - first one out was Saddam himself!! The players also found Osama but he was last seen strapped to the back of a camel that had gone running off into the desert.

Other notable events saw the British use a bulldozer to tunnel under the Euphrates rather than risk animal attacks while swimming across. The Chinese spent most of the game delivering take aways to the locals! Naturally the US shot up some friendly forces. The Cup Of Christ was also found but had to be left behind as it could only be moved within the area occupied by the Knight guarding it.

At the end I revealed that there were no WMD to find :-)

Ω



Crossing the Euphrates proved difficult as Locusts, Wasps, and even Panthers inhabited its waters!

## PLAYER RESULTS

Here are the individual win/loss records.

| PLAYER             | P | W | L | D |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Chris Ager         | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Nigel Ashcroft     | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Wayne Baumber      | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Nigel Blair        | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Keith Bristow      | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Stephen Burleigh   | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Luis Calcada       | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Nick Carter        | 6 | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Shaun Carter       | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Paul Case          | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Simon Croome       | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| James Crosfield    | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Kevin Croskery     | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Steve Crowley      | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Ian Daghish        | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Daniele Dal Bello  | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Patrick Dale       | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Michael Davies     | 7 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| Phil Draper        | 6 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Bill Eaton         | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Bob Eburne         | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Michael Essex      | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Jackie Eves        | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Paulo Ferreira     | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Russell Gough      | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Paul Haesler       | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| William Hanson     | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Malcolm Hatfield   | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Brian Hooper       | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| John Kennedy       | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Paul Kettlewell    | 6 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Justin Key         | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Lars Klysner       | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Paul Legg          | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Tim Macaire        | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Bjarne Marell      | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Dominic McGrath    | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Chris Netherton    | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Pete Phillipps     | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Toby Pilling       | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Ian Pollard        | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Sergio Puzziello   | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Fermin Retamero    | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| David Schofield    | 7 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| Graham Smith       | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Neil Stevens       | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Simon Strevens     | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Derek Tocher       | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Georges Tournemire | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Jes Touvdal        | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| David Tye          | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Mark Warren        | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |

## FIRE TEAM PLACINGS

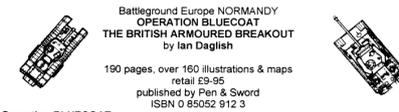
### ELITE DIVISION

| POS | TEAM | PLAYER   | PTS | OPPO  |
|-----|------|--|-----|-------|
| 1st | 8    | Bob Eburne<br>Dominic McGrath<br>Derek Tocher        | 16  | 16140 |
| 2nd | 1    | Shaun Carter<br>Steve Crowley<br>Fermin Retamero     | 15  | 16845 |
| 3rd | 3    | Keith Bristow<br>Toby Pilling<br>Sergio Puzziello    | 15  | 16700 |
| 4th | 6    | Stephen Burleigh<br>Simon Stevens<br>David Tye       | 14  | 13530 |
| 5th | 7    | Michael Davies<br>Georges Tournemire<br>Jes Touvdal  | 14  | 12870 |
| 6th | 2    | Luis Calcada<br>Daniele Dal Bello<br>David Schofield | 12  | 12805 |
| 7th | 4    | Michael Essex<br>Lars Klysner<br>Bjarne Marell       | 12  | 12405 |
| 8th | 5    | Phil Draper<br>Russell Gough<br>Paul Haesler         | 6   | 3185  |

### FIRST DIVISION

| POS | TEAM | PLAYER  | PTS | OPPO  |
|-----|------|---|-----|-------|
| 1st | B    | James Crosfield<br>Patrick Dale<br>William Hanson     | 21  | 19245 |
| 2nd | A    | Paul Legg<br>Graham Smith<br>Mark Warren              | 16  | 13910 |
| 3rd | D    | Chris Ager<br>Wayne Bamber<br>Ian Daghish             | 12  | 13670 |
| 4th | C    | Nigel Blair<br>Paul Case<br>Kevin Croskery            | 18  | 13515 |
| 5th | G    | Nick Carter<br>Bill Eaton<br>Brian Hooper             | 12  | 11110 |
| 6th | E    | Paulo Ferreira<br>Malcolm Hatfield<br>Chris Netherton | 13  | 10400 |
| 7th | F    | John Kennedy<br>Tim Macaire<br>Neil Stevens           | 9   | 8375  |
| 8th | H    | Paul Kettlewell<br>Justin Key<br>Ian Pollard          | 6   | 5585  |

The **OPPO** value is the total value of the Crusader ladder points of the opponents beaten by that fire team



**Battleground Europe NORMANDY  
OPERATION BLUECOAT  
THE BRITISH ARMoured BREAKOUT**  
by Ian Daghish

190 pages, over 160 illustrations & maps  
retail £9.95  
published by Pen & Sword  
ISBN 0 85052 912 3

**Operation BLUECOAT**

After two months of bitter combat in Normandy, Operation Bluecoat transformed the campaign into a war of movement. British and German armoured divisions were flung against one another. Over the rugged terrain of the 'Suisse Normande', thrust met with counter thrust in a rapidly changing mobile battle.

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**Author**

Ian Daghish read History at Trinity College, Cambridge, where his Bowen Prize-winning thesis was 'Napoleon Bonaparte and the Invasion of England'. He has since written a number of articles about the Normandy campaign of 1944 and has designed a number of commercially successful historical wargames covering both American and British small-unit actions in Normandy. Ian believes in visiting the scenes of the action, and for some years he has been a familiar sight in the summer months walking the Normandy battlefields with cameras and camcorder. He is currently writing Battleground Europe Operation GOODWOOD.

Ian is a marketing professional, offering consultancy and interim management services. He is married with two daughters and lives in Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

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(Ian's wife)



The Elite Division winners - (l-r) Dominic McGrath, Derek Tocher and Bob Eburne.



Neil Stevens (left) awards top player Toby Pilling his prize.

# The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

## Toby Pilling Does The Double

Derek Tocher

Toby Pilling went undefeated over the course of INTENSIVE FIRE to win the championship and complete the double for the year (having won BERSERK! back in March). The achievement was all the more notable as he picked up 140 pts in the process, no mean feat when you are already rated above 3750 pts.

Wayne Baumber managed to lose all five games he played and dropped 260 points leaving him perilously close to the foot of the table. Paul Case, who established a new all time low of score of 2220 pts after BERSERK! 2003, managed to win two

games and pick up 175 pts. Despite this however he still props up the other 208 players - but only just!

The single largest gain made over the weekend went to Patrick Dale who picked up a massive 415 points moving him from 199th to 116th. Dave Tye picked up 265 pts putting him into the top 10% of players. The other notable gain of the weekend was made by the Danish player Lars Klynsner who picked up 220 pts and moved into 15th. A number of other players picked up over 150 pts including Dominic McGrath, Spanish visitor Fermin Retamero, and Simon Strevens, who moves into third place on the

list.

Justin Key (-340 pts) and Nick Carter (-365 pts, but with the excuse of being a tournament newbie) closely contested the poorest performance of the weekend. Both Pete Phillipps and Russell Gough also contrived to lose over 200 points during their visit to Bournemouth.

Without further ado here is the ladder as of 27 November 2003.

Ω

| Rank | Player                | Played | W—D—L   | Points | Rank | Player                      | Played | W—D—L   | Points | Rank | Player                     | Played | W—D—L   | Points |
|------|-----------------------|--------|---------|--------|------|-----------------------------|--------|---------|--------|------|----------------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1    | Toby Pilling          | 60     | 53—2—5  | 3950   | 65=  | Georges Tournemire          | 3      | 2—1—0   | 3115   | 128= | Andrea Marchino            | 1      | 0—0—1   | 2930   |
| 2    | Steve Thomas          | 42     | 32—1—9  | 3755   | 65=  | Mark Walley                 | 4      | 3—0—1   | 3115   | 128= | Andy Price                 | 3      | 1—0—2   | 2930   |
| 3    | Simon Strevens        | 73     | 47—1—24 | 3670   | 67=  | Luis Calçada                | 43     | 21—1—21 | 3110   | 130= | Paul Boyle                 | 5      | 2—0—3   | 2925   |
| 4    | Mike Rudd             | 38     | 32—1—5  | 3660   | 67=  | Luc Schonkerren             | 5      | 3—0—2   | 3110   | 130= | John Sharp                 | 8      | 3—0—5   | 2925   |
| 5    | Fermin Retamero       | 13     | 11—0—2  | 3650   | 69   | Andrew Dando                | 44     | 23—2—19 | 3105   | 132= | Steve Allen                | 6      | 1—1—4   | 2920   |
| 6    | Michael Hastrup-Leth  | 45     | 31—1—13 | 3615   | 70=  | Simon Morris                | 11     | 6—0—5   | 3105   | 132= | Tim Collier                | 17     | 7—0—10  | 2920   |
| 7    | Derek Tocher          | 93     | 68—2—22 | 3595   | 70=  | Stewart Thain               | 15     | 8—0—7   | 3105   | 132= | Paul Kettlewell            | 55     | 23—0—32 | 2920   |
| 8    | Dave Schofield        | 95     | 65—0—30 | 3575   | 72   | Russ Curry                  | 6      | 4—0—2   | 3100   | 135  | Edo Giaroni                | 3      | 1—0—2   | 2915   |
| 9    | Aaron Cleavin         | 6      | 6—0—0   | 3565   | 73=  | Nigel Brown                 | 26     | 11—0—15 | 3095   | 136= | Joel Berridge              | 3      | 1—0—2   | 2910   |
| 10=  | Peter Bennett         | 14     | 12—1—1  | 3560   | 73=  | Mikael Siemsen              | 6      | 3—0—3   | 3095   | 136= | Tim Bunce                  | 14     | 7—0—7   | 2910   |
| 10=  | Bjarne Marell         | 36     | 26—0—10 | 3560   | 75=  | Kevin Beard                 | 13     | 9—1—3   | 3090   | 136= | Oliver Gray                | 3      | 1—0—2   | 2910   |
| 12   | Carl Sizmur           | 16     | 11—0—5  | 3515   | 75=  | Iain Mackay                 | 43     | 22—0—21 | 3090   | 136= | Brian Martuzas             | 5      | 2—0—3   | 2910   |
| 13   | Jes Touvdal           | 24     | 16—0—8  | 3475   | 75=  | Peter Michels               | 3      | 2—0—1   | 3090   | 136= | Andy Smith                 | 4      | 0—0—4   | 2910   |
| 14   | Dominic Mcgrath       | 92     | 47—1—40 | 3430   | 78   | Paulo Alessi                | 6      | 4—0—2   | 3085   | 141= | Patrick Dale               | 22     | 8—1—13  | 2905   |
| 15   | Lars Klynsner         | 11     | 8—0—3   | 3400   | 79   | Dirk Beijjaard              | 5      | 3—0—2   | 3080   | 141= | Phil Ward                  | 5      | 2—0—3   | 2905   |
| 16=  | Trevor Edwards        | 74     | 38—1—35 | 3380   | 80   | Robin Langston              | 9      | 4—2—3   | 3075   | 142  | Josh Kalman                | 10     | 5—0—5   | 2900   |
| 16=  | David Yeh             | 39     | 18—0—21 | 3380   | 81=  | Jean-Luc Baas               | 3      | 2—0—1   | 3070   | 144  | Martin Kristensen          | 6      | 2—0—4   | 2895   |
| 18   | Ran Shiloah           | 11     | 7—0—4   | 3370   | 81=  | Serge Bettencourt           | 3      | 2—0—1   | 3070   | 145= | Jakob Norgaard             | 6      | 1—1—4   | 2885   |
| 19   | Bernt Ribom           | 5      | 5—0—0   | 3350   | 81=  | Robert Schaaf               | 3      | 2—0—1   | 3070   | 145= | Bernard Savage             | 21     | 9—1—11  | 2885   |
| 20   | Phil Draper           | 20     | 13—1—6  | 3320   | 84=  | Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire | 4      | 2—1—1   | 3065   | 147  | Sam Belcher                | 8      | 3—0—5   | 2880   |
| 21   | Joe Arthur            | 21     | 13—0—8  | 3305   | 84=  | Bob Runnicles               | 3      | 2—0—1   | 3065   | 148  | David Kalman               | 5      | 2—0—3   | 2870   |
| 22   | Frank Tinschert       | 15     | 10—0—5  | 3295   | 86   | Patrik Manlig               | 16     | 9—0—7   | 3060   | 149= | Peter Ladwein              | 21     | 9—0—12  | 2860   |
| 23=  | Philippe Leonard      | 9      | 7—1—1   | 3285   | 87=  | Shaun Carter                | 61     | 27—1—33 | 3050   | 149= | Lutz Pietschker            | 4      | 1—0—3   | 2860   |
| 23=  | Steve Linton          | 11     | 8—0—3   | 3285   | 87=  | Stefan Jacobi               | 11     | 5—0—6   | 3050   | 149= | Neil Piggott               | 4      | 1—0—3   | 2860   |
| 25=  | Will Fleming          | 3      | 3—0—0   | 3280   | 87=  | Ben Jones                   | 39     | 17—0—22 | 3050   | 152  | Ulrich Schwela             | 34     | 13—1—20 | 2855   |
| 25=  | Ralf Krusat           | 6      | 5—0—1   | 3280   | 87=  | Bo Siemsen                  | 4      | 2—0—2   | 3050   | 153  | Nick Angelopoulos          | 5      | 1—0—4   | 2850   |
| 25=  | Alan Smees            | 4      | 4—0—0   | 3280   | 91   | Scott Greenman              | 8      | 3—1—4   | 3045   | 154  | Bill Eaton                 | 21     | 8—3—10  | 2840   |
| 28=  | Dave Booth            | 7      | 5—0—2   | 3270   | 92=  | Russell Gough               | 55     | 29—4—22 | 3035   | 155  | Dave Otway                 | 5      | 1—0—4   | 2835   |
| 28=  | Peter Struijff        | 5      | 4—0—1   | 3270   | 92=  | Steve Pleva                 | 6      | 3—0—3   | 3035   | 156  | Sam Prior                  | 12     | 4—0—8   | 2830   |
| 30   | Daniel Kalman         | 11     | 8—0—3   | 3245   | 94=  | Nigel Blair                 | 23     | 11—0—12 | 3025   | 157  | Mike Daniel                | 5      | 2—0—3   | 2825   |
| 31=  | Daniel Batey          | 4      | 4—0—0   | 3235   | 94=  | Daniele Dal Bello           | 4      | 1—0—3   | 3025   | 158  | Mark Chapman               | 6      | 2—0—4   | 2820   |
| 31=  | Paul Saunders         | 19     | 10—0—9  | 3235   | 94=  | Peter Hofland               | 4      | 2—0—2   | 3025   | 159  | Michael Robertson          | 4      | 1—0—3   | 2810   |
| 33   | Ray Woloszyn          | 31     | 18—1—12 | 3225   | 97   | Vincent Kamer               | 4      | 2—0—2   | 3015   | 160  | Clive Haden                | 5      | 2—0—3   | 2800   |
| 34   | Christain Koppmeyer   | 15     | 8—0—7   | 3220   | 98=  | Colin Graham                | 5      | 3—0—2   | 3010   | 161= | Alistair Fairbairn         | 3      | 0—0—3   | 2790   |
| 35   | Tom Slizewski         | 5      | 4—0—1   | 3215   | 98=  | Andrew Saunders             | 33     | 15—1—17 | 3010   | 161= | Nick Ranson                | 5      | 1—0—4   | 2790   |
| 36=  | Klaus Malmstrom       | 4      | 3—1—0   | 3210   | 100= | Nick Brown                  | 3      | 1—1—1   | 3000   | 161= | William Roberts            | 3      | 0—0—3   | 2790   |
| 36=  | Nils-Gunner Nilsson   | 5      | 4—0—1   | 3210   | 100= | Steve Grainger              | 8      | 4—0—4   | 3000   | 161= | Nick Sionskyj              | 8      | 3—0—5   | 2790   |
| 36=  | Yves Tielemans        | 3      | 3—0—0   | 3210   | 100= | Martin Hubbley              | 4      | 3—0—1   | 3000   | 165  | Chris Littlejohn           | 14     | 3—2—9   | 2780   |
| 39   | Francois Boudrenghien | 3      | 3—0—0   | 3205   | 100= | Ian Kenney                  | 4      | 2—0—2   | 3000   | 166  | Graham Worsfold            | 3      | 0—0—3   | 2775   |
| 40   | Aaron Sibley          | 43     | 26—0—17 | 3195   | 100= | Phil Nobo                   | 11     | 6—0—5   | 3000   | 167= | Lee Bray                   | 14     | 3—0—11  | 2770   |
| 41   | Jean Devaux           | 3      | 3—0—0   | 3190   | 100= | Duncan Spencer              | 4      | 2—0—2   | 3000   | 167= | Richard Kirby              | 7      | 2—0—5   | 2770   |
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| 47=  | Grant Pettit          | 7      | 4—1—2   | 3170   | 111= | David Farr                  | 4      | 2—0—2   | 2980   | 174  | Peter Neale                | 3      | 0—0—3   | 2750   |
| 47=  | Bruno Tielemans       | 3      | 3—0—0   | 3170   | 111= | Malcolm Rutledge            | 3      | 1—0—2   | 2980   | 175= | Burnham Fox                | 23     | 10—0—13 | 2740   |
| 49=  | Rodney Callen         | 6      | 4—0—2   | 3160   | 113= | Ian Daglish                 | 84     | 41—1—42 | 2975   | 175= | Tim Macaire                | 38     | 17—0—21 | 2740   |
| 49=  | Mel Falk              | 9      | 5—0—4   | 3160   | 113= | Sergio Puzziello            | 5      | 1—0—4   | 2975   | 177= | Rupert Featherby           | 3      | 0—0—3   | 2735   |
| 51   | Jeremy Copley         | 9      | 6—0—3   | 3150   | 115  | Simon Croome                | 29     | 15—0—14 | 2970   | 177= | Nick Quinn                 | 14     | 5—0—9   | 2735   |
| 52   | Nick Edelsten         | 22     | 14—1—7  | 3145   | 116  | Michael Maus                | 7      | 3—0—4   | 2955   | 179  | Gareth Evans               | 4      | 0—0—4   | 2730   |
| 53=  | Keith Bristow         | 42     | 24—1—17 | 3135   | 117= | Raurigh Dale                | 19     | 10—0—9  | 2945   | 180= | Steve Cocks                | 4      | 0—0—4   | 2720   |
| 53=  | Paul Haesler          | 10     | 4—2—4   | 3135   | 117= | Laurent Forest              | 3      | 0—0—3   | 2945   | 180= | Marc Horton                | 6      | 1—0—5   | 2720   |
| 53=  | Paul O'donald         | 72     | 44—1—27 | 3135   | 117= | Alex Ganna                  | 2      | 0—1—1   | 2945   | 182  | Chris Netherton            | 20     | 7—2—11  | 2715   |
| 53=  | Frenk Van Der Mey     | 4      | 3—0—1   | 3135   | 117= | David Murry                 | 5      | 2—1—2   | 2945   | 183  | Neil Stevens               | 53     | 20—2—31 | 2710   |
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| 60=  | Lee Brimicombe-Wood   | 12     | 8—0—4   | 3120   | 122= | Jon Williams                | 14     | 6—0—8   | 2940   | 187= | Jeff Howarden              | 7      | 2—0—5   | 2685   |
| 60=  | Stephen Burleigh      | 14     | 6—1—7   | 3120   | 125  | Derek Briscoe               | 1      | 0—0—1   | 2935   | 187= | Graham Smith               | 20     | 7—0—13  | 2685   |
| 60=  | Michael Davies        | 21     | 11—0—10 | 3120   | 126= | Martin Bryan                | 19     | 8—0—11  | 2935   | 189  | Christain Speis            | 5      | 1—0—4   | 2680   |
| 60=  | William Hanson        | 19     | 11—0—7  | 3120   |      |                             |        |         |        |      |                            |        |         |        |
| 60=  | Paul Ryde-Weller      | 10     | 5—1—4   | 3120   |      |                             |        |         |        |      |                            |        |         |        |

Continued on page 36, column 3



VIEW FROM

# The Scenarios of Intensive Fire 2003

Michael Davies

Before INTENSIVE FIRE, I jotted down some thoughts about the scenarios on offer and possible strategies for both sides. Although losing most of my games I did manage to play five of the scenarios on offer so am able to add an after the action postscript to some of these.



## Saturday Morning: Operation Bagrator OB7 Where's The Beef?

'Where's The Beef' starts with the Germans positioning themselves for a Russian infantry and armour attack. A substantial attacking force races to the village eager to gain a foothold before the enemy are reinforced.

### German Set up

Tucked away in the Tactical Objective is an Armour Casualty cap for the Ruskis. The objective is to stop the Reds earning more than twelve Victory points. Two Points are earned for control of each of the four multi-hex stone buildings on board 46, with another two points for mobile T34 with functioning armament within a defined road network. Immobilised tanks still count for two points, but a malfunctioned gun chops the points down to one. Ok I've prattled on a bit, but am driving home the point if the Russians have six tanks outside the victory area they cannot win.

With this in mind you should be very pleased when a Russian tank brew up, very pleased when one is recalled, and fairly pleased when one is immobilised outside the defined victory area.

T34 M43 are the most worrying part of the enemy force. They are highly mobile, resistant to small arms and equipped with significant MG and Gun armament. There are a lot of them initially bringing a lot of fire power to the battle. By carrying riders and

risking crew exposure several infantry units can be rapidly moved to the board 46 objective village. Enemy infantry are mostly ten first line rifle squads, backed up by three first line SMG squads, led by three leaders, they bring two LMGs, a 50mm Mortar and a Lend Lease .5 HMG to the scuffle. Although the Guards are not elite, their ELR is 4 actually higher than your own.

In terms of raw IFT the attackers have an edge, offset by concealment and solid cover. More worrying sheer numbers. Your nine squads start the game against thirteen squads and seven tanks. That said you do have some advantages.

Your leadership is better, commanding a slightly smaller high quality force with better support weapons. A MMG, four LMGs, and pair of Panzerschreck is a good start. Add in 13 two hex range Panzerfausts and inherent Anti tank mines and you should start to feel more confident. Adding really massive close range firepower are two flame throwers, arguably the most effective close range weapon for house to house fighting. It is always worth remembering inherent smoke. It can be useful defensively covering withdrawal, and on the attack. Veteran players are up to speed with smoke, I am still learning the game (for the next ten years!), and find it helps to keep a little stack of quarter inch smoke counters handy.

The inherent PF suffer from three main faults. Short range makes shots beyond two hexes impossible. A usage roll is needed before you can fire. Finally you risk backblast if firing from a building. Less serious faults are the limited number of shots, about two per enemy tank, and casualty reduction from a malfunction. All this is forgotten when a hit is scored and you have only a one in 36 chance of a dud compared to the near inevitability of a tank brewing up or at least being knocked out.

The Panzerschreck has longer range, with credible hit chances up to three hexes, and the need for some luck at four hexes. Leadership can help - with tank destruction important maybe it should!

While lacking awesome To Kill capability the 50L Gun has considerable potential. It can begin the game hidden. EE10 is a very aggressive spot able to interdict arriving units. A Stone building is practical any of the Multi hex buildings will see some fighting. Be creative there are lots of good spots even down to the brush around 46V2.

T34 frontal armour is very resistant to 50L fire. An APCR round has a basic to kill of 17, ending up with a credible to kill number. A4 availability makes a steady series of APCR shots unlikely. With AP the kill number drops to a basic 13, not enough against frontal armour. Suggesting you try for side shots isn't really very helpful. Deliberate immobilisation is as good as a kill, this has to take place at short range, and is subject to a +5 modifier, as well as any other applicable factors. If you are shooting at a fleeting target you might be better off trying for a critical hit!

Sometimes shooting at Infantry will be the way to go. With a fair rate of fire and fairly static targets you should gain acquisition and start doing some damage. If the gun immobilises a tank outside the Victory area or kills a squad it will have helped. If the gun is lost or disabled, use the crew to man another support weapon or a captured tank.

Most of the fighting will take place in the board 46 Village. It is worth spending some time studying the map. Look for obvious lines of sight, paths for movement and lines of defence. Don't spend hours stretching fishing line over the map to check line of sight. Get some fresh air if you start naming the streets or making up stories about the people who live there. Set up limits you to ground level hexes, a bit inconvenient. There are still hexes with lines of sight to the Russian approach areas but less than would be the case if you could start up stairs.

