

# VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

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**COVER:** A Tiger I of sPzAbt 501 pauses to be photographed in Tunisia.

### 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 go to:  
<http://lists.aslml.net/listinfo.cgi/aslml-aslml.net>.

### EMOTICONS

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

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

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

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# PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of *VFTT*, a couple of weeks later than planned (as usual, maybe I should revise the dates :-), but Trev Edwards' massive review of the latest third party products took him a bit longer to write than planned – I'm sure you'll agree with me that it was worth the wait though. 2009 seems to have been a bumper year for new *ASL* products, and with a slew of new releases coming soon from MMP and several others, 2010 looks like it might be another bumper year, so make sure your wallets are prepared for a 36FP attack!

The UK *ASL* tournament scene has also grown again, with the return of DOUBLE 1, so there will be plenty of chances to actually play some of the new stuff as well!

'Til next issue, roll Low and Prosper.

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 *ASL*ers. Don't be a silent voice.

Issue 79 should be out at the beginning of May 2010.

*VFTT* costs £2.00 per issue (overseas £4.00), with a year's subscription costing £5.00 (overseas £10.00). 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. You can also download *VFTT* free from the *VFTT* web site.

Back issue are now out of print but can be downloaded for free from:

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

### VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

9 Pier Road  
Kilchoan  
Acharacle  
Argyll  
PH36 4LJ

Telephone:  
(01972) 510 350

E-mail:  
[pete@vftt.co.uk](mailto:pete@vftt.co.uk)

World Wide Web Home Page:  
<http://www.vftt.co.uk>



# INCOMING

## MMP NEW YEAR SURGE

MMP expect to have several new products out at the start of 2010, with *ASL Journal 8*, *Action Pack 6*, and *ASL Starter Kit Expansion Set 1* all due in the New Year.

*ASL Starter Kit Expansion Pack 1* is the fourth instalment of the *ASLSK* line, and has been designed with all level of *ASLSK* player in mind. Designed to be a standalone package providing everything needed to play the game (except dice), it includes a fully illustrated colour rulebook and charts incorporating the latest errata, a sheet of 1/2" counters and a sheet of 5/8" counters, three maps and eight scenarios. The new maps (q, r, and s) consist of a small city board, a village/woods board, and a rural woods/hill board. Of the eight new scenarios, which are set in locations as varied as Poland 1939, Finland 1942, Sicily 1943, France 1944, and Germany 1944, two are *ASLSK 1* level (Infantry only), two feature Infantry and Guns (*ASLSK 2*) and four feature Tanks (*ASLSK 3*). It is expected to sell for \$36.00.

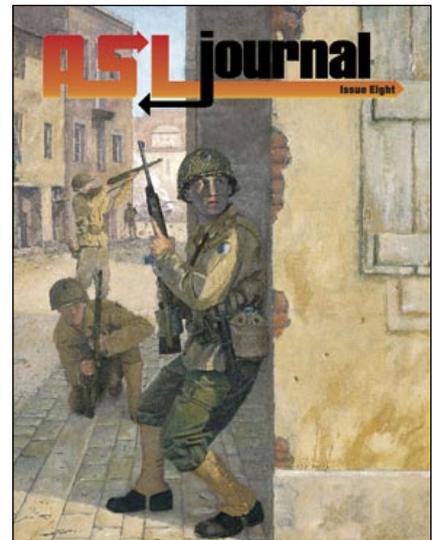
Out now, for \$10.00, is *Beyond the Beaches: ASLSK Bonus Pack 1*, which contains a new mapboard (p) and three new scenarios set in Normandy designed for use with just *ASLSK 1*.

Under development is *Elst*, an *ASLSK* historical module covering the battle in and

around the town of Elst (between Nijmegen and Arnhem) in September 1944. It is planned to have the *ASLSK* rulebook, 4 scenarios and a campaign game, and a separate rulebook introducing simplified off board artillery rules, rules for steeples (from *ASL*) and a new terrain type (polder). There will also be SS units added to *ASLSK*. Should it prove popular, there are tentative plans for a variety of additional *ASLSK* historical modules, each containing the *ASLSK* rulebook and a module-specific rule book covering all the rules specific to that module.

For *ASL* players, 2010 sees the long-awaited return of the *ASL Journal*. *ASL Journal 8* will be 60 pages in length, and include 16 scenarios, the latest Debriefing of *ASL* Q&A/Errata, the updates which went into the forthcoming *Doomed Battalions, 3rd Edition*, and numerous articles. Among these will be a detailed look at the rules for Vehicular Overrun, a detailed scenario analysis of 'J74 Priests On the Line' and a look at the scenarios of *Turning The Tide* by Jim Stahler, Ian Daghish's designer's notes for *Action Pack 4: Normandy 1944*, and a look at the upcoming Finn module *Hakkaa Päälle* by designers Lars Thuring and Tuomo Lukkari. The expected retail price will

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**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.

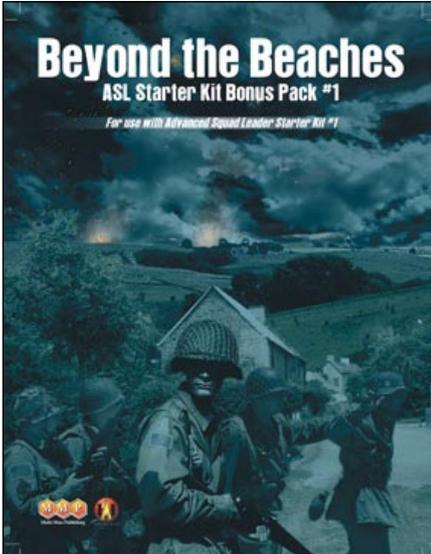
**LEISURE GAMES**, 100 Ballards Lane, Finchley, London, N3 2DN. Telephone (020) 8346 2327, e-mail them at [shop@leisuregames.com](mailto:shop@leisuregames.com), or go to [www.leisuregames.com](http://www.leisuregames.com).

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

**PLAN 9**, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen, AB25 1NE. Telephone (01224) 624 467 or e-mail them at [plan9@ifb.co.uk](mailto:plan9@ifb.co.uk).

**BATTLEQUEST GAMES**, 29 Victory Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2JF. Telephone 01403 242003 or go to <http://www.battlequestgames.com/>.

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



**Beyond the Beaches**  
ASL Starter Kit Bonus Pack #1  
For use with Advanced Squad Leader Starter Kit #1

**ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER**  
STARTER KIT EXPANSION PACK #1

Advanced Squad Leader Starter Kit Scenario, Board, and Counter Bundle

This game contains everything you need to begin playing Advanced Squad Leader!

# INTENSIVE FLU 2009

And it started so well, with an excellent weekend in Leicester catching up with old friends the weekend before INTENSIVE FIRE. After that it went downhill. I couldn't find my train ticket down to Paul's, that I'd paid £15 for in July, so I had to spend 50 quid on a new one. Only to find the original halfway through the journey :- ( We got to the hotel on Tuesday morning, only to learn that Ian Pollard would be late due to car problems. After curry and beer Tuesday night, Paul came down with flu the next morning, so me and Ian left him in the hotel while we went to Bovington for the day – he still hadn't got up when we got back at 4!

We spent the evening in the pub having a curry and beer while watching the football. Come the morning Paul was alive but I felt rough – I was coming down with Paul's flu from sharing a room with him :- ( A day of rest followed, with neither me nor Paul drinking beer, in what must be a first for an INTENSIVE FIRE weekend! With the players gathering, an early night was planned so I would be fresh in the morning to get the minis underway. Unfortunately the flu kicked in overnight, leaving me shivering and sweating buckets all night :- (

I managed to be up Friday morning for breakfast and to make sure things ran

OK, but went back to bed for the rest of the morning, then rested in reception for the rest of the day – still no beer :- (, although at least I managed to get in a game of *ASL*.

As usual, Friday saw a number of mini-tournaments. Trev Edwards ran a Gurkhas mini, tho as only Tom Jackson and Bill Sherliker enrolled, they played a best of three to determine the winner. The prize, a pair of crossed Kukri mounted on a plaque, was won by Bill.

Keith Bristow ran "The Weather Outside is Frightful", a mini themed around winter scenarios. Only four players enrolled, with Mark Blackmore ending up as the eventual winner.

The final mini was not really a proper mini-tournament, but a chance for players to play from a set of new scenarios Ian DGLISH developed specifically for INTENSIVE FIRE. As a result, these did not count for Crusader ladder points. All three were bases on the actions of the Guards Armoured Division on the Brussels road, and were quite popular.

Up Saturday, feeling a bit better, got the Fire Teams drawn and the tournament underway. As usual players were divided into teams of 3, spread over 2 divisions, based on their Crusader Ladder rating. Two rounds were played on Saturday and the third on Sunday morning.

Around lunch-time, I got a game in, and this time a beer as well :- ) Then another – beer that is :- ) Two in 4 hours. The third beer took four hours to drink, a sign the meds were wearing off, so I took things easy after that, sticking to water and an early night – I was able to go bed early while others partied in the bar as the tourney games had finished so I could post the Sunday match-ups earlier than normal.

Up OK Sunday, took it steady, did presentations in a hurry as was eager to get down the pub for the United game that kicked off at 2 – after the result, wished I hadn't bothered :- ( - tip to gamblers, put your money on United losing at HEROES and INTENSIVE FIRE weekends and you'll usually earn a few quid.

The results in both divisions were close, with the Elite Division being particularly close, as the top team won with 15 points while the other three all



Tournament action in the main gaming room during the weekend.



ended up with 12 points each

In the First Division, three teams were in with a chance of winning on Sunday morning, depending on how results went.. Wins for Jackson Keddell and Gerard Burton enabled Task Force Keddell to win, while a clean sweep of the Sunday games allowed Kampf Gruppe Ramsey to steal second place.

Mark Blackmore won the Tournament Champion prize, going 7-2 over the weekend, though Gerard Burton and Jackson Keddell ran him close, both going 5-0 (Jackson actually won 6 games, but one of those was one of Ian's Guards scenarios, and was not counted for the results).

Finally we had run a raffle for a dice tower that Oliver Gray had donated, with entry being a pound, and all proceeds going to the Poppy Appeal – Stewart Thain won the tower, and the Poppy Appeal benefitted with over £50, so well done everyone.

