

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

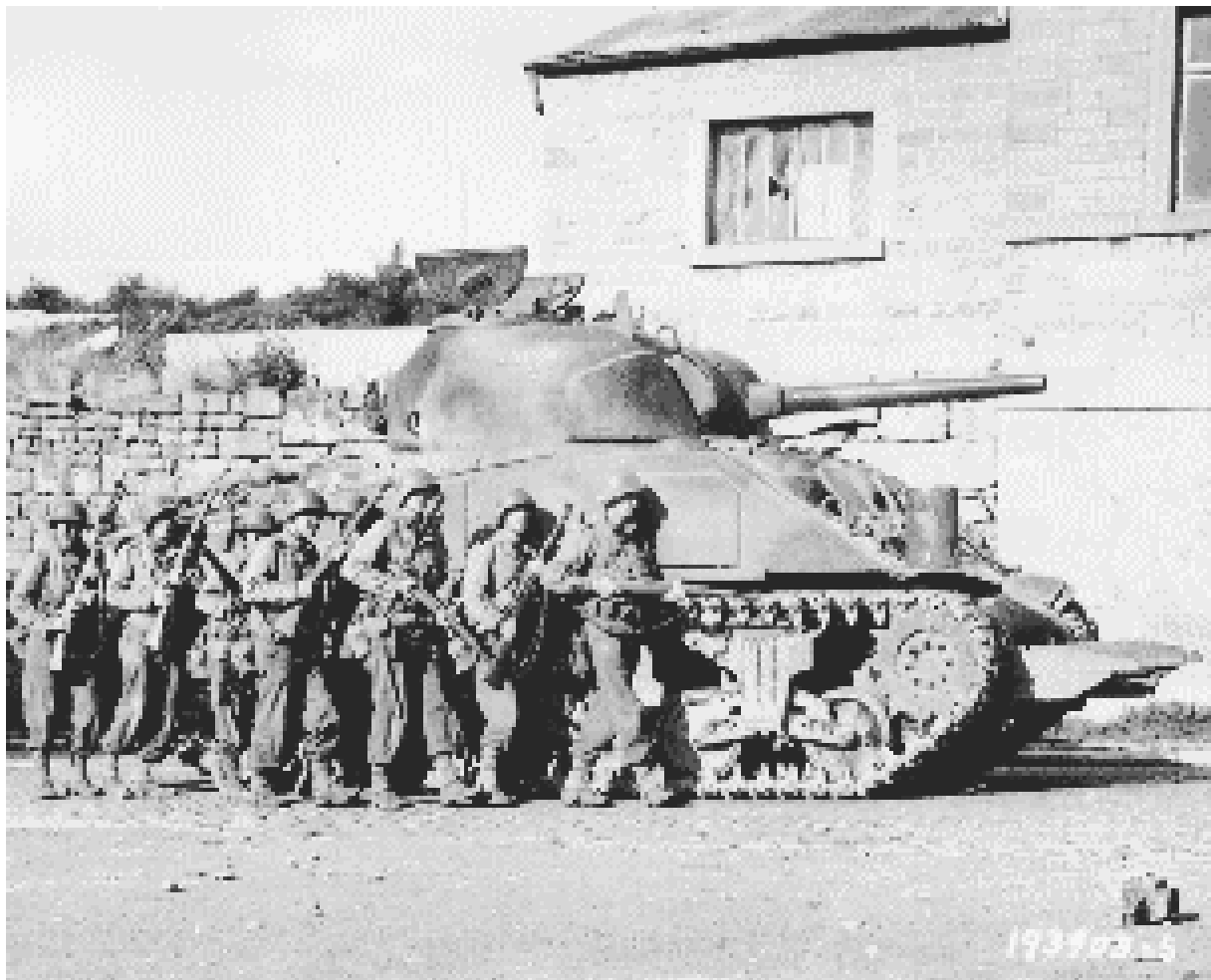
Britain's Premier ASL Journal

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NIGHT ACTIONS MATRIX - enter the night

THE ESSENTIAL ASOP - the most important steps of the SOP

THE WINTER WAR - book review

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COVER: American troops armoured assault with a Sherman.

THE ASL MAILING LIST

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

subscribe advanced-sl

You MUST use lower case letters!

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

PREP FIRE

Welcome to yet another *View From The Trenches*. A little later than planned but I spent the latter weeks of February and early March working away from home in Penrith – and staying in a village pub :-). Talk about hard work!! In fact with working away from home so much nowadays *VFTT* is likely to have a slightly erratic schedule for some time.

See you all at HEROES in a couple of weeks. Til then roll low and prosper.

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

Pete Phillipps

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 55 should be out at the beginning of May 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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INCOMING

MMP AIM AT NEWBIES

In shops any time now should be *ASL Starter Kit 1*. *ASLSKI* is aimed at new players, with a liberally illustrated 12 page rulebook written in a conversational style introducing the basics concepts of the infantry and terrain rules. *ASLSKI* is totally self-contained, with two geomorphic 8"x22" "ASL style" geomorphic mapboards on a heavy cardstock base and six scenarios using just the maps and counters provided in the module. The retail price will be \$24.00.

The rulebook is being reprinted now and should be available soon, with *Armies of Oblivion* due to be printed soon.

CRITICAL HIT

Shipping in April from Critical Hit is CH Magazine Volume 7, No. 2, a 10th anniversary compendium edition containing the best articles from previous issues and a dozen scenarios. The US price is \$19.95.

Also due to be shipped in April are several new scenario packs. *TIGERS TO THE FRONT!—Army Group North 1944* is a scenario pack covering the battles of Army Group North in Russia in the summer of 1944. It includes 10 new scenarios, a set of rules and a 22" x 34" map covering the Panther Line. *BATTLE OF THE BRACCHI HILLS—On the Road to Rome 1944* focuses on the battle for the Mount Bracciacchi Triangle during the battle for Rome. 10 scenarios are included, along with new rules and a 22" x 34" map of the Bracchi Hills region. Both will cost \$24.95.

BERLIN—Fall of the 3rd Reich is a detailed new historical module covering the battle for Berlin through 12 new scenarios. As well as two large linked mapsheets, the module includes two countersheets containing all the SMC, MMC, AFV and Gun counters needed for play, a total of 592 counters. As well as versions of the standard *ASL* counters there are also new counters for Red Banner squads, fanatic Hitler Youth, and Volksturm units. Also included is a rules booklet and Play Aid Card. The module will cost \$49.95.

Coming soon is *Finland at War Volume 1: JATKOSOTA* which contains 12 new scenarios depicting actions from the Continuation War offensive of 1941 through to the end of the war when Finland fought to eject German troops from their soil. Also included are two mounted 8" x 11" geomorphic maps which are geomorphic on

three sides so they can be used together in numerous combinations for half-board scenarios or combined to form one complete 8" x 22" geomorphic board, a sheet of 106 color die-cut counters, providing AFVs, guns, SMC, MMC (including new 5-5-8 squads) and Finnish T-H Hero counters, and a special rules booklet. The pack should cost \$29.95.

HOB BATTLE BOGAGE

Beyond the Beachhead is new scenario pack designed by Chas Smith featuring eight new scenarios set in Normandy. Also included are two new geomorphic mapboards depicting Normandy terrain, and two geomorphic overlays which will fit on either mapboard. The maps also feature new artwork for bogue making it possible to have hedges and Bogue on the same mapboard. No retail price has been announced yet.

LATEST BUNKER OUT

Dispatches From The Bunker 18 has begun shipping, following its release at the recent Nor'Easter Tournament. As well as an analysis of Hill 621 by Jim Torkelson, Carl Nogueira's Tactical Tips, and the usual features there are three new scenarios. 'Taking a Stand at Rosario', the latest in the Early Philippines Series, sees a large Japanese combined arms attack on a mixed Philippines defence including elite Philippine Scouts and Coastal Defence elements on Boards 46 & 49. 'Riding the Coattails' is a tournament sized scenario which sees a Slovak infantry company attacking a Polish Border Defence unit in the '39 Polish Campaign. The final scenario, 'The Killing Ground', is part of the Tunisian series and sees a German combined arms Kampfgruppe attacking dug in American infantry at El Guettar.

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



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

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.

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

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

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

Ω

FKaC Scenario Errata

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

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

A1 Tavronitis Bridge (93)

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

A2 Bofors Bashing (94)

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

A3 Descent Into Hell (95)

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

A15 Stand Fast the Guards (92)

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

In SSR 4, change dr to DR.

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

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

A22 The Crux of Calais (96)

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

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

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

A24 Regalbuto Ridge (100)

Shorten Game Length to 7 turns.

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

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

In the British balance replace 7 Turns with 6 Turns .

A35 Guards Attack (108)

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

A38 North Bank (110)

Add 8 ? to the British OB.

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

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

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

A40 Ad Hoc at Beaurains (91)

In Victory Conditions replace 35 VP with 30 VP .

A43 Probing Layforce (99)

In Victory Conditions replace 20 VP with 17 VP .

Reduce British OB by one 6-4-8.

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

A102 On Silent Wings (98)

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

G22 A Day By the Shore (103)

In the VC add assembled after Good Order .

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

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

G43 Kangaroo Hop (106)

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

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



The Scenarios of Intensive Fire 2003

Part 3 – The Rest Of The Ones I Didn't Play

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 post-script to some of these.



A104 In front of the Storm

This scenario is from the *ASL Annual 1996* which features a number of scenarios to use the French infantry counters and board 40 from *Croix De Guerre*, plus board 42 from *Action Pack 1*. Essentially the scenario is a point defence for the Germans and an armoured assault for the French. There are a few bells and whistles that add to the fun for both sides: mines, tanks, civilian interrogation, elite French colonial infantry and a bridge.

The board alignment is a little unusual resulting in some half hex woods, takes a little getting used to but only affects four hexes.

A104 German Set Up

At the game start you control the scenario's objective the 40I2/I3 bridge and the hexes immediately adjacent I1 and I4. Keep in view if you control a single one of those hexes you win. It is a remote possibility the French to misunderstand the Victory conditions bag the bridge and neglect to advance into 40I4. That cannot happen very often. In most games I'd remind the French of the need to occupy the hex on turn seven. That said would subsequently fight hard to stop that happening! So far so good, the mission becomes trickier when you consider the size and strength of the French forces.

The Spahis were recruited in North

Africa. In the First World War they served valiantly in the Trenches. Now there sons and grandsons face the Germans again. The enemy starts with twelve squads six Elite, and Six first line. An ELR of three is a good start for the French. Special rule 4 increases the broken side morale of French MMC. This has an impact on play. Firstly French troops will be easier to rally, and secondly broken units will be harder to kill by fire combat. The Spahis do fairly well for support weapons three LMGs' and a pair of MMGs' brings a lot of firepower to the party. Leadership is nothing special three Leaders, two 8-1s and a lone 7-0. Elite French squads has an inherent smoke exponent of 1, the prevailing wind generally hinders enemy smoke placement.

Smoke is very helpful when crossing open ground, particularly for the assault on the bridge. Fortunately the only smoke the enemy tanks can place is from crews or burning wrecks. The H35 is a reasonable tank for the period. It qualifies as a small target, with hull armour of 4 factors, turret armour rises to six, certainly resistant to 37L or ATR fire. A 37* gun is an asset in a close range fire fight, very useful against static targets. Although the best armour on the field by virtue of being the only tanks around, the H35 has some weaknesses. The coaxial MG is limited to a basic 2 IFT. The vehicles are subject to one man turret restrictions making the turret slower to turn and prohibiting use of the main armament when crew exposed. This helps as the tanks will almost always be buttoned up. At under six hexes range the basic to hit of the 37* vs an Infantry target is 8, this immediately falls to 7 for being buttoned up, and will drop lower for TEM and any hindrances. For example a concealed squad in a building can only be hit by snakes. There is better news, these tanks are slow. Ten movement factors is a handicap, made worse by effective loss of the main armament when crew exposed. If the French place a premium on speed and expose the crews to exploit the roads, you may have the chance to destroy a tank in close combat. Unless the CMG has been relocated to fire as an AA MG a H35 with exposed crew is without a manned functioning weapon. Against an unarmed tank you can move into the hex it occupies in the movement phase or without the requirement to take a PAATC. As the French would not have a functioning MG

the attack would gain a -1 modifier, and another -1 for CE status giving a basic to kill of seven, or better if you ambushed or qualify or street fighting.