The three Victory buildings are V8, CC7 and EE4. The latter two buildings are nearby and defence of one will benefit the other. The V8 building is more isolated and it is hard to see how this could be defended for long. Within the Village is a small Church (AA7) complete with steeple, and a graveyard in Z7. Nearby is a small woods and Orchard that cries out Panzerfaust. Again spend some time looking at the map, plan your set up, rout paths and subsequent lines of defence. You can be almost certain the Reds will try for three buildings and will bring tanks into the road network for the last turn.

Enemy tanks can enter buildings. This creates an immediate risk of falling down into a cellar (one in six). Almost as amusing falling rubble landing on another tank try not to laugh if it happens the other guy will be a bit upset. most T34s will settle for keeping to

roads or other open ground. Part of the game will involve moving along narrow streets to ambush tanks, enjoy it when it happens.

Set up offers a lot of choice. If you have definite thoughts or ideas explore these first. My own approach would be to organise the defence around three weak platoons with separate Flame thrower and PSK teams. My own view is V8 is doomed. That said a few units around X7 with plans to fall back after a couple of turns is worth considering. The remaining forces would mostly be around EE8 and AA9 with PSK teams in the woods grave yard area, the MMG probably in EE8 ready to move upstairs or back towards the action. The plan is to interdict Russian entry if at all possible, then draw back into the Village. The Flame thrower teams should hang back a bit waiting for opportunities later on. The 50L gun is hard to spot. I keep looking at the EE10 Orchard, and adjacent wooden building in DD9, not ideal but very tempting. The GG7 Woods is an idea, but perhaps a tad too far back. Maybe they can hit the Reds as they arrive and intensive fire would allow leaving the gun behind. Whatever set up is adopted in subsequent turns you will really need to move! You shouldn't be chasing the Russians but moving before he assembles that .50 MG or hits building with 76L gun fire.

Time for a few loose ends. Against the Panthers the T34s have limited offensive potential. Fortunately the Russians cannot pick up Panzerfausts but will happily use any dropped flame throwers, Panzerschrecks' or the 50L gun against your arriving Panther. This complicates your end game, and is best avoided by trying to recover any loose equipment and destroy or disable it if the enemy threatens capture. Stay focused if sacrificing a Panther to destroy a T34 wins you the game consider it, the Victory conditions impose no casualty or style cap on you! I mention this before but make use of captured or abandoned T34s. Even if you just climb into them for a quick shot then disable them the next turn.

The tricky bit is to do the right thing at the right time. Kill armour when you should, defend buildings when that right and look for opportunities all the time. This isn't a case of finding a spot and holding onto it for the whole game it is a delicately balanced fight with a continually changing balance.

The best example is when the Panthers arrive. If you have won already point it out to the Ruskis gently. Nice when it happens but you might be faced with six or seven T34s and need to whittle them down. Obviously a Panther is superior to a T34 in armament and protection. The 76L gun can only penetrate frontal armour with a critical hit. APCR can just about do the job on the

Turret at short, well very short range. Side Armour gets us into the range of probable damage thought. In return any hit better than a dud does the job.

In practical terms the reds should hold out more hope of destroying a tank using captured support weapons or close combat. If you can try to fight at longer ranges. Whittle down the enemy for a win. The biggest worry is of tanks driving in to the victory area on the last turn. Try to discourage this, either by supporting your own infantry attacks or actively seeking out enemy armour. a lot of different things can happen, as long as you are seeking to destroy the enemy you are doing right though.

As the German you should try for smoke a few times and for Panzerfaust more than thirteen times in most games. Don't be passive in defence, kill tanks when you can. Balance this against too much aggression which will cost you Infantry, then buildings and ultimately make Killing tanks harder. However bad things get the arrival of the Panthers on turn five always puts you back in the game. Unless you win early make sure this ones goes the distance.

### Russian Entry and Attack

Your Tactical objective is to earn twelve Victory points. These are awarded two for control of each of the four Multi hex buildings on board 46, with one or two points for each T34 on or within a specified road network. Fully functioning AFVs' and even immobilised ones with a working gun earn two VPs', a mobile tank without a gun earns one but you get nothing for an immobilised vehicle with a disabled gun.

From this it is clear you need at least three tanks to win. Any vehicle immobilised out of the defined road grid is effectively lost for Victory purposes. Losing five tanks takes some doing, often the German will help, avoid making his job easier by taking reckless shots with the main armament or using ESB for no good reason.

The best news about the Enemy is they are not really ready for your attack. They have not boresighted, dug in or trouble to go upstairs for a better view. Armour support is on the way, two rather deadly Panthers', hard to see the attack working if they were already on board.

German Infantry is Elite, well led, and has a support weapon for every squad, even before you factor in inherent ATMM and PF. The support weapon mix includes two Flame throwers, and two Panzerschrecks' both very useful in urban conflicts. Despite these strengths the enemy does have some weaknesses. The top two are range and numbers. Flame-throwers', PF, and even PSK all suffer from range limitations. Beyond

two hexes only the PSK can bite. At three hexes a PSK has a credible to hit of seven, just about viable against a moving target. At four hexes range a to hit of four is a one in six chance of a hit with an equal chance of elimination due to X number. Against a moving target at extreme range only a two will do it. The best defence your armour can use is range. The other weakness to exploit is German numerical inferiority. For the opening five turns you face nine squads and a gun with thirteen of your own squads and seven tanks. Expect the Panthers to take a turn or two to get into sight and you have six or maybe seven turns to slap the Panzergrenadiers around.

Expect the Germans to start in concealment terrain. The Scenario card and above description give you some ideas of the strength of the German force, you next need to study where it is placed on the Map. The Gun we will look at soon, the Infantry is of more immediate concern. The first thing to pick up on is negative evidence, where the enemy isn't. Maybe V8 is unoccupied, at least some places will be the Germans haven't got that many units even if they deploy. Next its time for some guesswork or deduction. With so many support weapons nearly every stack will be three counters high. Anything four high is likely to be a leader directed fire team probably a LMG or the MMG. Units starting in woods or orchard are most likely PSK teams, of a squad, half squad or Leader. Be reasonably pleased if you see a few big stacks. I'd be overjoyed to see a suspected death star in say V9 with three squad equivalents, a Leader and pile of support weapons. Some of your estimates will be wrong. Some opponents are devious, some confusing, and simply put you will make mistakes. Learn from any information that arises as play progresses. For example there is only one MMG, and any known units has what it has, anything else is somewhere else. There is a definite knack to estimating enemy positions from limited intelligence, for me its a fun part of the game. It gets harder when Hidden units are involved, which brings us to the gun.

Finding the gun let alone fighting it is difficult. It could be anywhere. Even a dumb spot with limited line of sight is a problem. A good start would be the darn thing rolling for APCR and malfunctioning on the first attempted shot. Nearly as good would be a miss. More realistically you may find the threat when firing at other targets. Once it's position is known you can work to neutralise it. the best defence for all units is line of sight. For armour present your frontal armour, and move away. Try for smoke grenades if opened up, use your gun and MG if out of other options. The best way to trash a gun is



with Infantry, IFT attacks or close combat if sited for it. Losing a tank to the Gun is bad luck, more than that very bad luck and likely to make winning much harder. The low rolls that hurt you most will generate SAN make sure you roll for it and be a bit lucky yourself.

It is to be upbeat about the Gun. OK it cannot bore sight and its basic to kill of 13 will struggle against the frontal armour of the T34. Most of the threats are low probability ones. A frontal hit yields a to kill of two, which on a roll of snakes yields either immobilisation or shock. Immobilisation outside of the victory area is significant. Shock can be just a delay or can lead to a disabled tank. Whilst we are waiting for the outcome bored Kraut gunners will have a few more shots at a static acquired target looking for APCR or even firing HE as area fire for a giggle, the beggars might even run up to the tank and start throwing grenades at it. A to kill roll of three yield possible shock which isn't bad. Barring a dud a critical will do the business on a tank. Overall these possible outcomes are a shade under a one in twelve chance, about equal to gun malfunction odds. The picture gets darker at one or two hexes range or if 50L APCR is found. APCR has a to kill of 17 rising to 20 at one hex range. These are T34 killing numbers and you really don't want to be suffering too many attacks that serious. Side on armour is thinner and not ideal against the gun at any range. Up close the Jerries may go for deliberate immobilisation. It is a slim threat but worth rattling your pram over if it happens. The +5 modifier for the attack helps, as does movement or any hindrances. If immobilisation occurs within the Victory area remember the tank can still count for Victory purposes.

The need to conserve at least three of your tanks' to earn Victory does cramp your style a bit. You cannot afford to lose more than four tanks in the course of play. One at least could go very easily to an ambush by the 50L gun, other losses can be expected when the Panthers arrive. It is important that the Armour does play an active role in the attack. without help the Infantry can't do the job on their own. Keeping out of range still allows effective gun fire and MG fire. Against troops in cover target acquisition is deadly. The best way to get them is acquisition. The basic to hit at expected combat ranges is eight. Being buttoned up firing at a target in a stone building drops the final to hit number to four. With acquisition this rises to six. not impressed, well acquisition nearly triples the chance of a hit. With seven tanks you can target most of the enemy front line and double up on critical targets. If he stands and fights, hit hard, if he withdraws push forward leading with the

Infantry.

In any battle for buildings Infantry are key. You start with thirteen first line squads with a fair selection of support weapons. The HMG is an American .50 Browning that fires finger sized bullets. Teamed up with the 9-1 Leader it can break troops in buildings and encourage others to withdraw. The small 50mm Mortar is a different weapon. It enjoys rate and can acquire targets. It's bite is limited. A nice feature is the well known air burst that occurs when tree branches explode bombs above troops in woods. Less well noted the TEM of Walls is reduced to +1. this suggests a use against the woods and Orchards around AA9 if they are occupied. If the Germans withdraw or are never present, dismantle the Mortar if time allows, or drop it if pressed. Later in the game you can try to hit the arriving panthers with highly speculative Mortar shots, once inside the Village line of sight and range will reduce opportunities for contributing for to the Infantry fight. To man the Mortar requires a squad that must forfeit its inherent firepower to retain acquisition, decide on each case as it arises.

Close combat is tempting when you have a firepower advantage or better chance of an ambush. Factor in the importance of the target, if you can fight the gun crew or a small Panzerschreck team take the chance. Similarly if adjacent to a Flame-thrower weigh up the pros and cons of close combat or routing.

If the enemy fight and die on the edges of the Village you should be pleased. It is reasonable to expect your Infantry and Armour to win a fire fight. Much trickier is following up a retreating enemy. On the Eastern flank the terrain is more open, you might be able to isolate V8 complicating Withdrawal. It may be the Germans second line can be targeted from current tank positions. On the Western flank it is more difficult. The Krauts can pull back on hex from a nice solid stone Building straight into another. If you follow up to quickly you will be met by substantial IFT attacks, the odd spare Panzer Faust, and those flame throwers you might have forgotten about! If you are more careful you can move Infantry into position, drive Tanks to better spots and drive him back again in another turn. Every time they withdrawal the Germans should be weakened just a little and soon enough their defence will collapse.

Which is all a bit previous! I've not said too much about the playing area, or how to get onboard and into the fight for the Village. Some features of the Village we have touched on. The important features are the location of the Multi Hex Stone Buildings, and the walled Orchard and woods around

the AA9 Building. I'm not too sure if Russian squads can enter the Steeple location in AA7? the idea of them instantly deploying to do so appeals, more likely a squad would enter but be subject immediately to overstacking penalties. If you find the gun early on, the swathes of Orchard, Brush and grain are not that important for the first half of the game beyond providing cover or hindrances. The first bit of business is crossing board 17. There are several ways to plan this. One idea looks at every hex on the board edge and considers paths to board 19, another style takes each unit in turn and finds a role for it. The scheme I favour is to look a bit further to the role the troops will perform and how to get them there, not radically different just thinking in terms of larger groups than squads. I'd not offer an opinion on the best style to adopt, the key word is style! subject to enemy dispositions I think you need troops attacking East and West of the Village. In the East tank riders will cover ground very rapidly, you can cover 11 hexes, stop drop off riders and be nicely placed. In the West a Tank or two is useful in support but the opening moves can be on foot, bringing on the Mortar and HMG, probably the LMGs as a longer range firefight is expected. An attack on both flanks can be given the grand title of a double envelopment. It works well when you have numerical superiority. There is a weakness though. A gifted opponent may be able to give one flank a whipping then double back and hit the other. This takes skill but there are guys out there well up to the job. Alternatives could be an attack down just one flank or a direct frontal attack down the middle of the board. Each idea has its merits. Concentrated attacks are darling if the enemy dribbles troops into the fray. If you kill chunks as they arrive whilst inching forwards a win is expected. the Attack on a single flank can fail if you run out of time to take the objectives on the opposite side of the board. At certain levels of concentration casualties mount due to the concentration of targets you present the enemy. For example a stack of a single squad hit by enough firepower to suffer a morale check gets just that. A stack of three squads and a Leader may benefit from the Leadership but will still take at least four morale checks, and more than that if the Leader breaks factor in SAN and it gets worse. For Armour few would actually stack, the concentration problem is putting too much close to a single weapon say the 50L gun or PSK and suffering several hits. In general concentration is "good" the pros outweigh the cons.

The Village fight should present some worries, leading to a fairly strong grip on the Village close to turn five. The not too distant rumble of Panthers is heard. On turn five

they only have 5 MP. They can reach about half way across the board.

A lot can happen in the next 3.5 turns. With some luck you may be able to grab control of any remaining Victory buildings. This may allow you to screen the Tank Victory Area with Infantry and any support Weapons from the approaching Panthers. Long range shots with the 50mm Mortar might blow off a track or stun the crew occasionally, not easy to pull off and might need a spotter in say EE4 or FF3 to work this. The HMG can kill or stun exposed crews again work it in to the plan.

A judgement call is how to use the armour. I'm loathe to suggest this but the best winning strategy may be to hide! With narrow streets in play you may be able to hide down one and try for point blank immobilisation or APCR shots followed by a rear attack. To turn the turret round to attack you ramps up the modifiers by +4, after making a 1 DR under Rule 31.122 to allow the turret covered arc to change. Worth trying if you go into this phase of the game with seven T34s. Frontal shots against the Panthers are futile but side armour is weak, very weak at short range. Use APCR and hope for a burning wreck, lots of smoke to help you hide.

If you can cover your tanks by supporting fire from the others great. If that is not going to work dodge. Use Infantry to attack the Tank, if your opponent errs remind him Nahverteidigungswaffe are not fitted for another three days. Infantry casualties are of no consequence once you have vanquished the Huns, don't lose with half a dozen squads on the board!

Before the Panthers reach the Village you can try some wacky stuff. A sally out in strength could fail, presenting a single fleeting target to moving Panthers is a distraction but not a very effective one. Your best defence is time. The German balance gets the tanks into the Village quicker, another turn would be even more deadly.

How tense this closing stage is depends on how much of the enemy infantry force remains, your Tank numbers and a few bits of luck. A stalling Panther is a blessing, similar good luck will include disabled guns or ESB for a tank pushing just one hex to far to get a shot.

Other luck may come into it, with flame-throwers around fires are possible, with attendant smoke, use the cover it provides. If your tank crews survive send them after a Panther. watch out for Panther crews. As they bail out they may head for buildings discourage this!

Expect a really tough fight. The approach to the Village is nerve wracking followed by a bit of house to house. with

luck and effort this should go your way. As the Panthers arrive the game really takes off. Winning is nice, if it all goes to pot try to get as close to 12 VPs as you can. I think its worth playing the fight in the Village past the point you can win it just for the fun of it, ask your opponent if he is up for it though and accept a loss even if he isn't.

If you keep an eye on the clock, stay out of range of Anti Tank weapons and work hard this is a great scenario.

## Conclusion

In 'Where's the Beef' both sides need to work hard for a win. If you don't concentrate you can suddenly find yourself being unlucky. The best part of the scenario to my mind occurs after the Panthers arrive, driving round the Village at speed should be tense. I'd prefer to play the defenders in a tournament but would play either side in a fun game.

## After The Action

Played this one in the first round of the Tournament against Dominic McGrath. We both fancied playing the Germans, dived for it and with hind sight he should have got the balance.

My set up was stronger on the Western flank with the ATG out field in R3. Dominic's entry was brisk using riders and CX movement. In the advance phase the T34s attempted long range Area fire, mainly to gain acquisition. for the first turn, I mostly skulked, using line of sight for defence and positioning troops ahead of Russian forces.

On turns two and three the attack started to take off. Some ridiculously low rolls kept the Russians away from the woods and graveyards around AA9, but moved forwards further East to threaten the building in V8/V9. This held out well. T34s chanced a few shots but sensibly kept a respectable distance to avoid PF shots.

At this point in the Game expected to lose V8/V9 by the game end but contest the other two buildings. I had not appreciated the row houses in X7, X6 and W7 were also considered Victory buildings. Yikes.

As no tanks had been destroyed, the Panthers were faced with the prospect of destroying at least four T34s. By chance a T34 malfunctioned its main armament and Dominic had the difficult decision of doing without the Gun or risking recall on a gacked roll. Not an easy choice and personal preference comes into it. Until the game end this unit became a complication but not much of a distraction for either of us.

A T34 was used to edge down the Eastern Flank and came within sight of the 50L gun. Holding fire would have been sensible as the best shot was beyond

immobilisation range and unlikely to kill, needing a TK of two or three without APCR. My first big mistake was to try the shot. No APRC, followed by a hit that bounced off the tanks hull. Play continued with the attack gaining the row house building, not making any real progress on the Western flank and the tanks keeping their distance.

Time for a bright idea, moving the ATG by hand. This is hazardous movement and not recommended in the line of sight of anything, let alone a dented T34 with two MGs and a functioning gun. Presto one broken crew lucky to be alive.

The crew routed to the edge of board 46. Board 16 was off table until the Panthers moved on so Dominic drove a Tank adjacent to the broken crew to DM it, ready to cause elimination by failure to rout. A decent move, supported by another tank that started to threaten my units with encirclement.

In the rout phase I placed board 16, and found a building adjacent to the crew who routed comfortably. Well the obvious happened in the rally phase the crew makes it, and generates a 7-0 Leader two hexes from the static T34. The Leader failed to find a 'faust, but the crew had one, ate back blast, survived a morale check hit the tanks rear and brewed it up. I am certain this would not have happened if board 16 had been placed on the table and felt very guilty doing the attack. Three hexes away a worried looking T34 heard the explosion.

In the advance phase moved closer to the tank. The crew was able to try for another PF but failed burring defensive fire and the tank drove away. Another burning tank would have been useful but totally undeserved.

Despite this minor set back, and some obscenely low die rolls on my part Dominics attack gained ground without significant tank losses. On turn five the Panthers arrived heading for Board 46. By not going crew exposed I delayed their progress and by turn six they were neither near the Russian Tanks or likely to threaten them before the game end.

Play had taken too long and the fight was time out, and had to be adjudicated, well perhaps not, really I should have conceded! With two buildings controlled Dominic had four points in the bag. I am certain I could not have recaptured a building, and think no others would fall to the Reds. The key issue was the points to be earned by Russian tanks. With six in play a further eleven points could be earned, twelve if the tank gun was repaired. This gave me two turns to kill two or three T34s. At the time thought this possible, but after a few minutes discussion with Dominic and Derek Tocher accepted it wasn't and conceded. Felt bad as with a better appreciation of the game would have thrown



in the towel earlier.

I'd made a few mistakes. Being aggressive early in the game only worked because of consistently low DR, not many snakes but plenty of threes'. Not realising the row houses counted for points was avoidable and should have been queried before play started. Holding on to buildings for longer would have helped, still had a lot of troops at the game end and plenty of toys. The three biggest mistakes were not exposing the Panthers crews to use the roads, not allocating enough troops to the defence of the left flank. The ATG crew were very entertaining but would have been more use in either the row house or even V8/V9? and finally arguing the toss about a lost game!

There were some fun bits. The board 16 episode didn't really effect the game too much. I had some fun with the PSK and Flame throwers against Infantry, picked up on wall advantage, and tried to start a fire with a flame thrower. After three turns the Flame went out on a snakes.

Despite losing I think this is a balanced scenario and good fun to play. The attacker has more to do and credit to Dominic for a win against the run of the dice.



## Saturday Afternoon: France 1940

Saturday afternoon offers a choice of one of three selected scenarios set in France 1940 or any mutually agreed scenario. The mutual choice scenario is a good idea, which I would have welcomed for the "Rising Sun" round on Sunday (the idea of offering a mutual choice scenario is that it allows the players to play scenarios products not out when the scenario list was being drawn up – Pete).

### Le Herisson

This scenario has several attractions. Amongst them several pages of scenario analysis written by Mark Nixon in the ASL Annual '96, a rare armoured vehicle and an interesting plot a gradually collapsing Town defence.

The sIG33 (sF) is an armoured box built on to a Pz Kpfw I chassis, used to

mount a 15cm sIG Infantry gun on it's normal field carriage after the wheels had been removed. Around 38 were made, seeing action in France, Holland and Belgium with some still in service in 1943 in Russia. It's an ugly looking beast, the Gun shield is oversized and ungainly but resistant to small arms and functional.

Le Herrisson is worth playing if you like playing with rare vehicles or enjoy knocking them out!

### French set up

The evacuation of Dunkirk finished on the 3rd June, with the French providing a rear guard whose bravery saved thousands of British lives. Two days latter the French high command was struggling to fight on. Defensive Hedgehogs (Le Herisson in French) were created ahead of the German advance, bravely resisting but short of everything needed for warfare.

To control the town of Hangest you need to maintain a defensive perimeter. Lose control of too many buildings and the position will crack. To the west the Bosch already have a foot hold to reach you they must cross board 22 and claim eleven or more Multi hex buildings on board 20 for a win.

There are fourteen multi hex buildings on board 20, including some very solid second level buildings in T3, and AA3, two chain of rowhouses and even a very exposed two story wooden building in EE1. It is essential to understand the building control rules, including mopping up and search rules. The row houses are particularly interesting as to control them the German must pass through all ground level locations and possibly the level one locations as well. This takes time, and if he doesn't do it properly don't feel obliged to point out the error!

One bright idea is to pick four multi hex buildings which you will contest vigorously and set up with a view to defending these. The best area to consider doing this is the North Eastern quarter of board 20, containing five multi hex buildings. You can't just set up there and expect to hold on for eight turns though. It is helpful to delay the Germans from turn one, and to contest the areas that give access to the area you will make your last stand.

You can win by blowing the German casualty cap of 25 VPs. This is a very high total to earn from just infantry losses, but becomes credible if you pick off a few sIG Ibs'.

The scariest German units are the sIG Ibs'. At short range concentrated small arms fire, or close combat can take one out. Your main weapon threat against them is your machine guns. Attacks are limited to normal range, but that is eleven or twelve hexes for

your HMG or MMGs respectively. The LMG is tied to a six hex range restriction but can still do damage. At the likely ranges of engagement to hit numbers are excellent, a basic nine or ten, modified by the AFVs large target size and any leadership you throw into the shot. Hitting will not be a problem. Doing damage will though. Hull and side armour value is one, falling to zero for turret hits. The MG has a basic to kill of four, rising to six at one hex range, although this shouldn't happen too often. A modified to kill number of three or four is grim, best described as a one in twelve or one in six chance of significant damage. For the LMG any shot is worth taking. At best you are losing two or even four IFT factors, against a gain of 3-5 casualty points and reduced risk of being hit by 15cm fire. All your machine guns are subject to ammunition shortage, the original breakdown number becomes an X, and you are subject to a new B of one below the old one. For the LMG and HMG you are using X11, B10 weapons, with a one in six chance of a breakdown or outright elimination. The MMG are slightly better, suffering only on a one in twelve basis. Chances are your MGs will not survive the game.

Throughout you will need to balance the temptation to ice sIG Ibs' against the need to hurt the numerous German Infantry. The enemy start with 12.5 squads, all first line with a range advantage for inherent firepower, an inherent smoke exponent, and higher ELR of four. Even after ELR replacement a second line German squad is almost as useful as your own 1st line troops. Making things worse the German support weapons are more reliable than your own. An HMG is never a welcome sight in an opponents OB, and the three LMGs are not particularly nice either. German Leadership is limited to three Leaders, a 7-0, 8-1, and (Sacre Bleue), a 10-2. Expect him to be a darned nuisance, if he isn't rallying troops, he will be directing fire with great effect or helping accompanying troops shrug off your fire attacks. Killing or wounding him would be nice. The best weapon against him is the sniper. With a SAN of four you should see some attacks and if you keep the counter in his general area you may get lucky. Nearly forgot, snipers are also very effective against open topped vehicles. A hit against a sIG is likely later in the game if your counter is not drawn forwards. Chances are the sIGs will be in the backfield waiting to be Stunned or recalled.