Evening saw the last few of us out for a meal. The next day, I had to hang around in the hotel 'til 4pm for train back to London and the sleeper back to Fort William at 9pm. Got back home 4pm Tuesday afternoon, and the flu really kicked in, took a week to recover :-)

Continued on page 6, column 1

## THE SCENARIOS

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

Scenario	Allied	Axis	Draw
A94 Last Defense Line	0	1	0
AP31 First Cristot	1	1	0
AP32 Second Crack At Caumont	5	0	0
AP34 Bocage Blockage	6	2	0
AP41 The Meat Grinder	5	5	0
AP42 Frontiers and Pioneers	1	3	0
AP50 Panzergeist	0	2	0
AP52 Into Vienna Woods	0	1	0
B1 Two Long Bars	2	0	0
B2 Ice Follies	1	0	0
B4 Clear Up the Bridgehead	0	2	0
BoH1 #1: The Hardest Day	0	1	0
BRd1 Point to Make	2	0	0
BRd2 Bridge to Nowhere	1	0	0
ESG18 Exceeding Expectations	0	1	0
FF2-10 Castle Keep	0	1	0
FrF30 Bidermann's Escape	0	1	0
FrF37 Crossing Swords at Kyaukse	0	1	0
J9 A Stiff Fight	0	1	0
J96 Another Bloody Attack	0	1	0
J98 Lend Lease Attack	1	0	0
RPT17 Hetzer Hunters	2	4	0
SF-5 Bushwhacking the Ambush	0	3	0
SP125 Nunshigum	4	7	0
SP163 First To Fastov	1	0	0
SP173 Der Letzte Geburtstag	1	1	0
SP177 Tic Tac Toe	1	0	0
SP179 Brittany Speared	2	1	0
SP180 Encircle This!	1	1	0
SP65 Ayo Gurkhali!	1	0	0
SP95 Burn Gurkha Burn!	0	1	0
SV12 Trap By Mishap	0	1	0
SV14 Day At Night	1	0	0
SV6 Norwegian Edelweiss	0	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>



Above: a rare photo of Pete Phillipps (left) playing ASL without beer in his hand! Not that it made a difference, Martin Mayers still beat him!  
Below: the prizes for the weekend.



As usual for INTENSIVE FIRE, the bar was a popular site for exchanging war stories.



Above: the First Division winners (left-right): Gerard Burton, Wayne Baumber, and team captain Jackson Keddell.

Below: Tournament Champion Mark Blackmore.

Bottom: Dave Schofield (left) and Trev Edwards clash.



## INTENSIVE FLU 2009

Continued from page 5

I'd like to thank Dominic McGrath and Derek Tocher for their help with the scenario selection, Shaun Carter for help with the prizes, and Trev Edwards, Ian Daghish and Keith Bristow for organising the mini-tournaments, and Ian Pollard for taking the photos which are used here in *VFTT* and the *ASL* Tournays web site. But most of all everyone for turning up and making INTENSIVE FIRE the success it is.

## FIRE TEAM PLACINGS

### ELITE DIVISION

POS	TEAM & PLAYERS	PTS	OPPO
1st	<b>Gruppo Schofield</b> Dave Schofield (3475) Phil Draper (3390) Sam Prior (3085)	15	16355
2nd	<b>Kampf Gruppe Edwards</b> Trevor Edwards (3415) Mark Blackmore (3385) Miles Wiehahn (3070)	12	13685
3rd	<b>Udarnaya Gruppa Bunce</b> Tim Bunce (3720) Bill Sherliker (3290) Stewart Thain (3160)	12	13000
4th	<b>Kampf Gruppe McGrath</b> Dominic McGrath (3645) Simon Croome (3200) Tom Jackson (3095)	12	12730

### FIRST DIVISION

POS	TEAM & PLAYERS	PTS	OPPO
1st	<b>Task Force Keddell</b> Jackson Keddell (3000) Gerard Burton (2775) Wayne Baumber (2670)	21	19920
2nd	<b>Kampf Gruppe Ramsey</b> David Ramsey (2970) Martin Mayers (2745) Chris Walton (2605)	18	16170
3rd	<b>Kampf Gruppe Binns</b> William Binns (3045) Shaun Carter (2865) Jackie Eves (2345)	15	13535
4th	<b>Kampf Gruppe Daghish</b> Ian Daghish (2895) Paul Legg (2775) Paul Jones (2635)	12	11050
5th	<b>Udarnaya Gruppa Haas</b> Mat Haas (2965) Brian Hooper (2860) Simon Taylor (2555)	6	5430
6th	<b>Kampf Gruppe Smith</b> Graham Smith (2880) Ian Parkes (2825) Nigel Blair (2635)	6	5205

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



If you wish to attend INTENSIVE FIRE 2010, the dates are Thursday 28 - Sunday 31 October – about a dozen of us have already booked into the hotel so book now to avoid disappointment!

And if you can't wait 'til October 2010 for some tournament action, HEROES 2010 takes place in March 2010 in sunny Blackpool over the weekend Thursday 11 – 14 March – check out the ad elsewhere for the details.

Ω



Above: the Elite Division winners (left-right): Sam Prior, team captain Dave Schofield, and Phil Draper.

Below: Stewart Thain won the raffle draw for this dice tower donated by Oliver Gray.

Bottom: Trev Edwards proudly shows off his winning chit from his game against Dave Schofield.

## PLAYER RESULTS

Here are the individual win/loss records.

PLAYER	P	W	L	D
Wayne Baumber	4	1	3	0
William Binns	6	2	4	0
Mark Blackmore	9	7	2	0
Nigel Blair	4	2	2	0
Keith Bristow	4	1	3	0
Tim Bunce	4	3	1	0
Gerard Burton	5	5	0	0
Shaun Carter	3	2	1	0
Paul Case	1	0	1	0
Simon Croome	4	2	2	0
Ian Daglish	4	2	2	0
Phil Draper	4	3	1	0
Trevor Edwards	7	4	3	0
Jackie Eves	3	1	2	0
Eric Gerstenberg	3	2	1	0
Mat Haas	3	1	2	0
Brian Hooper	6	2	4	0
Tom Jackson	6	2	4	0
Paul Jones	8	4	4	0
Jackson Keddell	6	6	0	0
Paul Kettlewell	2	2	0	0
Justin Key	6	2	4	0
Paul Legg	3	1	2	0
Tim Macaire	4	3	1	0
Martin Mayers	4	3	1	0
Dominic McGrath	3	1	2	0
Ian Parkes	5	1	4	0
Pete Phillipps	2	0	2	0
Ian Pollard	1	0	1	0
Sam Prior	4	1	3	0
David Ramsey	5	4	1	0
Nick Ranson	1	0	1	0
Dave Schofield	3	2	1	0
Bill Sherliker	9	5	4	0
Graham Smith	3	0	3	0
Simon Taylor	4	1	3	0
Stewart Thain	3	1	2	0
Chris Walton	7	2	5	0
Miles Wiehahn	3	0	3	0



# The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

## INTENSIVE FIRE 2009 Update

### New Champion – Mark Blackmore

*Derek Tocher*

INTENSIVE FIRE 2009 was the 31st British ASL tournament and there are now almost 2900 results recorded on the ladder and we now have 261 players who have participated at least once. At any one time there are about 80-90 ASLers attending tournaments on at least a semi-regular basis. The largest number of games played over the history of UK ASL tournaments has been racked up by Brian Hooper, 158, and there are nine players with over 100 games recorded, and another eighteen who have played 50+. The top 10% of players have ratings of 3280+ while the upper quartile are rated 3160+. Those in the lower quartile have ratings below 2810 while the bottom 10% of participants are rated 2665 or less. These numbers have remained essentially invariant

over the last ten years and the distribution of results is essentially Gaussian about 3000.

Mark Blackmore recorded seven straight wins in the tournament and is the new champion and appears in 15th on the full ladder. Over the weekend there were quite a number of results that went contrary to ladder standings and hence we have quite a number of players who have lost/gained more than 200 points. The most points gained over the weekend was recorded by Gerard Burton who went 5-0 and gained 405 pts promoting himself to 115th on the all time list and 21st on the active players list. A little behind was Paul Jones 4-4 who picked up 285 points and newcomer Jackson Keddell +240 points leaving him at 16th on the active players list after only one tournament. Close behind was

Phil Draper who picked up 230 pts to put him in 3rd position on the active players list and 8th on the all time list.

Of course we also had a number of significant losers over the weekend as well. Ian Parkes lost 285 points despite winning one game and is now on 2540 pts and creeps into the bottom ten players. Long time regular Keith Bristow lost 230 points and so slipping into the bottom half of the list and Miles Wiehahn was the third player to lose more than 200 pts.

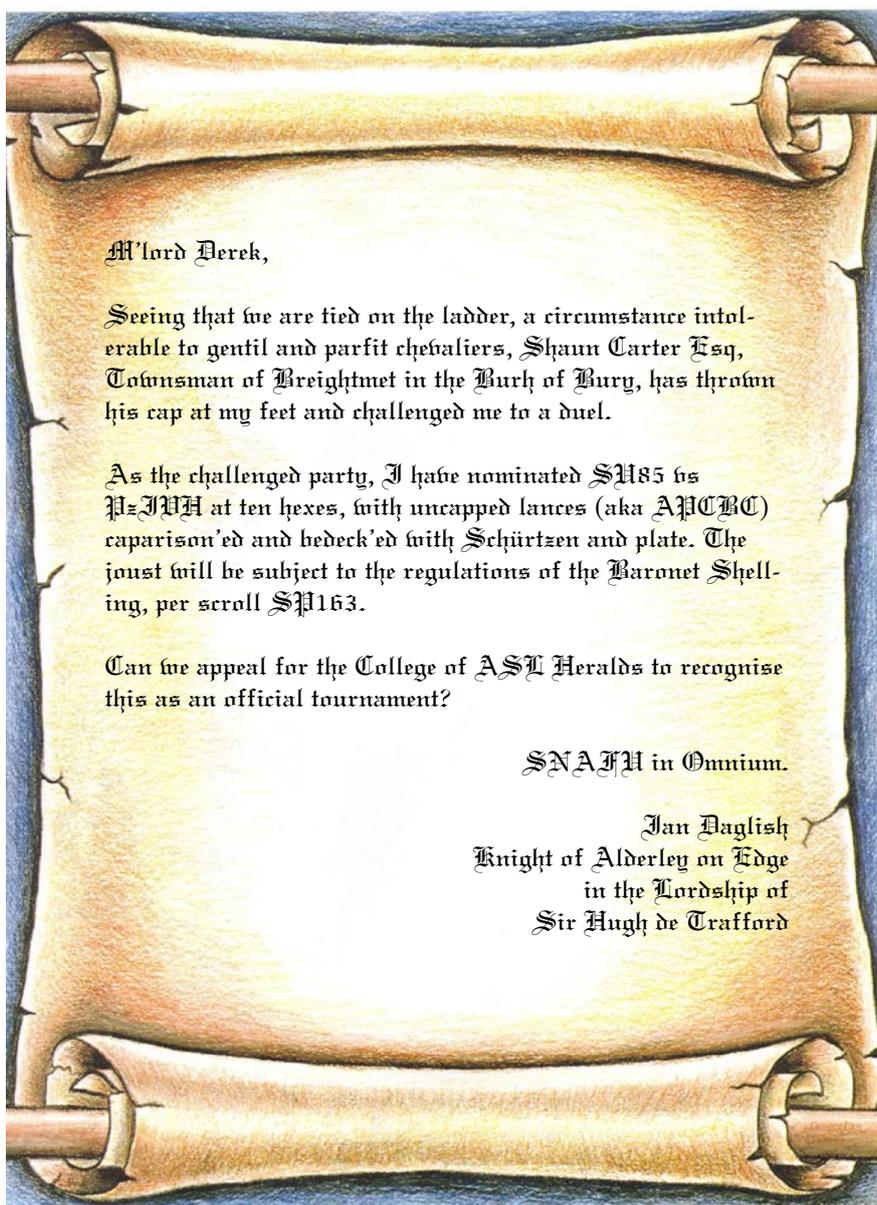
Without more ado here is the Crusader Ladder as of 21 December 2009.