Worth noting the French movement factor is red, so subject to mechanical reliability. Every time the tank attempt to move it must perform a TC. An original 12 immobilises the vehicle. It is important you insist this is done as an immobile tanks is less of a threat to you. Being radioless also hampers the French, agreed a NTC with a morale of 8 is likely to be passed, but very useful when it isn't, stopping a French unit that clearly wanted to move. If the French opt for platoon movement this is generally slower and will bunch the units together. Very important the lack of radios' force the H35s to enter as a single platoon.

To counter the French tanks you have a 37L anti tank gun, Anti tank rifle, Infantry and some Anti tanks mines. Your weakest tank killer is the ATR, a basic to kill of five, rises to seven at one hex range, just enough to penetrate the Hull, immobilise, cause shock or possible shock. I'd be very please to bag an H35, and would even settle for an immobilisation result. Deliberate immobilisation attempts are an option, but with small target size you will be looking for a very low number at most six, more often less than four, and remember it has to be a hull hit! Part of the units role is to cause fear. A nervous Frenchman might decide the ATR is a real threat and take measures to avoid it, exploit this if it happens.

The 37L gun is deadlier, a basic to kill of nine, rate of fire of three and a bore sighted location all help. Firing from an emplaced position it may take a few shots to kill an H35, you could get lucky with the first hit, chances are the French will try to prevent further shots, moving away is a good defence, hitting you with Infantry even better. If you kill a tank early in the game great, remember the gun can be moved, perhaps it should be if French infantry are massing for an attack. Against squads the 37L can do some damage, attempt this if all three tanks are out of the Battle, the gun is very close to the Infantry or it is part of a bright idea.

Chances are your Infantry will not encounter any crew exposed tanks. They may have chances for close combat attacks or CC reaction fire. When to attempt this requires careful judgement. If tanks are

closely supported by Infantry it might not be the best idea, when you have modifier in your favour, and no prospect of retribution in the near future it is open season for H35.

If you happen to capture a H35 or crew an abandoned one, its gun is not terribly effective against armour, but you may as well try it! Even if you gain little from the attempt its a story to amaze folk afterwards.

Other Anti tank weapons are more obstacles that targeted weapons systems, mines and the road block. The road block cannot destroy a tanks but sure can restrict movement. It can be used as a brick wall, and if you have a cunning plan for this that is a scenario winner go for it. If not place it to restrict enemy tank movement. At the start of the game you know the French can enter on or between 42A6 and 42Q10, and are heading for 40I1. Most tank drivers are reluctant to go through woods, and buildings, avoid ponds streams and marsh. With mines about movement may be restricted to road hexes. To restrict access to the bridge you might consider road hexes from 42H2 to 40I3. 40I1 takes some beating but think carefully before you decide. It is possible to remove roadblocks, doing this under fire though can be tricky.

At the game start you have eight factors of AP mines, four of Anti tank mines. You can exchange you anti personnel mines for another two Anti Tank mines which should be a nasty surprise for the H35s. The best place to spot mines is underneath tank tracks. One factor fields are workable, they have less chance of activation, but do the job if triggered and once known worry the enemy. As you cannot site mines in road hexes, your options are slightly limited but not too greatly. Either side of a road block is good, or behind the walls in E2, F2, favour locations you can cover with fire. A mixed mine field is nasty. The four spots I'd consider for mines are 40K1, G3, E2 and F2. Many alternatives are worth considering, the Orchard around C2 for instance of any open ground closer to the Bridge.

Anti personnel mines can effect vehicles, for an 8 factor field double one will blow the tracks off, anything else just reveals the presence of mines. If the tank continues to move forward it will be attacked again. AFV movement creates a trail break that may be used to avoid mines, conceivably the enemy could stop and reverse out. Not a bad result as it slows up the French plans for at least a turn. Given tanks may be moving in platoons this can be very disruptive. Against Infantry an unmodified eight IFT attack is a nasty surprise. It is a hefty attack and the Spahis will avoid the side if at all possible. Part of the value of mines is uncertainty, as there position becomes known

they become less powerful weapons. Don't expect too much from mines, a broken squad and a KO'd tank would be sweet, but roadbound French Tanks and nervous Infantry also help your cause.

I've mentioned the ATR and the use of Infantry against tanks. These are important elements of your defence, perhaps more important is how your Infantry compare to the attackers in quality and numbers. Four Elite squads and another four first line squads is not bad compared to the twelve the French field. A higher ELR of four and three Leaders helps as does the two LMGs, and bore sighted MMG you receive in addition to the ATR. Superficially the French have a 50% advantage in raw firepower over your troops in a stand up fight they would be expected to wear you down in a fire fight then march to the bridge within the seven turns available. The fire power disparity becomes very serious when you appreciate only part of your forces will be engaged by the French in any particular sector.

To win, you need seek the advantages terrain and concealment provide, and make some intelligent guesses as to the attack the French will develop. If you can it is helpful to units in Stone buildings with concealment, or at least in foxholes. Advancing French troops will likely be in or behind Orchards or brush, sometimes in buildings later in the game, or using armoured assault. In most cases the enemy will benefit from a 0 or 1 TEM, and be subject to FFNAM, this gives your shots a net 0 or -1, effectively moving the strength of your attacks one column to the right. In effect a four IFT attack with a -1 DRM bites about as hard as a six. Significantly the chances of a kill are raised. Most of the time KIA/K results are tripled, the chance of a morale check goes up about one in six. That is pretty good. French return fire is facing a +2 or +3 TEM, and reduced for advancing fire. A lone French squad has little chance of a result, massed firepower is more threatening. In the Final fire phase German concealed units out of LOS of French troops take shots at broken units without losing concealment. In the following prep fire phase you can bug out if losing, stand and fight if facing broken squads and a few half squads. That is sort of how, and a very rosy how at that, what's is missing is where, a much trickier problem.

There are significant risks associated with moving tanks through woods. There is a serious risk of bog, and the MP penalties to consider. I would be happy to predict no French tanks will enter woods hexes to enter play. I would expect either all tanks to enter at A5/A6, or I10. Armoured Assault movement is practical and might be used. Your first decision is should you oppose move-

ment along these axis.

To contest the A5/A6 entry area a platoon sized force organised around F3 could work, for example a squad in building F3, and others in E4 and D3. The Unit in D3 might appreciate a fox hole. A LMG in E4 can set up a fire lane to A6 as soon as any unit enters. A squad or half squad in the A4 woods should wait for units entering on A5 or fire in the Final fire phase. This platoon needs a Leader, maybe the 8-1, maybe the 8-0 with an Anti tank Rifle in F3 to create a stack that looks an awful lot like a MMG position. Adding the 37L to this sector is a gamble, it will look pretty silly if the tanks arrive elsewhere and will be vulnerable to close range attack by the Spahis. you can opt for a smaller force, a single unit in A4 might be enough, one in E4 as good. What you decide on is a matter of choice. These units are mobile, they can fall back to the bridge, shift to another sector or even stay in place and direct fire on the French. F3 is a good spot to delay troops entering on I10, but don't stick around if being hit by 37mm HE, and increasingly powerful musketry.

The second platoon position is around the J2 woods. Stone buildings in I3 and J3 are garrisoned with a squad each. From I3 Fire towards I10 hampered by Orchard. Bore sighting can offset this a little. If the 9-2 leader and the MMG are used a six or eight IFT attack at -2 is possible. Even using a LMG and squad you shoot a six IFT attack. fairly scary. Bore sighting should only be good for a few shots, but enjoy it if the French are determined to occupy the hex. Building J3 is nearly as good, bore sight H7 and expect a target soon. A third squad in J2 will not get a shot on turn one but can change places with another squad to offer a concealed target to the Frenchies.

That accounts for roughly six or seven of your squads. Leaving about a squad or two, the 37L gun, a LMG or MMG and another Leader. The gun has a lot of choices. It could set up to provide close support for either platoon, in ambush almost anywhere on the board or way back on board 40 taking long range shots at the French. Ambush gains a limited amount in this scenario. The side and rear armour of an H35 is the same! being close gives a +1 or +2 to kills, with a greater vulnerability to counter measures. By starting on Hill 520 on board 40, your to kill numbers drop by just one compared to shots at two or less hexes range. To hit numbers against a H35 at 13-18 hexes range fall to 7, due to small target size, and small gun size being cancelled out by your long barrel. Against a moving target this will drop to 5, but pick up if you gain acquisition or the tank stops. Return fire is limited. CMG will be halved, to hit numbers start very low start-



ing with improbable, rising to three with acquisition! Woods hex 40I7 is definitely worth considering, K7, L7 nearly as good. A gun duel with the tanks must surely delay their forward movement whilst making the Spahis infantry attack harder. Take your time selecting a gun position it is important. Nearly forgot, the French may group their machine guns and use them against the Gun crew at long range. If it happens consider using HE, and give thought to skulking.

Starting a MMG on board 40 is handicapped by range. Otherwise 40I7, K7 or L7 would be ideal location for a foxhole squad or half squad, MMG and Leader. Range restrictions half fire, and you cannot bore sight a location out of range or line of sight. With shorter range a forward position is tempting. Building F3 has an appeal, J3, I3 are also good. When bore sighting give thought to buildings', D5 and H5 will attract visitors'. Hitting these with a +1 attack instead of +3 makes a big difference.

Definitely a gamble starting a squad or half squad with an LMG in a foxhole in 40I3 ready to spit death down the 40I1-42I2 road. Maybe this reduces your firepower frontally too much. If you are sold on the idea, use the guys to dig more foxholes ready to receive any retreating units later in the game or the gun crew if it disables the gun.

A couple of loose ends, Kindling is an option. On the upside burning terrain is inaccessible, the cons are the effort involved and smoke may provide cover for the enemy. Interrogation can only happen when a unit is captured. It creates a chance of mines or concealed/hidden units being revealed but by the time it happens not too much will be concealed. Revealing the mines is irksome, particularly if everything is in the same place but not a match winning event.

The idea of wiping out hordes of attackers with superlative gunnery, and machine gun fire has an appeal. It is just about possible to win by greatly reducing the French forces, more likely they will not reach the Bridge in the time available.

More loose ends. If you need to fall back a foxhole in I1 in front of a roadblock helps you but doesn't give the French much. The woods hexes in 40G1, H0 and H1 are pencilled in for a last stand on the West Bank, use any foxhole you have spare there. Don't be surprised by French Infantry moving through the woods on the Southern flank, running down the paths to avoid a direct approach. You can relocate some of your forces ahead of him, and gain from the delay extra movement causes him.

I've a nagging doubt about the size of the force on Hill 520, maybe more should start there, perhaps as much as two or three squads. Certainly with the balance I'd put

another half squad there as sniper bait, and Ad Hoc gun crew. Something to consider is placing the 9-2 Leader with a squad and MMC in the same hex as the hidden gun. At the risk of presenting a concentrated target the gun crew benefit from the Leadership for morale checks and rallying. Not everyone's cup of tea but worth a thought.