There is just enough German infantry with sufficient leadership to attack across the entire board. Very occasionally a German commander might opt for concentrating on the Northern flank and seeking to drive

towards the North East corner, whilst pushing South as he goes. As you set up first you can't be certain this will happen, and your set up needs to cover a range of threats.

The sIGs are strong on offence with a 150\* gun. A hit using direct fire is resolved using the 30 IFT table. A KIA results from a five or less, with some potential for Rubble or potential flame generation. A single hit can rubble a building, and cause falling rubble to cascade into adjacent hexes. Anyone caught in the rubble is killed. This is a fair argument against stuffing any buildings with troops. Using Area fire the sIG has an easier time hitting but non critical hits are resolved on the 12IFT with TEM. Try not to dwell on critical hits, they are resolved as 36(-3), and reversed TEM. did I mention 15cm guns cause shellholes, not very likely as most targets will be in buildings or at least woods but worth remembering. The sIGs can generate smoke, all vehicle crews have inherent smoke grenades, the sIG has S9 a fair chance of several smoke deliveries then.

The sIGs do have weaknesses. Low ammunition is the most serious. B9 is critically low, once you blow this you are looking at B8, X9 for the guns and a long drive off the board. Without any MG the sIG is poor in close combat, but retains the capability to overrun. It isn't going to happen often, but remains an option late in the game. As an open topped vehicle the sIG can really shift down roads, or perform armoured assault. Fanciful ideas but less shocking if you have anticipated them. Road blocks and IFT attacks from above or behind will deter very aggressive movement.

A terrain feature of note is the small stream on board 22. It is dry and easy enough to enter, exit costs are doubled which makes the stream a slight break on German turn one movement.

Knowing the enemy is important. Appreciating the strengths and weakness of your own troops is vital. We have already discussed French MGs. In numbers your troops are close to the Germans, a total of 10.5 squads of first line troops. A slightly lower ELR of 3 isn't a massive problem. more worrying is your reduced broken side morale. For a squad a morale of six makes surviving subsequent attacks, rallying or self rallying harder, much harder. For half squads the broken side morale is five, pretty hopeless if under desperation morale. With ammunition shortage in effect, some ELR replacement might be expected. Statistically the odds are low, and if you start rolling box cars for fun, chances are ELR replacement will be low down on a long list of worries. It is reasonable to expect a squad to suffer replacement due to ammunition shortage every two turns, maybe four or five times

during the course of a game.

Three Leaders for a force of just over ten squads is pretty good. Although the Leadership can be used to good effect directing fire, perhaps a better use is to round up and rally broken units. This is a tricky judgement call, as cowering has a big impact on the number and power of attacks you generate, furthermore a -1 modifier can have a big impact on damage. Late in the game this becomes less of an issue, some MGs will be broken or disabled and you may be packed into a small area making the hex you are rallying troops collocated with the last remaining MG team!

Concealment is a boon. You can cover most if not all of your troops with a concealment counter on turn one. Additionally you can use HIP for a squad equivalent and its accompanying support weapons or Leaders. Concealment offers very real protection against fire on the IFT table or by reducing the odds of a direct fire hit.

You just might have enough concealment to generate a dummy stack or two. If these draw fire excellent, if they don't try to draw sniper fire or just confuse things later in the game.

The roadblock placement is a personal choice, balanced between providing cover for retreating or moving units, blocking the road for vehicular traffic. If in doubt the North east corner is a good spot. If you really can't think of anywhere useful settle for not choosing a spot to help the Germans.

The fortified building hex is a welcome addition to your OB. In a Multihex building fortifying a stairwell is good, particularly if only one stairway exists. Other choices include rowhouse, or key stone buildings. Z9 is very tempting, EE4 not too bad, but back your hunches.

The freedom to hide a squad or pair of half squads is interesting. A hidden unit in an upstairs rowhouse location is easily missed and can be mischievous on turn seven. It is also helpful to get behind the enemy. For example the single hex wooden building in W1 can be overlooked and could conceivably be bypassed. Suddenly appearing behind a sIG or stack of broken squads should cause concern. The only spot that might not need a hidden unit is the North East corner where I'd expect to end up late in the game anyway. One thought is hiding just half a squad can confuse anyone keeping tabs on your units as they appear, it is more confusing for anyone absolutely convinced you have hidden two units. This is a bit subtle but effective if your opponent is a worrier (look for a wrinkled forehead).

Although the idea of icing the sIG Ibs, plus a few German squads using machine

gun fire, mortally wounding the 10-2 Leader and earning a CVP win appeals, it is more likely a win will be judged on building control. A shorter game would make the Germans attack harder.

Set up presents a host of options. A frontal linear defence of level two hexes is suggested in Mark Nixon's ASL Annual write up, and could prove very effective. If the Germans rush across open ground you will have opportunities to kill or break them. Your own broken troops can fall back to the next defensive line and try to rally in time to contribute further to the defence.

When you start getting acquired or are lined up for serious IFT attacks it is time to either skulk or bug out. Fall back to the next line of defence and seek to delay or hurt the enemy again.

Some things help. Prisoners can be a burden for the Germans. If suddenly freed they become green units very quickly and can start reclaiming real estate, or worrying vehicles. No quarter makes mopping up harder, well impossible really, and send troops that would otherwise disrupt berserk instead. Any captured weapons arrive with ammunition and are most welcome. Its possible you'll bag a LMG part way through the game, less likely you'll be using a sIG Ib or the HMG. Avoid Melee, an equal exchange of units will not win unless you are very close to the casualty cap, and I mean very close! Give thought to kindling but resist the urge.

Most of your troops will probably be up front. Maybe the way to go is deploy a squad. Hide units behind the front line, seeking to contest building control. Split the rest of your forces between buildings T3, AA3, and either/or CC2 or EE1. Secondary positions can cover the gaps between buildings with fire. This is good for the first turn, later you will need to fall back, either by being broken or the simple act of movement. Don't get too attached to an building. If you do it will soon be receiving increasingly accurate sIG fire, and massed IFT attacks. If you lose too many units too soon the Germans will run riot later in the game.

Expect some fun. Yes you will suffer some MG breakdowns, ammunition shortage and struggle to rally broken half squads. The golden moments will be sIGs' gacking smoke rolls, or low ammunition forcing recall, the occasional MG shot that damages a vehicle and watching the continuous game of hide and seek the German feels obliged to play in a paranoid search for your half squads. Remember you can win regardless of your own casualties if the German forgets to control buildings. Keep a note of any he fails to control R6 is easily missed and he might

not understand the control of row how clusters. It is a cruel way to win, and tough when the other guy has almost beaten you fair and square, but there are limits to how much help you should give an opponent in open competition.

The scenario aftermath is worth a read, as essentially your victory depends on holding out for “too long”.

### German Set up And Attack

There are some good reasons for playing the Germans in Le Herisson, the 10-2 Leader is one good reason, the sIG Ibs' provide three more, any of these units could take 10% of the French OB out in a single turn.

The game objective is not the slaughter of French troops, instead you must capture eleven or more multi-hex buildings on board 20, whilst staying within the casualty cap of 24 CVP.

From the start it helps to realise there are only fourteen multi hex buildings on board 20, two are row house complexes, and a further three are second level buildings. The Chapter A rules on control are essential reading. If the French start kindling buildings you are gifted VPs, this is unlikely, remember you can throw the game by burning four or more multi hex buildings, can't see a reason to do this though! Randomly created fires from say sIG hits are not an issue. You can gain control of unoccupied buildings by being the only unit present as you move through them. With some hidden units around mopping up may be needed. This work need only occupy a half squad for one prep fire phase, with a risk of casualties of a concealed or rather hidden unit is revealed. As soon as you discover all enemy hidden units mopping up is still useful for capturing broken units but not needed just to gain control.

Building control is absolutely crucial in this scenario. Brush up on the rules before play and discuss any tricky bits with other players. For at least part of the game part of your force will be seeking to control buildings rather than fighting. The best units for searching are half squads, use any second line troops you ELR to and concentrate on what they are doing. rowhouses are a bugger to control, and its probably quicker to run up and down stairs than search one hex per turn.

Which is all a bit previous. Before play starts you need a good look at the maps and what the enemy has placed in front of you. There are three Multi hex two story buildings on the edge of board 20. These must surely be your opening objective. To reach them you must pass through mixed terrain of buildings, hedges, brush, woods and even a

shallow stream. The enemy starts the game with 10.5 squads, they are first line, with an ELR of 3, reasonably led by three Leaders, and in possession of four MGs. A fortified building hex, two roadblocks, HIP for a squad equivalent and 12 concealment counters round out the French OB.

Although the French have a large area to set up in, there is a very high probability they will be happily waiting in the two story buildings, concealed and lining up there MGs'. some troops may be further back, MG teams guarding roads parallel to the first line of defence. Although the French are free to create six dummy stacks the chances are they will not. A fair proportion of counters will be used to protect or conceal real units. Maybe three or at most four stacks will be dummies. The hidden squad or hidden half squads could be anywhere. There is a chance you will never find them, and they will only appear on turn seven running into buildings. The natural tendency is to imagine the units will be in buildings, but be wary Orchards and woods can also be used.

Another French surprise is the fortified hex. Yes its is an entire hex so it could be three levels of a second level building or just a single story. If used in conjunction with a hidden unit a the top of a stairwell this can get nasty. You run through the ground level fortified hex, then later mop up to find the hidden unit losing a half squad in the process. You must then divert troops to gain control of a building you thought was already secure!

So far the French sound very strong. There are no pushover but do have weaknesses. All units are subject to ammunition shortages. A box cars will ELR replace a unit to a green one. That change chops down effective range, and even combat ability. Covering becomes dire, and the breakdown numbers of MGs falls even lower. French units broken morale is one lower than the good order side, so once the French start to break they really do suffer! Enemy machine guns main weakness are high breakdown and elimination numbers. They are effected by low range factors, which can be crucial when shooting at Vehicles.

Early in the game French MGs may become apparent. If concealed the higher stacks are a give away, if hidden well

the first clue may be when they open fire. If they stay out of the fire fight they are of little immediate concern. The French player will have a definite opinion about trying to destroy armour with MG fire. As a large target the sIG is easy to hit. To kill numbers for MGs are very low and a single hit unlikely to do the job. Given enough time the French will get lucky and you could lose one, two or even three sIGs. If you are nervous about the risk of MG fire set up further back. Beyond 12 hexes you cannot be hit by direct fire and your sIGs +3 TEM armour is proof against most IFT attacks.

Your sIGs are not bad units from a perspective of firepower, a direct hit is resolved on the 30 IFT column for direct fire, and 12 IFT column for area fire (plus TEM). Getting a hit is hard. Against a concealed target you can only use Area fire, which will be adjusted for TEM probably +2, or more likely +3. Direct fire is way deadlier, but harder to get a hit. A basic to hit of seven or eight, drops to five or six due to TEM, and even lower against concealed targets. Acquisition helps, but don't expect the French to wait indefinitely, nor can you afford to dawdle. If there are no viable targets, try for Smoke, your sIGs' are S9 a very high smoke number reflecting the units role.

There is not escaping the units low breakdown number. To trigger low Ammo you must make an initial to hit or special ammo roll of 9, 10 or 11. Thereafter a roll of 8 malfunctions the gun, 9 or more disables it, and you are subject to recall. Pretty much you can expect two shots then start thinking about a way off board. The lesson is not to expect too much from the sIGs. It is also worth being very pleased when they do manage to do some damage. The sIGs are pretty much there for fun. If they draw MG fire hope for high to kill rolls, or broken MGs. losing a sIG and crew is hard, console yourself with the effect that shot would have had on Infantry.



Michael Davies (left) shakes his head as David Schofield teaches him another painful lesson.

German Infantry is very strong initially. 12.5 squads, all first line with an ELR or four. As you expect to cross open ground, an inherent smoke exponent is welcome, even just "1" helps. With four machine guns your firepower is slightly better than the French. It gets much better if French units remain hidden or concealed. Leadership is in your favour with a 10-2 counter even low IFT attacks can be deadly. In most cases you would like to advance in a series of waves. Moving up to the French defences, shooting, then following up as they retreat. At best the French can exploit four lines of defence, if you can kick this down to three excellent. Try to inflict casualties, but if you are having any don't be too worried.

As you advance, mop up, search and stay busy. Shoot in the defensive fire phases, probe and outflank the enemy work continually to gain small advantages. A few lucky events can help. A lucky sIG shot may kill a unit, as might the odd IFT attack. With only 10.5 squads one of these hidden losing a squad is a big deal for the French. As his forces shrink, defence become harder.

You don't have to kill all the enemy. Capturing them is acceptable, and probably a good idea. Breaking French units is almost as good, generally they move backwards, and often take a while to recover due to their lower broken side morale. If you can keep a broken unit under desperation morale take the shot, this is crucial to keeping them broken.

The hardest part is the approach to board 20. The Northern flank is the most favourable, as buildings offer fair protection. In the South, be careful, commit about a platoon of squads and don't run into open ground. The sIGs can fire smoke, declare opportunity fire or take a big chance on firing at concealed targets. Chances are the French will hunker down. Shoot everything sensible in the advancing phase and you are on your way to Victory.

It helps to have a vague plan for searching buildings, and moving on to the next target. This can change as the game develops but the thinking might go, capture T3, next move against R6 and W4, down to the V7 rowhouses, and finally V9. Not as easy with French interaction!

With tolerable luck you should get some effective shots from the sIGs', much work will be done by your Infantry shooting up the French then driving East. Take prisoners, exploit any encirclement opportunities you can create and try to keep every single unit busy doing something every turn.

## Conclusion

Le Herisson is a well designed scenario.

The set up options for both sides are reasonable, although the French probably have little alternative than to stage a defence of the edge of board 20. Most games will end up with a fight for the North Eastern corner of the board. The low ammo rules, and sIG Ibs' add colour to the scenario. The real game is the drive across board 20, mopping up and searching buildings. It needs a certain amount of hard work to earn a win for either side, luck alone will not grant you a Victory.

## After The Action

In the Tournament played this one against Dave Schofield a living ASL legend. Originally we thought about playing a mutually agreed scenario. Dave said he had a cunning French set up for Le Herisson and I was happy to play the Germans so we mutually agreed on A77.

Dave's cunning set up was a strong force in the South and less troops in the North. I suspected this consisted of just two squads plus the HIP unit and that was not far of the mark. The plan was to draw the French into a meat grinder attack in the Southern part of the board for two turns then run all over them whilst a couple of half squads probed the less strongly defended area.

This plan was rather lame. A stronger force in the North say three squads and the 7-0 Leader was needed. This was not immediately apparent and my initial advance forward went well, with a DR 3 in advancing fire breaking a key squad manning a MMG in 20Z2. When this unit routed I could have surged forward in the next turn facing a limited number of 4 IFT and 2 IFT attacks at 0 or -1. Dave would have recovered and still won, but my game would have been better.

A few things distracted me. Firstly my optimistic attempts for smoke simply placed low ammo counters, fire broke another half squad, the squad had ELR replaced and it crossed my mind winning a fire fight would give me numerical superiority.

The French realised I was not going forward and kept me happy with just enough targets to keep me static. I'm pretty sure Dave was dropping hints for me to attack and late in the game accepted his advice. I also had some tuition in encirclement and a bit of help with vehicular movement.

Pretty much my attack was too slow. By about turn four we both appreciated I wasn't going to win but played on for the fun of it. After some pretty silly shots against concealed targets in buildings a sIG finally ran out of ammunition. Another just malfunctioned whilst the third was hit by an MG shot that was unlucky not to cause recall or penetrate!

The Infantry fight was one sided. Lots

of French squads died with only five German CVP points lost in the entire game. Effectively I'd completed the wrong mission earning lots of CVP and not enough buildings ending the game with seven or eight and very, very lucky to get that.

The French defence did have a few tricks 20Z7 was fortified and without a big effort hard to take (it didn't happen!). The hidden units were half squads in R8 and level two of T3.

Really enjoyed playing this one and learned something in the process. I've a better understanding of encirclement, pacing an attack and an insight into the skills of a top ranked player! Think I missed the chance to run down the left flank, but the wily "Silver back", knew I wouldn't! There is a lot more to this game than rules and dice.

Greatly enjoyed the game.



## Sunday: The Rising Sun

Although this section of the tournament features the Japanese the scenarios selected place the Japanese on the offensive and limit the knowledge of PTO rules required to enjoy play.

If you are very new to PTO ASL Scenario J76 Ultimate treachery has the least Pacific terrain as it takes place on an Urban board with just buildings and a few Palm Trees. Both of the other scenarios require more knowledge of Jungle terrain, with J9 stiff fight being a bit easier to play. That said SP91 Show a Little Guts has the advantage of a Schweirpunkt write up which gives an attacker or defender a good start.

## J76 Ultimate Treachery

This scenario is set in Hanoi (Vietnam), in 1945. Taking place on an urban board the only PTO terrain in play are Palm Trees. If new to PTO you will need to read the Rules sections on Japanese but will not have to consider Jungle, huts, Caves or anything else exotic. Part of the scenarios attraction is an FT17 an Antique tank of WW1 vintage which will have an impact on French

and Japanese plans.

Building control is crucially important. The French control all Buildings within their set up area at the game start. The Japanese will seek to gain control during play, the French should be aware of the control conditions to ensure this is done accurately and for their own counter attacks.

## French Set Up

There are two possible ways to win. One way stop the Japanese controlling more than 44 building locations in your set up area. This objective that can be restated as you win by controlling 30 or more building locations in your set up area at the game end. Alternatively win immediately by earning 18 or more CVP.

The casualty cap is a fair slice of the Japanese OB. Two of the three Japanese Leaders are each worth a VP, the third is worth two. Each crew or squad is worth another 2 CVP, and a half squad a single CVP. Japanese units are unusual controlled by separate rules that apply only to them. Some of these rules can lead to CVPs being earned. Specifically a Japanese Leader that breaks is immediately subject to wounding and a wound severity die roll. Squads that fail morale checks are step reduced, with an already reduced squad replaced by a half squad and your CVP tally going up one. ELR effects these results for conscript units, but with an ELR of 4 in a short game you should not see too many needs to apply those special circumstances. Japanese crews take some killing, a break replaces a full Infantry crew with a step reduced Infantry crew still happy to blaze away, another break replaces the unit with a broken Vehicle crew but in other Armies that would be a dead crew. In summary shots at Leaders are generally worth taking. Squads are easier to kill than crews, with two failed morale checks generally earning you a CVP. This isn't easy, but it can be done. Even if it doesn't form your main strategy the Japs will have to keep track of their casualties.

Holding a number of 30 or more building locations at the game end is a win. To plan for this you have to count locations, decide which will form your last line of defence and make this plan flexible to cope with realistic Japanese plans. All of the locations North of hexrow BB count for Thirty locations. Holding all these is a win, but for each one you lose you must hold another location South of row BB but within your original set up area. Chances are the Japanese will appreciate this factoid and make a sustained effort to seize say CC8 and/or DD7 to cramp your style.

To help you plan you need to appreciate the strength of your own troops,

the strength of the Japanese attackers and the terrain over which the battle will be fought. Of these I think terrain is the most important, given its relationship to the ultimate victory conditions.

Special Rule 2 transforms woods and Orchards into Palm trees. They are in season, and as best as I can understand it not much different from Orchards. Walls are given a large chunk of rules in the ASLRB but are fairly well known. In this scenario the walls are conveniently located to provide jumping off points for the Japanese assaults on your set up areas. In certain rare circumstances they may provide a hull down position for the FT17 or you may cross one in the tanks using 20% of your movement points. Several varieties of building are in play. Single hex, row houses, multi story buildings and even a few single hex multi story buildings.

Obvious things to note are the TEM of buildings. Against small arms IFT attacks wooden buildings offer +2 TEM, stone +3. For indirect fire weapons in this outing the 50mm Mortars an additional +1 applies for each full level above the level occupied. Stating the obvious Stone buildings offer much better protection than wooden ones. If you can occupy terrain with a higher TEM than your opponent you should start to win fire fights. The protection of a wooden building is plenty good enough compared to open ground particularly when movement modifiers (FFMO or FFNAM) apply.

It helps if you can just glance at the map and assess how many VPs a building is worth, the next level of skill is assessing how easy it would be to attack or defend that building.

Best mention the weather, conditions are overcast which may lead to rain or heavy Rain later on. At short ranges this does not have a big impact on fire combat. At longer ranges it will, add +1 or +2 to a shot. The big gain for you is severe reduction in smoke. Enjoy rain if it arrives.

It's a good idea to read the Chapter G notes on Japanese. There is also a very good introduction to PTO written by Matt Shostak (apologies for dropping names I don't know the guy!) in the ASL Journal Issue One, that covers the Japanese well, and touches on Caves, Jungle, and many other PTO things. If you are going to play the Japanese or play against them you really do need to sit down and study them. Step reduction is crucial, as is ELR replacement of conscript squads. Japanese Leaders really do lead from the front, rallying troops like commissars, and similarly raising the morale of accompanying MMC by one. Working to your advantage broken Leaders wound, and die on a 5 or 6, or a 4,5 or 6 if already wounded. Adverse modifiers have to be

applied. The Japs start with an 8+1 Leader if wounded he becomes a 7+2. Almost a shame to kill him! Against the tank the Japs can create up to seven Tank hunter heroes. These cannot Banzai charge but are able to defend against overrun or advance into your FT17 hex and engage in close combat using his own CCV and possibly an Anti tank magnetic mine or equivalent device. (The equivalent might be a lunge mine an explosive charge thrust at a tank, which usually proved fatal for the operator). Fortunately a scenario rule prohibits Banzai or your chances of a win would be reduced.

Other important stuff. The two MMGs the enemy receive must be manned by Infantry crews or SMC or it's Breakdown number and rate of fire is reduced by one. The original B11 would become an X so do not expect to see Ad Hoc MG crews too often. No similar restrictions apply to either of the two LMGs and pair of 50mm Mortars the enemy start with. All the Japanese support weapons can be used against the FT17. It's thickest armour is 2, going all the way down to 0 or -1 for a rear Hull hit. An MG to kill of four can work against thin armour, and even a 50mm Mortar round can be worrisome.

The 50mm Mortars can fire High explosive, smoke and white Phosphorous rounds. HE is not too much of a worry barring a critical hit for troops in cover. Mortars can and often do go on ROF sprees. Against daring players the shots will come thick and fast, some more devious Orientals may wish to exploit the Mortars Smoke and WP capabilities. If it isn't raining the Japanese can cover movement through open terrain by Smoke, they can even try to drop smoke in your hex. White Phosphorous is nastier attacking troops as it arrives or is moved through.

Keep in view the enemies six first line squads have an inherent smoke exponent of 1, and appreciate you are up against a wily opponent if he makes use of this. Fortunately the enemies eight second line squads don't get any, watch out for battle hardening an Elite Squad can start rummaging about for WP hand grenades which you don't particularly want to see.

A strange option open to the Japanese is to HIP 10% of their OB even when attacking! Here that is two squads and any accompanying support weapons or Leaders. This can be a surprise as it can confuse your understanding of enemy on board units. If one or more units remain concealed there is scope for a sudden appearance and property grab later in the game.

Smoke, toughness, Leadership, human anti tank weapons, numbers and support weapons are all in the Japanese favour. The

last bit of worrying news is Hand to Hand combat. The Imperial Japanese Army love it. If you are ambushed or the defender in CC/Melee the enemy can declare Hand to Hand. Immediately they gain a -1 modifier, and conduct combat using the red CC numbers. Usually an attack at 1:1 requires a 5 to be effective, a Japanese attacker would need an eight, or a nine if ambushing scary numbers to be sure. The casualty cap helps a bit, quite a lot if the first enemy attack results in a loss and his bottle goes.

Your own troops are a mix of French and Vietnamese troops, six and a half first line and six green squads with an ELR of two. This amounts to twelve squads just a bit short of enough troops to man a solid defensive perimeter. The low ELR worries me. Broken troops will tend to ELR replace, 1st line becoming green, with green squads disrupting. Disrupted troops are a menace when trying to retreat they are either left behind or force other units to stay behind and protect them. Green troops without leaders are slower, break and even destroy things, and cover more severely, they are also LAX, not welcome when CC and Hand to Hand are expected.

You are short on Leadership an 8-1 and 7-0 is about right for 12.5 squads, not so good to cover the areas you need to defend, rallying troops and directing MG fire. Without capturing enemy equipment or scrounging the FT17 support weapons are limited to a HMG, MMG and LMG, just about enough to do the job.