Ω

Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points	Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points	Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points
1	Toby Pilling	75	68--2--5	4085	59=	Steve Crowley	47	21--1--25	3175	118=	Colin Graham	5	3--0--2	3010
2	Derek Tocher	122	91--2--28	3855	59=	Jonathan Pickles	8	5--0--3	3175	118=	Sam Prior	51	27--0--24	3010
3	Steve Thomas	42	32--1--9	3755	61=	Grant Pettit	7	4--1--2	3170	118=	Andrew Saunders	33	15--1--17	3010
4	Tim Bunce	59	41--0--18	3735	61=	Bruno Tielemans	3	3--0--0	3170	121	Allard Koene	7	4--0--3	3005
5	Simon Stevens	87	60--1--25	3720	63	Tony Gibson	31	17--0--14	3165	122=	Nick Brown	3	1--1--1	3000
6	Mike Rudd	38	32--1--5	3660	64=	Rodney Callen	6	4--0--2	3160	122=	Thomas Buettner	3	2--0--1	3000
7	Fermin Retamero	13	11--0--2	3650	64=	Mel Falk	9	5--0--4	3160	122=	Stephen Burleigh	37	15--2--20	3000
8	Phil Draper	65	41--2--22	3620	66	Jeremy Copley	9	6--0--3	3150	122=	Steve Grainger	8	4--0--4	3000
9	Michael Hastrup-Leth	45	31--1--13	3615	67=	Simon Croome	56	30--0--26	3145	122=	Martin Hubley	4	3--0--1	3000
10	Aaron Cleavin	6	6--0--0	3565	67=	Nick Edelsten	22	14--1--7	3145	122=	Ian Kenney	4	2--0--2	3000
11=	Peter Bennett	14	12--1--1	3560	69=	Paul O'donald	72	44--1--27	3135	122=	Phil Nobo	11	6--0--5	3000
11=	Bjarne Marell	36	26--0--10	3560	69=	Frank Van Der MEY	4	3--0--1	3135	122=	Duncan Spencer	4	2--0--2	3000
13	Steve Linton	17	14--0--3	3545	69=	Andrew Whinnett	16	9--0--7	3135	130=	Gilles Hakim	5	2--0--3	2995
14	Dominic Mcgrath	150	92--2--57	3535	72	Chris Courtier	13	7--2--4	3130	130=	Kris Pugh	14	6--0--8	2995
15	Mark Blackmore	50	34--0--16	3505	73	Paul Sanderson	41	21--0--20	3125	132=	Eric Baker	2	1--0--1	2985
16=	Dave Schofield	145	104--0--41	3475	74=	Lee Brimmicombe-Wood	12	8--0--4	3120	132=	Matt Blackman	2	1--0--1	2985
16=	Jes Touvald	24	16--0--8	3475	74=	William Hanson	19	11--0--7	3120	134=	David Farr	4	2--0--2	2980
18	Martin Vicca	33	23--1--9	3420	74=	Philip Jones	5	3--0--2	3120	134=	David Ramsey	35	15--0--20	2980
19	Trevor Edwards	116	62--1--53	3415	74=	Anthony O'boyle	3	2--0--1	3120	134=	Malcolm Rutledge	3	1--0--2	2980
20	Lars Klynsner	11	8--0--3	3400	74=	Paul Ryde-Weller	10	5--1--4	3120	137	Sergio Puzziello	5	1--0--4	2975
21	Craig Benn	46	3--0--13	3380	79=	Tom Jackson	17	9--0--8	3115	138	John O'rielly	5	2--1--2	2970
22=	Ran Shiloah	11	7--0--4	3370	79=	Georges Tournemire	3	2--1--0	3115	139	David Blackwood	7	4--0--3	2965
22=	Peter Struijf	10	8--0--2	3370	79=	Mark Walley	4	3--0--1	3115	140=	Elliot Cox	2	0--1--1	2960
24=	Andrew Dando	48	27--2--19	3365	82=	Luis Calcada	43	21--1--21	3110	140=	Ben Jones	49	23--0--26	2960
24=	Carl Sizmur	21	13--0--8	3365	82=	Steve Cook	23	14--0--9	3110	142=	Eric Gerstenberg	9	5--0--4	2955
26	Bernt Ribom	5	5--0--0	3350	82=	Luc Schonkerren	5	3--0--2	3110	142=	Michael Maus	7	3--0--4	2955
27	Paul Haesler	14	7--2--5	3325	82=	Stewart Thain	24	12--0--12	3110	144	Neil Brunger	48	18--0--30	2950
28	Joe Arthur	21	13--0--8	3305	86	Simon Morris	11	6--0--5	3105	145=	Stuart Brant	5	3--0--2	2945
29=	Bill Sherliker	27	14--2--11	3295	87	Russ Curry	6	4--0--2	3100	145=	Laurent Forest	3	0--0--3	2945
29=	Aaron Sibley	58	35--0--23	3295	88=	Nigel Brown	26	11--0--15	3095	145=	Alex Ganna	2	0--1--1	2945
29=	Frank Tinschert	15	10--0--5	3295	88=	Marc Hanna	6	4--0--2	3095	145=	David Murry	5	2--1--2	2945
32	Phillippe Leonard	9	7--1--1	3285	88=	Mikael Siemsen	6	3--0--3	3095	145=	Pedro Ramis	6	3--0--3	2945
33=	Will Fleming	3	3--0--0	3280	91=	Jas Bal	5	3--0--2	3090	150=	Paulo Ferreira	9	4--0--5	2940
33=	Ralf Krusat	6	5--0--1	3280	91=	Kevin Beard	13	9--1--3	3090	150=	Wayne Kelly	11	4--1--6	2940
33=	Alan Smee	4	4--0--0	3280	91=	Gary Lock	2	2--0--0	3090	150=	Bob Nugent	3	2--0--1	2940
36	Dave Booth	7	5--0--2	3270	91=	Iain Mackay	43	22--0--21	3090	150=	Jon Williams	14	6--0--8	2940
37	Malcolm Hatfield	56	26--0--30	3265	91=	Peter Michels	3	2--0--1	3090	154=	Derek Briscoe	1	0--0--1	2935
38=	Derek Cox	16	8--0--8	3245	96	Paulo Alessi	6	4--0--2	3085	154=	Martin Bryan	19	8--0--11	2935
38=	Daniel Kalman	11	8--0--3	3245	97	Dirk Beijaard	5	3--0--2	3080	156=	Andrea Marchino	1	0--0--1	2930
40	Jackson Keddell	4	4--0--0	3240	98=	Billy Carslaw	11	4--0--7	3075	156=	Andy Price	3	1--0--2	2930
41=	Daniel Batey	4	4--0--0	3235	98=	Robin Langston	9	4--2--3	3075	158=	Paul Boyle	5	2--0--3	2925
41=	Paul Saunders	19	10--0--9	3235	98=	Chris Milne	5	3--0--2	3075	158=	Martin Mayers	27	11--0--16	2925
43	David Tye	42	19--0--23	3230	101=	Jean-Luc Baas	3	2--0--1	3070	158=	John Sharp	8	3--0--5	2925
44=	Ulric Schwela	44	20--1--23	3225	101=	Serge Bettencourt	3	2--0--1	3070	161=	Steve Allen	6	1--1--4	2920
44=	Ray Woloszyn	31	18--1--12	3225	101=	Robert Schaaf	3	2--0--1	3070	161=	Tim Collier	17	7--0--10	2920
46	Christain Koppmeyer	15	8--0--7	3220	104=	Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire	4	2--1--1	3065	161=	Paul Jones	14	5--0--9	2920
47=	Ian Percy	12	8--1--3	3215	104=	Bob Runnicles	3	2--0--1	3065	164=	Iain Ainsworth	1	0--0--1	2915
47=	Tom Slizewski	5	4--0--1	3215	106=	Scott Byrne	12	7--0--5	3060	164=	Edo Giaroni	3	1--0--2	2915
49=	Klaus Malmstrom	4	3--1--0	3210	106=	Raurigh Dale	38	17--0--21	3060	166=	Joel Berridge	3	1--0--2	2910
49=	Nils-Gunner Nilsson	5	4--0--1	3210	106=	Patrik Manlig	16	9--0--7	3060	166=	Brian Martuzas	5	2--0--3	2910
49=	Yves Tielemans	3	3--0--0	3210	109=	Stefan Jacobi	11	5--0--6	3050	166=	Andy Smith	4	0--0--4	2910
52=	Francois Boudrengchien	3	3--0--0	3205	109=	Bo Siemsen	4	2--0--2	3050	169=	Mark Caddy	1	0--0--1	2905
52=	Bob Eburne	56	32--0--24	3205	111	Scott Greenman	8	3--1--4	3045	169=	James Neary	5	2--0--3	2905
54	Michael Davies	71	38--1--32	3200	112	Tim Macaire	61	32--0--29	3040	169=	Phil Ward	5	2--0--3	2905
55	Jean Devaux	3	3--0--0	3190	113	Steve Pleva	6	3--0--3	3035	172=	Shaun Carter	76	34--1--41	2900
56	Armin Deppe	13	7--1--5	3185	114	Mark Warren	20	11--0--9	3030	172=	Ian Daglish	135	61--2--72	2900
57=	Gerard Burton	29	15--0--14	3180	115=	Daniele Dal Bello	4	1--0--3	3025	172=	Josh Kalman	10	5--0--5	2900
57=	Bill Durrant	5	4--0--1	3180	115=	Peter Hofland	4	2--0--2	3025	175	Martin Kristensen	6	2--0--4	2895
					117	Vincent Kamer	4	2--0--2	3015	176=	Jakob Norgaard	6	1--1--4	2885
										176=	Bernard Savage	21	9--1--11	2885