This scenario can be a lot of fun, if the French arrive using armoured assault using the routes you predicted and proceed to dawdle you deserve to win. Watch out for a fast paced attack that deviates ever so slightly from what you are expecting the French can give you a kicking if they develop fire bases and shoot you out of position, before rounding up prisoners at the Rivers edge, forcing your men to remove the road block and driving H35s' over the bridge to claim victory.

Finally, remember your mission is to defend the bridge, your own casualties do not matter so long as the bridge or its immediate approaches are under your control. Draw some inspiration from the scenario aftermath, with only a half squad and Leader surviving.

A104 French set up and attack

The Victory conditions are simple you win by controlling hexes 40I1, I2, I3, and I4. These are a single lane Stone Bridge in I2 and I3, and the hexes immediately adjacent to them. Good news is there is no casualty cap.

With no enemy forces present you could run or drive down the A5/A6 or I10 roads for a win in just two turns. With enemy forces present the mission is more difficult. Eight enemy squads are split equally between 1st Line and Elite. An ELR of four is annoying as most failed morale checks will not be accompanied by ELR replacement. The Elite squads are 5-4-8s' slightly harder to beat in close combat due to the extra factor. They also qualify for the assault fire bonus which can be used when falling back. German Leadership is very good, three Leaders, including a 9-2. The Krauts do fairly well for support weapons a MMG, two LMGs and even an ATR. All of these can just about be used to take on your H35 tanks, at short range an MG can manage a Stun, a rear shot can eliminate on a two DR. Nearly forgot a Stun result against a one man turret results in a recall. More often the support weapons will be used against Infantry targets. At normal ranges an elite squad teamed with an LMG can choose between a combined 8 IFT attack, combined spraying fire to cover two hexes with 4 IFT attacks, a split 4 IFT and 2 IFT attack which can also be used for spraying fire. Potentially single unit can deliver some firepower to between one and four hexes, using first fire or prep fire. If final fire results then even more dam-

age is possible. Admittedly these are weak attacks, if you are in hard cover they will not be effective but this is worth considering during any planned advance. The ATR will most likely be used against Armour, it can be used for long range fire and to move the elite squads firepower up to the 6 IFT column. More factors to consider, the MMG can bore sight giving a -2 DRM for attacks, a good argument against stacking, factoring in the 9-2 Leader to that attack is a nightmare. Plenty to consider, time for some calming thoughts. Enemy SAN is just 2, limiting the potential for sniper attacks, your SAN of 3 triples the chances of your sniper being activated. Don't forget cowering, Leaderless attacks will cower on doubles evaporating low IFT attacks and taking the sting out of others.

Fortifications are key to the Germans defences. The first to consider is the mines factors allocated. The 8 factors of AP mines can be used as a single field or exchanged for two more AT mine factors. An 8 Factor field can just about blow the tracks off a H35, vs Infantry expect a morale check or the odd KIA/K result. Sooner or later you will find the mines, by all means search if you want, offsetting this against time pressures. The AT mines are more deadly, if you activate an AT mine you will lose a tank on a DR of six or less, any other result is an immobilisation. you can totally eliminate this risk by sticking to road hexes or Terrain West of the 42A6, Q4 road. This would be less of a restriction without the road block. The road block limits tank movement options. Early in the game it will not have much impact, later as you approach the bridge half expect to find it blocking the road and tempting you to go around it.

Most enemy units begin play concealed. The mines and road block are hidden as is the 37L gun. Although the ATR can immobilise an H35, and might even kill one, the 37L gun is a more effective anti tank weapon the must be respected. your Hull armour is four, and turret armour six, against this the 37L has a basic to kill of nine modified to three or five. Those are very credible to kill numbers. The 37L begins the game hidden and really could be anywhere in the German set up area. The first time it fires will probably be your first indication of where it is. If you lose a tank finding out this is a bit upsetting. Try to counter the threat by line of sight, moving out of the 37Ls sight is the strongest possible defence. A slugger match between the H35s and the gun deserves to go the Germans way, it is better to destroy the gun with IFT attacks from your Infantry or MMGs. The gun really can be anywhere, guarding a single flank, in a building by the crossroads, even on board 40 say on hill 520, bore sighted and waiting for a

shot. You can get lucky, the gun can malfunction on the first shot, it can be poorly placed not sighted to your units or a long shot counter measure gets lucky, for example a bounding fire shot from a 37* tank gun does the improbable and ices the gun and crew. More often Infantry fire must do the job. If the Gun is on board 40 might be a job for the sniper, relocate on a 2 DR and hope for the best, if it is the only unit over there it will be the only eligible target, a PIN result is not massively helpful but a break definitely creates opportunities.

If the entire enemy OB began the game hidden I don't think your troops would be strong enough to win comfortably or easily. Fortunately only part of the German OB is hidden and you can make some reasonable estimates as to the strength and dispositions of the Infantry forces. This requires a bit of guess work but can be surprisingly accurate. The first thing to look for is negative evidence. Any empty hex clearly doesn't contain Infantry! So you'll know if there are any German units on the Eastern bank of the River of Hill 520, or covering the Southern Flank. Accepted the 37mm Gun could be there, but until it fires or you find it keep it in view but don't let it dominate this stage of planning. Almost certainly some units will be in or around building 40J3 and I3, another little group around building 40F3, and maybe some troops close to the woods in 40A4 and B4. Beginning play with eight squads the Germans are free to deploy one squad. By counting counters you can tell if he has done this, the key word is can, and if you don't want to you do not have to! Next look for clusters of units. Any grouping should contain a Leader. If it does not well it messes up your estimation of the enemy's position but will be easier to deal with later when the Germans are trying to self rally under fire. Looking at a group you can probably guess if a Leader, MG and squad or half squad is one of the stacks. Anything like a Death star of three squads, all three MGs and the 9-2 will be rather obvious. The Krauts can pull a few tricks. The ATR looks like a MG, a Leader on it's own looks like a squad, two half squads look like a squad and MG. With effort the enemy can deliberate confuse you, in some games it will happen, in most set up will be to exploit crucial defensive characteristics. Some things are certain. A single counter will not have a MMG and Mr 9-2 with it, the MGs and ATR need MMC to fire them, more than nine stacks suggest a Leader alone in a hex. Initial reconnaissance should be fairly accurate, build on this assessment as play progresses. Learn where the MMG is, the 9-2 Leader and even squad types as they are revealed. This all helps to plan how to develop your attack.

When planning your attack it helps to understand the strengths and composition of your own forces. Begin by reading the Chapter H notes for the H35s. These three tanks are lightly armoured, but invulnerable to small arms fire beyond an extremely lucky MG shot. They need to be wary of the 37L gun, mines, prolonged MG or ATR fire and close assaulting Infantry. Their main role is to provide cover for assaulting troops, and to wrinkle out stubborn defenders by short range 37* fire. As a consequence of a one man turret the CMG and 37* is not usable when crew exposed, any MA shots will always attract a +1 modifier. Against troops in a building at six hexes to three hexes range your to hit roll will be eight, less one for being buttoned up and three for TEM giving a to hit of four or less. Once you acquire acquisition this improves to a six or less forcing the German to consider a retreat. This is great if it drives him out of say J3, I3 or F3 giving you leverage to move forwards and hit the next line of defence. Obviously this is not going to work if the 37L takes the tank out so be careful moving into a fire position defend yourself by line of sight if you can. The H35s do have weaknesses. Mechanical reliability should not be a big worry. Every time you expend a start move you run the risk of immediate immobilisation on a natural 12 DR. If moving as a platoon the risk is split between the other vehicles, with a finite chance of all three vehicles synchronising immobilisation. not certain but the chances of two vehicle breaking down are one in six for two tanks, slightly more than that for three out of two, and all three hovers around one in thirty six. Bear in mind a DR of twelve is needed to trigger the possibilities. to put your mind at rest the chance of all three tanks moving as a platoon being immobilised simultaneously is around one in one thousand two hundred and ninety six or there abouts. Statistically that is very unlikely. For the really nervous this will not happen on turn one, and is not an issue if you stay in motion. Being radio-less requires a TC for independently moving H35. With an elite squad morale of eight, this TC should be passed most of the time. Platoon movement is generally more reliable. The most effective range for your tanks is two hexes. At one hex range Infantry can hit back harder and it is a risk to be positioned so close to the enemy. Overruns are an option. It is a quick way to get into a building and effective against broken units. H35 overrun strength is not impressive, I calculate it to be 6 IFT with modifiers for TEM and target status. Possibly there is a way to exploit AP10 ammunition. AT rounds are very effective against Guns, and even work against Infantry. He rounds attack on the 4 IFT column,

AT isn't that far away with a 2 IFT attack. worth doing if the to hit is exactly 10 against any target, or generally against a gun.

If the 37* rolls doubles any hits become multiple hits pick the roll that best suits. Kill results are favourite, think it through first though. If you take enough shots you will malfunction a gun. A gacked repair roll makes a tank subject to recall, each attempted repair has a one in six chance of doing this. Think carefully, is a tank with a malfunctioned gun more useful than a recalled one? If already immobilised, a disabled main armament forces you to bail out. adding a vehicle crew to the fight. If you lose a tank try to bail out, with a CS of two this is difficult so be pleased if you make it. Use the Tank as cover, burning wrecks are very useful in this respect, with a mild breeze the smoke will drift and may be between you and the enemy giving you some useful cover.

The three tanks are useful and important units. In addition you start with twelve Infantry squads and three Leaders. Leadership is nothing too special two 8-1s and a single 7-0. Nothing special but good enough for the job. The squads are evenly split between first line and Elite. Note broken side morale is raised by one which really helps rallying and defence against IFT attacks on broken units. The Infantry bring two MMGs and a further three LMGs on board. Their weaknesses are ELR and low smoke exponents. Their strengths well certainly numbers, and probably raw firepower. On turn one the Spahis outnumber the Germans twelve to eight in squads, 62 to 47 in terms of raw firepower. If the French can gain better terrain to fight an even fire fight they should win.

The map alignment is a bit unusual, creating a few unusual half hex woods, this should not have a big impact on play though. My first mistakes preparing for play were confusion about single lane bridges and grainfields. The ASLRB has the answers, grain is not in season, at present the MF penalty applies as the fields are ploughed and planted with crops but not high enough to provide a hindrance. For the German some concealment terrain is lost. For the French movement is slowed and some promising avenues of approach become death traps! Entering through the 40D6 grainfield becomes less attractive, and a move along the Southern edge of the board trickier. For me the most annoying bit of grain is in I6 a month later with grain in season it would provide a hindrance to fire from I3 to I9/I8. The single lane bridge I'd imagined being a big problem for movement, fortunately it isn't but with a road block you might not ever get to cross it with a Tank! Late in the game the bridge is a problem. without armoured support Infan-



try are very exposed on the bridge to fire from the Eastern Bank. Fire lanes are particularly painful. A squad in a foxhole with an LMG at ground level in I3 can place a fire lane along the bridge making it very difficult to cross with the prospect of PBF in I4. If the Germans have held back the MMG entry become easier but crossing the bridge very difficult. An MG in I6 or I7 can see more on board 42, offset against less ability to place a fire lane. If the German has plans to allow entry but contest the bridge crossing he may start the scenario with significant forces on board 40. A second option could be to retreat from I3/J3 buildings on turn one running back over the bridge. I'm not sure this is the way for the Germans to win. If the West Bank is overrun quickly with little loss, the problem of crossing the bridge might be solved by removing the roadblock and assault movement. Once a tank is able to cross the bridge your winning chances grow.