The FT17M's vulnerability to a host of Japanese weapons has been mentioned. The rest of the bad news follows. One man turret, mechanical reliability, radioless and unable to benefit from road movement. On the plus side, it possesses a 4 factor CMG with ROF (1), is totally resistant to rifle fire, rates a small target and can provide cover for French units. At very close range, an FT17 can perform an overrun attacking on the 8 IFT table, you can also drive into buildings eventually! One cunning plan I had was to drive into Z2 a Multihex building just as the Japs occupy it. With obscene luck the building hex entered could rubble, initiating a chain reaction that levels Z2, and flattens X2 as well. This removes 14 locations from any possibility of Japanese Control and might kill a few enemy units as the building falls. Pure fantasy to be avoided unless you are in serious trouble early in the game.

More conventional use for the FT17 could be as an MG position perhaps starting in a building. With solid TEM the tank is hard to hit and complicates close combat attacks. Keep in view a burning tank could ignite a building. If the tank is knocked out, crew survival relies on a 2 DR not a banker.

If they survive head for a MG or at least an upper level of a building.

A frank Japanese player would probably agree Time pressure is key to this scenario. Given enough time the Japs can capture successive lines of defence with low losses. If the attack has to pick up speed, assault moves are replaced by regular movement and prep fire support is similarly reduced. This leads to higher losses in the assaulting units. Be very pleased when the Japanese dawdle. Don't freely give the balance to anyone other than a close friend who is either painfully unlucky or a very good friend the extra turn makes your defence much harder.

So how to set up. Even though this fight takes place in Hanoi it is very similar to street fighting anywhere. Well the classic way to defend City blocks is to define a perimeter flanked by machine gun fire down either flank. This assumes you have enough troops and equipment to do the job. If you believe this is the case set up to defend the Multi level wooden building Z2, and wooden two storey building X2 with say three or four squads, a further three in the stone X7 rowhouse complex, and three more around stone single hex multi level building CC8, and wooden level two building DD7. The MGs can start with these units or be held further back to interdict road movement. The Stone multi hex multi level building in DD4 is a good MG position, other may also appeal. The tank could start in a ground level location in the front line or further back. Building FF1 is not too bad a bit out of the way but tricky to attack. There is much scope for variation. Second level locations are favoured, try to control stairwells as long as possible without them the enemy cannot climb the stairs. Weaken a sector if you can see a use for the troops elsewhere or if you see the defence as hopeless. I've personal reservations about holding the X7 row house area in strength but a couple of half squads may do it. If the MGs fire is directed by a leader consider using a green half squad or squad to crew it, with leadership they are as skilled as a first line squad.

As the game opens Japanese intentions will be revealed. If the attack is spread across the board you may be strong enough to resist at least for a turn or two. If the bulk of Japanese forces are intent on a thrust into a single area, support the threatened sector with fire, and filter troops in to support it if it is holding, or cover a withdrawal if it isn't.

Don't be terribly brave. If broken fall back. If threatened with close combat, look at the red to kill numbers and consider voluntary break if green, pinned and facing a sizeable force.

A few finesses help. A unit of the

second floor of say AA2 makes it harder to control all locations in the building. If you withdraw early in the game this is probably a waste of resources. On turn four much more valuable. Remember from second floor locations your attacks should benefit from PBF vs adjacent units. Ground level return fire from adjacent open ground doesn't. Beware encirclement it drops morale and forces surrender. Skilful attackers will manoeuvre to encircle you and bag units that would otherwise rout or in some cases pin rather than break. Appreciate the distances involved are small. Given a free run a single Japanese unit can enter several locations in a turn, using mopping up entire buildings can be claimed very quickly.

Expect some unusual events. A few wins in Hand to Hand would be nice, mortars can run out of smoke, and rain may arrive when its helpful. These are fun, enjoy them, whilst working for a win. Japanese Leaders do have short glorious lives, squads can steadily reduce to half squads and beyond moving you towards a CVP win. If the enemy attack is slow paced, aim for delay, kill what you can but fight more for territory than to inflict casualties.

On turn four check how close the enemy is to a win and how high the CVP total has risen. Determine your best hope of Victory. Remember your own casualties do not matter, stairways are important, occasionally opponents make big mistakes. If going on the offensive will earn you a win fix bayonets and charge.

## Japanese Set Up And Attack

Ultimate treachery is an excellent scenario for player new to the Japanese in ASL. Here the Japanese are on the offensive seeking to gain 45 or more of the 74 building locations in the French set up area whilst remaining within a 17 CVP Cap. The casualty cap keep things honest. Without it you could merrily charge into close combat with French troops win any melee or Hand to Hand that develops and win comfortably in the time available. With the CVP limit, there is still considerable scope for close combat, as long as it works in conjunction with other tools available to you.

Setting up second against an enemy that is not benefiting from HIP or masses of concealment counters is generally helpful. From what is visible you should be able to estimate the strength of French defences in every sector and with careful judgement form an impression of enemy defensive plans. On this more later, first scrutinise the French OB and look for its strengths and weaknesses. Most noticeable is the French raw fire power, six 1st line and six green squads have 48 IFT strength, add to this a

HMG, MMG, LMG and even 4 factor MG in the Tank for a further 16 factors bringing the French total to 64. Disregarding the Mortars' you have 60IFT factors, and effectively less if you consider the difficulties of exploiting your 3-4-7 second line squads. As the attacker fire superiority would be helpful. Fortunately half the French squads are Green, when they cower the effects are much more severe. Green troops also have short range, only three hexes, which will impact some attacks. More help comes from the lower morale of broken side French troops, harder to rally, easier to kill by subsequent fire attacks. In terms of leadership you have a slight edge, three Leaders to two with the French having nothing comparable to your 10-1 Leader.

The FT17 has a 4 factor coaxial machine gun with a rate of fire of 1, it is impervious to small arms fire at two or more hexes range, and resistant to MG or Mortar fire. Fortunately it is radioless, subject to mechanical reliability, limited to five MP and operates under one man turret restrictions. It gets close, well very close really, it can perform an overrun with on the 8 IFT column. An overrun costs 2 MP plus costs of entry so this opportunity is very limited. Against the armoured threat you can use MGs, Mortars, close combat or possibly your best weapon Tank Hunter heroes.

With Japanese hand to hand combat modifiers and Stealth leading to greater potential for Ambush, seeking out close combat is tempting. Against pinned, or CX'd units too tempting to miss. There are problems. The French will fight back vigorously. If the French can exchange their twelve squads for nine of yours in close combat they win. Wearing the French down with fire combat will help. An ELR of 2 for the French is painful. On a straight morale check a roll of nine or more breaks the squad and ELR replaces it. A 1st line squad becomes green, a green squad is disrupted. You can move through disrupted squads and eliminate them for failure to rout. Standing adjacent to the French in buildings you should be able to gain the upper hand in any firefight.

The Imperial Japanese Army is an unusual force in squad Leader. Almost every unit is hampered by short range, here your six first line and eight second line units are all ranged four hexes. On the plus side they do enjoy numerical superiority, splendid ELR of four, a goodish SAN of four, and are subject to step replacement for morale checks failed whilst a squad. The latter characteristic is useful. It allows you to move adjacent to an enemy unit, and generally survive at least two fire attacks with a half squad rather than a broken half squad! Make use of inherent smoke for your 1st line squads. The odds of

placement are just one chance in six but worth trying for when moving closer to the enemy.

Although Japanese Infantry are happy to charge through open ground, it is best to try to protect them. Making use of cover, dash, and inherent smoke are good ideas, covering fire and Smoke or WP from the Mortars will also help. The 50mm Mortars are fairly short ranges, not a problem in a scenario played on half a board. Aside from firing HE, a read of the chapter H notes will draw attention to their WP and Smoke rounds. Smoke and WP are valuable for covering the advance of your units, offering protection against enemy fire. A basic 50mm Mortar round hit is resolved on the 2 IFT column, in most cases with a +2 or +3 modifier for TEM, in buildings with multiple levels above the Target hex the TEM is modified by +1 for each level. True a critical will do damage, but a regular HE shot is more likely to activate a sniper than help you very much. Trying for Smoke can be the Answer. This can shield your troops from fire, or be used to cover enemy trouble spots. For example you can cover the tank, or a MG stack, reducing the effectiveness of their fire. An availability number of S7 should make you hopeful. White Phosphorous is a less effective hindrance to line of sight, offset by its ability to cause morale checks and but fires are not possible as environmental conditions are not dry or very dry. White phosphorous availability is WP6. With mortars firing Smoke or WP there is always a chance of Rate and throwing up a smoke screen covering several hexes. Stop firing when you have covered enough useful hexes. You are free to switch to HE for the rest of your shots, and maybe you will need smoke later in the game.

With overcast conditions rain can fall, this is awkward as immediately you are unable to place smoke other than Infantry smoke Grenades within buildings, further any smoke already placed disappears.

Barring bad weather be wary about Multi Level buildings. A Level two buildings line of sight is always hindered by WP, smoke is a level 1.5 hindrance so can be seen over. With an abundance of Level two locations freely available to the Westerners this is important.

Japanese Leaders are a bit keen. They raise the morale of accompanying troops by one, and can rally like commissars, similarly ignoring Desperation morale. This is generally useful, and welcome if a unit is quickly returned to the front, less welcome when a perfectly reasonably 2nd line Half squad become a still broken conscript! If under pressure close to the casualty cap maybe leaving troops to self rally is an

option. Your Leaders never break, something to do with Bujutsu or Bushido, instead they wound. The first wound can be fatal or the guy will hang in for the rest of the game. You start the game with three Leaders, all of them are needed if you attack on a broad front.

IJA Squads and half squads cannot operate MMGs without lowering rate of fire and upping breakdown numbers by one. It is better to use the Infantry crews given to fire them. You start with two MMG both B11, and a combined firepower of 8 IFT. Set up options include working up front with the assaulting squads, forming a dedicated fire support section or a bit of both. Other ideas include setting off as a tank hunter team or becoming a clean up section to mop up buildings. If an MMG is disabled look around for captured kit, or man a Mortar. Against troops in buildings a series of 8 IFT attacks should inflict morale checks, with a few ELR replacements. From a commanding position the section can scythe down counter attacking French troops.

Two LMGs add firepower and tactical flexibility. The LMG can destroy a tank eventually and may as well if no better targets are around. In the attack, assaulting units can exploit the LMGs fire power at point blank range to beef up attacks, subsequently the weapon can be dropped before entering close combat.

Special Rule 3 prohibits Banzai charges, and even Banzai charges by tank Hunter heroes. Even so you are entitled to seven TH heroes who can be used for close combat reaction fire or created to advance into an adjacent location. worth using these units if the opportunity arises, but there are plenty of other assets to use against the FT17 if it becomes a nuisance.

Although the attacker you are free to HIP 10% of your squads FRU as well as accompanying leaders and support weapons. There is no reason to tell the French you have done this as long as you keep a note of their location. It does help a bit in confusing the French on turn one, very effective if you are bringing units on from the Eastern edge. It's not really worth keeping units HIP for no real purpose, for several turns, but maybe just for one or two turns?

Walls, Palm Trees, road and buildings are the only types of terrain present. The walls are very conveniently sited to provide cover for approaching the French set up are with nearby buildings providing upper level locations for MGs to set up in to give covering fire. For a win you need at least 45 controlled building locations. There are 30 locations North of hexrow BB, so if you control everything else you win. south or row BB there are two main defensive sector. In the Western all three buildings are wooden,

ranging from a single hex, through a two hex two story house up to a multilevel building block of eighteen locations. To the East is a tougher nut to crack of a single hex wooded building, a two hex wooden two story house, and two rows of stone row houses. It helps to have a copy of board 21 handy when reading this! North of the BB hexrow most buildings are wooden, except for a single hex multi story building in CC8, and a multi hex, multi level building in EE4.

The set up area for units on board is limited. to a stone rowhouse block or terrace South of the set up area and a mess of Palm Trees and buildings in the Easter sector. Mortars need open ground or Palm tree locations to fire, and there are few of these available. The best spots, by virtue of being the only spots are X10, R7, and if you accept more restricted fields of fire, S9, U10, T9 and V10. For the sake of argument you could use S10, maybe T10 or R10. None of these is even close to being ideal. Remember you can use spotted fire, it reduces accuracy and lowers ROF but remains an option. Some of the rowhouse locations, particularly the upper level may be serviceable MG nests. There is an Alternative the multi level building S8, the second and third levels have commanding views of the French Eastern sector.

French dispositions should give you ideas for set up. You can choose between concentrating to stage a firefight or bypassing resistance and starting to go for territory from the start. French forces may be concentrated North of row BB or formed into several defensive Islands.

If the French are concentrated in a last stand bastion, you need to approach it with caution. Taking one or two turns preparing to assault, seizing territory, well locations on the way. A more dispersed set up across the whole perimeter of French set up areas can be met by similarly dispersing your own forces. Concentrating on a strong thrust or a pincer movement.

A dispersed attack just splits the available troops into tree groups each tasked with attacking a sector of the French line. About four squads and a Leader per attack is about right, with the balance of your forces going to the most strongly defended sector. Appreciate the strongest sector is not the one with the most units. Take into account support weapons, troops quality, and strength of position. Certainly if the building to be attacked is stone or wood, the better terrain will require a stronger attacking strength.

In general the Pincer movement or double envelopment has the most style. You seek to bypass one enemy sector say the Eastern cluster of Rowhouses and put

pressure on the defenders by threat of encirclement or elimination through failure to rout. There is a danger. The Defenders may concentrate practically everything they have against one part of the pincer and destroy it totally without losing too much territory.

Down to specifics try organising your troops into three reinforced platoons of about four squads and a Leader. The MMGs' are manned by Independent crews and can start the game as a separate tactical unit. The Mortars should also be manned, I'd favour a deployed 2nd Line squad to do the job, other might favour 1st line units for this. The mortars can be attached to an attacking group or act independently. Their main role is smoke, once this has been placed or depletion kicks in move the Mortars and crews forward. You have many free choices, assigning the LMGs one per platoon, or brigading them in just one area, keeping the 1st line squads together, and which Leader goes where. As usual judgement plays a part, there is ample scope for variation.

Turn one is tricky. Some units will be able to fire at the French on turn one, and I thin the MMGs should. Most of the rest needs to move. If protected by cover everyone is fairly safe, but running around inn open ground without the benefit of a stone wall, hindrance or smoke should be limited. a lot depends on line of sight. Be careful. moving a stack of three squads and your best Leader is reckless in open ground in view of the enemy and most of the time unnecessary. On turn one gain ground if offered it, but more often settle for gaining good positions to exploit on turn two.

This is a short scenario, only five turns with the first one gaining a springboard for your drive into French real estate. Once you are into the City Blocks South or row BB you should have a few laughs. At least one or two hand to hand combats, an Ambush and chasing the odd French squad up stairs to be captured. Use mopping up to save time gaining control of buildings, but do not dawdle. If you gain all locations South of row BB suffering only slight casualties there may be a strong case for pushing North and gaining more than you need to secure Victory. The obvious risks are becoming over extended and higher casualties. If French opposition is very weak the risk is worth it, conversly strong French forces are best shot up rather than assaulted.

Sometime during your attack the FT17 will intervene. Try for Tank hunter heroes, use LMGs as anti tank weapons or go for street fighting to kill the tank. It is not a massive threat but can not be totally ignored.

The important stuff is to avoid moving in open ground in plain view of the enemy,

pace the attack to fit the time available and make judicious use of close combat. Playing a role in Victory, watch the casualty Cap, make use of all forms of smoke and keep hitting any broken French units to DM them and reduce chances of their rallying.

This is a short scenario with a lot of charm. Swap the Japanese for another Nationality and the pace and development would be different, probably slower with different emphasis on fire combat. The Japanese are not even close to being the worst choice for this mission!

## Conclusion

Ultimate treachery is a quick playing game with some charm. The FT17M is fun, giving the French some help, without becoming the focus of too much Japanese attention. City fights are painful for the IJA as units that would break and soon rally are instead step reduced. In long games this can be a handicap. Here with Just five and a half turns and the Japanese on the offensive slow attrition is limited.

For the French a balance between holding terrain and suffering casualties is complicated by the chance of a win by inflicting Jap casualties. There is room for error and whilst you need to make some tough decisions you do not gain from punishing yourself for any mistakes.

As the Japanese, you really must go on the offensive. The first turn is mainly about moving your assaulting units into position. The second turn can be a smoke shrouded charge into open ground. The rest of the game will mostly be close quarters action with another turn or road crossing later on. Smoke is helpful, though you can win without it. Rain generally isn't welcome or a match losing event! If you can pace your attack correctly to gain ground for low casualties you should win.

Both sides clearly have winning chances, the final count of buildings can be very close to the Japanese target. If the French have won and the Japanese still have a credible force declare a winner then give though to playing another turns to simulate the Japanese balance as a friendly game.

This is a good choice if you are fairly new to PTO giving a taste of the Japanese without needing to learn new terrain or face the prospect of playing hide and seek.

## After The Action

By Sunday morning I'd lost both tournament scenarios, three Friendly games, lost a fun game (of which more later), and won a friendly game of Shlov Labours Lost. Fortunately I'd enjoyed every single game and am one of lifes optimists.

Sunday started well, with a few

historical insights from Shaun Carter and a valuable insight into the Game system. The historical stuff included a chilling tale about mine clearance that makes me appreciate the easy life I have! The gaming stuff was more immediately useful, pretty much to analyse the game objectives and set targets towards achieving these at the end of each turn.

Being new to ASL I've yet to play or meet everyone, and played hide and seek with Russell Gough for about half an hour. Eventually he found me and we settled down to a game. I fancied J76 and we both picked Japanese, Russell ended up as French with the balance.

Whilst Russell was setting up shot the breeze with others in ASL Limbo and heard the rumour this was difficult to win if you don't get smoke. I'd thought a bit before about the mortars having both WP and Smoke ammo, and the low probability of rain, but not seen it as too important.

French set up was very quick. A lot of troops were concentrated in the stone row houses with an HMG team in CC8, FT17 in X4 and more troops covering the X2 and Z2 buildings. A fire fight against the row houses was doomed, against the wooden buildings it might work but I couldn't set up to attack both in strength. Although attacking from off-board was an option I'd forgotten about it! so decided on a drive through the rowhouse under cover of Smoke.

Set up a couple of units concealed rather than hidden so as to remember they were there! With hindsight HIP should have been used. Both Mortars were in X10 looking for WP and Smoke rounds.

Game began with Wind Change, mercifully no rain. The first mortar found WP, and retained rate to place two WP counters on top of the French triggering a string of morale checks all passed. In error used full strength WP since play have realised dispersed WP was appropriate an honest mistake but embarrassing. This certainly helped. The Mortar lost ROF, with the second trying for WP without joy, but placing regular smoke. With smoke or WP covering the rowhouses felt brave enough to run forwards taking some step losses but very few. French fire was hampered by hindrances and some cowering, but a lot of shots were taken and Japanese losses mounted. Before the advance phase some French troops routed leaving a clear way in to the row houses.

The rest of the game was a wind forward drive for another two turns. In most close combats stealthy 1st line Japs faced lax green French troops, leading to Ambush and hand to hand with a -2 modifier. Even at less than even odds this was fatal and very quick. Luck played a part and was almost

relieved when the French won a melee. It happened when I advanced a 8+1 Leader into combat with Monsieur 7-0, and the Frenchie won Hand to Hand. Not long after Russell conceded, at the end of turn three. The French tank had survived a couple of LMG shots but never had a big impact on play.

In the bar got pulled into a debate about building control the consensus being to control a location you must move through it. A bit embarrassing as that requirement makes a Japanese win harder, but I'm pretty sure enough troops remained to do the job in two turns.

With rain or without any SMOKE gaining the first set of buildings is much harder for the Japanese not impossible but harder. Quite a few folk played this scenario, and in most of them no rain fell, and some SMOKE was placed.

This proved a good choice for Sunday morning very fast playing.



## FRIENDLY GAMES OB 3 CLOSE QUARTERS

Set up for this scenario is Simultaneous with the use of a screen or box lid recommended to conceal set up. This is a bit tricky as anything that conceals the Germans set up also covers the map. Using two maps is one solution, not an option at home, but something I did for a friendly at Intensive fire. Alternatively set the Russians up first then the Germans but remember sequential set up with German forces unknown makes the Russians set up more difficult.

### OB 3 German Set up

Your troops are tasked with defending broken wooded terrain from a strong Russian tank and Infantry attack. If you can stop the Reds exiting twenty two or more EVPs' of units by Turn 7 you win. Remember your own casualties are not an issue, your entire OB can be destroyed and you can still win.

The key to this scenario is the terrain present on boards 47 & 32, a good look at Chapter B will pay dividends. Some terrain is impassable to Tanks, for example the single

Crag Hex at 32K2. The Sunken road prohibits tank movement across it, but not along it! Also important the ponds & Marsh hexes both impassable to tanks. Streams are shallow, of limited value in slowing tanks. As tanks exit their underbelly armour is exposed but for most Panzerfaust or Panzerschreck shots this is academic! Keep in view Tanks can drive through woods with a bit of effort. At this stage it is enough to understand the easiest routes for tanks onto and across the board.

I'm a bit fixated with the enemy armour. The Russian infantry force is decent. Two decent leaders, and ten & a half squads, all first line, mostly Riflemen with three SMG squads added for spice. ELR & SAN is equal to your own. Note Battle field integrity rules are optional, but if your opponent is agreeable worth playing as your Integrity base is higher than the Ruskis. Enemy support weapons are a mixed bag, three LMGs', a pair of 50mm Mortars and a couple of Demolition charges. Only the Leaders can use the DCs without penalty. Against troops in woods mortars are a very real threat, the best defence is line of sight, next up entrenchment or other solid cover, or your own suppressive fire. In total the Ruskis have twenty three EVPs of Infantry, if you can whittle down this force you make the enemy have to exit tanks. Enemy Armour is all lend lease. Five British Valentines, Two American Shermans. Against infantry targets the Shermans gun is good, the Valentines 57mm suffers from limited HE, & less bite attacking on the 6 IFT column compared to the 12IFT for the 75mm. Both Vehicle types are Vulnerable to your anti Armour assets. The 50L Anti Tank guns has a basic to kill of 13, or 17 with any APCR you roll. To kill numbers will not be high, but not so low as to argue for deliberate immobilisation attempts. At short range Anti Tank rockets will be devastating. I was surprised to notice the Valentines do not have any MG armament, this not only restricts their offensive ability, it makes them more Vulnerable to close combat attacks. The EVP for both types of armour is six points. At least four need to exit for a win, every tank you destroy makes the enemies options more limited.

Your own troops are pretty good. Aside from ten first line squads, and three Leaders you start with four Infantry crews. One crew is needed for the 50L gun, the others can crew the MMG & pair of Panzerschreck you start the game with. The 50L gun has already been mentioned, probably it is best against the sides of tanks, or in some case Infantry. The Panzerschrecks are beautiful weapons against tanks. Preferably you will be taking shots against

the sides or rear of big static targets at short range. Expect to miss some high odds shots, lose PSK due to exceeded X numbers and an occasional Dud. With ten Infantry squads in June 1944 you gain fifteen Panzerfausts with a range of two hexes each. In close terrain these are exceedingly valuable. In an emergency or after you have iced all the Armour you may be able to use a few PF against Infantry. Ideally you want shots at short range against static targets. In woods and close terrain close combat opportunities against armour arise. Remember to try for Anti Tank magnetic mines. Against a Valentine the chances of a kill or immobilisation are subject to -4 if your attack benefits from an ATMM (-3), and no MG armament (-1), even without ambush or Leadership a Nine or less does serious injury.

Don't forget your fortifications. Foxholes provide cover, as do trenches. Trenches also restrict tank movement and increase your movement options. Wire is helpful, deterring enemy entry and/or slowing movement. Placing some wire above a trench is viable but more often use in woods is more practical. Wire in road hexes will delay Infantry, with potential to disrupt the enemies movement and planning.

You can hide a squad equivalent, and the Gun. emplacing the gun in brush is clever, woods hexes are nearly as good, as ever the best spot is covering the enemies axis of movement. Hiding a squad or half squad manning the MMG with Mr 9-1 is a fair idea if he will appear late in the game, not so clever if he will open fire on turn one and remove any element of mystery! A better option may be to hide two crews manning PSK in ambush positions. Admittedly half squads who can roll for PF can do this job almost as effectively. Give the placement of hidden units some thought it is important.