Rank	Player	Played	W—D—L	Points
178	Sam Belcher	8	3--0--5	2880
179=	William Binns	16	7-0--9	2875
179=	Patrick Dale	38	15--1--22	2875
181=	John Johnson	1	0--0--1	2870
181=	David Kalman	5	2--0--3	2870
183=	Russell Gough	81	45--4--38	2865
183=	Miles Wiehahn	16	7--0--9	2865
185=	Brendan Clark	16	6--1--9	2860
185=	Peter Ladwein	21	9--0--12	2860
185=	Lutz Pietschker	4	1--0--3	2860
185=	Neil Piggot	4	1--0--3	2860
185=	Neil Stevens	60	24--2--34	2860
190	Paul Kettlewell	86	39--0--47	2855
191	Nick Angelopoulos	5	1--0--4	2850
192	Keith Bristow	69	39--1--29	2845
193	Bill Eaton	21	8--3--10	2840
194=	Mark Furnell	13	5--1--7	2835
194=	Mat Haas	10	4--0--6	2835
194=	Dave Otway	5	1--0--4	2835
197	Mike Daniel	5	2--0--3	2825
198	Mark Chapman	6	2--0--4	2820
199	Michael Robertson	4	1--0--3	2810
200=	Michael Essex	30	14--0--16	2800
200=	Ivor Gardiner	17	8--0--9	2800
200=	Clive Haden	5	2--0--3	2800
200=	William Roberts	11	3--1--7	2800
204=	Kevin Croskery	16	6--0--10	2790
204=	Alistair Fairbairn	3	0--0--3	2790
204=	Nick Sionskyj	8	3--0--5	2790
207	Chris Littlejohn	14	3--2--9	2780
208	Graham Worsfold	3	0--0--3	2775
209=	Lee Bray	14	3--0--11	2770
209=	Richard Kirby	7	2--0--5	2770
211	Bill Hensby	31	10--0--21	2765
212=	Andrew Hershey	10	4--0--6	2760
212=	Flemming Scott-Christensen	6	1--0--5	2760
214=	Oliver Gray	9	3--0--6	2755
214=	Jonathan Townsend	4	1--0--3	2755
216=	Martin Barker	9	2--0--7	2750
216=	Peter Neale	3	0--0--3	2750
218	Burnham Fox	23	10--0--13	2740
219=	Rupert Featherby	3	0--0--3	2735
219=	Nick Quinn	14	5--0--9	2735
219=	Graham Smith	43	16--1--26	2735
222=	Gareth Evans	4	0--0--4	2730
222=	Justin Key	63	25--1--37	2730
224	Hamish Hughson	4	0--0--4	2725
225=	Steve Cocks	4	0--0--4	2720
225=	Marc Horton	6	1--0--5	2720
227	Ray Jennings	11	3--0--8	2715
228	Brian Hooper	158	55--2--101	2695
229	Simon Hoare	4	0--0--4	2690
230=	Nigel Blair	108	41--1--66	2685
230=	Jeff Howarden	7	2--0--5	2685
232=	Andy McMaster	29	10--0--19	2680
232=	Christain Speis	5	1--0--4	2680
234	James Crosfield	15	6--0--9	2670
235	Paul Legg	123	50--2--71	2660
236	Pedro Barradas	7	1--0--6	2655
237=	Nigel Ashcroft	52	19--1--32	2635
237=	Chris Walton	43	12--0--31	2635
239	Adrian Catchpole	11	2--0--9	2625
240	Adrian Maddocks	12	3--0--9	2620
241	Arthur Garlick	21	2--5--14	2615
242	Bryan Brinkman	9	1--0--8	2610
243	Damien Maher	4	0--0--4	2595
244=	Roger Cook	29	9--2--18	2590
244=	Ian Pollard	110	42--1--67	2590
246	John Fletcher	6	0--0--6	2585
247	Wayne Baumber	67	28--0--39	2580
248	Chris Netherton	30	10--2--18	2560
249=	Pete Phillipps	124	52--0--73	2555
249=	Mike Stanbridge	47	13--1--33	2555
251	Michael Rhodes	43	10--0--33	2545
252	Ian Parkes	9	3--0--6	2540
253	Simon Taylor	12	2--1--9	2535
254	Paul Case	123	32--3--88	2515
255	Robert Seeney	5	0--0--5	2510
256	Nick Carter	11	2--0--9	2475
257	John Kennedy	24	5--0--19	2415
258	Jackie Eves	42	12--0--30	2410
259	Chris Ager	26	7--0--19	2400
260	Ray Porter	33	3--0--30	2340
261	Nick Ranson	27	3--1--23	2120



My lord Derek,

Seeing that we are tied on the ladder, a circumstance intolerable to gentil and parfit chevaliers, Shaun Carter Esq, Townsman of Brightmet in the Burh of Bury, has thrown his cap at my feet and challenged me to a duel.

As the challenged party, I have nominated SWS vs NEM at ten hexes, with uncapped lances (aka AABC) caparison'ed and bedeck'ed with Schürtzen and plate. The joust will be subject to the regulations of the Baronet Shell-ing, per scroll SM163.

Can we appeal for the College of ASL Heralds to recognise this as an official tournament?

SNAFU in Omnium.

Jan Daghish  
Knight of Alderley on Edge  
in the Lordship of  
Sir Hugh de Trafford

# LASL

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L o n d o n ' s  
Advanced Squad  
Leaders

London's Advanced Squad Leaders (LASL) welcome ASL/ASLSK players or potential players. If you're passing through or staying over in London, you're welcome to come along and take part. There's no fee for taking part or spectating.

We usually meet on the second Saturday of each month from 10.30am until 5.30pm. LASL's venue is located in the lower ground floor of Starbucks, 32 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1AA. It's quiet and has space for up to 20 games.

If you want to come along send your name and contact details to [brendan@doubleonline.net](mailto:brendan@doubleonline.net) to arrange a game and ensure there are no last minute problems.

# 'Up and Down the Desert'

A systematic approach to mastering desert warfare in ASL

Jon Neall

In 1940, none of the eventual major combatants in North Africa, save perhaps the Italians, expected to have to fight a war in the desert. By 1943, many were experts, having learnt the hard way that fighting in arid conditions was a far cry from war on the European mainland. The desert was harsh and unforgiving. Extremes of weather, from blistering hot days, to freezing cold nights, and sandstorms that could almost tear at one's skin, drove men mad. Like the jungles of the Far East, in North Africa it could truly be said that a soldier fought more than one enemy. The North African war, fought over such large distances, was also the most mechanised of the war. Each side depended on motored vehicles for survival, and as such, not only was their maintenance of the utmost importance, but the correct utilisation of such tools of war was paramount to any one side's success.

The Chapter F rules have a good go at representing these conditions in ASL terms. For a start, vehicles all have a greater VP value (DVP – desert VP, F.3). But it's the landscape that strikes the prospective desert ASLer first. The map boards are almost bare, giving a commander little in the way of cover, and Lines of Sight seem endless. New terrain types abound, from the simple (scrub and hammada) to the complex (hillocks, wadis and sand). At first, it would seem that mastery of these would be enough for the desert commander. Of course, ASL is never that simple. Mastery is also required of a range of different climatic conditions, each of which affect visibility most of all, providing not just cover, but in their most severe form providing contests where battles are almost fought by the blind versus the blind. In fact, mobility and visibility are perhaps the areas most affected by the desert, in real life and in ASL. Suddenly, that open landscape can begin to feel a little constricting.

As the commanders and the troops on the ground learnt these new 'rules' in 1940-43, so do we on our cardboard battlefield; bit by bit, lesson by lesson, mistake by costly mistake. To ease the process I offer this approach. A programmed instruction method is hardly original in ASL, although I am unaware of any such article or guide dealing with

the Desert rules. But I prefer to think of this as more of a systematic approach even though I realise that the semantic difference is slim (in some sense the following might resemble a Training Manual approach). It occurs to me that by examining just a few scenarios from WOA (or even HL), and digesting certain rules to begin with, while adding others later on, we can quite efficiently develop our own mastery of this unique battlefield of the Second World War. I won't necessarily offer any tactical advice. The WOA scenarios have been analysed in the past by a much more qualified writer than me, and tactics in the desert develop only after mastery of the mechanics, and this is what I offer here. So let's transport ourselves to Libya, late 1941, for our first lesson. The attempt to relieve Tobruk is about to begin, and you are set to command armour in your first desert battle.

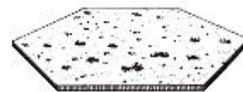
## LESSON 1: Introduction to the Desert Text: 35 Blazin' Chariots

Firstly, it is assumed that you have a grasp of the vehicle and ordnance rules, as well as those regarding basic infantry. Footsloggers will not last long out in the desert without some kind of mechanical transport. Cities, towns and villages are few and far between, and once you move over the escarpment and head inland, you'll find civilisation has completely abandoned you, leaving you to wither and die in the sands. Many theorists at the beginning of the war saw desert operations as an opportunity for a type of land-based naval warfare, where fleets of vehicles would manoeuvre about like fleets of battleships, and where occupation of key terrain was less important than gaining a position from which the most effective fire could be brought upon an enemy. Scenario '35 Blazin' Chariots' enables you to test this theory. One player commands a squadron of 5 Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division, while the other commands a motley collection of Panzers (Marks IIF, IIH, IIIG and IVE) of Kampfgruppe Stephen, part of 5 Panzer Regiment of 21<sup>st</sup> Panzer Division. This British counterattack is a perfect

introduction to the desert; minimal rules with only armour, with no need to worry about infantry, only three terrain types, and one climatic condition to really be aware of.

### Basic Terrain

Terrain is the easiest to grasp in this case. You only have to deal with Open Ground, Scrub and Hammada, in other words the terrain *printed* on the three map boards. There is no complicated overlay terrain, and you don't have to worry about Board 25.



Open Ground (F1.1) in the Desert is, you guessed it, pretty much just like Open terrain anywhere else. There is a slight difference, however, and it is mostly to do with the hard surface so regularly encountered in North Africa. Because of this you are not allowed to Emplace your guns during set-up, and any entrenchment attempt suffers a +2 DRM (as does any such attempt on a desert board, unless in sand). Neither of these issues are a problem in this scenario, but they are important to remember for later on.



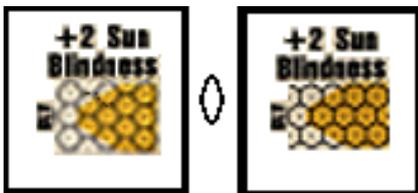
Scrub (F2.1) is only a little bit different from Open Ground. There is no TEM to be gained here (and it won't even negate FFMO or Interdiction), but Entrenching is allowed (+2 DRM), and so is Concealment and Emplacement for Infantry and Guns only. Movement costs for Vehicles differ for Scrub also. In our case, it will cost our Fully Tracked AFVs 2 MP to enter, slowing us down some as our drivers try to negotiate this piece of tricky ground. Wheeled Vehicles, such as Armoured Cars and Trucks, pay an even greater cost to enter Scrub.



Hammada (F3.1) mainly affects movement also, and can prove to be a bit dodgy for most vehicles, kind of in the same way that driving your family sedan over successive kerbs and footpaths is bad on the suspension and the bodywork. Like Scrub, Hammada does not negate FFMO or Interdiction, but it has a variety of different movement costs for each type of vehicle. A Truck must spend 6 MP to enter (!) although our hardier AFVs can take the punishment with only a 2 MP cost.