So, how to attack. The basic plan is to move onboard, overcome blocking forces then drive/assault across the bridge. Being radioless the H35s' must enter as a single platoon. There are two feasible entry points for Armour which allow fast movement. The A5/A6 road, and the I10 road. If you accept delay caused by moving through brush, ploughed fields or over hedges there are other routes. Not too bad an alternative the Orchards in F9, G10. The A5/A6 road can be interdicted. If enemy infantry are in the A4/B4 woods sending tanks' in is a risk. If the ATG is also there you could lose a tank very quickly. As the gun is hidden a precaution you could take is to deploy a squad and enter a half squad on A5, move into A4 looking for the gun, then CX to B4 hoping you do not find a minefield! If the gun is present in either woods hex it will be occupied by the crew, and swamped by any other infantry you commit to that flank. If you find nothing move forwards swiftly with any accompanying Infantry. Ok the gun can appear in C4 or a number of other places and take a credible shot but if the tank goes it is in a more useful spot than the board edge. If enemy counters are plentiful on the Northern sector a direct armoured approach may be reckless. Instead assault using Infantry occupying woods, buildings and brush then shooting in successive turns. If you can break or destroy a couple of squads a turn the German defences will collapse.

Plan B is to enter the tanks on I10. They can reach D5 and engage enemy forward positions. If the ATG opens up and retains ROF, the best defence is line of sight.

The Spahis have many choices for entry. Coming in through the Southern woodlands is the least attractive option. The Northern and Western Broad edges are more

suitable. If the A5/A6 road is covered by concealed units, bring a force on to engage them with fire or at least hold them in place is valuable. Maybe three squads and a Leader, plus a LMG or MMG. There are no dummy stacks, and the worst that could happen is you engage a pair of half squads. The rest of your troops can arrive along the I10 road, or move through the broken terrain North of the road. Avoid moving in stacks, think before you CX, and be careful with your Leaders. Although it would be nice to get into position on turn one and start blazing away at the enemy, I suspect your first attacking positions will take two turns to reach. enjoy any action that occurs before then but don't feel the turn is wasted if you do not shoot much.

In the second and third turns you will attack the enemies front line and should break through fairly quickly. If you are causing some casualties you are winning. An average of just over half a squad per turn will reduce the Germans to a very small force late in the game. If you can trade your own units off for this at a favourable rate expect to win.

A few loose ends. Gain ground when you can. Use inherent smoke or at least try for it when it is useful. Take prisoners. Interrogation is in effect, it might reveal mines or strip units of concealment, very helpful to your cause. I'd recommend giving quarter. Prisoners will supply information and might be taken in sufficient numbers to remove the roadblock. I've a suspicion this contravenes the Geneva convention and might prove a mistake if subject to enemy fire. The idea of encircling enemy units appeals, without the mines and ATG tanks could achieve this. Keep the idea in reserve it really helps when you can pull it off.

The fight for the Western bank should be exciting. It will not always go the way you want it, but weight of numbers and armoured support will tell. The next objective is to cross the bridge. If the enemy cannot oppose your move this may just be a case of CXing a unit on turn seven. If enemy units are still active this will not be so easy. Given a choice you do not want to spend turn seven running through four hexes of residual fire and/or fire lanes to be robbed of Victory by bad luck. any remaining tanks are superb for the job. If they make it great, if they fail their loss will create a wreck and might provide smoke to cover any further moves. A turn seven scramble is kind of exciting, less flamboyant but perhaps more skill full being closer to a win in turns five or six. Watch out for some enemy units moving on to the Bridge or into I4 late in the game to win you must dislodge them, just being in CC or Melee is not quite enough.

This can be a tough game. The enemy

mines, 9-2, and 37L are all worrying, but numbers, high morale and a well paced attack should earn a win.

A104 Conclusion

I've a nagging doubt the Germans can win by massing on board 40, happily digging foxholes and covering the bridge and its immediate approaches with fire power. Even a compromise of a platoon on the Western Bank could give the French a bad time. That said suspect there is more fun to be had trying to defend the Western bank with a serious force, and if there is any justice a greater chance of a win.

The attacker has a harder job to do, breaking through a serious force and gaining the far bank in the face of strong opposition. This becomes extremely difficult for the French if all the tanks are destroyed, extremely difficult for the German if none are!

Perhaps the key to this scenario is terrain, not so much line of sight as manoeuvre to place yourself in higher TEM terrain than your opponent to give the best chance of winning a fire fight.

This is not a bad choice for Saturday afternoon, and is the only one that doesn't include Air support.

A104 After The Action

Quite a few people played this scenario at the Tournament with a fair few German defenders opting for setting up some forces on the Western bank. If the French attack was fast paced and driven forward with vigour they would win. Most games I heard of where pretty close with exciting finales.

Again another balanced scenario popular with the Tournament players credit to the organisers.



J9 A Stiff Fight

This scenario appeared in the first *ASL Journal*, alongside some blinding articles on Smoke, (or rather SMOKE), tin can tanks and jungle fighting. The jungle article is worth a read before playing "A Stiff Fight", as are parts of Chapter G and of course the chap-

ter H notes for the CHI-HA.

As the Japanese are on the offensive this isn't a hard core PTO battle with masses of hidden units and fortifications'. Here we have a delaying action fighting against an armour supported probe. Part of the attraction is the British OB consists of Ghurkhas', troops with an international reputation which is well deserved.

J9 British Set Up

For the Ghurkhas' to win they must have an unbroken squad or half squad on or adjacent to a road hex between T5 and CC6. Take note of Special rule 2 which explains the Y10 to X6 road depiction is a path. The good news is this is a wide strip of territory that is not easy for the Japanese to defend. The Victory conditions also leave some scope for you to claim victory if a unit in melee or close combat, or even a berserk unit occupies a road. If the Japs take a Ghurkha prisoner in close combat (why?), try claiming Victory if the MMC ends up on or adjacent to the road.

Ghurkhas' are excellent troops. As British Elite troops they do not cower which is an underrated strength. Covering occurs for troops firing without Leadership on doubles, that is for every sixth attack. This degrades the attack made, and some of the time stops subsequent first fire. Not covering raises the strength of a British force. An ELR or five, plus Elite morale build on a good start, a smoke exponent of two are not bad. Better yet the Ghurkhas' excel at close combat. If they are the ATTACKER or ambush the Japs they may declare close combat and are entitled to a -1 modifier for this. As commandos the Ghurkhas' are stealthy always useful in Jungle terrain. Legendary fighters the Ghurkhas' rarely surrender even if encircled or surrounded, instead they will either low crawl or be eliminated. In "A stiff fight" you start with three 6-4-8 squads and another four 4-5-8s'. The former have a fire power advantage the latter are longer ranged, both are good troops. Leadership is not too bad an 8-0 and 7-0 Leaders nothing too special, but the good news is you do get two Leaders which is of course better than just one. The support weapons allocation is good, four Bren guns and a pair of Boys Anti Tank rifles. The Bren was a well respected weapon in the British Army, with a full magazine it was a heavy weapon but could and occasionally was fired single handed, that is using just one hand. It attacks with a fire power of two and rate. This early in the war a Bren can serve as an Anti Tank weapon. Not a good idea when Infantry targets abound, but if suddenly adjacent to a tank, a shot has a good chance of a hit and will pit a to kill of four increased to five or six by range against

armour factors of four or less. The Boys Anti Tank rifle is remembered by everyone who fired it! Weighing 36lbs compared to about 22lbs for a Bren it was a difficult weapon to shoot. It remained in service long after the war, and my Dad fired one on a rifle range during his National Service in the 1950s, in part to improve marksmanship but it also served to make the Bren seem lighter and Lee Enfield rifle easier to shoot. During WW2 it served as an early war anti tank weapon. A basic to kill of six requires some optimism against the frontal armour of a CHI-HA which will be three or four AF. Range helps but barring a critical hit your to kill roll will be five at best, with a possible shock roll on a six. Every second or third shot should be effective, so to take out all three tanks you need at least three shots but probably something more like eight or nine hits. The Boys can be used against Infantry, it was not designed for target shooting but any hit would disable a man, and near misses tended to demoralise anyone targeted.

Aside from Infantry, Leaders and support weapons, you start the game with four wire counters. A restriction under scenario rule three limits the placement of wire counters on roads to two. This is a bit inconvenient as the wire not only slows Infantry it can bog tanks. The CHI-HA is awarded low ground pressure in the game so a DR or ten or more will result in bog. A chain of four Wire hexes could be expected to slow or disrupt tank movement, but you are restricted to two hexes or wire on roads. Even so the wire you do receive is very useful. As PTO is in effect wire is not always revealed until its hex is entered or you expend extra movement points to enter or leave a wire hex. You have the option of recording wire using HIP but only in Jungle Kunai or Bamboo hexes. This can be helpful for slowing an enemies attack.

The enemy does need slowing! Eighth enemy squads are attacking split equally between Elite and 1st Line troops. They are Stealthy and can use smoke grenades when full strength. Unfortunately Elite squads have a slim chance of WP which is very useful for stripping concealment and occasionally breaking or pinning units. In support the Japs have three LMGs, all B11 weapons but effective. The enemy has a single 50mm Mortar, an asset in Jungle fighting. The Mortar has Smoke and WP ammunition, and its HE rounds are effective airbursting against troops in Jungle or Bamboo. Remind your opponent he cannot fire the Mortar in Dense Jungle or Jungle road hexes. More support comes from a pair of MMG, complete with crews. The MMGs are not ideal on the offensive in Jungle, but your opponent will find uses for them. Probably more worrying are the Jap

Leaders, a 9-1 and 9-0. With Leaders Japanese troops can move faster, and can be more resistant to fire combat. With no casualty cap in place the enemy will be unconcerned with the fate of any of his units. watch out for Banzai attacks. Even a Jap SMC can launch one. In Jungle terrain you should expect some attacks, very effective when you are pinned, or covered in smoke as it almost guarantees hand to hand combat.

The remaining Japanese units are M97A or CHI-HAs. A very reasonable early war tank. It is fast with 14 movement points, reasonable armour, a smoke discharger and a decent gun for Infantry support which benefits from rate. A slight problem is the slow turret, a real handicap in more open terrain, less of an issue in this scenario. The lack of a radio is serious and has a big impact on play. CHI-HA tanks must enter as a platoon, and if wishing to move independently in subsequent turns must pass an NTC with a morale of 8. The BMG armament is not expected to do much damage, the 57mm Gun is a deal more dangerous. At short range with acquisition it can wipe out your units very quickly. Against the AFVs you do have the ATRs and perhaps the Brens, if you have to close combat can do the job. Ideally you do not want to lose units taking out the tanks if you can possibly avoid it.

With overcast conditions in play it might start to rain. Good news as it restricts the use of Infantry smoke or the CHI-HAs smoke dischargers. With heavy rain a +1 LV hindrance applies to short range fire attacks which generally hinders defence.

There is a lot of PTO terrain present, swamp, Kunai, Bamboo and Jungle, with a single road, a few paths, ponds, and open ground. The Jungle is dense which confers a +2 TEM except vs. the Mortar where air burst applies. In Jungle road hexes normal stacking limits apply but without a road stacking is limited down to two squads. Even during daylight you can stray in interior Jungle hexes. For stealthy troops the chances are slim, perhaps worth remembering if Japanese second line or conscript units appear. There is a rule G.3 that restricts fire groups in Jungle, Kunai, Swamp or Bamboo. Pretty much units in the restricted terrain can't form Fire groups with other troops in restricted terrain. This can be a big problem when you are trying to take out troops in high TEM terrain but not a massive inconvenience for a short range fire fight. One rule that does hurt Dense Jungle is inherent terrain so hexsides have the potential to restrict line of sight. This can be very annoying and you must be careful when checking line of sight.