Concealment counters have a range of uses. These range from sniper bait through to concealing your dispositions from the enemy. With nine concealment counters you can make three or four dummy stacks or improve the height of real stacks. The only real error you can make with Dummy units is to give them a substantial defensive roll. Deception is important, but don't confuse yourself by allocating the defence of a flank or key road to dummy units.

All the above needs to be considered at least briefly. At some stage you will need to organise your troops set up and formulate a basic defensive plan. If you are aggressive and determined you can set up very close to the anticipated Russian entry areas. If you are lucky you will ice several tanks then enter in to a favourable fire fight with the rifle & SMG troops. If the enemy enter Infantry first things become more difficult. The enemy

is strong enough to win a fire fight if you factor in the effects of vehicle armament and concentration against part of your forward line. A forward defence on or close to the 32F & 47B hexrows really can work, certainly worth considering if it suits your style of play. Remember you can still fall back or skulk. The Polar opposite meets the enemy with mostly dummy stacks with the bulk of your forces well West waiting for action later in the game. This defence also works well against cautious players', although is feeble against more aggressive types.

My own preference would be to organise the defence into small Islands. The 50L gun can be treated as a separate units, whilst the other crews can be organised as individual teams. The Infantry works best as three small platoon positions each with a Leader. A lazy way to do this is put one in the middle of the play area with one squad covering each road either side! Lazy but a fair game plan. Trenches can slow armour, with dirt road hexes prime sites provided they have some line of sight to enemy troops as they move across the boards.

After setting up, look closely at your dispositions. Bore sight, consider slight changes and don't start play until you are happy with your deployment.

As the Reds enter take any tempting shots. Place residual fire and work out how the enemy is attacking. He may be attacking across the entire board, down one or both flanks, leading with Armour or Infantry. Work out his plan of attack then close him down!

Expect some execution as your units become revealed by enemy probing or your own attacks. Give ground grudgingly when you have too. Rally broken units and push them back into the fight. Some enemy units will exit successfully, it is your job to limit this number!

The real killer in this game is time, seven and a half turns! Crafty Russians may engage you in a fire fight then parade West after destroying your forces. Trade space when you are subject to greater firepower, until you are right up against the board edge.

In some games you will fight and die where you start the game. In a few you may need to relocate to meet an attack down one flank. this is worthwhile if most of the enemy is onboard and attacking down a single line. You can or perhaps should bring troops down to the threatened area. Slow things down by Killing things, immobilising tanks, breaking troops, targeting Leaders, PF & PSK shots.

A lot can happen in this one. A creative attack will brush aside your blocking force, or your own defence might enjoy a run of success against armour or Infantry Leaders. If the enemy forces exit early and reach 22

EVP early on, concede, shake hands & congratulate your opponent. Conversely be a bit tactful if you ice so much of the enemies OB (particularly tanks) a win will rely on battle hardening or Leader creation.

### OB 3 Russian Set up

To win you must exit at least twenty two EVP off the West edge. Given each tank counts earns six EVP that is four tanks or three tanks and two squads. Without any enemy interference you could do this easily in two or three turns. It is certain the Germans will oppose any passage West. Thinking in terms of a casualty cap can be helpful. you start the game with 23EVP of Infantry, 42 EVP of Tanks, losses of up to 43 CVP are acceptable provided everything else exits.

Your plans are complicated by HSR 2 (Historical Special Rule), which screens German set up. Don't panic. Chances are the Germans will set up to cover the breadth of the playing area. Very rarely the Majority of his forces will be set up to cover a single exit. A good start is to read chapter B sections covering Woods, sunken roads, buildings, Marsh, streams and ponds. Being cheerful about things, you will appreciate streams are not impassable and even woods can be moved through with some effort. That said the easiest way West is along the roads entering at 32A5/A6, and/or 47 GG5/GG6 or straight down the middle along the Central board edges. The Germans will fight, either as you enter, throughout the game or later on as you prepare to exit, but you should begin by planning entry and roughly the direction you will take.

I think you have at least three options, moving down just one road, or along both roads, or even across open ground with your armour. The Infantry can enter independently, or support the Armour, Riders are an option so too is armoured assault. There is scope for keeping part of your forces back a bit, entering later to avoid congestion or to keep the enemy thinking. In all cases expect to be surprised by what you can see of the enemy.

On turn one most of your understanding of German dispositions will be speculative. You do know there is a 50L gun out there somewhere, a fair of PSK, and ten squads effortlessly lugging around fifteen Panzerfausts'. You also expect to find three Leaders and three crews. As the screens come down you will see several small piles of blue grey counters. The Gun and a squad equivalent will be hidden but the rest will be under concealment. Only nine "?" counters are included in the German OB this can confuse things a bit, but you should be able to guess where the MGs and Leaders might be, if you are good at it, guess the gun location

and even the probable spots for fortifications. Part of the game is getting this wrong! Make it easier by keeping rough notes when units are revealed. The 50L gun has limited access to APCR, offset by a high rate of fire and good chance of a first shot. Losing a tank to the gun is almost expected, try to make the first loss the last by using terrain to block or hamper line of sight, smoke, or swiftly neutralising the gun. The PSK & PF are a deadlier threat at short range. The PSK can just about hit you at 4 hex range, the PF struggles as range increases but can do the job at two hexes. In close terrain the engagement ranges will be short. Motion, smoke and hindrances help, try to take shots against your Valentines in preference to the Shermans. Wire is a nuisance. You can clear it by driving on to it, not so clever if you trampling is met by a hail of rockets! Trenches can also be crossed, with a slight risk of bog. I'd half expect to find a trench on each road slowing down movement and threatening box on entry. A slightly bizarre defence might feature a line of Trenches and wire along one road with a small covering force and a horde of units covering the other road. If you see this don't laugh until you have won.

Above all do not lose the initiative. Sure the Krauts can be crafty, but as the game progresses you will get a better idea of their plans and steadily drive forwards killing enemy units as you go.

In most games you could always do with a few more troops. Certainly more Infantry would be welcome particularly more Leaders. Ten and a half squads is not a bad little force, the three LMGs are most welcome and a pair of Demolition charges promise a couple of loud bangs. The Mortars might be useful. They boast a long range and high rate of fire. Sadly with a limited bite. On turn one you could get one or both Mortars onto the 47EE2 Hill and start aiming for interesting woods hexes or concealed units. If the Mortars are not favoured either ditch them early on or drop them when they become inconvenient. The three SMG squads are excellent tank riders, good in close combat, and strong at short range actions in woods.

The main weaknesses of the Russian infantry are range, and lack of inherent smoke making ability. The Armour goes some way to providing smoke. The Valentine has a Smoke discharger, the Sherman a Smoke Mortar and some Smoke Shells (S5). Like most players I keep forgetting to use these. A partial answer is to pick out a stack of Smoke Counters at the start of the game and aim to use them at every suitable opportunity. If you don't expect to be reminded when the first tank brews up.

Seven tanks is not a bad start. The

Shermans are sound, with good mobility, MG armament, a decent gun and reasonable armour. Their main weakness is the large target size increasing the risk of PSK & PF hits. The Valentines' are showing their age. A 57L gun is not ideal against Infantry, although a HE depletion number of 9 helps. It is not a bad idea to fire AP in the Advancing fire phase and save HE for the better shots. The lack of a MG of any sort is worrying. The Valentine is more Vulnerable to close combat and less able to attack or search for enemy units by IFT attacks. Don't dis the tanks too much without them this mission would be impossible. In firefights make full use of acquisition, it is worth rereading the rules on critical hits as tanks fire will benefit greatly from reversed TEM and double firepower. I'd steer clear over overruns unless there is a broken unit just begging for it. Going crew exposed at short range is one to worry about. The obvious gain is better to hit numbers, and for the Shermans a four factor AAMG. The obvious downside exposure to enemy fire. Very difficult choice, staying buttoned up makes shots +3 to hit concealed targets before you add TEM. being exposed to fire has an up side anything that shoots at you is revealed for some return fire.

The Infantry could do with another Leader to improve Rallying and movement but is still a considerable force. With tank gun support they can grind forwards and win fire fights. They can screen for hidden units, fight hand to hand, and count for EVP later on. Use riders if you see some benefit but dismount safely if the circumstances change for the worse. If given a choice beat the Jerries by firepower, save Close combat for pinned units or desperate situations. Chances are you will not need to use human wave.

Seven turns looks like a long scenario. For the tanks the distances to cover are not great, and if enemy opposition is overcome a dash off board viable. For the foot sloggers time is more pressing. Limited leadership slows movement, with ELR failures conscripts arrive with limited movement capability. If you dawdle the Infantry will not be able to exit. Try to keep forward momentum. At least move one hex in the advance phase. CX when it is safe to do so, although be careful if hidden units are still about for fear of ambush. That said avoiding stacking should be enough of a precaution.

Set up is easier once you have decided on a way across the board. If a single road appeals flank the armoured column with Infantry and drive through the enemy front line. A drive down two roads can work, if you gain the initiative and wear the enemy down. If the enemy start moving units across the board to meet your drives you are getting

closer to Victory, if you stumble from one ambush to the next you will need a lot more luck to win.

### OB 3 Conclusion

Given a choice I would prefer to play the Germans in this one. The Russians need to gain the initiative and hold it against a strong and well concealed German force. For the Soviets an attack down both flanks has some potential, a drive down just one might have better chances but a certain amount depends on enemy dispositions. Similarly the Germans must decide on a balanced defence or favouring one road over the other. If either side can dictate the course of the action they should win.

### OB3 After the action

Before Intensive fire I was pretty sure playing the Russians would be difficult for me. The game is balanced, this is more a comment on my skill level! Luckily enough played the Germans in a Friendly on Thursday Night with a Danish visitor.

The Ruskis were led by Bjarne Hansen. My set up covered both roads, with a tiny force of concealment counters and about a squad in the centre. The ATG was on the left flank with the weaker platoon. Trenches on both roads and wire directly in front was designed more to slow enemy movement than provide cover. The days first mistake was randomly siting a third wire counter near the middle of the board for reasons that now totally escape me! I'd also neglected to record the covered arc or bore sighted location of my 50L gun before Soviet set up, but Bjarne allowed me a free choice before his first entered play. I thought that was pretty sporting in competitive play!

Pretty soon Infantry probed the left flank and Centre. As the first tank entered the bore sighted location, tried for 50L APCR, a DR of 12 broke the gun first shot. We both laughed as the Valentine dodged the Gun and moved further onboard. For the first turn both sides were cautious. On turn two more Russian units arrived screened by Infantry already onboard. My central units played cat and mouse with the Russians, the Gun repaired and I think managed to brew up a Valentine. This was lucky as the gun could have been disabled by a repair roll or more likely just remained disabled. Another fluke, a long range PSK shot from a hidden team put paid to another Valentine.

Although inflicting casualties, Bjarne could probably have told me where all my units were at this stage. His attack began in earnest. Infantry covered by smoke drove me back more by the threat of close combat than firepower. One squad was faced with a

choice between breaking and risking close combat at two to one. Make the wrong choice but it paid off. A stalemated melee for several turns which should have been won by the Russian earlier with even moderate luck! As my troops tried to struggle to the threatened sector the attack ground forward. A half squad in the centre of the board earned a Tank Killer badge by charging into a building and killing a third Valentine with a back blast eating PF attack.

At this stage falling back three hexes would have helped. With three Valentines destroyed the idea of eliminating more tanks took hold. Bjarne obliged by bogging the last two Valentines on Wire in the same hex, so the Infantry were pushed forward to try for more PF shots. This was a reckless plan that did not deserve to work and did not! Fire combat broke one squad very quickly and the second not too long after. The broken units were soon surrounded and eliminated.

By the end of turns three or four, there was no real prospect of a Russian loss!, my best hope of Victory would be for tanks to become immobilised. This evaporated quickly as the bogged tanks not only freed themselves but removed the wire, all remaining tanks crossed the Trench and were poised to move off. With the tanks purposely buttoned up to avoid sniper attacks I could not win even if the balance had been in place! Very unusually I conceded.

I'd made several mistakes. Being too aggressive was key. Another error starting a larger force on the flank which was avoided. The third randomly placing wire in the middle of the board rather than supporting the defence of a road.

On the plus side, enjoyed playing a top flight opponent and would not otherwise have played the scenario. Nearly forgot was given a free choice of sides!



## SP91 Show a Little Guts

Amongst the attractions are boards 35 & 38 getting an airing, a pair of M3 GMS 75mm gun half tracks and a flame thrower and demolition charge for each side. As an

added incentive scenario analysis is included in the Schwerpunkt Volume 8, providing an excellent guide for playing either side, and a few insights into the tactics opponents may use.

Of the three scenario on offer for Sunday morning this one demands the most knowledge of PTO terrain. A good choice if you play PTO a lot, perhaps not the best if you are new to the theatre.

Reading parts of chapter G, the Chapter H notes for the M3s, & Mortars, and the Schwerpunkt scenario analysis are a good start. The scenario card situation description gives an excellent idea of what the fight is about and the Americans resolve.

## SP91 American Set up

At the game start you control all hut, foxholes & trenches within your set up area. Most of the rest is not controlled by either side with the sole exception of 35Y10 which the Japs control. A quick count confirms there are seventeen Victory locations in play, if the enemy control thirteen of these he wins immediately. The immediate Victory conditions are very important. At times they work in your favour when you are heavily outnumbered but the Japanese can't reach that last location, on other occasions you may have gradually attrited the enemy and could easily recapture any lost territory after an enemy immediate win. The bad news will happen less often if you are prepared to accept heavy casualties as long as they are keeping the Japs away from key locations.

One way to play is to decide which foxholes & trenches you will aim to hold throughout the entire game. Essentially this is a point defence or hedgehog, although "Alamo" or "Rorke's Drift" is pretty descriptive. We will look at set up later, enough for now to suggest the best "Alamo" is the string of trenches plus the two foxholes on the hill overlay. This may change subject to Japanese intentions or combat results.

Enemy forces are impressive. Twelve squads set up in the Western half of board 35. They consist of three Elite squads, plus seven 1st Line, commanded by three Leaders. They are well provided with support weapons, three LMGs, a 50mm Mortar, flame thrower and demolition charge. Aside from inherent smoke, and even White Phosphorous for the Elite squads, the Japanese can count on some smoke or WP from the Mortar. The demolition charge can be nasty. Japanese troops are happy to throw these, and even detonate them in their own hexes. For anti tank work, the enemy can generate up to five tank hunter heroes. These guys can conduct distracting and sometimes effective one man attacks on Armour. With a Dc in play they might even

be given the charge and directed towards a fortification, specifically a trench or foxhole. The Flame thrower will be used either by a MMC or Leader. Both are dangerous and take a deal of stopping. A KIA result will do it, morale checks can work against half squads but generally a full strength squad will get through moderate firepower. If you get lucky you can get a pin result which immediately stops the threat of a FT attack.

On turn 2 more enemy arrive from the extreme South East. A further four squads and another Leader, carrying two more LMGs and a 50mm Mortar. Try not to dwell on the fact you may now be outnumbered almost two to one in squads. Keep in view the Japanese are all stealthy, happy to Banzai, love close combat and are outstanding at hand to hand. Last bit of bad news enemy SAN is higher, expect 50% more sniper attacks than you deliver, not bad for an attacking force.

Co-ordinating Instruction 4 allows two 6 IFT mine fields in any hex not containing a hut, fox hole or trench. I guess ponds, marsh & swamp are also out! The mines could arrive anywhere. Acknowledge the threat to your Infantry but don't dwell on it, a couple of 6 IFT attacks is not in the same league as a hero delivered demolition charge or a flame thrower burst. As the M3s side hull armour is zero it is treated as an unarmoured vehicle & effected by a DR of six or less, which is worrying. If waiting for a Japanese attack give thought to searching for mines but don't make commit too much effort to this.

American troops are all Elite, nine squads with impressive range and fire power. Within six hexes range they are free to use spraying fire, generally trading concentrated firepower for effects over more hexes. In terms of raw fire power the Yanks really have an advantage and that is greatly magnified at close range, even before you factor in support weapons and the M3s'. The 60mm Mortar is a bit of a wild card. With a ROF of three it can expect a couple of shots per turn on average. Against troops in Bamboo, Palm Trees or Jungle it receives an airburst modifier of -1 making its 4 IFT attack nasty. Using spotted fire its area of Influence can be extended at the expense of chance of a hit and lower rate of fire. Perhaps more useful a pair of MMGs, probably at their best used for fire lanes, very effective against charging troops in open ground or low TEM terrain. American Leadership is fairly good a 9-2 & 8-1 Leader are good for directing the fire of MMGs' and not bad for rallying broken squads or themselves come to that! The 8-0 Leader does prevent cowering but doesn't add much else to a front line position. One possible use for him is as a one man assault engineer force, he can man

the DC & FT happily and be directed to trouble spots. Alternatively the DC can be given to any squad for a one off powerful attack. The Flame thrower is welcome, but confers a -1 DRM on attacks against its user. Avoid getting attached to it, make use of the first reasonable fire opportunity you get rather than waiting for a stack of three squads and a Leader.

The M3s are welcome additions to your forces. Short Barrelled 75\* Guns are expected to be firing at very short range. With a rate of fire of two second and even third shots can occur much to the irritation of the Japanese. A 75mm HE shell attacks on the 12IFT column, or 24IFT and reversed TEM for a critical. As acquisition ramps up, the expectation of critical hits should also rise. The M3s carry special ammunition WP & AP. White phosphorous is always welcome, with WP9 expect at least some. Aside from the morale effects of a hit & LOS hindrance, it also serves to slow movement, sometimes useful. The M3s have some problems. Being open topped they can be hit by small arms. Frontal shots are at +3 due to the vehicles armour and gun shield, even side shots are at +2. The M3s are vulnerable to massed fire power, direct LMG fire, Mortar rounds, Flame throwers, tank hunters, close combat, the mines and even snipers. Even so you are better off for having them. Aside from a reasonable gun, the half-tracks carry a 4 Factor Anti Aircraft MG. It is restricted to fire within its own hex or outside VCA, but useful in a tight corner. The M3s can just about overrun. A mechanical reliability roll is needed before any movement but after that you are free to move up to 13 MP and perform an overrun. The attack goes in on the 8 IFT column. This could be reckless early in the game against large enemy concentrations. Later on the tactic is valuable, even tempting if the situation is desperate. Late in the game abandoning the vehicle to reclaim a remote hut or fox hole will attract some scorn but the onus is on the Japanese to neutralise this threat rather than you limiting yourself to tactics he approves of! Most of the time a 75mm gun with a crew is more useful than a two turn jaunt to reclaim a hut. Worth remembering you can use armoured assault with the half tracks. They provide even as wrecks ideal for routing units or to avoid stacking too much in one spot.

“Show a little Guts” features a lot of Pacific theatre terrain. Light Jungle is not much different from woods, other than being a level two obstacle. Air burst is worth remembering, accepting the limited number of Mortars in play.

Kunai is not massively different from grain but harder to move through, and with restrictions on fire groups. Palm trees are

just permanently in season Orchards that can suffer air bursts. Both swamp and Marsh are in play, both can be moved through. Swamp is more hostile limiting fire groups and blocking line of sight. There are several patches of Bamboo. Again these restrict fire groups, block line of sight and are very hard to traverse without a path. A total of five ponds are in play one or possibly two hinder Japanese movement.

The only other bit of PTO terrain in play are the Huts. Chapter G covers them well, with nearly an entire page of text. This is worth reading, but most of the fighting will take place away from the huts.

A good look at the ASLRB gives you all you need to know about terrain. To win the scenario it helps to have an understanding of the map. It can help to look at the Japanese starting positions and think how on board forces will move North and East across the map. I'll try to keep this brief !

For example troops starting near 35X8 will have to pass through the clump of bamboo around AA8, the easiest way is using the Path in AA7. You can oppose this traffic by a fire lane terminating in AA7. The first shot is likely to be subject to a lot of hindrances but subsequent attacks on troops moving along or into the fire lane will be unmodified by hindrances and potentially damaging. Plan B for the Japs is to go South of the Bamboo. This route becomes congested at BB9 & CC9.

Briefly troops starting near 35T6 must pass through V5 or W6 to avoid Pond or Bamboo. Enemy units from near 35T2 have generally better choice, but need to get across a strip of open ground running from Y1 to Y3.

That covers options on turn one, After that the onboard forces have easier routes towards you. A patch of open ground around 38FF4 is worth noting, not the best approach to the hill and trenches.

On turn two the Japanese flanking force arrives. It can enter on the W1 Swamp or further East. Options are complicated by Swamp and Bamboo slowing things down. In many cases Japanese movement will be through rows U/V, into Kunai and straight at you.

A mild breeze from the South is a nuisance, spreading any smoke on board and generally blowing it into the American positions. A wind change would be nice, I'd settle for no wind or even a change in direction.

Game duration is helpful. A turn shorter and the Japanese would really struggle, any longer and your chances of a win would be slimmer. Even without any opposition the Japanese would need at least three turns to rack up a win. If you can

impose three turns delay you will win.

Set up is tricky. The two fox holes on the Hill and the line of three trenches should be defended by at least part of your forces. How much you commit to this area is a judgement call. You also need to decide how much or how little to allocate to the defence of outlying areas. Mike Faulkner provides excellent advice in his analysis in Schwerpunkt Volume 8. Perhaps as much as four squads, an 8-1 Leader and MMG could be allocated to the defence of the board 35 foxholes. Much of the rest goes into the trenches with the choice of using the mortar to oppose the arriving Japanese reinforcements or fight the onboard units. The suggested starting positions for the M3s are 38EE6, 38DD3, & possibly 35EE2. Further forward is a tad risky. If the Japanese player has read the Schwerpunkt analysis some of these hexes may contain Anti personnel mines. That is tricky if you move or bail out, but not catastrophic.

As with all set up, there is scope for personal variants. Maybe the outlying areas are doomed and best manned by a smaller force. You could place greater emphasis on MMG fire and start them both in the Trenches ready to create fire lanes. There is scope for personal choice in this.

Bad ideas are likely to include setting up closer to the Japanese without the benefit of fox holes or Trenches with the aim of wiping them off the map then recoiling to wipe off the reinforcements. An ambitious plan that deserves to fail! Another weak starter setting up out of line of sight then moving forward with concealment. Might work but again it should not!

After the Japanese opening moves you need to reposition your forces ahead of the advancing troops. Start falling back with troops that are outfaced in a fire fight. Voluntary break if this become obviously necessary in the rout phase. Bring the HMG, half squad & Leader on quickly, heading for the Hill. The obvious rout may be mined, pick a less direct path but don't be too surprised or too distressed to walk onto a mine field.

Once play starts the fight will change from a delaying action to a close quarters blood bath. There are sub plots. The Japanese must decide between going for outlying huts and fighting the big fight. You must focus on the mission. Killing enemy units is fun, but if the last remaining unit takes a thirteenth fox hole, trench or hut you lose the game regardless of casualties.

A few loose ends. Try for WP particularly when advancing, there is a one in six chance of a critical hit and if that leads to a step reduced squad or broken Leader some time in the game then it was worth the

effort. Use captured weapons, very true for the FT & Demolition charge less so for LMGs. Keep the idea of an overrun in view. On turn four it might just tie up an enemy unit and stop movement in turn five. Use the M3s MGs as often as you can. Generally you will be crew exposed so there is no good argument for not trying this at fair targets.

Do not be too scared of Melee, with a fire power advantage you will generally win. A stalemate helps more than it hinders. The only scary thing is Hand to hand at which the Japanese excel.

If you can impose a delay on the Japs you should win. In the opening turns each Yellow unit prep firing or assault moving helps you a little. If you pin or break units this slows them or even pushes them back a turn. Do this a few times and enemy units are lost to the Battle without being killed.

There are other ways to win, mowing down Banzai charges or winning close combats you shouldn't will do it. If your morale is flagging read the quote from Lt Klein in the situation on the scenario card again and make that extra effort.

### SP91 Japanese set up

Victory is yours the instant you gain control of 13 hut or order of battle fox holes or trenches'. At the game start you control a single hut 35 Y10, even if you do not choose to occupy it. Twelve more locations and you have cracked it! The Americans have two possible strategies, hold grimly on to five or more of the seventeen victory locations on the map or eliminate most of your forces before you gain control of sufficient locations.

The destruction of your entire force is difficult, and probably not possible in an even game. It makes more sense for the Yanks to aim to control an "Alamo" of five or more locations'. The most likely site will be the two foxholes on the overlay Hill and the chain of three trenches. Knowing this is a start, but you will still have to work hard for a win.