If our vehicles were *not* fully tracked, however, entry into a Hammada hex would require an instant Immobilisation DR (as would entry into a hex *accessible* to a Hammada hex). This would be needed also if we were trying to change VCA in the hex. This DR is adversely affected for vehicles over 4 tonnes, non-British vehicles, and those that do not spend more time negotiating the hex through the doubling of movement costs. A failed Immobilisation DR results in a TC, failure of which means the vehicle is bugged and the occupants have clearly decided to move on.

Hammada also adds quite lethal effects to certain types of fire. In the same way that Air Burst Indirect fire can be deadly for those sheltering in woods; a -1 TEM applies for any DC, Bombardment, and Ordnance/OBA HE attack against any non-armoured target. This won't apply for now, but once again it is something to remember for later on. Ultimately, Hammada is best avoided by most vehicles and men.



### Sunblindness

The only environmental condition we have to worry about for the moment is Late Afternoon Sunblindness (F11.61-612). The British squadron arrives on the eastern side of the map, charging west into the setting sun. This provides a +2 Desert Low Visibility (DLV) hindrance to any TH or non-ordnance IFT fire facing west. This is probably one of the biggest problems (other than trying to stay on the move and fire) that the British commander

will face, although if he can manoeuvre his forces to attack the Germans from a different direction, or to even get behind them somehow, then he can negate this disadvantage or even turn it to his own advantage.

As the EC is defined as Moist, there will be no dust of any kind to worry about. Dust only occurs when EC are Dry or Very Dry, and at least one desert mapboard is in use. Vehicle Dust occurs whenever Light Dust (which we will discuss later) is theoretically possible.

Other than that, there is little else to be mentioned for now. Scenario 35 can be played with just these few rules in mind. It is a classic charge across the open desert. The British Stuart tanks have to exploit their higher speed and close with the German armour as soon as possible. You can try to focus your attack either in the north or the south (remembering that the British player has to enter at least 3 tanks on each board), in an attempt to move in on either of the German flanks, hopefully quickly negating the effects of Sunblindness, or you can split your force to achieve both flanking opportunities. Due to the dispersed German set up, a charge across the centre of the board, while it might split the German force, will do little other than leave your forces vulnerable from attack on two sides. The wide open terrain, however, ensures that everybody is in LOS at all times, so speed, constant manoeuvre and motion are paramount for the British player. The German will stay still for the first few fire phases, trying his best to cull the British force a bit before it gets too close. Then he, too, must move into the fight to avoid being outflanked. At most he'll want to keep between the British tanks and the sun, maximising the DLV effect on the British fire. If they manage to turn his flank, either in the north or the south, he will have lost his primary protection from fire, and will start losing tanks faster than his opponent. You are ready at this point to try it.

## LESSON 2:

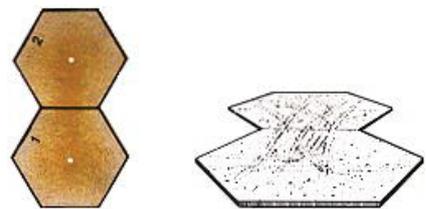
### Sand, Sangars and Dust

**Text: 39 Turning the Tables**

It is time to welcome the infantry to the fight in North Africa, and to do so we'll travel back a few months to March 1941. The Afrika Korps has just arrived in the desert to face the British, the latter force flush with its recent overwhelming victory over the moribund Italian 10<sup>th</sup> Army in Cyrenaica. The allied advance had lost its impetus however, leaving the

recently arrived Rommel an opportunity to strike. The line at Mersa el Brega resembled the later Alamein line in the sense that it allowed no open flank in the south for a mobile force to turn. The position was thus a bottleneck, and was one that the newly arrived British 2 Armoured Division had fortified with lines of mines and wire. Scenario '39 Turning the Tables' gives us a sense of this type of frontal battle in the desert while also presents another obstacle; sand. But before we look at the terrain, let's consider how Routing works in the desert.

In the desert, units are not forced to rout to woods or buildings (F.1C). Only very occasionally will either appear (actually woods will never appear, why would they? It's the desert!). Because of this, in any scenario that only uses desert boards, an infantry unit is only eliminated for failure to rout if the enemy forcing it to do so is within six hexes of it. Added to this is the fact that in North African scenarios, probably a reflection of the nature of the fighting there, surrender cannot be refused (it is well known that many of the combatants in North Africa considered the theatre a 'gentleman's war', and there were many examples of chivalrous actions from officers and troops of each side).



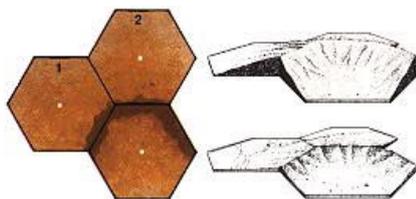
### Sand

It seems a no-brainer that a desert scenario should have lots of sand (F7.1), but the sand overlays themselves represent the very softest of sand, the type that is so difficult for both men and vehicles to easily traverse. Open Ground on a desert mapboard is hard and difficult to break; sand, however, is soft and almost fluid in its movement. In most respects sand is treated as Open Ground; it is neither a Hindrance nor an Obstacle and it doesn't negate FFMO or Interdiction. It mostly affects movement, some attacks, emplacement and fortifications. Sand is something that, if you are moving a vehicle, is best avoided if possible due to the inhibiting nature of Sand Bog.

Movement costs for sand are 1+COT for infantry, 2+COT for fully tracked vehicles, 3+COT for Halftracks and a whopping 6+COT for trucks (all of

these costs are lessened by 1 MF/MP if EC is Wet/Mud). In addition, when any vehicle enters or changes VCA in a Sand hex (or into an accessible hex) it must take a Sand Bog DR. Higher DRM apply for vehicles with high ground pressure, that aren't fully tracked, or are trucks. A negative DRM applies in Wed/Muddy conditions (due to the way moisture makes sand a lot firmer), or if you are doing the Sand Bog check while in an accessible hex rather than the sand hex itself.

Sand has some defensive benefits. There is no TEM at all, but any ordnance attack on the Infantry or Area Target Type against an unarmoured target has its FP halved (FRU) on the IFT, due most likely to the muffling effect of sand on high explosive shells that might often penetrate the ground some way before going off. However, sand is hard to control. While it's easier to dig a foxhole in sand (entrenchment attempts do not face the +2 DRM), any protection from such is halved, as is any Emplacement benefit. Not only that, no other fortifications can be built in sand at all. It's better to take advantage of the way sand channels the movement of your enemy. Look for chokepoints where he will be forced to advance through gaps in sand, or set up HIP units that can bring heavy fire on units forced to wade through sand at the higher movement cost. If you are the attacker, use HS to probe the defences and find out where the British fortifications are.



We also have to consider the effect of Sand Dunes (F7.5), particularly in this scenario. Sand Dunes are signified by a darker yellowish/brown hexside on Sand overlays. There are two types of Sand Dune crests, high and low. On a Low Sand Dune Overlay, the sand hexes are considered as normal sand hexes, while the dune hexside itself is considered a half-level obstacle, much like a wall in terms of its affect on LOS. It provides a +1 TEM to fire across the hexside, and costs 1 MP/MF to cross (and when vehicles cross, Underbelly Hits can occur as per usual). On a High Sand Dune Overlay (as in this scenario), the sand hexes are considered the equivalent of half level Hillock hexes (which will be considered in the next lesson), while the Dune Crest is considered

a Level 1 obstacle. Normally a High Dune would be marked by a counter, but this is not necessary in this scenario where *all* dunes are considered high. Dunes can do much to inhibit movement, block or hinder LOS and provide protection from fire. They add a terrain benefit in a war zone where every bit of cover is priceless.



## Sangars

Sangars (F8.1) are a type of Entrenchment unique to the desert. The term itself originated among British troops stationed in Afghanistan in the Nineteenth Century (supposedly 'sanger' was the Persian word for *barricade*), and referred to a type of rock structure that was able to provide only a limited amount of cover using materials available to troops at the time.

A sangar cannot be set up in sand, nor can one be created during play. It is the equivalent of a 1S foxhole in many respects. It can hold one squad, but it can also hold a gun and its crew. Its TEM is +3 against an Overrun, and +1 against other attacks. An emplaced gun still receives a +2 benefit, but this is not in addition to the benefit of the sangar. Like a foxhole, it costs infantry 1 MF to move beneath a sangar or out of it, and a gun can be pushed into a sangar. One cool thing about sangars is that a trench counter in an accessible hex is presumed to be joined to the sangar fortification, and this means that your units can move from one to another without having to first leave either of the fortifications. This represents the ability to create a type of fortified outpost so common in the war in North Africa.

Sangars can be subject to Overrun of course, and a gun that is in a sangar during an overrun is automatically destroyed (as is the sangar), even though other units get to face a proper OVR resolution process. A KIA result from a DC, OVR, or HE of 70mm or more also destroys the sangar immediately. One opportunity arising from a vehicle OVR of a sangar is that the said vehicle (assuming it is fully tracked) can be subject to Underbelly Hits while crossing the relevant hexside.

## Dust

Alfred Toppe, a former officer with the Afrika Korps, wrote post-war of his

experiences in the desert of North Africa. One of his main observations was that dust in all of its forms had the most impact on warfare in that arena, and that its effects were at all levels, from strategic to tactical. Toppe writes of how enormous dust clouds quite pointedly showed the location of advancing enemy troops, and how dust itself could bring combating forces to within metres of one another before battle commenced. There is even a story of how one British divisional commander was lost for three hours trying to make his way from his command tent to the mess tent in a dust storm; a distance of a couple of hundred metres. Dust is represented in *ASL* in a number of complex ways. There are different levels of extremity of dust, and each level adds more complexity to the resolution of LOS and fire attacks. We also have to consider Vehicle Dust, the 'tail' of dust that follows vehicles around the board, providing a rather convenient (at times) amount of cover for other vehicles or infantry that might be following. There is also the concept of Heavy Wind and its affect on fire attacks to consider.

Whenever EC are Dry or Very Dry and a Desert Mapboard is in use, then dust can occur (F11.7). In this scenario, Light Dust is in effect as per SSR. This means that Vehicle Dust will also occur, although, with only four vehicles, the effect will be minimal. More apparent will be the slight effect Light Dust has on fire attacks. Dust in any form usually causes either a desert LV DRM (Light or Moderate Dust) or in extreme cases such as Heavy, Very Heavy and Extremely Heavy Dust a LOS Hindrance DRM that negates FFMO and Interdiction.