Kunai also imposes fire group restrictions. It is a lot like grain, but always in season and with a greater effect on move-



ment. Other than the small chance of straying it is as quick to move through Kunai than Jungle. Other considerations are it doesn't cause air burst, and has a TEM of zero. The interesting Kunai on the map is mostly North or Row Y. There is a patch in O6, O7 that assists Japanese entry and two other swathes further South in U9, V9 and W3, W4, X2. Both of these areas can be exploited to catch the Japanese in low TEM cover as they move south.

Bamboo is more difficult to enter. It can cause vehicles to bog and can only be entered by minimum move, low crawl of advance vs Difficult terrain. Against IFT attacks it offers a +1 TEM, but the tank gun will benefit from a -1 TEM due to the effects of explosives on bamboo. Mortar fire will qualify for airbursts but are still resolved with a -1 TEM. Bamboo is subject to a two squad stacking limit, and cannot form multi hex firegroups with other restricted terrain types. Most of the interesting Bamboo is north of row Y. There is a Patch in S8 that cannot be overrun by tanks or easily advanced into on turn one. Further East in U3 is another clump, perhaps less useful for a defensive position but serves to slow enemy movement. A very interesting cluster of Bamboo covers Y3, Y4 and Z3 with paths through Y3 and Z3. As long as a Tank Gun or Mortar do not start plastering the area with HE this can be a touch position to capture. Chances are the Japs would seek to use firepower to achieve that.

Swamp is a lot like Marsh with big trees stuck in it. Again there are restrictions on firegroups. The CHI-HAs are prohibited entry and must check for bog if moving adjacent. Infantry can move through swamp. This is slow but very effective if it gets you somewhere important that the enemy has not defended.

There are a number of small ponds dotted around. Obstacles to movement they do create some line of sight opportunities but not many! Palm trees are a lot like in season Orchards, inherent terrain and neither good nor bad. They do allow easy movement for tanks and Infantry can flit through them with some protection from FFMO at least.

Swamp, bog hexes adjacent to swamp, jungle, bamboo and ponds channel the enemy tanks. The enemy enters along the northern edge, but cannot drive through the pond in P2. Entry east of P3 is frustrated by jungle and swamp. It can be done but units will have to move towards P4 to have any real impact on the game unless driving through jungle is a big part of the Jap plan. Further west, well lots of good spots to enter, very few lead south. Swamp in G10 and the surrounding marsh threaten bog checks. Sooner

or later any tank planning on moving south will likely pass through R5. If it doesn't well there is a prospect of a tank becoming bogged or even immobilised moving past swamp or through jungle or bamboo. Most tanks will be driven down the P5 to GG6 road. Does this help a lot? Well perhaps not. The ATR are not able to bore sight and will not hit harder just because the route of the tanks is strongly suspected. A bigger worry is hordes of Japanese Infantry quite like their tanks and may push south ahead of them pushing you back further into the jungle.

Terrain is pretty important in this scenario. A good look at Chapter G before and during play will help. You are on your way to better performance if you get interested in the Map. Start with the obvious stuff like where the road is. Then look for areas impassable to tanks or difficult for tanks. Next try to find a series of defensive positions to oppose Japanese entry, and the IJAs subsequent advance. After that you need fighting positions to complete the middle part of the game and for a finale spots from which to contest road control.

None of the above is easy to do, a certain amount depends on your opponents planned advance and a bit of luck will play a part. In organising your defence I think there is a strong case for establishing a front line on turn one and seeking to oppose Japanese entry. OK maybe I'm wrong and keeping some troops back to dig foxholes is a better bet but I can't see it.

You can start on or South of row T. Useful locations are Jungle hexes T5, T6, T8 and T9 that confer concealment and give +2 TEM protection. T5 is a bit vulnerable to overrun but not excessively. Palm tree in T3 and T4 are not ideal but worth a look if you want to spread across the board a bit. There is a chance of Jap Infantry heading for the S1,S2,T1 marsh a squad in U2 makes this less attractive but weakens your opposition to Turn one entry elsewhere. You can use wire to pad out the defences. A wire counter in T5, and/or T9 with your troops under it, stop the Japanese gaining use of the Path or road they contain and might just bog a tank or frustrate a Banzaing Jap. Unfortunately once place wire cannot be moved and you are limited to placement in two road hexes maximum.

My best guess is the Japs will attack with the armour supported by most of the Infantry down the P5 road. A secondary attack may be launched towards T8,T9 but I could be wrong! Try to meet tanks with the ATRs, Infantry with hefty attacks catching the Japs in stacks and benefiting from low TEM or hindrances. You might bag a tank and maybe step reduce a few Infantry for little or no loss yourself. Not a bad start.

Next turn is harder. Stay and fight or fall back or a bit of both. If you fight decide pick your targets carefully. Hit the tanks if you can and consider moving units that have been acquired or face massed IFT attacks. Even holding the front line you can manoeuvre to exploit lines of sight and limit the number of enemy troops you fight.

Making use of skulking is part of the game system. A bit difficult, well maybe not possible in wire hexes but elsewhere practical. A full blooded withdrawal may be in order if you have been unlucky in a fire fight or it suits your style of play. Again you have options falling back as far as you can or just enough to force the Japs to use CX to catch you. When falling back try to exploit the Kunai patches seeking to catch the enemy moving through them at speed and unconcealed or a first and subsequent fire attack at -1 for FFNAM. The road is jolly important. If the Japs control it they can split your remaining troops in two and concentrate against either flank in turn to wipe out your small force. Try to discourage movement down the road, stop or discourage tanks with the ATR, Infantry with 6-4-8 squads.

Which all sounds very easy. Main problem is your force is small just Seven squads. Deploying can help a bit later in the game but maybe not first thing. If your front becomes extended gaps will appear and there are enough Japs about to make a small gap bigger.

Don't be too afraid of melee, if you are likely to ambush you have an advantage and if you ice a couple of squads early in the game suddenly your numerical problems are alleviated.

The opening turn should be fun. the next couple of turns will go your way some of the time. As you enter the closing stages of the game the fight is harder. The wire will have been found. You will have suffered casualties and the Japanese will be right in the ruddy way of anything you want to do!

If you are going to win it must happen on turn six. Gaining control of one or more road or adjacent to road hexes then holding on like grim death for longer than your opponent want you to! Here the motto of the Brigade of Gurkhas can help; "*Kaphar hunnu bhanda marnu ramro*" which is Nepalese for "It is better to die than live a coward. It could all come down to a final turn of close combat. If you are held in melee and have a squad on or adjacent to the road you win. If you lose, well it must have been close shake hands and give your opponent an opportunity to agree.

J9 Japanese Set up and Attack

There are two ways to win. The first is to control the T5 to CC6 road and all hexes

adjacent to it at the game end. An alternative is to eliminate all the Gurkha forces. Worth noting to claim victory the enemy need only be unbroken, so a berserk squad can earn a victory as can one in meleé.

The first factor to consider is the enemy forces. Gurkhas are bad news. Against most troops when your troops advance into combat in ambush terrain they have the advantage of being stealthy, leading to an ambush and often hand to hand with the additional -1 modifier Japanese troops attract. With Hand to Hand being so lethal you're likely to ice an enemy unit for no loss. Against Gurkhas the picture changes, they are also stealthy, less prone to ambush, and if they turn the tables able to attack in Hand to Hand with their own -1 modifier. With high Gurkha fire power a kill is highly probable and your return fire by no means certain to kill. Close combat and hand to hand remain part of the plan but can not be used as your primary tactics.

British forces are almost equal in numbers to your own. Seven Elite squads, four 4-5-8s', and three very tough 6-4-8 squads. They are elite, stealthy, possess smoke, and have an underlined ELR of five. Further they do not disrupt, almost never surrender and just love Hand to Hand combat. Like all British Elite and 1st line troops they do not cower. In support weapons, well they do rather well. Four LMGs and a pair of ATR. Against your tanks the LMG is ineffective at battle ranges. The ATR can just about kill a tank, with ridiculous luck it could even burn! Leading the Gurkhas' are a pair of Leaders, nothing special just an 8-0 and a 7-0. Both Leaders can happily man ATRs. The rest of the British OB is comprised of four Wire Counters. These slow Infantry, with a marginal impact on tanks.

The enemy force has plenty of strengths, powerful in a fire fight, very tough in Hand to Hand or close combat. It does have two weaknesses though. For openers it is a small force, seven squads enough to open the game but spread painfully thin when casualties begin to mount. The second weakness might dissipate as soon as you enter the board, but you do start the game with the initiative.

As you set up you will get some clues as to the enemies dispositions. Most players will start some units close to the treeline ready to contest your entry on turn one. In PTO the wire can be hidden in certain terrain until you find it by searching or enter the hex. Your opponent might gift you with the knowledge by setting up the wire on board. Make use of this if it happens, but tell the guy after the game that the option to hide the wire existed. The rest of the British OB will be concealed. Look for single counter

stacks covered with in one concealment counter these cannot contain either an ATR or LMG. Count stacks to determine if the enemy has deployed a squad and try to figure roughly what is where. This is very difficult as the Brits start with six support weapons one for each squad with no real way of you knowing what's an ATR or LMG. That said you can see if the enemy has concentrated in one area, is spread across the board, or is patiently waiting for you to move into the Jungle.

Your own troops are a mix of Infantry and Armour. Four Elite and four 1st Line squads have a slight numerical edge over the Gurkhas'. Alright it's just a squad, and if you are being critical British raw firepower is 2 factor stronger. An ELR of four is good enough, though obviously not as good as the Brits. In a stand up fight the Infantry forces of both sides are not quiet equal, the Gurkhas probably have an edge. Japanese combat power is boosted by a pair of Leaders, three LMG, and A 50mm Mortar. More firepower comes from two MMG and Infantry crews. The 50mm Mortar is extremely useful. If the rain stays off you can place both White Phosphorous and Smoke rounds crucial for a swift advance. In Jungle actions 50mm Mortars are idea for pushing troops back behind the treeline for fear of air bursts and a steady string of hits. It's a judgement call whether to place the 9-1 Leader with the MMGs or Mortar. Remember your full strength squads have inherent smoke exponents. The Elite squads can even roll for WP helpful when it arrives.

On their own the Infantry would struggle. Fortunately you are commanding three CHI-HA Medium tanks. Compared to later war armour the tanks are undergunned, slow and poorly protected, they have no radios and have slow turrets. All these points are valid but the CHI-HAs are the best tanks on the board, by virtue of being the only ones in play. The gun has some whack against Infantry. Any regular hits attack on the 6 IFT Table with zero TEM, a critical bites harder with reverse TEM but the chances are slim until you gain acquisition. Any Gun with rate can pull a few surprises, the 57mm Gun has ROF 1 so expect the odd second shot if you have several tanks firing for a couple of turns. The CHI-HA has two MGs the rear turret gun might not be used at all, but the bow MG may be. It can fire at a different target to the gun. A 2 IFT attack is way down the table, TEM or hindrances can reduce effectiveness. Against a broken unit keeping them subject to desperation morale is a result worth a burst.

The Tank can fight at point blank range or overrun. This is very tempting and if successful would reduce the enemy forces by a

squad or half squad. In small games this is a result. I would happily exchange a CHI-HA for a 6-4-8 or 4-5-8 Gurkha squad. Especially if it open a gap for my troops to exploit and I was still left with one or two other tanks.

There might be a use for vehicular smoke dischargers. With SD5 a DR of five or less is needed for placement. This drops to four if buttoned up. The ASLRB gives good coverage, key things to remember it must be the first weapon you fire, can be triggered or placed in response to enemy movement and doesn't work in rain! A valuable use for smoke could be when moving over wire. If the wire is cleared by the first tank to move onto it fine, but if you are bogged smoke can work defensively. Later it may help you advance Infantry through the hex with better protection, smoke and say dense Jungle really adds serious TEM. With 14 MP even using platoon movement trying for Smoke is not going to slow you down too much.