You will get some insight into American plans when you look at his set up. Before play starts you will have a rough idea of the strength and location of his Infantry, and certainly where the M3 Half tracks are located. Remember you need to spot the mine fields you receive before his set up. In most games a fair proportion of the enemy will be close to the Trenches, with small groups forward to slow down your defence. Occasionally you can see something different. You might see a large concentration in the trenches with next to nothing elsewhere. This gives you an easier time getting to the "Alamo" and a stiffer fight when you get there. You might even see the Bulk of the Americans far forward on board

35 spoiling for a fight. Expect a faster game with a scary opening turn. Faced with a forward defence you could go for a fire fight whilst gaining ground with the reinforcing units.

Whatever defence you face you need an appreciation of the composition and capabilities of the Yanks. The bulk of the defenders are Infantry, nine Elite squads, with respectable range and fire power. They are led by three Leaders the best being a 9-2. With two MMGs Company K can form a "Death Star" of two squads and two MMGs directed by a 9-2 Leader able to deliver 20 IFT attacks up to six hexes, and 12 IFT attacks out to twelve. The stack would deserve to be hit by a sniper or smoke if possible, maybe a flame thrower or DC later in the game. Aside from the two MMGs, the company receive a 60mm Mortar, flame thrower and demolition charge. The flame thrower is about the only weapon capable of stopping a Berserk or Banzai charging unit with a single shot. A spare 8-0 US Leader might use it. Demolition charges are tricky to use in defence, try not to be concentrated in the impact hex and hope for a high roll if you are attacked.

Enemy squads can roll for smoke with a 50% chance of success, or 33.3% for WP. Both are damaging they slow weaken defensive fire and in the case of WP demand a morale check. Some help comes from the prevailing wind which blows in your favour at the game start. On turn one a half squad and HMG, helped by a 7-0 Leader arrive on the North edge of board 38, East of row EE. By turn two they can be assembled and in position directing 6 IFT attacks out to twelve hexes with a rate of fire of three. That is a lot of firepower. At the very least equivalent to an entire squad, with rate most likely as damaging as two squads, and even more if the Yanks have a run of hot dice. These units may head for the Hill, possibly towards the "Alamo" or come straight on the North edge to interdict your reinforcements or flanking force.

American Infantry do suffer a bit from low Morale. Elite squads with a morale of 7 are not as tough as those with an eight morale. Broken Elite squads morale is higher, at eight, making rallying quicker and easier. If the Americans ELR replace, their broken morale is still eight, and when rallied fire power and range still both six. A second ELR replacement reduces morale, fire power and range, it can happen but not too often in a game of five and a half turns.

A pair of M3 GMC half-tracks might look rather feeble. The vehicles are subject to mechanical reliability, are scantily armoured and open topped. In their favour are 75mm Guns with ROF 2, white

phosphorous Ammunition (WP9!), a 4 factor AAMG, small target status and great potential mobility. We will look at their Vulnerability later. At this stage you need to appreciate their lethality. The AAMG has fire power equal to your squads. The 75\* gun has rate, attacks on the 12 IFT column and with critical hits does the 24 IFT column with any applicable TEM reversed. Despite being open topped and subject to mechanical reliability the M3s can conduct over runs and drive deep into territory nominally under your control. There is a very real risk of destruction associated with this adventure but you must guard against an aggressive opponent who makes use of his M3s mobility.

Your own forces start with a reasonable numerical advantage and build up to sixteen squads facing nine and a half plus a pair of half tracks. There are complications. The Half tracks are hard hitting units, as are the American Infantry. In a fire fight enemy fire power could be telling or you might just win by a whisker.

In most games the Americans will opt to defend fox holes and trenches allowing you to concentrate against smaller parts of his forces in turn. In such circumstances your fire power may actually be superior to the enemies. If this proves effective you will be rounding up enemy squads or half squads. If fire power doesn't do the Job other qualities of your troops can be used. In close combat you have the big advantage of a -1 modifier in close combat. If one of your 4-4-7 or 4-4-8 squads enters into an enemy hex it can declare hand to hand and fight an even fight. Against pinned enemy units the fight moves from even to substantially in your favour. There are times to use this advantage, but not all the time. If you have to gain ground quickly a close combat attack is sound. If the enemy unit is isolated and due to be shot to bits maybe its not the best use of your resources.

To get the Japanese close up you need to make use of inherent smoke, smoke & WP from the 50mm Mortars, Banzai charges and the resilience of full strength squads to enemy fire. The Mortars are useful sources of SMOKE, tending to use this munition first. Without any special ammunition the Mortar can be effective against targets using HE, particularly troops in Jungle, or Palm Trees as air burst applies to both. The mortars can be used against the M3s, HE can do the job, WP is almost as good with potential to hurt the crew.

Both a Flame-thrower and demolition charge are included in your support Weapons. With three Elite squads and three Leaders you have a deal of choice as to how these are crewed. Barring horrendous fire power or

low die rolls a full strength elite Squad should be able to deliver the DC to a chosen spot. The flame thrower is a bit more difficult as it confers a -1 DRM attacks on its operator, again it should get through. Pin results hurt, as you were either close to a passed morale check or might have been able to accept casualty or step reduction, tough covers it! A Banzai charge with a DC is described in the Schwerpunkt write up, and is a fair idea. At the very least expect to cause some concern in American ranks. If the attack works it will create a gap, if it doesn't some enemy fire power will have been expended.

Another DC delivery system is one of the six tank hunter heroes you are allowed to try for. If aiming for an M3 a basic tank hunter attack must be a distraction, eat up fire attacks and might result in a damaged or destroyed vehicle. With reasonable luck you may find an ATMM greatly increasing the chance of a kill. If the first one doesn't do the job, there are another five. Adding the DC to an attack on an AFV is perhaps unnecessary. The hero can be moved to attack a fox hole and trench if given the DC which can be truly devastating.

Aside from Mortar fire and the odd heroic attack, you can hit the vehicles in close combat if there really is a need. You start the game with three LMGs, another two arrive on turn two. Firing at a small target from effective range will need something like a DR9 for a hit, four through six or seven for some kind of effect. I fancy those odds. If not firing at tanks the LMGs will be useful against infantry, you might even use a fire lane to catch moving troops.

Co-ordinating Instruction 4 allows you two secretly recorded 6 IFT mine fields outside of huts, fox holes & trenches. Avoid daft places, like the remote corners of the board, or hexes you will pass through. Seek instead hexes that may be entered by routing units or the turn one reinforcements. Fair examples are the Jungles behind the trenches and the immediate approaches to the Hillock. Any spot is a good spot if the enemy trapse through it setting off mines. Once they are detected, enjoy any damage they do, a 6 IFT attack has limited power unless you roll low.

An awful lot of PTO terrain is in play, as well as other features that appear in ETO scenarios. Ponds serve to channel movement, Swamp, Marsh and Bamboo to slow it. The predominant terrain's are palm trees and Kunai. Palm Trees are similar to in season Orchard, with airbust hazard. Kunai is similar to brush, though it has fire group limitations. The best news, you can run through Palm & Kunai quickly, receiving TEM hindrance for most fire attacks incoming or out going. Fire lanes are a pain, the first attack can be very tame, the real threat is a fire lane unaffected

by hindrances. Initially the Americans have two MMG that can be used for this. The 60mm Mortar disregards hindrances when resolving effect, factoring them in when rolling to hit. With ROF 3, it might seem harmless right up to the time it has a run of shots and catches you in air burst terrain. Unless you need the Leadership benefits or to concentrate forces for a particular reason avoid stacking in fire lanes or hexes acquired by the Mortar.

Planning your set up should take into account known enemy dispositions. It can help to organise your troops into three platoons one for each set up area. typically a platoon will contain a Leader, three squads and a few of the support weapons. Being glib, the best squads, best leader and biggest share of the support weapons go to the Area expecting the toughest fight. This is probably 35T2, or 35X8. Starting in stacks is acceptable, moving in stack less so but not always a crazy idea. Finding a spot for the Mortar is complex. If you plan to try for smoke on turn one, obviously it needs to set up assembled and manned. If the smoke fits better into your end game dismantling the mortar makes it much easier to carry. This is a judgement call, and not a major one. Being Japanese you can hide 10% FRU of your troops. That is two squad Equivalents and accompanying Leaders & support weapons. This is worth exploiting. Firstly it confuses the enemy as to your set up. It allows an assault moving unit to remain concealed, and protects Leaders from early SAN attacks until revealed. A psychological benefit is the impact this has on your opponent. some player will simply shrug, other will be more impressed. undeniably the tactic has style, don't go overboard, you will not win just for remembering to hide a few units'!

When setting up consider where you need to move and how you will get there. The Squads in 35X8 will either use the Path through the AA7 Bamboo or step further South through the Palm trees at BB9 heading for 35FF3/GG4, then towards the Hillock & Trenches. They will consider a move towards the lone fox hole in 38DD4, or the huts in 38BB1, BB2 & AA3 if there is a need for a probe there or you are suddenly free to head there due to enemy losses or attention being elsewhere.

The troops around 35T2, can take an almost direct line to the trench lines, Blitzing the 35AA3 & 35CC4 Fox holes and picking up a couple of huts on the way to the Trenches. No quarter is in effect for both sides so abandon the idea of prisoners. Every move under enemy fire carries a risk of casualties. As long as you are maintaining a good rate of exchange you are winning. As you outnumber the enemy sixteen squads to

nine and a half, maybe twelve if you make an allowance for the Vehicles you can afford to lose slightly more squads than the enemy and still have numerical superiority. If your attack is gaining ground rapidly and you are on an even casualty exchange you are winning.

Starting some units near 35T8 avoids larger stacks elsewhere. It also allows a drive towards 35AA3 from another direction drawing enemy fire and complicating the defence of AA3.

On turn two already the noose should be tightening around the Americans. A pair of squads may have been eliminated on both sides an M3 hit by LMG or Mortar fire and your tally of victory hexes rising.

Reinforcements or a flanking force arrive on the South edge of board 38 on or East of the Swamp in W1. Entering a single unit, say a squad or half squad through the Marsh, heading for the Huts clustered around 38AA3 has merit. The rest can use bypass and CX to get as far on to the map as practical. If there is a risk of interdiction avoid presenting massed targets. Do not dawdle but don't be reckless either.

In subsequent turns you should feel you are slowly crushing the enemy, encircling some units, pushing others slowly back. If this steady pressure is working and time allows stick with it. If the clock running too fast a few Banzai charges or assault moves forward can help.

Some casualties are inevitable. You need some troops to claim Victory hexes but don't feel a special need to keep casualties down this is a one off scenario not part of a series of battles.

Worth the effort is keeping a record of hexes you control. If this is done during play with the agreement of your opponent you will avoid a few surprises. Certainly you would not want to claim Victory when you haven't earned it, but a dispute as to control of a disputed hex is unpleasant and avoidable. I do not think this is gamesman ship, certainly it is not intended to be!

With a fast paced attack that concentrates against parts of the American defences and defeats each segment in detail you can expect to win. You can pull off some fancy stuff on the way, HIP set up, Banzai Charges, Tank Hunter Heroes and some creative flame thrower or Demolition Charge attacks that will either lead to Victory or something to talk about after wards. fighting to the bitter end is worth the extra effort. With Japanese troops in particular close combat and melee can be very dicey.

If the worst happens and you lose with almost your entire OB wiped out, console yourself with the knowledge you have tried hard for a win. Losing with many units still

in play, a demolition charge and remaining Tank Hunter heroes is harder to understand.

## SP91 Conclusion

This scenario can live up to its Title. For the Japanese the first two turns are the most challenging crossing terrain under American fire. In these opening stages of the game Japanese casualties will be greater than the defenders. As the Attackers reach the main American positions the character of the game changes, with the Japs getting a more even fight.

Whilst Melee can last for several turns Hand to Hand combat tends to be faster and more deadly. The -1 modifier for the Japanese gives them a hand, the fire power of US units makes it a fairly even fight.

Some games will be very close. Neither side should concede the game too early. If the DC & FT remain in play both sides can make some truly awesome attacks that can improve winning chances.

With no casualty cap a blood bath is expected. Probably not the easiest scenario on offer for the Japanese but a good choice if you are fond of short range fights in exotic terrain.

SP91 Show a little guts.

Quite liked the look of this one as the Americans but the Japs need careful handling. At Berserk lost a game of "Burn Gurkha Burn" quite badly to Toby Pilling fighting on past the point of good sense with a lone squad and Leader surrounded by well led but unlucky Japanese troops. In a daze picked up Toby's board 37 and packed it away with my stuff! The board has been returned to its original owner.

On Saturday Night Toby offered a Friendly game of "Show a Little Guts" and a chance for revenge. I'd planned an early night but jumped at the chance of a game playing the Japanese. I picked up a few tips waiting in the bar and did manage to spring a few surprises barring unusual luck Victory was remote.

US set up was directed the half tracks towards the Eastern flank, with a strong defence of the Trench. My plan, or rather the plan I'd been gifted, was to set up around 35T2 to move forward on turn one.

This is a good scenario to play the first couple of turns as the Japs then disappear as things go their way for a bit. The Japs moved on with few incidents in their player turn. On American turn one a Half track moved finding the mines shortly before blowing up. The crew died and my confidence grew.

On turn two gacked a WP roll but placed smoke on top of the Westernmost trench. BANZAI. Launched a spectacular attack against the Trench line. With smoke

covering the hex outgoing fire was hindered but still destructive. Lost four squads but encircled the 9-2 and a killer stack before dropping a DC on it and a quick spurt of flame. Part way through the attack the Japanese sniper made an appearance and things looked good for the Land of the rising Sun. The 9-2 Leader survived with other troops and the Japs went into close combat. There was a remote chance of the 9-2 breaking but both the flame thrower and FT attacks were reasonable rather than good. A nice touch a wounded Leader leading the charge could not reach the target hex so ended up outside gesticulating wildly and promising follow up action right up to his demise short afterwards.

At this point Japanese losses had really been too heavy for Toby to lose. The main worry was the flame thrower. Its original squad was killed but another stepped forward to man it. A single attack can clear a hex. The Americans countered by driving the M3 at the FT, and drawing its fire. A nice idea but costly as the M3 was traded for a shot against the 9-2 and his squads. Toby planned to bypass which would have frozen the FT & prevented fire outside the hex, crafty move and it paid off.

With heavy losses in a failed attack we were really playing for Fun. Part way through the game it was noticed I'd selected an extra DC, maybe two were stuck together! I compensated by being useless with the turn two reinforcements. Highlights include a series of inane mortar shots & a SMC BANZAI. The arriving Mortar started firing WP first roll snakes targeted at the HMG, Squad & 8-1 Leader. Slight problem though a palm tree in the way blocking LOS. Trashed a coconut then aimed Smoke at another foxhole, hit with rate. Asked why we were using dispersed smoke counters before being told it was the Japanese defensive fire phase.

By turn five had one trench hex and needed more victory hexes further East. All were covered by a lot of fire power, including a captured Jap LMG. As Japanese casualties are of no consequence BANZAI 9-0, who got close before a HMG shot at -3 put an end to it, whilst retaining rate. After a few more desperate charges I reached the same conclusion as Toby had three or four turns early and conceded.

After the game expressed the view this was a bit dicey, there is a bit of truth in that but ASL scenarios always contain an element of chance. That said would happily take the Japs against a better player simply because their attack is such fun to execute.

Saw this one played by other players and think the general view was this was plenty of fun to play.

## And Finally

Despite losing a lot of games I greatly enjoyed INTENSIVE FIRE, the event was well organised and well supported. I'm hopeful of getting down for the tenth anniversary in 2004.

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# HEROES 2004



## ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT

26<sup>TH</sup> - 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH (FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY) 2004

HOTEL SKYE, SOUTH PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, ENGLAND

### THE EVENT

2004 sees the organisers of BERSERK! take a well earned break so HEROES moves from its normal slot at Birmingham's ManorCon gaming convention to fill the gap for ASL action in the first half of the year. Like BERSERK! the action starts on Thursday and continues through to Sunday so you can play in an ASL tournament and/or play friendly games (or even try your hand at a campaign game if you can find an opponent). The focus of the weekend will be the main tournament, in which players of like record are paired off to allow us to determine the winners - depending on numbers attending there will be four or five rounds. The first round will start on Friday afternoon and each round sees players choose from three carefully selected scenarios. Main tournament entrants are to be familiar with the rules through to the first half of Chapter G.

### BOOT CAMP

Don't worry if you are a new player (someone who has only ever played five or fewer games against a live opponent), as a special tournament featuring scenarios with easy to handle units and manageable forces will be available on Friday. You can learn the game with an experienced player nearby to offer advice on rules. There will never be a better time to try your hand at ASL!

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

### THE VENUE

The Hotel Skye is familiar to those who have attended BERSERK! in the past and offers plenty of gaming room for the whole weekend, Meals and good beer are also available in the hotel, and numerous alternative food outlets are close by. The hotel is easily accessible from the M55 and the train station is a 5 minute walk away. Bed and breakfast is just £22.00 per person for a shared room or £28.00 for a single room.

### THE COST

The weekend, whether you enter a tournament or just play games with the people you will meet, is fantastic value at only £7.00!

## HEROES 2004 BOOKING FORM

Please enclose a cheque for £7.00 for registration payable to PETE PHILLIPPS and a cheque for £10.00 for the hotel deposit payable to HOTEL SKYE and return with this form (photocopies acceptable) to Pete Phillipps, Heroes 2004, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, LE4 7PY.

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# The Scenarios of Intensive Fire 2003

## Part 2 – Some of the Ones I Didn't Play

Michael Davies



### OB9 ORIOLA FORCE

'Oriola Force' is a nicely designed village defence scenario. There is a fine balance between the quality and number of the attackers with the Elite but very small village garrison. Air support is present but arrives on turn 5 and isn't around for very long. For the Russians Elite Infantry, T34/85s, an Infantry Gun and an M17 anti aircraft half track add to the appeal.

The M17 is one of about a thousand vehicles sent to Russia from America, an export version of the M16 half track. The armament is a quad .50 browning mounting, squeezed into an M3 Half-track. The rate of fire given by different sources varies but is around 2,200-2,300 rpm. Effective against aircraft, these weapons were also used against ground targets. The most astonishing footage I've ever seen of one of the quad mountings was in the film *Waterworld*. The noise of firing was incredible, with considerable amounts of huge cartridge cases generated by any protracted firing. I've heard of a group of machine gun enthusiasts in the USA who own and occasionally fire one of these! Counters are provided in the *Onslaught to Orsa* pack, but an M16 from *Yanks* could easily be substituted and reminds us of the gun's origins.

### OB 9 Russian Set Up

The tactical objective requires you retain control of thirteen or more VPs of buildings. Each single hex building is worth a point, with multi hex buildings earning two points. At the game start you control all buildings on board 22. For the Germans to control a building they must satisfy rules 26.11 for gaining control and 26.14 for buildings in particular. For unoccupied single hex buildings this means occupation during the Movement Phase. For multi-hex buildings, things

are trickier. Dummy units cannot contest control but Good Order Infantry can. With hidden units around this scenario gets interesting. Make sure you understand building control before play starts, it is more important in a close game like this than one in which you are likely to hold on to a lot more real estate than you need to.

Initial enemy forces are equipped with some serious firepower, four LMGs, two MMGs and an HMG. That is 29 factors out to eight hex range. with four leaders, two of them with a -1 modifier this is serious cause for concern. Fourteen German Infantry squads are available, ten second line and four first line troops. This adds another 56 factors of raw firepower plus potential for twenty one short range Panzerfaust shots at troops in buildings. There are even a pair of Panzerschreck crewed by 1-2-7 crews threatening armour later in the game or 12 IFT attacks against buildings earlier on. I've laboured the point but the Germans greatest strength is firepower.

After that the next German advantage is simply numbers. There are a lot of troops attacking outnumbering you almost two to one. Other features of the attacker to consider are inherent anti tank mines, and the inherent smoke potential of German units. OK the last one only applies to the four first line squads and you should not expect to see masses of smoke from a smoke placement exponent of 1. Later on a pair of Stukas arrive but that is nearly it for the initial forces.

The set up instructions give a Battle field Integrity base for the German forces. This rule is optional and I'm not sure you can insist on it being played. Certainly it is in your interests for it to be applied as it can lead to the reduction of German ELR. Low ELR really helps, it leads to the gradual degradation of enemy forces and even in a short game helps. For example a second line squad becoming a Conscript is hard to rally, slower moving, has a higher risk of self injury using a Panzerfaust, is more likely to break support weapons, struggles to ambush or hold its own in close combat, and cowers on a doubles for IFT attacks. If you let this rule slip your game becomes a whisker harder. Admittedly the application of the rule slows the game down just a bit, but the German will have to do most of the work!

Your own troops have a couple of weaknesses. They are a bit short of support

weapons, possessing only three machine guns. The lack of firepower is a slight problem, but short range is more of an issue. Leadership is a bit limited. A 9-1 leader is a good start, and the 7-0 leader good enough, but another leader would be very welcome. This is a bigger problem if the defence is spread across a wide front. Losing a leader on one flank makes rallying your troops difficult. Your most serious weakness is almost certainly numbers. Only eight squads to contest control of half a board on it's widest axis!

Rather better news, your eight squads are Elite 4-5-8s who out-range the enemy second line squads. Higher morale gives greater resistance to fire combat, increases chances of rallying and gives greater capacity to absorb ELR reduction.

You start play with a 76\* Infantry gun, small enough to begin play in a building or free to set up in woods, open ground or an Orchard hex. A small emplaced gun can resist a lot of enemy interest. As it can begin play using HIP part of its function is to create uncertainty in the enemy ranks. On turn one at least German troops should be looking out for the gun. Once you open fire some of that dread is removed. A 76\* gun can just about ice a wooden building causing rubble on a KIA roll followed by a 1. Rubble buries troops and can fall into adjacent hexes. Nice when it happens but not something to build your game around. More realistic are your chances of a critical hit. A basic to hit of eight gives a critical on a DR of two or three against wooden buildings. With acquisition this rises. Check this for every low roll. The gun has ROF of 2, be optimistic of several shots some turns. Don't forget Intensive Fire, there are no prizes for having a gun captured, or still being intact at the game end.

Aside from the HIP allowed for the gun, you start the game with ten concealment counters and freedom to hide another squad plus its accompanying leader or support weapons.

Concealment is always welcome. A pair of these makes good sniper bait. They can also be used to confuse the enemies understanding of you dispositions. Here you have a lot of choices. Making real stacks bigger, adding an adjacent stack to a real unit, small dummy positions in a single building or a three or four stack ghost army in a single building or chain of buildings. A long shot

would be to line the woods on the southern edge of board 22 with dummy stacks. Useful if it delays German moves, pointless if he charges through them.

The freedom to HIP a squad creates opportunities. Although there are a lot of choices I think these boil down to setting up an ambush to catch advancing enemy troops, hiding to emerge late in the game, protecting a key unit from fire or a combination of these themes.

Protecting a key unit isn't always smart. In 'Oriola Force' the Germans have a lot of firepower and much of it can be directed at you on turn one. If you want to stack the 9-1 leader with a squad and MMG it will be noticeable as a large stack. You can create two or three other big stacks but this still leaves a 25% or 33% chance of guessing your position and removes some of the mystery from your defence. Hiding the stack is an idea. Plan B starts the 9-1 leader in a different Location and forms the MG team later. Think it through and follow your strongest hunch.

Hide and seek chooses an overlooked or remote building or even another hex of concealment terrain then appears on turn six to reclaim as much property as possible. Ambush may be similar in so far as if the ambush site is bypassed or ignored you can appear later in the game. Ambush spots can include upper levels of buildings, and spots at the back of buildings. It is nice to inflict search casualties on enemy units, it's a free kill and very annoying. Just as good is appearing behind the front line part way through the game to encircle units using fire or cause elimination due to failure to route.

A snag with hidden units is just that. They cannot be seen but equally cannot contribute to fire combat. Something to think about before you hide an eighth of your squads early in the game.

Board 22 buildings are the stars of this scenario. They are spread across the board, and not really grouped for easy defence. Buildings on the northern edge in EE10, CC10, BB8 and W9 are not under immediate threat. Even the wildest German charge is unable to reach them on turn one.

Closer to the woods and ripe for attack on turn one is a small cluster of buildings in AA2, Z1 and Z2, the stone building in X2, and on the eastern flank V2, U4, S3, R2, and nearby S4 and R4. You can't garrison all of these buildings. Even if you know the Jerries will charge recklessly on turn one you haven't enough bodies to do it.

Give thought to either abandoning these forward positions immediately, manning them with dummy units or defending just one or two Locations then withdrawing. The most promising forward position is V2

and U4, the others are pretty grim with X2 being a death trap.