The application of the Dust rules during Light or Moderate Dust is pretty simple. You need only roll a second die for any TH DR or non-Ordnance IFT DR. This die is halved (FRD for Light Dust; FRU for Moderate Dust) and the remaining figure is the dust DLV added to the attack. Range is not relevant to this dr, and the total effect will always be in the region of +0 to +3 DRM. The randomness of the result clearly relates to the fact that shifting winds can move dust around, providing momentarily clear lines of sight, or alternatively dust can rise quickly enough to appear like fog then just as quickly subside again. The Light/Moderate Dust dr is a simple mechanism to simulate this effect. It can be tiresome, but if you are on the receiving end of incoming fire it might just save you some serious damage. As always in *ASL* it is wise to remember the exceptions to the rule however; for example DC, FT, OBA and Fire Lane



*A German column in the desert obscured by clouds of dust.*

attacks are *not* affected by dust hindrances. We will discuss Heavy Dust in the next lesson, since it raises its ugly head in Scenario ‘37 Khamsin’.

Vehicle Dust (F11.74) might seem an annoyance, but it is rather simple to grasp and can quite easily become your friend if you take advantage of it. In Dry or Very Dry conditions it stands to reason that a vehicle driving on sand or dirt surfaces is going to raise dust. It happens all over the world, not just the desert, although it is clearly in the desert where its effects are most apparent. Essentially the Vehicle Dust counter follows your vehicle around as it leaves one hex and moves to another. As long as it spends 2 or less MP to enter a hex (in other words it is going fast enough to *make* dust), it leaves a Vehicle Dust counter in the hex it has just left. This

counter remains until your vehicle moves again into another hex, or spends an MP in some other way (this further MP expense suggests the passage of time and thus the settling of the dust). Heavy winds, gusts or rain, should they occur (or already exist in the scenario) also negate the possibility of Vehicle Dust, which is why it doesn’t occur in the next lesson. A vehicle that ends its MP in motion is given a VD Motion counter.

One further trick regarding Vehicle Dust involves Platoon Movement. Usually you would probably choose not to use Platoon Movement if you could avoid it, but Chapter D makes it clear that you can if you wish (D14.24). In the desert it can be an advantage as Vehicle Dust is placed for vehicles moving in Platoon or Convoy *after each impulse* (F11.741). This enables

you to actually create a ‘wall’ of dust, and this of course can be really handy when trying to provide cover for other units. Remember, if LOS goes through three or more hexes of Vehicle Dust (or Heavy, Very Heavy, and Extremely Heavy Dust), the LOS will automatically be blocked. Therefore, in the desert it often pays to move vehicles first, creating such a ‘wall’, and then letting your other units follow, unlike elsewhere where the threat of hidden AT capability often causes us to advance our infantry first.

### AA, Wire and Minefields

This scenario has a few other tricky sections that can make it a little complicated. You’ll have to deal with Late Afternoon Sunblindness again, but you already know how this works (in this case it’s a definite advantage for the German). A couple of Stuka DB make an appearance, although this shouldn’t cause too much of an issue to most *ASL* players. In this case they make it harder for the British player to manoeuvre his forces. You might also want to review how AA fire can deal with this threat as the British Bofors gun is essential in this task. There are 10 Wire counters in the scenario, each of which can help the British player influence the movement of the advancing German troops so you might want to think carefully about their placement. Remember, however, that the effect of Wire on movement is variable, and the German player can designate 3 squads (or their equivalent) as Sappers. The most significant feature, however, is the allocation of Mines to the British player, and in the desert these are treated a little differently than normal.

Minefields in the desert were usually clearly marked. Their role and effect was usually to deny movement rather than to provide a violent effect. Both sides used them extensively, and in places like Gazala and Alamein, minefields had a distinct effect on the course of the battle. In Scenario 39, the British player is given three rows of Known minefields, each eight hexes long. Within each row he has to designate at least one hex that is a Dummy Minefield. The rest have an attack value of 6 Anti Personnel, and 3 Anti Tank Factors. Such Known mines can be cleared of course (B24.7-24.74) by infantry expending their entire MF, placing a partial TB counter on the hexside crossed, declaring themselves TI and by attempting a mine clearance DR of 2 or less at the end of their CCPh. Such a DR is favourably affected by Labor Status (gained for failing the first and second attempts), Leadership, and amount of

DUST TYPE	DLV	LOS HINDRANCE	OTHER
Light Dust	½ subsequent dr (FRD)	NA	Does not negate FFMO/ Interdiction* *roll sub dr for Interdiction negative modifier
Moderate Dust	½ subsequent dr (FRU)	NA	Does not negate FFMO/ Interdiction* *roll sub dr for Interdiction negative modifier
Heavy Dust	½ subsequent dr (FRD)	½ Range in Hexes (FRU)	Negates FFMO/Interdiction +1 MP per hex for Vehicles
Very Heavy Dust	½ subsequent dr (FRD)	+1 per Hex of Range	Negates FFMO/Interdiction +1 MP per hex for Vehicles +1 MP per hex for BU AFV No Double Time/Charge
Extremely Heavy Dust	½ subsequent dr (FRU)	+1 per Hex of Range	Negates FFMO/Interdiction +1 MP per hex for Vehicles +1 MP per hex for BU AFV No Double Time/Charge B/X # <i>lowered</i> by one
FFE Dust	NA	+1 per Hex of Blast Area	
Vehicle Dust	NA	+2 per VD counter	Occurs whenever Light Dust can occur VD Counter placed in hex exited by vehicle VD does not occur during Heavy Winds/Gusts/Rain

**Table 1: Dust Summary**

squads/HS/heroes/Sappers attempting the task. Success results in a full TB counter being placed with an exit hexside of the owning player's choice. A DR of 12 results in Casualty Reduction of the clearing unit. Remember that wire can be removed in much the same way (B24.73).

This scenario will see the British defenders, protected by Wire and Minefields, and the confines of Sand, faced with an elite German force, top heavy with MG and supported by Stukas and Sappers. The attackers will come out of the setting sun onto a British defence that is also hindered by low ELR. These Brits might crack under the pressure or they might not. As long as you can master the environment (considering everything mentioned above), and maximise it whether you are attacking or defending, you should have few problems with this one.

## LESSON 3: Hillocks, Wind and Sand Storms Text: 37 KHAMSIN

The Gazala Line was a formidable line of defences stretching from the Mediterranean Coast in the north to the Bir Hacheim fort some forty miles to the south. Although it consisted of a well developed series of minefield enclosed brigade size 'boxes', this method of fortification inhibited the movement of (and communication between) allied units, and the presence of an open flank south of the position allowed Rommel's Panzerarmee to sweep around in a large right hook into the rear of the British and Commonwealth position over May/June 1942. *ASL* scenario '37 Khamsin' gives us a taste of a confused small scale battle, symbolic in many ways of the larger battle it was part of, of the Knightsbridge brigade box between the main Gazala Line and the prized fortress of Tobruk. 'Khamsin', as the name suggests, also gives us a taste of something else that was common to desert warfare, a severe sand storm.

### Dust and Wind

Heavy Dust (F11.73) is the third level of Dust intensity, and the first level that is able to negate FFMO/Interdiction. This also means that, like Vehicle Dust, enough Heavy Dust can actually block LOS. Like Light Dust it can only occur in Dry or Very Dry conditions, but is only applicable in a scenario where *all* mapboards are desert. Most times that you make a TH DR or a IFT DR during Heavy

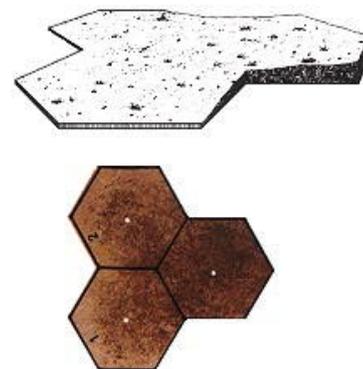
Dust you include a third dr that is halved (FRD) and added as a LOS Hindrance (exactly as it is in Light Dust). However, in Heavy Dust, you must also add a DRM equal to *half* of the range in hexes to the target hex. This means that, at most, ranges over 10 hexes are illegal during Heavy Dust as the minimum LOS Hindrance would still be six or more in such cases (B.10). Heavy Dust therefore brings the battle to a close quarter fight, where units can often move right up alongside one another without ever facing or receiving any really effective fire. Also, vehicles are constricted in their movement during Heavy Dust, with each hex entered costing a further 1 MP than usual.

Although it might not happen in the scenario, there is the possibility that wind and gusts might force the dust level up to Very Heavy or Extremely Heavy Dust. Very Heavy Dust is so bad that every hex of range creates a +1 LOS Hindrance, and a Light Dust DLV dr (FRD) is added to the result. Also, BU AFV must expend an extra MP to move into a hex while infantry are prohibited from using Double Time. Extremely Heavy Dust differs only in the sense that a Moderate Dust DLV dr (FRU) is made and added to the LOS Hindrance. Extremely Heavy Dust hurts weapons too; in this case B/X numbers are all lowered by one. If you're fighting in Extremely Heavy Dust, you'll have to virtually walk on top of the enemy to hurt him (refer to Table 1 for a full summary of the effects of Dust).

In this scenario, you also have to face Heavy Wind (not literally), which in the desert has an effect on the fire attacks of units that are firing *against* the wind direction. Presumably to simulate the effect of trying to aim into the blinding effect of dust particles travelling at high speed, the Heavy Wind (F11.761) rule adds a +1 DLV DRM to any attack *into* the wind (i.e. *opposite* of the wind direction). In this particular case, with the wind coming from the south east, as a German player attacking from the north of the board encounters British defences he might find himself staring directly into the wind, creating an unnecessary disadvantage. Therefore, an attack from the south, heading northeast, might be wiser and more successful (although neither player can escape the effects of Heavy *Dust*).

### Hillocks

The key terrain in the scenario is the three Hillock overlays. Hillocks (F6.1) are slight rises not high enough to be worthy of calling a hill, and represent undulating terrain as found in the desert; an attempt to



take away the billiard table feel. Hillocks are half level obstacles, inherent terrain, and cost no more than normal cost of terrain for infantry, cavalry and wagons to enter, and one extra MP for other vehicles. Their only slight elevation change does however pose some problems regarding LOS from units behind hillocks, on hillocks and adjacent to hillocks.

The Chapter F footnotes make a good effort at simplifying the hillock LOS rules by suggesting that we should consider them the equivalent of a 'wide' wall. As long as we take this advice we are a good way towards demystifying some rather complex LOS rules. Getting this right can be the difference between being seen and not being seen, or at the very least of being able at times to claim a +1 TEM benefit.

Every hex on a hillock overlay is a hillock hex. Let's for the moment forget about Hillock Summits and just consider a normal such hex. If a unit is on a hillock hex, it can see everywhere else on that hillock overlay, and any other hillocks that are next in its LOS. These other hillocks are at the same level as the original hillock and are thus in plain view. The same unit can see past this next hillock to a third one along the same LOS, but can only see past it to units that are adjacent to this third hillock. Any other unit further than this that is not on a hillock hex or adjacent to one cannot be seen, and is thus *out* of LOS. Of course, any units on other hillock hexes, or higher, can still be seen no matter how far away they are.