The Tanks can do overruns. A pretty basic 6 IFT is not devastating or particularly bright vs an unbroken squad with an ATR. Picking off a lone Leader or broken MMC is a better target.

The tanks are useful. Remember there is no casualty cap so take some chances with them. If you can exchange each tank for a squad, that would leave you outnumbering the Gurkhas two to one.

I've gone into some detail about the terrain present and features of board 37 in the Gurkhas scenario analysis above. Chapter G is essential reading and I'll only mention key details here. Dense Jungle, Bamboo, and Palm Trees are inherent terrain, this has a tremendous effect on line of sight. At times it will help, at times it will not. Everyone makes mistakes occasionally so don't dwell on yours. That said look for hexsides that block enemy LOS when you are moving. A fire attack blocked by hexside doesn't even leave residual fire and is effectively lost. Exploit it when it happens but don't make a big thing of it.

The ultimate aim is to kill or break all the Gurkhas or at least keep them out of the Victory Area. First you must move onto the board, engage the enemy, before chasing down his units to earn Victory. enemy set up has some influence on how you can do this. in most games concealed enemy units will oppose you from the treeline on row T. Very rarely they won't, and your first move will be a steady move forwards. Moving as stacks may be beneficial with the aim of getting as far down the road as is safe to do so. This is a good start to the game, and has strong prospects for a win if you keep up the pace of the attack.

Nearly as good are a series of small isolated positions. Tackle one or two at a time and before long you will have destroyed a sizeable chunk of the enemy forces for small loss to yourself. If done expertly small defensive positions can lead to a Gurkha win, although some delay or bad luck on your part is needed.

Another unlikely defence comprises a hedgehog around BB3 or thereabouts. Will work fine for the first two or three turns not so well thereafter!

My own view is the enemies best defence is to oppose your entry through open ground, Kunai or Palm Grove whilst benefiting from Dense Jungle cover. To overcome such a defence you need to concentrate against part of the line and drive through. Depending on specific enemy set up the best spot to assault is likely to be around T5. By moving down the road you can get pretty close with the armour and mass infantry in support. Expect some pain as you enter, return the favour if he stays to oppose you.

Once he retreats you are both in Dense Jungle, both receiving +2 TEM for IFT attacks but you have the edge with Tanks, MMGs' and the Mortar. By applying steady pressure you can drive the enemy back, breaking or killing units as you go. As long as your fight is supported by armour and massed support weapons you will be degrading the enemy faster than he is attriting you. This can go on for a while, but suddenly becomes a bit one sided when your slower losses lead to the Gurkhas being worn down to two or three squad equivalents fighting bravely and either struggling under the weight of support weapons or struggling to recover them. Close combat has its place, against pinned or otherwise disadvantaged units, but don't rush in to it if you are already winning a fire fight.

As the game approaches its finale most if not all of your tanks will be disabled, destroyed or recalled, your force will be much smaller, one or both Leaders dead or at least wounded. enemy forces will have given the stiff fight that gives the scenario its name but become much reduced in the process.

You still have more to do. A lone MMC in the Victory area earns the Gurkhas a win. You must seek out and neutralise any troops still in the game. Sometimes you'll do a blinding job and not have too much to chase down. If the attack has been flawed or unlucky the closing turns will be more fraught.

A few loose ends. Some nasty things will happen. Advancing onto hidden barbed wire can be fatal. A bogged tank stuck in Jungle, adjacent to a Swamp or with wire wrapped round its tracks slows down platoon movement and is bypassed if subse-

quently immobilised. Crews can and do bail out use them to man the mortar or LMGs, look for wire, or draw enemy fire, scrounge a LMG if appropriate, little ploys like that can add up to a win in a close game. Keep the sniper busy, on turn five a broken squad is more useful than a dead Leader. Prioritise your targets with a thought to the mission. Use captured weapons, limit the time you spend trying to find them though! Occasionally Banzai is the way to go, not often, and not all the time. It can work well in conjunction with smoke if you get a chance.

Not really a loose end more of an important tactic. Encircle and infiltrate. If you can flank a position enemy units can become encircled. As Gurkhas they will not surrender, they will still suffer movement and morale penalties and be eliminated if unable to rout. Infiltration is similar, seeking to prevent rout and Leading to encirclement if used for fire attacks.

I've not mentioned platoons or how to split the forces yet. Japs are a bit like Finns able to function tolerably well without Leadership. The two MMGs work well as a team in the same hex or close together but protected by other units, say a tank or squad. The Leaders are there to speed up movement, rally troops when broken half squads appear and in the case of the 9-1 direct fire combat.

The tanks are important for a win. Not so much for their fighting qualities so much as to address your shortage of Infantry! The CHI-HAS' MG and 57mm gun are effective, the armour is resistant to enemy attacks, but if you were picking a force from scratch more infantry would be preferable to tanks in this very close terrain. That said you must work effectively with what you have got.

Expect a tough fight. The Gurkhas are excellent troops and here they are reasonably well equipped. If you can co-ordinate the tanks Infantry and heavy weapons teams you deserve a win. If you attack with units in isolation you will need more luck to do the job.

J9 Conclusion

Gurkhas make this scenario much more interesting. Their close combat abilities and stealth argue against Japanese players' gleefully entering close combat whilst high firepower and immunity to cowering may argue otherwise. The Japanese will need to exploit their armour to create winning chances. This can mean trading a tank for a squad, flattening wire or simply persuading Gurkhas' to move back a hex.

In any scenario luck plays a part. A few good rolls could disable or destroy two or even three tanks very quickly. With simi-

lar luck though Japanese troops would be shooting Gurkha stacks to bits or coming out on top in close combat. If you roll low enough, often enough you will either win or in my case stay in the game longer against much better opposition! To get the best out of "A Stiff Fight" you need to exploit good luck when it happens, and not be too discouraged if it comes your way.

I think this scenario is a good choice for round three, it has a high fun quotient and might be the quickest playing of the three scenarios on offer. Both sides have winning chances. I'm drawn to the Gurkhas in part for their odds of winning, in part because I think they are excellent troops.

J9 After the Action.

Tried to avoid this scenario as it can end up a bit cluttered along the road. Several folk played it though and didn't hear any grumbling.

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|-------------------------------------|-------|
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LEADERSHIP AMONGST THE SCENARIOS

Chris Riches

As any Squad that's ever had to fight for me will tell you, I have a great Leadership style – follow me all the way into the casualty pool! So this article isn't about glorious tactics and inspired small unit leadership to help you win scenarios. Sorry. More mundane stuff here chaps about relative distribution of Leaders in our scenarios. Who's ready to go over the top with some statistics?

This list was developed in order to convert non-ASL (ie *ATS*) scenarios into an ASL format, and is actually a much bigger spreadsheet than what is presented here. I wanted to be able, for a given number of leaders in a scenario, to define the quality of leaders that would be present. I also wanted to be able to make some distinction between nationalities.

This could have been achieved by using the LG# within the ASL DY0 system, but it was clear from a quick scan of scenarios that force leadership didn't match too well that model. Therefore what I did was take all the official scenarios (ie with modules, General, Journal etc) and record the distribution of leaders amongst those scenarios. At this point I stopped and saw whether I had a reasonable output, or whether I needed to carry on into 3rd party products, but decided that it was OK.

The results were quite interesting in how varied they were - for example there are 17 different examples of ways in which just two leaders were provided (7-0 and 8-0, two 8-0s, 8-0 and 8-1, 7-0 and 9-2 etc).

I then screened the output in each group to provide a small number of more common leadership pairings, and then assessed each of the major nationalities against these. One of the outputs was a "Nationality Start Point". This represents the most common leadership group for that nationality, and thus the start point for determining quality. Then, if you want a better force, go down the table one or two rows. Similarly, if you want a worse force, go up one or two rows.

2 Leaders

| Leaders | Nationality | Start Point |
|----------|-------------|-------------|
| 7-0, 8-1 | | |
| 8-0, 8-1 | Sov | |
| 8-0, 9-1 | Ger, US, Br | |
| 8-1, 9-1 | | |
| 8-1, 9-2 | | |

The 5 groups shown account for 68% of all

2-leader groupings, of a total of 17 different types.

3 Leaders

| Leaders | Nationality | Start Point |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| 7-0, 8-0, 8-1 | | |
| 7-0, 8-0, 9-1 | | |
| 7-0, 8-1, 9-1 | Sov, US | |
| 8-0, 8-1, 9-1 | Ger, Br | |
| 8-0, 8-1, 9-2 | | |
| 8-0, 9-1, 9-2 | | |

The 6 groups shown account for 64% of all 3-leader groupings, of a total of 31 different types.

4 Leaders

| Leaders | Nationality | Start Point |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 7-0, 8-0, 8-0, 9-1 | | |
| 7-0, 8-0, 8-1, 9-1 | Sov | |
| 8-0, 8-0, 8-1, 9-1 | Br | |
| 7-0, 8-0, 8-1, 9-2 | Ger, US | |
| 8-0, 8-1, 9-1, 10-2 | | |

The 5 groups shown account for 56% of all 4-leader groupings, of a total of 34 different types.

5 Leaders

| Leaders | Nationality | Start Point |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 7-0, 8-0, 8-0, 8-1, 9-1 | | |
| 7-0, 8-0, 8-0, 8-1, 9-2 | Sov, US | |
| 8-0, 8-0, 8-1, 8-1, 9-1 | Ger | |
| 8-0, 8-0, 8-1, 9-1, 9-2 | Br | |
| 8-0, 8-1, 8-1, 9-1, 9-2 | | |

The 5 groups shown account for 55% of all 5-leader groupings, of a total of 23 different types. The 5 leader data set was the one, not surprisingly, with fewest number of entries and the flattest distribution.

General Notes

The data is of course dependent on the type of scenario analysed, and so with the British represented by *Pegasus Bridge* and *A Bridge Too Far*, their quality might possibly be higher than "normal".

Other comments

Commissars were replaced by their non-Commissar equivalent.

6+1 Leaders were very few, and have

been treated as 7-0.

10-3 Leaders again are rare and have been combined with 10-2.

A few scenarios had 3 of same type of Leader, and these were screened out as abnormal distributions.

For the 1 Leader category, pick whatever! Typically, 8-0, 8-1 and 9-1 have been used.

There were too few scenarios with 6 or more leaders to make an assessment worthwhile.

Again, too few to make French, Italians and others valid.

Separate groups in a scenario are done separately (eg a group of 3 and a group of 2 are treated separately, not as one group of 5).

The other piece of information I logged whilst I was about it, was the ratio of Leaders to Squads for the main nationalities, which came out as follows:

| | Ger | Sov | US | Br |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Ratio: | 0.3357 | 0.2356 | 0.2962 | 0.306 |

This can then be used to work out the typical number of Leaders for a nation's force of various sizes:

| # Squads | Ger | Sov | US | Br |
|----------|-----|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 7 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 8 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 9 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 10 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 11 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 12 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 13 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 14 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 15 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 |

So there you have it. Not too painful and hopefully of some use to someone. And why should I write an article on Leadership? Maybe in response to my appraisal one year from my line manager who said "we don't know why people like working for you". Enough said.

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THE WINTER WAR

The Russo-Finnish War of 1939 – 40

(William R Trotter, Aurum Press Ltd, £18.99. ISBN: 1 85410 881 6)

John Barton

I suspect that I am like the majority of readers in that the 'Winter War' was almost unknown to me until I purchased the *ASL Annuals*. I knew nothing of the causes of this conflict and little of its outcome, except that, alone of the 'new' Baltic states set up in the aftermath of World War I, Finland preserved its separate existence. This title rectified a gap in my knowledge.