Further back, the western flank can be approached through woods and is hard to defend. Three squads, a leader and a LMG will slow things down and punish a reckless attack. In the east, a second level building in X7 cries out for a MMG position. With a gun nearby and more infantry in front you can reasonably expect to hold on to this building until your reinforcements arrive on turn four. If you end the game with control of every building with a hex co-ordinate of 5 or greater you hold 16 VPs, three more than needed. Plan B might be to hold everything east of row Y, with a smaller force in the west.

Try to catch Germans moving in the open. Don't feel you have to hide. If you kill a few squads early on, the German attack will slow more than the caution concealment gives.

Something I'd not attempt myself would be a defence of the board 22 treeline and the Z1, AA1 buildings. Scary to pull off, and weak against a massed attack that just seeks to ice units rather than gain territory.

I'd accept the criticism the set up descriptions above are vague, and not massively helpful. The main problem is you don't start with much and have to cover a fair bit of board with that small force. Given there is scope for organising a counter attack a set up biased to one flank would work, holding out till the armour arrives then actually going on the offensive. As always, my advice would be to develop and explore any ideas you have about set up where they differ from my own.

On turn four the eagerly awaited reinforcements arrive. Three squads, a 7-0 leader, the amazing M17, and four T34/85s. Avoid dawdling. The Half-track is crew exposed so run it along a road and start scaring the Germans with a 12IFT attack that turn and subsequent 24 IFT attacks with 2 ROF. Using riders fetches troops across board 11 quickly. I'd like to bring most down the road to X7 then drive an attack into the weakest German units. With 85L guns, MG armament and your remaining infantry some territory must be up for dispute.

The Germans will still have some of the 21 Panzerfaust shots they start the game with and one or two of the Panzerschrecks. Potent anti armour threats. If you are crew exposed long range MG fire or small arms up front is threatening. Balance the improved movement and combat capabilities against this.

On turn five a pair of Stukas arrive. They are around for two turns and can attack twice with MG armament. Shooting one down would be nice, offset against giving

the M17 an active role against ground targets. Once the bombs have fallen you may be looking at burning tanks or rubbled buildings or on rare occasions considerably less damage. A couple of mistaken air attacks would be appreciated, might even prompt a German capitulation.

To defend against air attack, try not to have too much in the same place. Try to be hidden or at least concealed. Finally cross your fingers and hope for failed spotting, poor accuracy or poor effect.

In the closing stages of the game count the number of buildings controlled. If you are winning, consolidate your position and accept a win if your opponent realises his position is hopeless. If you need to gain buildings, determine exactly what you need and plan how to gain them. With no casualty cap you can do silly things. Intensive fire, overrunning buildings with tanks, human wave, remembering you move last.

In my opinion organising your defence is more difficult than the Germans attack. If you can confuse your opponent as to your dispositions, inflict some casualties and delays you will keep the number of buildings lost to a minimum. It is likely some buildings will be lost, keep in view you do not need all for a win. The turn four reinforcements will be eagerly awaited. Use them aggressively outside the closest range of anti tank weapons. Dread the Stukas, disperse to avoid their attacks.

This is a blinding scenario which will test your defensive skills to the limit.

## OB9 German Set Up and Attack

The tactical objective is very simple, capture sixteen or more victory points of buildings and hold on to them till the game end. It helps to have a plan of which buildings you would like to capture, along with a rough idea of how you will maintain control till the end. You could go for all the buildings south of the GG6 to R7 road, or a everything on the eastern or western flank plus some other buildings. Make an initial decision then adjust this to cater for the enemy resistance you encounter.

You are ripping through eight Elite squads, a pair of LMGs, a MMG, couple of leaders and a 76\* Gun. To do this at speed requires some casualties. Using HG Wells' (author of *Little Wars* and lots of sci-fi stuff) casualty calculator you can estimate your losses. The attacking force is 15 squads equivalent against nine squads of defenders. Wells would expect a force of two squads to prevail over a single squad without casualties and any evenly matched force to exchange. So fifteen squads destroys five Russian squads and exchanges four of its own units against the remainder. This suggests

the loss of about four squads in optimal conditions leaving you with ten or eleven squads to face up to the Russian reinforcements.

In practice that is a rosier picture than you should hope for. The Russian squads are a bit better than your own chaps, with higher morale and longer range. Factor in the advantage of generally better cover, concealment and the need to do things in a rush and the attack gets more difficult. Wells' model as I have used it doesn't take into account support weapons. In this regard the German really has a big advantage. Seven machine guns is a lot, any time you get two MMGs and an HMG there is a temptation to form a huge MG fire group. Not always a bad idea. A squad and a half could be belting out 16IFT attacks with rate. On this more later.

If you knew precisely the location of every Russian unit this would be an easier scenario for you. Historical Rule 3 allows the Reds to set up concealed as if you are entering from off-board. The enemy has the option of declining, more often he will set up in woods and buildings concealed, and make use of allowed HIP and concealment counters. A HIP Gun and up to one squad plus SMC and support weapons could be almost anywhere. The gun is small enough to set up in a building, and happy in woods, brush or even Orchard hexes where it can emplace to gain a +2 TEM. With the ability to self rally the Gun can set up in an isolated location on the flanks of Russian defensive islands. If your opponent is optimistic he might even try the stone building in X3 right in the centre of the board. As a hidden unit it can catch adjacent units in its covered arc with a basic to hit of ten or even eleven, moving into critical hit territory. This could ice a squad or half squad early in the game and mess up your batting average. Even when known the gun is tricky. ROF, concealed, and in +3 TEM terrain it is a real tactical puzzle. Counter by exploiting the weaknesses of gun Covered Arcs in buildings, strip concealment by your own fire or hit Ruski to hits, throw over the odd Panzerfaust and approach for close combat. The gun may be resilient and delay you but should fall within two turns of concentrated effort. In most games the gun will be almost as troublesome but further back. Accept an easier passage on to board 22 if this is the case.

The other hidden units could also be anywhere. There are woods hexes aplenty on the southern borders of board 22 which are legitimate set up locations for the enemy. If you wander on to one you will face the possibility of TPBF, say a 12 IFT attack at zero DRM, followed by a fair chance of Ambush. Rather worse is bypassing a hidden unit and finding it behind routing units. Being encircled is deadly and a quick way to

lose troops for failure to rout or failed morale checks. You can reduce the risks by search, attempting to move through hexes in the movement phase and the odd speculative shot.

Don't get carried away with this. Searching the woods is not required for a win. Keep in view any hidden unit is not shooting at you! Most of the time the hidden unit will be hidden in or supporting main Russian positions. Odd times the enemy will try something devious. A unit hidden in building R4 threatens to appear on turn 6 and run around reclaiming buildings. It might even get lucky and tear about for two turns! Maybe holding back a Stuka is an overreaction to this. Some searching beforehand helps and to be frank you are unlikely not to give R4 any attention during the early stages of your attack.

The hidden unit and concealed units make control of multi-hex buildings more difficult. To control a building with a concealed stack you must either risk it being a dummy, occupy every location or search. Searching is fine when it reveals dummy stacks, not so clever when you find the hidden gun or squad or realise that dummy stack isn't! Accept this can happen. There are only two hidden units and at most five dummy stacks and the latter are pretty harmless.

Keep tabs on the units you reveal. A scrap of paper can help. It is a bit obsessive to do this but I find it useful. As you reveal more information about front line troops you get a better idea of what lies ahead. For example if you are fire upon by the MMG, 9-1 and a squad, you can speculate other four counter stacks are dummies, you should also be able to guess where the 7-0 leader is, and perhaps even the remaining LMGs. There is some scope for error but the estimates should be plenty good enough for planning the next attack.

Broadly speaking enemy deployment options range from a frontal defence of say Z2, X3 and V2 through layers of successive defence, to making the multi-hex buildings EE7, DD5 or X7 into fortresses. For choice I'd rather be up against a frontal defence and would have a lot less concern about any of the others. The rub is a good enemy deployment will confuse you as to the tactics he is employing. Get it wrong and you will spend two or three turns slowly breaking down a frontal defence which is in reality a screen of dummy stacks and pair of squads.

The greatest strength of your troops was mentioned earlier, raw firepower. Troops are a strong reinforced company, with plenty of support weapons. Two Panzerschreck teams are dictated by Historical Special rule 5. Saving these units for the approaching Russian tanks may be an error, the rockets

are very useful against buildings. At short range the PSK have high To Hit numbers. Against a concealed stack in a wooden building a +4 DRM still gives a basic To hit of four at two hexes range, three at three hexes. Not too shabby, when followed by a 12 FP attack. The risk of loss is small and if your luck is that bad you were going to miss a T34/85 anyway! Panzerfaust rockets are also usable. Although short ranged they hit targets with a 16 FP attack. If your PSK are eliminated, use their crews to fire PF or to man a machine gun.

Manning your MGs is difficult. High firepower is devastating when directed by a leader. It is very tempting to form an 8-1 or 9-1 directed stack of both MMG, the HMG and three entire squads to belt out 24 IFT attacks followed by subsequent 16IFT ones if you retain rate. Any visible targets in wooden buildings will move or be destroyed. The obvious downsides are you can only do this on one flank, it ties up three squads and can be countered by concealment and line of sight defences. Maybe half squad crews are the answer, maybe the MGs should be split. Even the crew composition needs thought. Using first line squads or half squads is helpful to resist ELR replacement, a second line squad immediately become conscript on its first replacement. Trust me you don't want a conscript squad anywhere near your firebase! If they are not covering they are breaking support weapons, as soon as you have rallied them! If you use first line troops for the fire support element of your attack the teeth are weaker. An inherent smoke component of just one is not impressive but is much better than no chance at all. Without any 1st line squads up front you have no way of generating smoke. Difficult choice, that needs a minute or twos thought, but once you've made your mind up move on to the next decision.

Exactly how you organise your attack depends a lot on style but should also pay attention to suspected enemy dispositions. If stuck you could do worse than attack over a broad front. Form a MG platoon of the MMGs, HMG and as much as three squads and a leader to head for the Z1, Z2 buildings and flank them with other platoons. A couple of squads deployed can drive ahead moving to reveal hidden or concealed units, and drawing others out by presenting fleeting targets. Once you engage the enemy, drive deep where resistance is weak or futile, bypass or destroy pockets of resistance.

The easiest ways to lose are push to hard and lose units in the open for doing so, or dawdle and still lose but with most of your OB in tact. The attack needs to be carefully placed. Timed to gain ground, controlled to keep casualties low.



three a bit of both, defensive pockets along the likely line of a French advance. You could try others things, like a Hedgehog (or could that be Herisson) or point defence, covering the road with units or effectively skulking on the FF and GG hexrows. How successful any strategy will be depends a bit on how the French attack as well as how you develop your defence. You will have to do a bit more than just stay in the one spot banging away at the front of enemy armour for a win.

Enemy forces are a mix of armour and infantry. The infantry comprises seven elite squads, two leaders, a MMG and a Boys anti tank rifle. They arrive in small Laffly trucks. This is a reasonable amount of infantry enough to stand up to your own troops in any firefight. The armour is rather more impressive, five S35 tanks. Their armour is good for 1940, with a frontal AF of 6, even side armour ranks a 4 for the hull and 6 for the turret. Side armour immobilisation has effectively a saving throw of 5 or 6 frustrating when you are trying for deliberate immobilisation! MG armament is feeble, just a two FP MG, offset by a 47mm Gun free to fire HE. Worth noting is the strange radio used by the S35 communicates in Morse. If not using platoon movement the Morse messages allow the crew to check for movement with an effective morale of 9. Note the vehicle is subject to one man turret restrictions, so if CE cannot fire the main armament. It is well worth reading the Chapter H notes for all the vehicles and equipment that appear in this scenario.

Enemy trucks are vulnerable to every weapon you possess. Even a 2 IFT column attack is effective on a DR of four which immobilises it. Use MGs, inherent firepower and even HE against trucks when you can, particularly any with passengers. Armour is more of a challenge. Infantry can do damage in close combat. Anti tank fire comes from a 47L gun and three 37Ls. APCR is not available, making AP the most effective weapon to use. For a 37L gun a basic to kill of 9 at most combat ranges will struggle against an S35s' armour. Given enough time it will get through. Side hits hitting the hull have a better chance of success. The 47L gun is more effective, a To Kill of 11 is good, especially when combined with ROF 3.

Deliberate immobilisation is an option at short range. Given the +5 to hit DRM and the need for a hull hit this isn't ideal. Often a basic shot aimed to kill has a better chance of success. Don't forget the 37L guns qualify for multiple hits on doubles rolls that hit the target. A knocked out tank is welcome, an immobilised one is lost for the purposes of exit. Although the To Kill numbers against armour are low, if you can land enough shots

you will do damage.

A close look at your troops is useful. The guns are useful. They begin the game hidden, emplaced and boresighted. With ROF 3 they can pump out a lot of shells. The 47mm gun is a very real threat to French tanks, the 37L less scary. The Pz III Fs' are not as effective Anti tank units. Although they will likely start the game concealed, the French should have a fair idea where they are. With four concealment counters you can create two dummy tanks which may help confuse the foe a little, but not very much. The tank mounted guns suffer b11, and lower ROF. By going crew exposed your to hit chances improve with limited vulnerability to return fire. A 9-1 Leader is valuable particularly for long range shots. If you are subject to recall or under heavy fire the Pz IIIs' smoke discharger may be useful to cover a retreat or tactical withdrawal.

The Infantry force is very weak against armour. At best you may be able to ice a tank in close combat, more often your prey will be infantry or trucks. If you are short of offensive opportunities do constructive things to improve your survival chances. Dig fox holes, skulk, gain concealment or relocate to a more useful spot. One odd tactic is to stack a leader with a gun crew. the 9-1 Leader improves resistance to morale checks, and helps rally attempts a little. Not a tactic everyone favours but it can be effective.

Your most powerful unit must be the Stuka. It is around for just one attack, make sure to pick the best target you can. A loaded truck is a fair selection, but go for a tank if it appeals. The attack can go in on turn it arrives or be held back for a crucial moment.

The key feature of this scenario is the terrain. If you favour a front line Stonewall defence that aims to destroy the French as they arrive you could concentrate to hit the French as they arrive. Infantry in the O3/O4 and L6 buildings is a fair start with a guns emplaced in grain, and tanks in woods on either side is feasible. If you get lucky and destroy a few tanks with your opening salvoes the prospects for a win are encouraging. If you hit but fail to do significant damage things become fraught.

Plan B is to exploit the unusual lines of sight on board 16. Emplaced guns or tanks are at a big advantage shooting at moving units when they are hidden behind grain or brush. Your outgoing shots are from a stable position, and subject to +2 for moving targets, plus any applicable hindrances. Return fire will be subject to the same hindrances, TEM for terrain or emplacement and some pretty abysmal modifiers for motion fire or fire in the advance phase. For example an emplaced gun in K7 will benefit from emplacement, plus a hindrance of +2 or +3 vs

entering units. Outgoing shots are still tricky but you do have the advantage of shooting first and a second crack in the next prep fire phase. Against MG or Infantry fire the +4 or +5 DRM you receive is as good as a bunker.

The stone wall around L6 is notable. The French may desire it for hulldown fire positions. As the defender you might want to start a tank hull down with VCA away from the wall. After some defensive fire shots, you can bug out driving North to take up a new position closer to the exit area. That said you don't always have to fall back, occasionally going forwards into French trucks or behind the tanks will be viable.

A tactic of long standing against heavy troops is to dance around behind them. For instance if you have two guns in the same hexrow, open fire with one then as enemy units turn to face the threat start firing from behind.

Meanwhile your Infantry should be making things difficult for the trucks. Softskins prefer roads and cannot cross either hedges or walls. Building O3/O4 covers the road effectively and can even hit some entering units. Late in the game French troops may need to drive offboard; a squad in woods near the northern board edge should manage a fire attack with some prospect of success against a Laffly or fast moving MMC.

If you have a keen eye for terrain, exploit this to set up a series of cunning ambushes. If you can visualise the French advance this helps. Remember your own units have a fingerprint, the French should be able to guess where your tanks and infantry are, and maybe where your guns are. For example, a concealed tank in the N9 woods is begging to be approached by tanks exploiting the walls adjacent to M7 and L7. Can you site a gun to exploit this, either as they approach the hex or arrive there? Hedges further north present similar opportunities.

Eight turns is a long time. The French infantry could cover the whole board in the time available comfortably as long as you don't shoot at them too much. Shooting the French to bits is a nice way to win, forcing the French to run out of time almost as good, really sweet if the result is close to French victory! I guess the key words are 'Kill' and 'Delay'.

Don't be afraid to run away. A recalled tank that makes it off the board saves you six VP, even a crew that scurries away to survive is useful. Similar rules apply to guns. If they are disabled try to move the crew to a safer place.

A lot can happen in this scenario. Your own set up is important, but the French will also have ideas. Exploit any luck you have, stay and fight if the odd 37L hit has done

more damage than it should, enjoy rate when you can. Stay alert for the unusual. An attack that doesn't give one of your guns a clear shot doesn't need to be alerted to the fact it has avoided your 37L or 47mm gun tell the guy after the game but meantime watch him search for the gun, worry about getting an extra four VPs from somewhere and sweat.

This scenario is playable with a strong front line defence, for really good players (and that doesn't include me by any stretch!) with an eye for terrain it takes on a whole new dimension of cunning ambushes and a greater percentage of shots against side or rear armour. Even with a basic set up this scenario will be fun. Don't be put off by air support, only one Stuka arrives, and might not do much. If you are feeling lucky try for a tank, settle for a truck if you feel more cautious.

### **GTF5 French Set Up and Entry**

To claim victory you must earn 33 or more CVP and/or exit VP. If you annihilate the entire German force you earn enough victory points for a win. Impressive if you can do it but not easy to manage. In the vast majority of games you will need to exit something, even if it's a few trucks laden with infantry or a pair of tanks. Fortunately your force is large enough to absorb a lot of casualties and still have reasonable prospects of a win.

To an extent your tactics need adjusting to the composition of the enemy force and its probable location. The Germans start the game with five first line squads, two leaders and a MMG, all are a threat to your infantry and trucks. Stretching a point your tanks can be hurt by close combat if you stumble onto a hidden unit or get too close to concealed or known squads. Agreed you can overrun the odd squad and should if it fits in with some critical plan, offset the risk of damage against the potential gain. Some enemy infantry will begin the game in woods, or buildings to gain concealment, positive TEM, and some protection from overrun. Expect concealed units, with a practised eye you should be able to spot a stack with the MMG, fairly easily if it also has the 9-1 Leader to direct fire. Other guesses about infantry dispositions should follow. Remember one MMC can set up hidden, it might just be a half squad, it could include a leader and the MMG, keep this in view but don't get paranoid about it. At the game start this gives you an idea of enemy plans, he may be way north waiting patiently for your attack, dotted around the board, or close to row K determined to destroy you at the board edge.

Enemy armour can start concealed. The Pz III Fs are good tanks, but your S35s

are better in almost every respect. Accepted the German tanks have smoke dischargers, larger MG armament, better radios, slightly better movement factors and faster turrets, your advantages are thicker armour, a harder hitting gun. Significantly your advantages are more important. The basic To Kill of your 47mm gun is 10, against the frontal armour of a Pz III F, your modified To Kill will be seven or eight. Return fire will be more accurate, with ROF, offset by a final To Kill number of two or three, and dodgy armament B11. This is great if the Germans offer you with one or both tanks for a short duel, and tolerable if they are lightly supported. Play gets trickier when the tanks are difficult to approach or protected by supporting anti tank guns.

The Germans are blessed with two reasonable guns at the game start. The PaK 35/36 is a 37L gun destined to serve throughout the war. It has the same To Kill potential as the Pz III's guns, with higher rate of fire, and B12. It can start hidden or emplaced in concealment terrain. From a hidden position the opportunities for side and rear shots are greater. One way to find a gun is to be shot at by it. Fine if the shot misses and you can motor away, not so good if your tank is immobilised or knocked out. A 37L ambush is generally survivable. More worrying is the ex Czech 47mm gun with a To Kill of 11. The Czechs are doughty fighters, and presently are well known for their specialist teams skilled at detecting NBC threats. In the 1930s they developed an arms industry that developed some very serviceable guns, tanks and small arms that came into the possession of the Third Reich. It's a long story, suffice to say not entirely the Czechs fault. I digress. The 47mm gun can kill a tank from long range. From say woods in X1 or brush in CC3 it can shoot half a board length, subject to line of sight. Return fire is hampered by brush or more often grain and not terribly effective. Worrying as this possible tactic may be, once the gun position is known you can start to work against it.

As you enter from off-board the enemy can conceal his units, additionally both guns and up to one MMC plus a leader and the MMG can start hidden. The enemy receives four concealment counters. This isn't deception on a grand scale, perhaps he will create a pair of dummy tank, disguise a squad or half squad as a MMG team, or seek to draw you to an outlying location with a dummy unit. On turn one your estimates of enemy positions are in part guess work. As play progresses more units will be revealed.

Air support is available for the Germans. A single 1939 Stuka can appear any time on or after turn two. Once it arrives it must either attack or withdraw after two

turns. It pays to be stoical when being hit by air support. At worst you face a 150mm bomb hit and a 4 IFT MG attack plus some Pin checks. Maybe you'll lose a tank. Defensive measures are limited. You only anti aircraft weapons are the CMG of the S35s and I don't think these will do much good. The best defence is for the German player to roll box cars on his spotting check and quietly watch the Germans swoop on their own ground troops. If anything German is destroyed your game gets a bit easier, not only has a key unit been destroyed one of your own has survived.

The S35s are your main striking force. Against armour the 47mm gun will destroy a Pz III in two or three shots. Against infantry HE is effective and at times the odd 2 IFT machine gun attack will kill, or break a unit, with a small OB just keeping a unit under the effects of desperation morale is useful, and CMG can do this. Generally the tanks should not seek out fights with the anti tank guns. The odd shot against a gun is acceptable, and you can be cheeky with the 37L but slowly throwing shots at the 47mm gun at long range is asking for casualties. In my opinion the weakness of the S35 is its Morse code radio. If you are not using platoon movement a DR of 9 or less is needed to move. You should be able to make a 9 TC most of the time, when you can't it hurts. It is very painful late in the game when you may be paralysed not to far from the northern edge poised to be victorious. You can be cautious and work as platoons or two or three vehicles or Balls it and truck to luck. Nearly forgot, you start with an Armour Leader, his main strength is to improve your To Hit chances, later on he may earn two extra VPs when he exits. Remember recalled tanks are lost for VP purposes. If a tank's Gun malfunctions think before you try to repair it. If you need few VPs with the S35 close to the north edge don't automatically roll for repair, instead use that radio and try to get moving off the board for a win. Other times the choice is less clear cut, be lucky.

Your OB includes infantry and Laffly trucks. The trucks are four wheeled drive and expend MP like armoured cars, they still can't cross hedges, but are slightly faster cross country in open ground or grain. The Lafflys qualify for small target size status against ordnance attacks, making them hard to hit in motion or if helped by TEM or hindrances. Against small arms fire protection is very, very limited. Even a basic German squad can reach out to 12 hex range to damage a truck, as closer range or with machine gun fire trucks will not survive long. Losing a truck with passengers is grief. With a bit of care that should not happen often. If you dismount infantry before the truck be-

comes a target you reduce the potential for damage. Line of sight and hindrances save trucks from most forms of attack. It is worth keeping an empty truck in motion, making it harder to hit and saving the 1 MP needed to start. If you have the urge you can try to drive off the north edge on turn one, it just about works subject to enemy counter measures. As an opening gambit this is a bit reckless. Later in the game, particularly when you have found every German unit driving trucks off the board makes sense if their rout is clear. Take infantry or bailed out vehicle crews as passengers for extra VPs.

Arriving as truck passengers the seven French elite squads bring two leaders, a Boys anti tank rifle and a MMG to the fight. If the Germans are away south, you can dismount early in the game and enter combat. French troops are superior in number to the Germans, and about equal in quality. If you find the guns, infantry are the best units to destroy them. The Boys can be used to good effect against a gun, and for long range shots at infantry. A very low to kill of 5 limits the ATR use against tanks, strangely side armour is thick on the Pz III and your best shots will be front turret ones. A To Kill of three is just about possible, and certainly a distraction for Fritz. A deployed squad mounted in a truck has potential. In quiet sectors it can bypass the enemy front line, and drop off the passenger to complicate routs, or lead to encirclement. Use the infantry to search for guns ahead of your tanks. Don't be shy of using armoured assault if you face just infantry. Be a bit wary of German overruns. After a few unsuccessful AP shots the Germans may try to kill infantry or trucks using PzIII overruns. This has limited merit, don't expect to see the tactic used too often.