Being *adjacent* to a hillock is easily worked out (your unit is in a non-hillock hex, but next to a hillock and the LOS in question is crossing that hillock overlay at some point). Two units that are each adjacent to two separate hillocks that exist between them can see each other just like two units that each had a wall for protection can see each other. A unit behind, but adjacent to, a third hillock can also be seen. However (there's always a 'however' in *ASL* isn't there?), if a unit is entrenched or emplaced behind and



adjacent to a hillock, it cannot be seen by units on the other side of that hillock even if they are on a half level hillock hex themselves.

If a unit can be seen, but there is a half level rise between itself and an attacking unit it can claim a +1 TEM (similar to that claimed for being behind a hedge). The TEM would not apply if the LOS was *over* the intervening hillock. For example, in the situation above, each of those two units could claim the TEM against fire from the other. However, if the attacker was *on* its hillock, it could see over the defender's hillock into the defender's hex, and thus the defender would get no TEM (F6.4 and 6.5). If, however, the defender was behind *another* hillock further along the attacker's LOS, then it *would* receive TEM (F6.41).

Okay, it seems fairly complex, doesn't it? But you need only to consider each hillock's position in relation to others. Generally, think in terms of the *first* hillock (i.e. the one your unit is one, for example), the *next* (or *second*) hillock (the one you can see over), and the *third* hillock (the one you can see, but can only see units adjacent to it). Always remember Reciprocity, so reverse this if you need to work out if your units hiding behind a hillock have LOS to that enemy unit clambering over the hillock in the distance.

A Hillock Summit is a Level 1 elevation (i.e. it is a half level obstacle on top of another half level obstacle). A unit on a Hillock Summit can virtually see everything and can see over other hillocks lower than it. A unit behind a Hillock Summit can conceivably (i.e. should LOS pass through the summit hex) gain the +1 TEM from fire on its hillock or any other with a LOS to it. If you are on a summit you can claim Height Advantage over units on Level 0, but not if they are on a hillock hex (as you would then not be one *full* level above, only half a level).

'Khamsin; allows a close and tense fight that is rarely seen in the desert, proving (as if there was any doubt) that while the maps may look bare, warfare in the desert is anything but boring. There is cover in the wind, you might say, and the defenders will be trying hard to minimise the effect of the German advance, trying to get some effective fire onto the attackers before they get too close. The British infantry will face overruns without much redress, although some of them might try for CC against the odd German tank. Learn in this scenario to use Dust as cover (on the attack and in the defence), use the heavy wind to your advantage, and master the way hillocks can sometimes provide

the best protection possible in such a desperate situation. The desert is a harsh teacher, but if its lessons are learned it can be a valuable ally.

## LESSON 4 Where To From Here?

Well, that covers quite a bit (though not all of) Chapter F. Playing these three scenarios first as an introduction to desert warfare in *ASL* is probably the most effective way of tolerably digesting much of what is in the chapter. However, we haven't included everything. Let's now look at what we are left with, Heat Haze, other terrain types in the form of Deirs and Wadis, and the complex arrangement of Board 25 and the Escarpment Overlay that transforms it.

HEATHAZE	
Inf ≥ 13:	+1 ea 6 (FRU)
Veh ≥ 25:	+1 ea 12 (FRU)

INTENSE HEATHAZE	
Inf ≥ 7:	+1 ea 6 (FRU)
Veh ≥ 13:	+1 ea 12 (FRU)

### Heat Haze

A scenario might occasionally stipulate that Heat Haze (or Intense Heat Haze) is in effect. Heat Haze refers to the visual distortion that occurs when objects seen at a great distance through very hot air tend to shimmer and become unclear. In *ASL* terms its effects differ based on whether the target is an infantry unit or a vehicle. A vehicle, usually larger and with a more defined shape, is generally easier to see at greater ranges than foot soldiers and

the rules for Heat Haze reflect this. Heat Haze adds a DLV of +1 for every multiple of six hexes past the first twelve when firing at infantry, or for every multiple of twelve hexes past the first 24 if firing at a vehicle. Intense Heat Haze lowers the initial range of non-effect from 12 to 6 hexes in the case of an infantry target, and 24 to 12 hexes for a vehicle. Table 2 gives a range vs. DRM outline that might be useful (use it when playing 'A61 Across The Wire').



### Deirs

Deirs are not a particularly challenging terrain. Essentially a deir is just a shallow dip in the ground, not even enough to be considered a half level depression. Units in a deir are considered to be at Level 0, but they can get some protection from the deir lip (the edge hexes of the deir overlay). A unit in a deir hex can benefit from a +1 TEM if the unit firing at it is firing across the lip but is not adjacent to the lip hexside. LOS is only ever affected if a unit in a deir is emplaced or entrenched. Such units can only see the deir lip hexside before them. Units in a higher elevation than the deir can always look and fire into it without penalty. A deir can be utilised to provide some cover, but don't expect too much from it. Take advantage of it when you need to, but

Heat Haze							
Range Against Infantry	0-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-42	43-48
DRM	+0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Range Against Vehicle	0-24	25-36	37-48	49-60	61-72	73-84	85-96
DRM	+0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Intense Heat Haze							
Range Against Infantry	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-42
DRM	+0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Range Against Vehicle	0-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-42	43-48
DRM	+0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Air Attack	Heat Haze: +1 To Ground Support Aerial Attack						
	Intense Heat Haze: +2 To Ground Support Aerial Attack						
Table 2: Heat Haze							

move on quick (*ASL Scenario 56 Half a Chance* gives only deirs, foxholes and sangars to the Italian defenders).

## Board 25 and Wadis

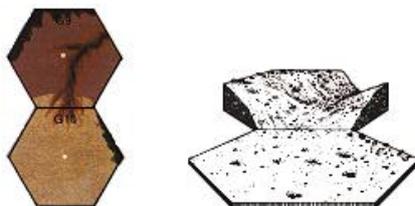
Probably the most complex part of using Board 25 revolves around the fact that the gullies are in fact Wadis, and the rules for Wadis include variable elevation and the presence of Wadi Cliffs. Wadis are, in fact, reasonably simple to grasp if you treat them as gullies with just a few modifications. In fact, the most complex part of mastering Wadis is getting used to the rules regarding how Crest Status can be gained by vehicles.



Unlike a gully, a wadi is generally assumed to have slightly different characteristics. Due to flash flooding (fast torrents of water at heavy volume), a wadi can often be cut deeper in to the earth with far more abrupt and vertical sides (hence the rules for Wadi Cliffs). At the other end of the scale a wadi could also be considerably wider than a normal gully, with gentler slopes that are accessible to vehicles. So, unlike the case of a Gully, in *ASL* a vehicle can assume Crest Status in a Wadi. Also, any SW can be fired from Crest Status in a Wadi as it is assumed that more room is available for such activity.

A vehicle can either move forward into Crest Status from within a Wadi, or it can move from an adjacent hex into Crest Status. Picture it like this. If the vehicle is IN the wadi (at the bottom of it, for example), it could drive forward so that the guys in the turret could just see over the crest, thus achieving a Hull-down position from forward fire. Or, it could reverse up the wadi bank behind it, achieving HD from fire behind. In the first case you would place a Vehicle Crest HD counter, in the second you would place a HD (rear) counter, each supplied in *WOA*. If done from within the wadi, this move costs 4 MP plus 1 MP to stop (quadrupled if done in reverse). If your vehicle is in a hex adjacent to a wadi, then it can do each of the above actions without having to move INTO the wadi in the first place. It could move forward into the Wadi hex and gain rear HD status immediately, or it could reverse into such a hex, and gain forward HD just as easily. In this case the MP cost is COT of the hex since your vehicle is not actually moving INTO the wadi plus 1 MP to stop. In each case it

is only the movement costs that differ, with reverse movement always costing four times as much as forward movement (it's always easier in a tank to do things looking forward). Remember to consider where you want your CA to face, as you have to consider the VCA change costs when calculating your move, and if reverse movement is part of the move you might have to deal with a pretty high MP cost overall.



Wadi cliff sides can greatly constrict movement, but they can also shield your infantry from fire in adjacent hexes. You can't cross a cliff, of course, without climbing, and this is something that most players tend to avoid for the simple reason that your infantry is extremely vulnerable doing so. You also need to remember that some wadis change elevation, meaning that you have to pay double the cost of moving IN a wadi from one level to another.

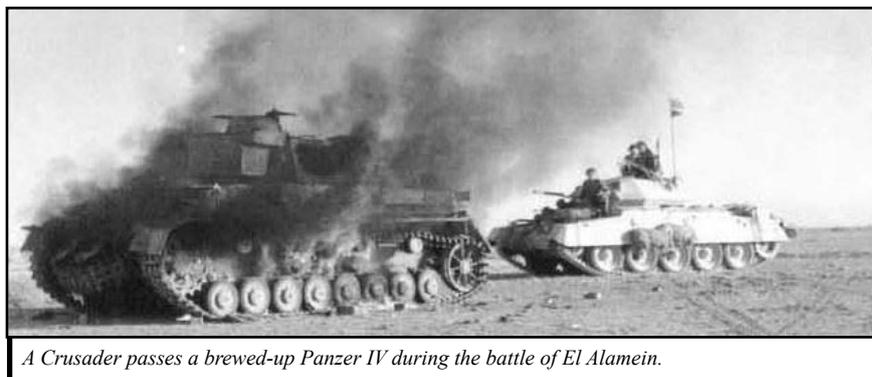
A good introduction to Board 25 is *ASL* scenario '51 The Taking of Takrouna' from *Hollow Legions*. In this small (half a mapboard) battle a group of hardy warriors from the New Zealand 28<sup>th</sup> (Maori) Battalion attempt to take a three hex village from a company of Italians. Getting up that hill under fire is no easy task for the British player, but it can be made easier by using the Wadis for cover. If you ever use the E1 overlay (escarpment) keep it in mind that the two boards on either side of Board 25 will be at different levels. The Escarpment Overlay 'joins' the two boards, one at Level 0, the other at Level 4. This change has little practical effect on play except that units at Level 4 might have quite a superior LOS to any other units on the map (*ASL* scenario '42 Point

of No Return' uses the E1 overlay – this scenario can also be seen as a kind of 'graduation' to this article; with many of the elements discussed present).

## CONCLUSION

The Chapter F rules need not be a reason to avoid battle in the desert. The desert is an unforgiving environment, but it is not always the bland, empty landscape imagined by most. Battle in the desert is with two opponents, the human (or cardboard) enemy, and nature itself. But nature can sometimes help you on your way. Dust can cover an advance. Heat Haze can allow movement without threat of effective fire, as can Sunblindness, whose effect can be used to give an attack the advantage. Wadis can give your infantry *and* your vehicles effective cover, and Hillocks can shield your approach if you know how to use them. Sand and Dunes also transform the landscape, providing traps for some, while ingenious use of Deirs and Scrub on occasion might just give you the edge over your opponent. Don't fear the desert; learn to use and take advantage of it.