After chapters discussing the emergence of independent Finland and the life of Baron Carl Gustav Mannerheim, the cause of the war is explained. It was recognised that Leningrad was in an exposed position in the event of an invasion. Stalin therefore demanded that Finland surrender some offshore islands in the Baltic, some territory in Karelia and permit the stationing of Russian troops on Finnish land. After debate, the demands were rejected; some politicians thought it was a bluff. Angered by the rebuff, Stalin sent in the Red Army.

Neither side was prepared for war. Finland had not mobilised, and the Red Army, suffering from the purge of its officers, simply was not trained for the fighting to come. One senior officer ordered ammunition and fire support for a campaign of no more than twelve days; hostilities lasted for three and a half months! Despite initially being forced back by the Red Army's overwhelming strength and hampered by a lack of heavy weapons (for instance, they had to use heavy Maxim machine guns in place of light artillery), the Finns soon showed that they were not push-overs. Equipped with winter camouflage and warm clothing not available to the enemy, they conducted hit-and-run attacks on the Russians, who largely stayed on the available roads through the forests.

Two Russian divisions were almost completely destroyed at Suomussalmi. Moving along the road in column, the first division was hit by ski troops who punched gaps hundreds of yards wide throughout its

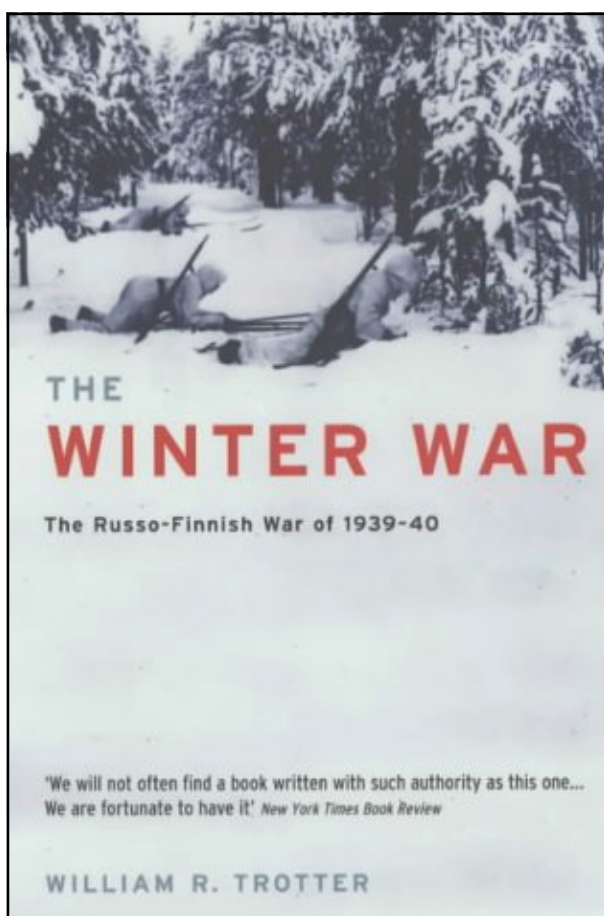
length. The Finns fortified their sides of the breach and repulsed Russian attempts to break out. They then snuffed out each Russian group in turn. (The *ASL* scenario "On the Raate Road" depicts just one of myriad encounters in this area). The second, supporting, division came under the same treatment and suffered the same fate. This column commander eventually ordered a gen-

Russians broke through the Mannerheim Line on 11 February, despite desperate resistance. The Finns lack of heavy equipment told against them, and the next day the cabinet authorised the government to seek terms. In early March the Finns went to Russia and were presented with terms on a 'take them or fight' basis. The treaty was signed on 12 March, to come into effect the following day.

With only fifteen minutes to go, the Russians began a furious bombardment in the region of Viipuri, out of simple bloody-minded spite, which killed hundreds.

With the fighting ended, Finland lost some 16,000 square miles of territory. In human terms, she suffered almost 25,000 dead and another 43,500 wounded. Mr Trotter says that Finnish historians now believe that the Russians may have lost between 230,000 and 270,000 dead, with perhaps that many again wounded. It is also suggested that 5,000 Soviet soldiers who had been captured by the Finns disappeared into camps run by the NKVD following repatriation, where they were interrogated and shot.

In June 1941, the Finns went to war with Russia as Germany's allies in Operation Barbarossa, in what became known as the "Continuation War". For the most part, Marshal Mannerheim was content to take back only those lands lost the previous year, although the Finns also took East Karelia. Stalin's resettlement policy had changed the ethnic make-up of the area, however, and the Finns found they were not welcomed with open arms. In the aftermath of Operation Bagration and the destruction of German Army Group Centre, the Finns found that the pendulum had swung the other way again and once more sued for terms. They were forced to relinquish all their gains of 1941 and to eject German troops from their country. This led to more death and destruction, as the Germans destroyed everything of value in Lapland when they retreated to Norway.



eral retreat. The two Russian generals suffered different fates. One died in the fighting, the other escaped to his own lines, where he was court-martialled and shot.

In January 1940, even as the slaughter at Suomussalmi was reaching its climax, leaving over 27,000 Russians dead, Stalin appointed Timoshenko to command the invasion, with Zhukov as his Chief-of-Staff. The soldiers were properly trained in new tactics, and the second attempt began with a ferocious bombardment on 1 February. The

The Essential ASOP

Jim McLeod

I really do have too much time on my hands this evening ...

Here is what I consider to be the “Essential ASOP”, stuff I hold little/no wiggle room on for myself or my opponent.

Announce each action in order of appearance and you are set to go without committing any huge ASOP violations. Items left off are intentional (unless I missed some huge must do ones!) and are items I would be lenient on, especially anything involving Panjis, Convoys, Columns and/or Pack animals of any species.

In cases where there are Para-Drops, Gliders etc, I will read the pertinent rules before play and as a reminder, make notes on when to do stuff.

Newbies, let the following be your mantra. I shall make it mine. :)

1. RALLY PHASE

- 1.11A: Setup Off-Board units
- 1.12A: Wind Change DR
- 1.13B: Recombine GO HS's
- 1.14B: Attempt to Recover SW/Guns

- 1.21A: Deploy
- 1.22B: Repair and Transfer SW/Guns
- 1.23B: Rally (Don't forget first MMC self Rally)

- 1.31B: Roll for Shock/UK
- 1.32B: May claim Wall Advantage (Attacker first)

2. PREP FIRE PHASE

- 2.11A: Remove Dispersed Smoke
- 2.12A: Fire Ordnance Smoke
- 2.13A: Attempt Radio Contact

- 2.21A: Become TI and Mop Up and Entrench
- 2.22A: Fire eligible units, Declare Opportunity Firers

- 2.31A: Change CA of Guns eligible to do so

3. MOVEMENT PHASE

- 3.21A: Move Berserkers able to do so
- 3.22A: Drop possession of SW/Guns

- 3.31A: Move units that are allowed to Move

4. DEFENSIVE FIRE PHASE

- 4.11D: Fire ordnance smoke (dispersed)
- 4.12D: Attempt Radio Contact

- 4.21D: Make Defensive Fire attacks as are allowed

- 4.31D: Change CA of Guns eligible to do so

5. ADVANCING FIRE PHASE

- 5.11B: During Mild Breeze, place drifting smoke
- 5.12A: Fire ordnance WP (dispersed)
- 5.13A: During Gusts, remove dispersed smoke and flip smoke counters to dispersed

- 5.22A: Fire units that are allowed to fire

- 5.31B/5.32B: Resolve Fire stuff

6. ROUT PHASE

- 6.11B: Voluntary break units
- 6.12B: Disrupters Surrender as applicable

- 6.21B: Rout units

7. ADVANCE PHASE

- 7.11A: Transfer SW/Guns/Prisoners

- 7.21A: Advance units eligible to do so

8. CLOSE COMBAT PHASE

- 8.11B Place onboard under “?”, all HIP units if any are in CC Location. Reveal unit strength factor of concealed units, eliminate Dummies
- 8.12B: Resolve Ambush if applicable
- 8.15B: Declare Intention to Withdrawal from “Melee” (Attacker first)

- 8.21B: Declare CC attacks (Attacker First)
- 8.24B: Resolve CC Attacks

- 8.42B: Resolve non-Flame Clearance Attempts
- 8.44A: Conceal units eligible to Conceal

- Now, thats not so hard ... is it. :)

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VIEW FROM

NIGHT ACTIONS MATRIX

Chris Riches

| | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--|---|
| PFPh | Attacker places FFE I J L and Gunflashes in FFE hexes. MC / PTC: D | Attacker fires at Enemy: A E F I J L and Gunflash. MC / PTC: D | Attacker Fires Illum (if allowed - I occurred): SR F K Mtr A F J K Gunflash S'Shell F K (firer stays concealed) | Sniper attack: Vs Att: A Vs Def: D L |
| MPh | Attacker moves into LOS of Defender: F (if known) I | Attacker moves into non- dummy Minefield: Break/KIA/K: A F I J & Gunflash MC/PTC: A F | Attacker moves into Trip Flare location: Set off: A F I K | Best GO Leader rolls for Freedom of Movement. dr < ELR (if allowed - L occurred): Success: G (Def turn only) |
| | Attacker uses non-Assault movement in Illum loc: A F I | Unopposed vehicle moves within 16 hexes: I | Jitter Fire (if allowed - J occurred): By Def: D I Gunflash By Att: A F I Gunflash | Attacker enters loc of HIP/concealed unit: A |
| MPh/ DFPh | Defender places FFE I J and Gunflashes in FFE hexes. MC / PTC: A F | Defender Fires at En: D I J Gunflash MC/PTC: A F | Defender fires Illum (if allowed - I occurred): SR: F K Mtr: D F J K Gunflash S'Shell F K | Gun Duel: A D E F I J L Gunflash |
| AFPh | Attacker fires at Enemy: A E F I J L and Gunflash. MC / PTC: D | | | |
| RtPh | Rout in enemy LOS: Attacker: F I Defender I | | | |
| APh | Attacker moves into LOS of Defender: F (if known) I | Attacker moves into non- dummy Minefield: Break/KIA/K: A F I J & Gunflash MC/PTC: A F | Attacker moves into Trip Flare location: Set off: A F I K | |
| CCPh | Ambush by attacker: Def not all elim: A E | Ambush by defender: Att all elim: E Att not all elim: D E F | Normal CC attack: A D E F L | Units held in Melee: A D E F I J L and Gunflash |

| Code | Outcome |
|----------|---|
| A | Attacker loses Cloaking/concealment. Retain concealment if non-illuminated and beyond NVR of all GO enemy (unless Breaks). |
| D | Defender loses Concealment / HIP. Retain concealment if non-illuminated and beyond NVR of all GO enemy (unless Breaks). |
| E | "No Move" removed from attacked unit. (N/A if Sniper / OBA) |
| F | "No Move" removed from all units which can see a known Attacker (ie within normal NVR, or illuminated). |
| G | "No Move" removed from Leader and units he is stacked with. |

| Code | Outcome | Pre-condition | Status |
|----------|---|---|--------|
| I | Unit with IR/Starshell capability can fire a Starshell. If doesn't do so, need to incur condition again. If does fire IR/Starshell, then they may be fired subsequently by either side. Trip flare counts as Starshell having been fired. | Unit with IR/Starshell capability has: - Unopposed vehicle moving within 16 hexes. - LOS to enemy unit. Enemy FFE Enemy Gunflash Trip flare activates. | |
| J | Jitter fire possible | FFE Gunflash | |
| K | Bore sighted Fire Lane can be used without target in LOS. | Illuminant fired Trip Flare activates | |
| L | Best Defender leader able to roll for freedom from No Move. | Attacker attack other than successful Ambush | |

"THIS IS THE CALL TO INTERNATIONALE ARMS!"