Before play starts have a long look at board 16. Brush up on the Chapter B rules for grain, woods, brush, walls, hedges and buildings, and possibly shell holes and rubble for the Stuka attack or if you fancy driving into buildings (or cellars). This may be a bit hardcore but it does help to have the board lying around the front room for a couple of days and blimp at it occasionally. After a while you'll start to split the terrain into separate areas, and see functions for each. For example, working north the woods around A5/A6 gives cover to your forces as they enter, and can be routed into if you advance from it. The grain to the NW around E5 hinders fire and could screen an approach to the woods buildings around O2. The building in L5 is again screened by grain to the south and approachable from that direction. Now this isn't interesting, but it is important to have at least this level of understanding of the terrain. Look out for other inter-

esting features, the road network is important, as are hedges, woods, walls and thick patches of grain that block line of sight. Terrain is important, some players really do have a good eye for it. I think part of the attraction of ASL for me is the maps.

How you enter depends a bit on enemy dispositions. In most cases it is sensible to enter with the tanks first. Maybe in two platoons of two or three tanks, one north of the A5/A6 woods the other south. As you enter you can move independently and delay entry if something very nasty surprises you. The trucks are trickier. There is no real rush. With road movement you can afford to hold back, then drive to any trouble as it arises. Alternatively you can drive on at A5/A6 and start dismounting units into the woods area ready to march forwards in subsequent turns. Keeping a mobile reserve off board is a fair idea. Once out of the vehicles form troops around Leaders and stay alert. There are a lot of Germans around, and if they get a clear shot they can break or kill your Infantry. The course of play depends on where the Germans are. In some respects a firefight as you enter will be best, it is painful but you should win convincingly and drive north for a victory. Tougher on the nerves is a series of crafty German ambushes. To defeat this Strategy you need pace. Part of your force neutralises the threat whilst the rest drives forward or rallies prior to forward movement. This is incredibly difficult to pull off but can be done. The trick is to suppress the defenders with fire, move in for the kill to draw fire and then send troops north watching the elimination or capture of the German pocket.

If the entire German OB started the game hidden this scenario would be difficult to win. Fortunately you get a reasonable idea of the location of German tanks and infantry which makes 'Wrong Battle' eminently playable. The Stuka is nasty, the 47mm gun worth respect, but the rest of the German OB needs some luck to hurt you. If you can develop effective attacks against either a solid line or series of enemy positions you can reasonably expect a win. Keep a record of the VPs you earn during play and be mindful of opportunities for a quick win. Pay heed to your own casualties, keep your eye on the turn record and enjoy an excellent scenario.

### GFT 5 Conclusion

The French earn Victory points for casualties inflicted and units exited. A win mostly earned by exit Victory points is possible, although most players will not be able to resist a bit of a fight. Air support does appear only one Stuka which should not take too long to resolve, at best it will destroy a

tank or if presented with a stack of squads using armoured assault just a bit more! Part of the attraction of this scenario is the constant struggle by both sides to use your units against enemy units least able to cope. For example the Anti tank guns will go for armour, the French tanks for German tanks and Infantry. Victory should go to the side who most accurately either anticipates his opponents moves or seizes the initiative and dictates the course of play. Then again it is worth playing just for the fun of commanding five S35s'.

### GTF5 After The Action

Not sure who played this at INTENSIVE FIRE, might have seen a game in progress but I've slept since then. As with 'Oriola Force' I wonder if air support was an issue?

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## THE CRUSADERS OPEN ASL TOURNAMENT LADDER

Continued from page 8

| Rank | Player           | Played | W—D—L   | Points |
|------|------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| 190  | Jackie Eves      | 22     | 7—0—15  | 2675   |
| 191  | Nigel Ashcroft   | 46     | 17—1—28 | 2665   |
| 192  | Pedro Barradas   | 7      | 1—0—6   | 2655   |
| 193  | Nick Carter      | 6      | 1—0—5   | 2635   |
| 194  | Adrian Catchpole | 11     | 2—0—9   | 2625   |
| 195= | Neil Brunger     | 20     | 8—0—12  | 2615   |
| 195= | Arthur Garlick   | 21     | 2—5—14  | 2615   |
| 195= | Malcolm Hatfield | 27     | 9—0—18  | 2615   |
| 195= | Mike Stanbridge  | 36     | 10—1—25 | 2615   |
| 199  | Bryan Brinkman   | 9      | 1—0—8   | 2610   |
| 200  | John Fletcher    | 6      | 0—0—6   | 2585   |
| 201  | Chris Ager       | 12     | 3—0—9   | 2575   |
| 202  | Justin Key       | 40     | 14—1—24 | 2570   |
| 203  | Michael Rhodes   | 43     | 10—0—33 | 2545   |
| 204  | Brian Hooper     | 97     | 29—1—67 | 2515   |
| 205  | Roger Cook       | 28     | 8—2—18  | 2460   |
| 206  | David Ramsey     | 9      | 1—0—8   | 2435   |
| 207  | Wayne Baumber    | 33     | 13—0—20 | 2430   |
| 208  | John Kennedy     | 24     | 5—0—19  | 2415   |
| 209  | Paul Case        | 81     | 19—1—61 | 2395   |

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VIEW FROM



# THE DEATH OF ASLOK

Steve Linton

Made you look. :-)

So the last bastion of the free world has fallen. The security measures at America's international gateways have proven woefully inadequate, and the unthinkable has happened: a foreigner, worse yet a New Zealander\*, Aaron Cleavin, has won the GROFAZ.

How the hell did this happen???? Does no-one else think that Mark Nixon's recent purchase of the Cleveland Indians was a tad coincidental? Where are the people from "Unexplained Mysteries" when you need them?

But, bizarre though it seems, it happened. What does it mean for the future? How does this unseemly turn of events impact on the future of the most prestigious title in the ASL world?

Those with a positive outlook will point to the limited impact on the UK when Aaron won INTENSIVE FIRE a few years back, but in doing so they fail to recognise the fact that beating the English\*\* is a fairly mundane occurrence for the antipodeans, so it didn't really warrant much effort (NOTE: Steve wrote this prior to England's World Cup final victory over Australia - Pete).

But ASLOK, now there's a different matter. This is a biggie, and they have means of dealing with such things in New Zealand. Think America's Cup...

Only much, much worse.

With Aaron's victory, Mark Nixon will be required to lift the entire shooting match and move it to Auckland. In keeping with international precedent, there will also be some changes to the way in which the tournament is conducted.

New rules for dice rolling will be introduced: dice towers will be outlawed, and the venue will be advised to remove all clear drinking receptacles before the event (let's see what happens when you roll your dice in a beer can). Anyone rolling less than 4 dice at a time will be subject to repeated penalties for delay of game.

The gaming itself will be brought into line with the 20th Century (Hey, this is New Zealand, you know!). ASL,

while allowed, will not be required, and credit towards the GROFAZ may be allowed for games such as *Up Front*, *Terrible Swift Sword*, *Wrasslin'*, *tiddlywinks*, *chess* and *Combat Mission*. There will be limits, however, as only those games of *Monopoly* played on the original English board will be accepted. Note that the actual approval of individual games will be made at the end of the tournament, depending on who won. :-)

Mini's will become 'stubbies', and will require the implementation of several local 'pub rules'. Win a CC, scull a beer; heat of battle, scull a beer; critical hit, scull a beer; check a rule, scull a beer; roll a 2, scull a beer; roll a 12; scull a beer. roll a 17, scull several beers until the dots stop moving.

While GROFAZ will remain the main prize for the tournament, there will be more stringent requirements than simply winning games. The marathon nature of the task will be emphasised, with competitors disqualified for falling asleep at any stage during the tournament or leaving the table for any reason during the course of a game.

Local colour will also be added: Darryl Lundy will lead a Haka before every days gaming begins, and anyone caught not paying complete attention will be handed over to the locals who will no doubt have reference to the colours 'black' and 'blue' in ensuring such slights on Maori culture are not repeated.

Gaming will commence as usual at 8am Cleveland time (that's about 2 in the morning the next day in Auckland), and can continue around the clock - although all games will be required to stop during any Rugby internationals. No alcohol will be allowed after 6pm local time, and anyone approaching any of the local women will, well lets face it, obviously have stumbled into the convention by mistake. Even in New Zealand, ASL players are not in any danger of breaching the local morality laws - at least in respect to women (OK, conscious women with no sense of smell).

The sheep are another matter. Don't go near the sheep. Its illegal. At least for foreigners.\*\*\*

But hey, it could be worse. If the Europeans had won the bloody thing, they'd make the IIFT compulsory....

\* - As Aaron currently lives in Sydney, official Australian government policy would normally require me to claim him as an Australian by virtue of the "Winners are automatically Granted Citizenship Whether they like it or not Act", but there are times when you just have to say "to hell with the law" and leave things in the street where you found them.

\*\* - As Trevor would point out, Aaron didn't beat any Welsh or Scottish players during his triumph, so they refuse to acknowledge his victory.

\*\*\* - As this email originates in Australia, I am required by law to include at least one sheep joke when referring to New Zealand. No offence meant to any Bondi residents on the list.\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\* - The law also requires a Bondi reference (for the uninitiated, Bondi, a suburb of Sydney, is the 3rd largest city in New Zealand). Amazing what politicians doodle in the margins of legislation when they are forced to listen to rantings from Prattlers Of The Usual Shit\*\*\*\*\*

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# “THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!”

This is the latest edition of the UK ASL Players Directory. It is broken down by country and then by postal code region. The date at the end of each entry is the date the address was last confirmed.

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Peter Fraser, 66 Salcombe Gardens, Millhill, London, NW7 2NT ( )  
Nick Hughes, 15 Layfield Road, Hendon, London, NW9 3UH ( )  
Martin Mayers, 41 Frank Fold, Heywood, Lancs., OL10 4FF (16/09/02)  
Toby Pilling, 51 Wensum Drive, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7RJ (19/03/02)  
Grant Hewitt, 44 Waltham Gardens, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 8FD (19/03/00)  
John Sharp, 3 Union Street, Oxford, Oxon, OX4 1JP (23/10/98)  
Alan Anderson, Pennaereve, Maddever Crescent, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3PT (11/12/98)  
Nigel Blair, 105 Stanborough Road, Plymstock, Plymouth, PL9 8PG (14/08/01)  
Paul Rideout, 5 Fisher Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants., PO14 3RA ( )  
Simon Stevens, 14 Teddington Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 8DB (23/10/98)  
Justin Key, Flat 7, 41 Nightingale Road, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants., PO5 3JJ (31/10/99)  
Simon Hunt, 26 Inhurst Avenue, Waterlooville, Portsmouth, PO7 7QR ( )  
Keith Bristow, 11 Coltsfoot Drive, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 8DF (26/03/01)  
Trevor Edwards, 18 Conway House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YJ (23/10/98)  
Steve Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL (23/10/98)  
Phil Draper, 8 Chesterman Street, Reading, Berks., RG1 2PR (28/10/00)  
Paul Sanderson, Flat 4, Russell Street, Reading, Berks., RG1 7XD (26/03/00)  
Michael Strefford, 3 Walton Way, Shaw, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2LL (05/06/98)  
Roger Cook, 24 Fifth Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 6DL (27/11/01)  
Dominic McGrath, 19 George Street, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 7RN (31/10/99)  
Stewart Thain, 55 Lysander Close, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4ND (14/09/01)  
Kevin Croskey, 4 Beechey Way, Cophorne, W. Sussex, RH10 3LT (10/09/02)  
Bill Hensby, 32 The Vineries, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 0NF (18/06/99)  
John Barton, 194 Chantonsbury Road, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 9HN (01/04/03)  
Nick Carter, 43 Halsford Park Road, East Grinstead, RH19 1PP (30/07/03)  
Keith Graves, 51 Humbar Avenue, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5JL ( )  
David Higginbotham, 18 Westfield Garden, Brampton, Cheshire, S40 3SN (03/07/00)  
Andy Osborne, 42 Atlantis Close, Lee, London, SE12 8RE ( )  
Simon Horspool, 28 Crown Court, Horne Park Lane, Lee, London, SE14 9AA (04/02/01)  
Martin Edwards, 127 Pepsys Road, London, SE14 5SE (02/09/99)  
David Ramsey, 41 Twin Foxes, Woolmer Green, Knebworth, Herts, SG3 6QT (02/03/02)  
Chris Milne, 19 Redoubt Close, Hitchin, Herts., SG4 0FP (09/05/01)  
Roger Underwood, 34 Woodside Lane, Poynton, Cheshire, RG21 1BB (28/10/00)  
Andrew Dando, 26 Constable Drive, Marple Bridge, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 5BG (17/09/02)  
Graham Forster, 1 Dalston Drive, Bramhill, Stockport, Manchester, SK7 1DW ( )  
Ian Daglish, 5 Swiss Hill Mews, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7DP (30/10/99)  
Steve Crowley, 2 Mossy Vale, Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 7RX (01/03/01)  
Adrian Catchpole, The Malting Barn, Top Lane, Whitely, Melksham, Wilt., SN12 8QJ ( )  
Jon Williams, 17 Larch Road, Colerne, Chippenham, Wilt., SN14 8QS (06/12/98)  
Bill Gunning, 14 Eagles, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7DT (14/09/97)  
Chris Riches, 3 Bernwood Grove, Blackfield, Southampton, Hants., SO45 1ZW (16/03/02)  
James Crossfield, Hughtcroft, Church Hill, Buckhorn Weston, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5HS (25/03/03)  
John Fletcher, 191 Trent Valley Road, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 5LE (23/10/98)  
Ronnie Tan, 250 Hydethorpe Road, Balham, London, SW12 0JH (21/07/01)  
Julian Blakeney-Edwards, 1 Elmbourne Road, London, SW17 8JS (21/10/98)  
Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, 49 Edgecombe House, Whitlock Drive, Southfields, London, SW19 6SL (31/10/99)  
Christopher Chen, Flat 11, 14 Sloane Gardens, London, SW19 8DL (25/02/99)  
Jonathan Pickles, 115 Wavertree Road, Streatham Hill, London, SW2 3SN (26/03/99)  
David Tye, 35 Redburn Street, London, SW3 4DA ( )  
David Orway, Department of Chemistry, Imperial College, South Kensington, London, SW7 2AY (14/03/98)  
Jean-Pascal Paoli, 51-60 Evelyn Gardens, London, SW7 3BH (03/05/00)  
Chris Courtier, 17b Hargwyne Street, London, SW9 9RQ (23/10/98)  
Paul Case, 12 Park Street, Dunster, Minhead, Somerset, TA24 6SR (28/10/02)  
Carl Bedson, 5 Allerton Meadow, Shawbirch, Telford, Salop, TF5 0NW ( )  
Nick Law, Flat 4, 12 Boyne Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8ET (21/06/99)  
Mike Batley, 2 The Gables, Argos Hill, East Sussex, TN6 3QJ (29/04/01)  
Bill Eaton, Dart House, 20 Bridgetown, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5BA (13/04/00)  
Nick Quinn, 7 Woodgrange Avenue, Ealing, London, W5 3NY (04/03/02)  
Dave Booth, 47 Dunnock Grove, Oakwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6NW (07/10/96)  
Robin Langston, 105 Little Bushey Lane, Bushey, Herts., WD2 19Y (19/09/96)  
Paul Ryde-Weller, 44 Farm Way, Watford, Herts., WD2 3SY ( )  
Sandy Goh, 12 Mornington Road, Radlett, Herts., WD7 7BL (31/10/96)  
Ulric Schwela, 19 Siddow Common, Leigh, Lancs., WN7 3EN (02/09/99)  
Michael Murray, 34 Bell Road, Walsall, West Mids., WVS 3JW (30/03/99)  
Ian Price, 19 Upper Green, Yettenhall, Wolverhampton, W. Mids., WV6 8QN ( )  
Michael Clark, Wold View, East Heslerton, Malton, N. Yorks., YO17 8RN (12/02/02)  
David Murray, 29 Middle Street, Nafferton, Driffield, S. Yorks., YO25 4JS (27/06/01)  
Wayne Baumber, 1 Crabmill Close, Easingwold, N. Yorks., YO61 3BX (24/10/03)

## SCOTLAND

Tony Gibson, 107 Queen's Den, Hazelhead, Aberdeen (22/05/00)  
Martin Vicca, 37 Dean Gardens, Westhill, Aberdeen (27/08/02)  
Ian Percy, 1 Polmuir Road, Aberdeen, AB11 7SP (06/05/98)  
Steven Trease, 2 Charlestown Circle, Cove, Aberdeen, AB12 3EY (17/06/99)  
Paul Saunders, 59 Grampian Gardens, Arbroath, Angus, DD1 4AQ (29/03/03)  
Michael Green, 27 Rotchell Park, Dumfries, DG2 7RH (12/09/02)  
Mark Chapman, Flat 7, 265 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, EH11 1TX (12/12/02)  
Garry Ferguson, 30E Forrester Park Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9AW (07/12/98)  
Bill Finlayson, 19 Taymouth Road, Polmont, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, FK2 0PF (16/06/01)  
Andrew Kassian, Flat 14/2, 20 Petershill Court, Glasgow, G21 4QA (01/01/96)  
Ellis Simpson, 4 Langtree Avenue, Whitecraigs, Glasgow, G46 7LW (20/04/99)  
Oliver Gray, 117 Upper Dalgaire, Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JQ (17/08/00)  
Garry Marshall, 24 Allardice Crescent, Kirkcaldy, Fife, KY2 5TY (21/05/01)  
Andrew Cowie, Elizlea, High Street, Errol, PH2 7KJ ( )  
Jonathan Swilliamson, Da Croft, Bridge End, Burra, Shetland Islands, ZE2 9LE (01/05/98)

Continued on page 39, column 2



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!

## 2004

### JANUARY

#### WINTER OFFENSIVE

**When:** 16 – 19 January.

**Where:** The Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD20718. Tel 301-464-0089. Double rooms are \$85.50 plus tax per day; mention Winter Offensive for the special room rate.

**Fee:** \$20.00 pre-registered by 31 December, \$25.00 thereafter. One day registration is \$8.00 by 31 December or \$10.00 thereafter.

**Format:** Unstructured format, mutually agreeable scenarios. Special mini-tournaments start Thursday morning. The main event free-for-all starts Friday morning.

**Notes:** T-shirts are \$12.00 (XXL \$14.00). As in the past all profits go to the ALS Foundation.

**Contact:** Multi-Man Publishing, 403 Headquarters Drive, Suite 7, Millersville MD 21108 or contact [perrycocke@aol.com](mailto:perrycocke@aol.com) or [bcyouse@cablespeed.com](mailto:bcyouse@cablespeed.com). You can also sign up on MMP's web site at [www.advancedsquadleader.com](http://www.advancedsquadleader.com).

### FEBRUARY

#### WEST COAST MELEE VII

**When:** 5 – 8 February.

**Where:** Crowne Plaza Hotel, 17941 Von Karman Ave, Irvine, CA 92614-6253. Standard room rates are \$79.00 per night.

**Fee:** \$24.00.

**Format:** The Melee will start on Friday morning at 9:00 am with the "Close Combat Phase". Throughout the day, players can freely match themselves in open-style competition, and report each completed game to the T.D. Starting on Saturday morning, the 16 players who have compiled the best overall records (using the Chicago system) from the Close Combat Phase will enter the "Hand to Hand" phase of The Melee. This will be a four-round single elimination tournament that will culminate with a championship match on Sunday morning. For those who don't make it into the Hand to Hand Phase on Saturday, there will be several mini-tournaments, open play and a big team Campaign Game.

**Contact:** Jim Aikens by email at [wcm@socalasl.com](mailto:wcm@socalasl.com). You can also get the latest details by visiting [www.SoCalASL.com](http://www.SoCalASL.com).

### WINTER WAR 6

**When:** 6 – 8 February.

**Where:** Chancellor Hotel, 1501 South Neil Street, Champaign, IL61820. Standard room rates range from \$89.00 to \$135.00 per night.

**Fee:** \$24.00.

**Format:** Single elimination / *ASL* Open style. Five rounds, matches start 6 Feb.

**Contact:** Brien Martin by email at [bkmartin26@aol.com](mailto:bkmartin26@aol.com).

### ASL SCANDANAVIAN OPEN

**When:** 27 – 29 February.

**Where:** Tøjhusmuseet (Danish National Arms Museum), Frederiksholms Kanal 29, 1220 Copenhagen K., Copenhagen, Denmark. You can sleep on the floor at the tournament site (there is a bath) and eat there. If you want more luxury then you can get accommodation from £13.00.

**Fee:** 150 Danish Kroner (about £12.00).

**Format:** The tournament will be a five or six round Swiss style affair depending on player numbers. There is also expected to be a smaller event for 6 – 8 players.

**Contact:** Michael Hastrup-Leth, Favrholtvej 15, 3400 Hillerod, Denmark, or email at

[hastrup@image.dk](mailto:hastrup@image.dk). For the latest information visit [www.strategispil.dk/ASO](http://www.strategispil.dk/ASO).

### MARCH

#### NOR'EASTER VIII

**When:** 19 – 21 March.

**Where:** Best Western Royal Plaza hotel, Marlborough, MA. Tel 508-460-0700. Room rates are \$99.00 per night – make sure you mention you are with Nor'Easter to get this rate.

**Fee:** \$20.00 if registering by 21 Feb, \$25.00 on the door.

**Format:** Five or six round Swiss format with five scenarios to choose from per round. There will also be a couple of mini-tournaments, including a three round event on Saturday.

**Notes:** First prize is a diorama courtesy of Joe Leoce, with second and third place and mini-tournament winners receiving plaques.

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact NorEaster VIII, c/o Mike Allexenberg, 27 Juniper Brook Rd, Northborough, MA 01532.

### HEROES 2004

**When:** 26 – 28 March.

**Where:** Hotel Skye, South Promenade, Blackpool, England. Room rates are £22.00 for a shared room or £28.00 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee:** £7.00.

**Format:** Four or 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 opportunities for new players to learn the game and friendly games available.

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact Pete Phillipps, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, LE4 7PY. Phone (0116) 266 6894 (evenings only) or email [h2004@vfti.co.uk](mailto:h2004@vfti.co.uk).

### OCTOBER

#### INTENSIVE FIRE 2004

**When:** 28 – 31 October.

**Where:** The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Bourmemouth, England, BH2 5EG. Telephone (01202) 555 889 or fax (01202) 789 567 to arrange accommodation. Single rooms are £33.00 per night, double rooms £29.00 per night per person if booked prior to 1 October – thereafter normal rates apply. Remember to mention INTENSIVE FIRE when reserving to qualify for the special rates. You can also book online at [www.kiwihotel.co.uk](http://www.kiwihotel.co.uk).

**Fee:** £7.00 (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). Players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in September.

**Format:** Three round Fire Team tournament (two rounds on Saturday, one on Sunday). There will also be some single day mini-tournaments on the Friday. Open gaming is available for those who do not wish to take part in the tournament.

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

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact Pete Phillipps, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, LE4 7PY. Phone (0116) 266 6894 (evenings only) or email [if@vfti.co.uk](mailto:if@vfti.co.uk).

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Tournament organisers Pete Phillipps hard at work at INTENSIVE FIRE 2003 :-)

### A CALL TO UK ARMS

Continued from page 38

### WALES

Martin Castrey, Connah's Quay, Deeside, Flintshire (20/10/03)

Paul Jones, 9 Cwm Nofydd, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF 14 6JX (22/11/02)

Kev Sutton, 1 Gorphwysfa, Windsor Road, New Broughton, Wrexham, LL11 6SP (25/02/99)

C. Jones, Deer Park Lodge, Stepaside, Narbeth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8JL ()

Emyr Phillipps, 2 Cysgod Y Bryn, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 4LR (27/08/02)

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

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# INTENSIVE FIRE 2004

**29 - 31 OCTOBER 2004**



INTENSIVE FIRE is the UK's longest running tournament dedicated to the play of *Advanced Squad Leader*. 2004 is our tenth anniversary 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-tourneys offer the chance for glory in more specialised fields of warfare. There will also be a Training Camp for inexperienced players. 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 (£35 per night for a single room or £30 for a double room). Players wishing to stay on Thursday evening should book early as there is Soroptimists conference close by on the same weekend and rooms may be let out to them. 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, 24 Huggett Close, Leicester, England, LE4 7PY. Telephone (0116) 210 1798 (+44 116 210 1798 from outside the UK) or email [if@vftt.co.uk](mailto:if@vftt.co.uk).