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

AUSTRALIA

R. Cornwell, PO Box 252, A-2533 Kiama MW
N. Hickman, 12 Blampied Street, Wynn Vale, SA 5127
Mark McGilchrist, 7 Smith Street, Bexley, Sydney, NSW 2207

Austria

Jeff Crowder, Erdbergstrasse 74/17, 1030 Vienna
M. Holub, Peter-Neuschmidt Str. 10, A-6363 Westendorf
Ronald Novicky, Höffingergasse 12-14/9/13, A-1120 Vienna
F. Schonbauer, Institut für Softwaretechnik., Resselgasse 3/188, A-1040 Wien
Fritz Tichy, Hoernesgasse 20/16, 1030 Vienna

Belgium

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Y Barette, 52, Rue du Chateau d'eau , B-1180, Bruxelles
T Bauwin, 23, Avenue du Cerf-volant , B-1170, Bruxelles
Serge Bettencourt, 11, Rue Fontaine d'Amour, B-1030, Bruxelles
D. Boileau, 15, Avenue Rene Stevens, B-1160, Bruxelles
Mr. Bosmans, Koningin Astridlaan 180, , B-2800, B-2800 Mechelen
J.P. Buchkremer, 20A, Rue du College , B-5530, B-5530 Godinne
T. Cavelier, 22, Rue O. Maeschalek, B-1080, Bruxelles
F Colard, 46, Rue de l'Abbaye, B-7801, B-7801 Ath
J.P. Dasseville, Reginalaan 3E , B-8670, B-8670 Oostduinkerke
R De Sadeleer, 1, Quai des Peniches, B-1210, Bruxelles
F. Delstanche, 107, Av G. Latinis, B-1030, Bruxelles
J.M. Dricot, 7, Avenue des Grenadiers, B-1050, Bruxelles
P Dutrieux, 38, Polderstraat , B-9500, B-9500 Geraardsber
A. Gottcheiner, 11, Avenue Feuillien, B-1080, Bruxelles
P. Henderyckx, 11, Sint-Johannastraat, B-2160, B-2160 Wommelgem
H Heyman, 91 B, Klapperbeekstraat, B-9100, B-9100 SI-Niklaas
J Himschoot, 36, Truysenstraat , B-2930, B-2930 Brasschaat
Vincent Kamer, 275, Albert Ier , B-1332, B-1332 Genval
D Kronfeld, 70, Avenue Houzeau , B-1180, Bruxelles
P. Lanote, 91, Avenue Gevaert , B-1332, B-1332 Genval
A Lens, Saulcoir, 1A, B-7380, B-7380 Queirvain
O Leo, 37, Rue des Glaieuls , B-1180, Bruxelles
P. Lesage, 184, Avenue du Roi, B-1060, Bruxelles
R. Letawe, 181, Av. des Croix de Feu, B-1020, Bruxelles
V. Libert, 43, Rue de la Vignette, B-1160, Bruxelles
J.P. Mahieu, 9A, Rue des Hironnelles , B-519, B-519 Spy
J.L. Maistriau, 13 Rue du Maiu Carlot , B-7387, B-7387 Honnelles
H Mielants, 43, St Lievenslaan , B-9000, B-9000 Gent
X Mols, 7, Rue des Champs , B-5030, B-5030 Gembloux
J.L. Morelle, 15, Rue Famenne , B-5590, B-5590 Ciney
B Postiau, 52, St-Antoniuslaan , B-1700, B-1700 Dilbeek
P. Ramis, 18, Rue Leanne , B-5000, B-5000 Namur
Pedro Ramis, 18 Rue Leanne , B-5000, Namur
Luc Schonkeren, Borsbeekstraat 43, B-2140, Borgerhout, Antwerpen
C Sref, 109A, Avenue Jupiter , B-1180, Bruxelles
M Steenwege, 74, Rijshenvelsstraat , B-2600, B-2600 Berchem
Bruno Tielemans, Smoutmolen 7, 1640 Sint-Genesius-Rode
Yves Tielemans, Stationsstraat 154, 1640 Sint-Genesius-Rode
M Valkenaers, 1207 Chaussee de Wavre , B-1160, Bruxelles
B Van Wassenhove, 12, Avenue Isidore Gerard , B-01160, Bruxelles
G Verdonck, 28, Morselveldenlaan , B-2640, B-2640 Mortsel
Jan Verreth, Trompetvogelstraat 29, 2170 Antwerpen
J Vrijdaghs, 46 Dennenstraat, B-2800, B-2800 Mechelen

Denmark

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Lars Klynsner, Egitlgade 2, 2. t.h., 2300 Copenhagen S
Peter Lageri, Tolderlundvej 86, liv, 5000 Odense C.

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J. Baudoux, 17 Rue de Bapeume, F-59000 Lille
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Francois Boudrenghein, 195 rue de la liberte, F-59650 Villeneuve d'Ascq
Michel Boulekfouf, 3 Chemin De Liemery, F-08170 Haybes

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J. Depotte, 19, Rue Darnel, F-62100 Calais
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O. Dietsch, 4, Route de Colmar, F-67600 Selestat
Philippe Duchon, 35 rue Neuve, 33000 Bordeaux
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C. Ghesquier, 57, Rue des Sports, F-59280 Armentieres
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R. Guettier, 16bis, Rue de l'Abbe Gregoire, F-92130 Issy les-Moulinx-
E. Guillaux, 11, Rue Victor Basch, F-78210 St Cyr L'Ecole
S. Hadjaje, 5, Place de l'Eglise, F-78113 Bourdonne
Olivier Irissou, 43 rue du Caire, 75002 Paris
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Klaus Malmstrom, Klinkendalsv. 6 Brokind, S590 41 Rimforsa
Patrik Manlig, Semanders v. 1:420, S752 61 Uppsala
Nils-Gunner Nilsson, Oluff Nilssons v.8, S433 36 Partille
B. Ribom, Falkenbergsgatan 13A, S-41265 Goteborg
Bernt Ribom, Falkenberg sg. 13A, A11265 Gothenburg
P. Rogneholt, 25, Lidnersgatan, S-75442 Uppsala
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If there are any mistakes, please let me know so I can correct them for the next edition.



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!

APRIL

ANZACON 2000

When: 24 – 25 April.

Where: Ashburton library, High St, Ashburton, Australia.

Fee: \$20.00 Australian.

Format: Two games are to be played each day. The times are Saturday 9am-6pm, Sunday 9am-5pm. Gaming is also available on the Friday night.

Contact: Andrew Rogers on (03) 8661-5789 or Neil Andrews on (03) 9801-1412.

MAY

MONTREAL ASL FESTIVAL

When: 22 – 24 May.

Where: Downtown Days Inn, 1005 Guy Street, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3H 2K4. Phone 1-800-567-0880 toll free, or (514) 938-4611 for rates and reservations. Most rooms have 2 double beds. All rooms have air conditioning and colour television. The hotel has its own restaurant and is near a variety of restaurants, as well as shops and night clubs. Indoor and outdoor parking available (charges apply).

Fee: \$30.00 CDN (£15.00 CDN for a single day)..

Format: The main tournament will be as many rounds as necessary, probably four or five rounds, to have one undefeated player. That player becomes "Mr. 10-3". The only time to remember is the 9am start time each day. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. Saturday morning. Each round will have a choice of five scenarios. Players can choose scenarios from previous rounds by mutual agreement. At least one choice will require knowledge of only chapters A to D. Each player secretly chooses and ranks three scenarios, and then the players compare choices to arrive at the scenario they will play.

There will be several mini tournaments for players who can join us for only one day, or for players who choose to leave the Mr. 10-3 tournament after they can no longer win. Saturday evening will see the first round of a "Fog of War" mini which will use historical scenarios designed by Ian Daglish. Sunday evening will see the second and final round of the "Fog of War" mini. Monday will feature a VP mini. All participants play the same scenario. There are two winners: best Allied player and best Axis player.

During all three days, players may choose to engage in open gaming instead of participating in a tournament.

Contact: Email blarcheveque@aircanada.ca or diane-mike@sympatico.ca. Send registration fee (cheque or postal money order, payable to Bruno L'Archevêque) to Bruno L'Archevêque, 2294 Fauteux, Laval, Quebec, Canada H7T 2S6.

NASHCON

When: 28 – 30 May.

Where: The Franklin Marriott Hotel & Cool Springs Conference Center, Franklin, TN. Special room rate of just \$89 per night. To get this special deal, call (615) 261-2600 and tell the hotel you are with NashCon.

Fee: \$18.00 for HMGS members (\$20.00 after May 15). Non-Members add \$5.00. Under 12 free w/adult.

Format: The ASL tourney format will depend on how many folks show up. It will either be single elimination or a 4 round Swiss system. Prizes to be determined. The scenario list will be announced shortly.

Contact: The HMGS Mid-South historical miniatures wargaming association runs NASHCON Contact Chris Edmondson at POB 44, Rockvale, TN 37153, 615/867-0229 or email him at echris66@comcast.net.

SEPTEMBER

A BRIDGE TOO FAR 2004 ARNHEM ASL TOURNAMENT

When: 17 – 19 September.

Where: Stayokay Hostel, Diepenbrocklaan 27, Arnhem, Holland. Next to an excellent gaming room, the hostel offers its own restaurant, bar and various amenities. 20 beds have been pre-booked at the Hostel, which will be offered on a first-come first-serve basis. For those who prefer to stay in a nearby B&B or those not served on this basis the organisers will be happy help in finding alternative accommodation near the venue.

Fee: £7.00.

Format: Five-Round Swiss style tournament, which has attracted an international audience. In each Round, the players will choose from three selected scenarios. After each round the players will face opponents with similar win-loss records, until a winner can be announced after round five. Players also receive points for opponent win/losses, which will be used to determine final rankings in case of an equal overall record. The Scenario List will be announced in early July.

Notes: There will be an Operation Veritable Battlefield Tour on the Thursday with a visit to the Goch-Kalkar area of Germany. This will be followed by a visit to the Dutch War Museum in Overloon, Netherlands.

Contact: For more details contact Pete Struijf by email at pastruijf@hotmail.com or visit the website at <http://www.xs4all.nl/~hennies/>.

OCTOBER

INTENSIVE FIRE 2004

When: 28 – 31 October.

Where: The Kiwi Hotel, West Hill Road, Bournemouth, 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.

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@vfit.co.uk.

Ω

ASL Word Search

Here's a little *ASL* word search puzzle to keep you occupied.

K N C G T B A X K T F I S E A
I E Y L A U N D P L A J R V S
D K T E O Q O R L Z P I V B S
D O G M T S E R N I F Y T W A
S R Q X E P E A U E T J E B U
U B W S F L B C V E S A H T L
G H L I S J E I O I B K M I T
C J R Y W M S E I M W S A G F
T E Z Z Y N Y I N P B M M E I
L Q K R E S R E B B W A O R R
L I N T Q V L B H C G T T J E
S D N L C P T T F V P M S N B
G I A R M O R E D C U P O L A
C K O T C L N A P A L M T J P
V Y Z N B K F G B H F O K O Q

ARMOREDCUPOLA

ASSAULTFIRE

BANZAI

BERSERK

BROKEN

CLOSECOMBAT

INTENSIVEFIRE

JSIII

LLTC

MATILDA

MELEE

NAPALM

PREPFIRE

PTO

ROUT

TIGER

VFTT

THE TRENCHES



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.

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.