Further reading on the subject of desert warfare should include *The Crucible of War Vols. I-III* by Barrie Pitt (Papermac, 1986), and *Desert Tactics* by Paddy Griffith (Osprey, 2008). There are numerous works of literature on the war in North Africa, and Major-General Alfred Toppe's article, *Desert Warfare – German Experiences in World War II* can be found at the Fort Leavenworth/Combat Studies Institute website. An indispensable guide to desert tactics in *ASL* must also include Mark Nixon's scenario analyses for *West of Alamein* as found in *The General Vol. 25 No. 6* and *Vol. 26 No. 1* and his article *Gunned Up in The Desert* from *The General Vol. 25 No. 3* (reprinted in the *ASL Annual '89*).



A Crusader passes a brewed-up Panzer IV during the battle of El Alamein.

# Double One 2010



**Friday June 25<sup>th</sup> to Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup>**

The London ASL tournament "Double One" returns in 2010, over the weekend of June 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>, with a new venue and continued support from its main sponsor, **Leisure Games** - [www.leisuregames.com](http://www.leisuregames.com).

Double One's new venue offers excellent value for money bed and breakfast accommodation, a large gaming room, open for extended gaming times, and is located close to Chelmsford, Essex, with easy access to London via a 40 minute main rail link, the M25, and Stansted international airport.

## **The weekend**

The gaming room opens at 3pm on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June for early arrivals - ideal for those wishing to tackle one of those monster scenarios that you never normally get to play in a morning or afternoon.

On Saturday morning, players will have the option to continue open gaming or enter one of several mini-tournaments. Participants that want to take part in a mini-tournament will be entered according to their ASL ladder rating. Subject to demand, we will also be running a Starter Kit mini tournament.

Each mini tournament will have capacity for 8 players, and will consist of 3 rounds, with round 1 commencing at 9.30am, round 2 at 3.30pm, and round 3 on Sunday morning at 9.30am. Details of the tournament scenarios will be released in early February 2010 and will be sent to all those pre-registered at the time.

Mini-tournament sponsors include **Friendly Fire** and **Le Franc Tireur**. Like **Leisure Games**, they have kindly agreed to provide prizes for mini tournament winners.

## **The venue**

The tournament's venue will be the Writtle Room, Writtle College, Lordships Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RR - [www.writtle.ac.uk](http://www.writtle.ac.uk).

Room opening times will be:

- Friday 3.00pm - 11.00pm
- Saturday 8.00am - 11.00pm
- Sunday 8.00am - 5.00 (prize giving circa 4.00pm)

The venue is less than 2 miles outside Chelmsford and is easily accessible:

- By car - the college is less than 15 miles from both junction 28 of the M25 and junction 7 of the M11.
- By train - Chelmsford station has a regular direct service on the London Liverpool Street line. Free pick ups and travel between the station and college can be arranged with the organisers
- By plane - London Stansted airport is less than 30 minutes from the venue, and for those flying into Stansted, free pick ups and transportation can again be arranged with the organisers.

Participants intending to stay overnight should book their B&B accommodation directly with the college (£30.00 plus VAT per person per night). A booking form and T&Cs are attached. Further information can be obtained by contacting Jenny Phillips at the college (phone +44 (0) 1245 424200 ext 25645 or e-mail [jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk](mailto:jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk)).

The college has a licensed bar which will be open during the weekend, partly in response to the first round of knockout games in the 2010 World Cup. Sandwiches and snacks will also be available at certain times. Writtle village is a very short walk from the college, with a varied selection of pubs, restaurants and a mid-sized supermarket.

## **Attendance fees**

The attendance fee for the weekend is £15.00 if paid before 30<sup>th</sup> April 2010, or £20.00 if booked after that date. Payment can

be made by either Paypal or cheque.

For further details, please either visit the tournament's website at [www.doubleone-online.net](http://www.doubleone-online.net) or contact the organisers as follows:

Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1 2RD. United Kingdom. [derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com)  
 Brendan Clark [brendan.clark@virgin.net](mailto:brendan.clark@virgin.net)

We look forward to welcoming you to Double One in 2010!



**BOOKING FORM  
 ACCOMMODATION  
 Summer 2010**

Conferences and Events, Writtle College  
 Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RR  
 Email: [Jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk](mailto:Jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk)



**Contact Details**

Full Name:			
Telephone Number:			
Mobile Number:			
Email:			
Full Address			Postcode:

**Accommodation Rooms**

Room	Rate per person, per night, PLUS VAT	Number of rooms:	Number of nights:	Arrival Date:	Departure Date:	TOTAL Due
Single En-suite Room- B & B	£30.00					
Single En-suite Room- H/B	£37.00					
Single En-suite Room- F/B	£42.00					
Doub/Twin En-suite Room- B&B	£30.00					
Doub/Twin En-suite Room- H/B	£37.00					
Doub/Twin En-suite Room- F/B	£42.00					
Cheques to be made payable to Writtle College.				Total enclosed		
Payment made over the telephone by card.				Date telephone call taken		

**Accommodation Details**

Please print clearly details of all persons in your party (including yourself)

Name	Address	Nationality <small>(Overseas guests, please see below)</small>	Telephone No.	Vehicle Registration No.

Overseas guests, please complete the information required below as required under the Immigration Order 1972:

Passport Number:	Place of issue:	Next destination:
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**Additional Requirements**

Please outline any special requests or additional needs which we should be aware of

**Confirmation**

I request the rooms / facilities above, and agree to the Terms and Conditions of hire as laid down by Writtle College.

Name:	Signed:	Date:
Payment made over telephone	Date telephone call made:	
Deposit enclosed: £	Cheque Number:	

London ASL Club  
 Double One Games Tournament

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Conference Co-ordinator

Writtle College  
Chelmsford  
Essex

CM1 3RR  
Tel: 01245 424200

Email: [Jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk](mailto:Jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk)

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# Panzer VIB King Tiger

Michael Davies

This article will be a very condensed version of the history and development of the Tiger II, followed by a comparison with a selection of opposing tanks and weapon systems. For a finale some tactics for King Tigers in *ASL*, and a few ideas for tactics against them.

## Naming Conventions

The Panzerkampfwagen VI B (Sd Kf 182) picked up a few nicknames during the war. Initially called Tiger H3, the name Tiger II caught on in March 1943. In June 1943 the official designation became Panzerkampfwagen Tiger Ausf. B. Konigs Tiger (Bengal tiger) was an unofficial name first used in January 1945.

The British translated Konig as King, whereas the Americans favoured Royal. Very briefly Allied intelligence referred to them as PanTigers, as the new tank incorporated features from both the Panther and Tiger.

It's almost certain most troops referred to the tank as a Tiger throughout the war.

## Development

At the start of WW2 the German main battle tank was the Panzer III armed with a 37mm or 50mm gun, supported by Panzer IVs with a short 75mm gun. Additionally the Third Reich used lighter Panzer I and II tanks for infantry support and scouting, plus PzKpfw 35/38 tanks gained from the fall of Czechoslovakia. Plans to develop a heavier tank to be used in small numbers were being developed from as early as 1937.

Work was divided between three main developers. Henschel und Sohn manufacturers of weapons, trains, trucks, planes and tanks started work on a chassis

and suspension in 1937. Ferdinand Porsche, the designer of the Volkswagen Beetle, and Tiger I, started work on a parallel design in 1939. The gun and turret were developed by the Krupp Company, long famous for armour development, gun and turret design.

All three developers needed to communicate with each other and accept changes to the design as the project developed. At an early stage the tank was slotted to mount the 8.8 cm kw.K 36 (L56), the same gun as the Tiger I would mount. Another option considered later was a squeeze bore 75mm gun with optimized anti tank capability, a design which was cancelled due to shortages of the tungsten carbide needed for hyper velocity ammunition. Although the concept gun was not developed it does show the aim was to produce a tank with phenomenal anti tank capability.

Ultimately the armament was decided between two very long 8.8 cm guns. Rheinmetal-Borsig FlaK 41 (L/74) and Krupp's own 8.8 cm Kw.K 43 (L/71). In *ASL* game terms the two guns are treated as 88LL guns (see German Ordnance note 12), in the real world their performance with similar ammunition was comparable, however the Krupp design was felt to be better and selected for the Tiger II.

Adoption of such a powerful gun increased the size of the turret ring needed for the Tiger II. This had implications for the size and weight of the vehicle. Porsche felt his design could not accommodate the dimensions needed so his chassis were used for the Ferdinand or Elefant assault guns famously used at Kursk. The Henschel design was chosen for production at the Kassel factory in Germany.

Production started in October 1943, with the first Tiger II manufactured in

November; output was in single figures per month until April 1944. The initial production went to training units and weapons development teams. The tank did not see front line action until June/July 1944.

An initial order of fewer than 200 was increased to 1500, with a production target of at least 50 per month. In actuality the production target was exceeded in September and October 1944 before production was severely disrupted by a series of destructive bombing raids that destroyed close to 95% of the Henschel production line at Kassel and disrupted subsidiary production and transportation in nearby areas. Allied strategic bombing reduced overall production by over 600 units.

Two main types of Tiger II were produced, the second being a command tank, the Panzerbefehlswagen, which mounted extra radio equipment and carried fewer rounds.

Tigers were issued to Tiger Abteilung of 45 Tanks and in small numbers to training or weapons testing units. Units started at full strength then gradually depleted as replacements were rarely sent, chiefly for transportation difficulties.

In action against armour or anti tank weapons, the Tiger II was very effective, with thick armour resistant to frontal attack, and a powerful gun. It was about as manoeuvrable as a Panzer IV, though perhaps a little underpowered as it used the same engine as the 45.5 ton Panther to move 68 tons!

Over short distances the Tiger II was very mobile; it could cross small streams by fording and could be supported on existing German mobile bridges. It did suffer from mechanical reliability problems when called on to cover distances approaching 100Km, when



These shots show the difference between the Porsche turreted Tiger II (left) and the more angular Henschel turret (right).

engines could break down. Most Tiger losses were caused by mechanical failure of the engine or tracks that could not be addressed with the resources available in the field. Whilst this does not detract from the weapons combat effect in a duel it was a weakness.

### Krupp's 8.8 Kw.K 43 (L/71)

The PaK 43 was mounted in the Tiger II, as well as in the Ferdinand/ Elefant, Nashorn, and JagdPanther. It was also used as an anti tank gun mounted on a cruciform mount or conventional gun carriage.

The greater effect of the PaK 43 than the PaK 36 was a result of the longer barrel and more powerful shell used. More propellant was used in the PaK 43, generating greater pressure which could act on the shell for longer due to the additional barrel length.

Two main types of ammunition were carried. SprGR 43 was the standard high explosive charge, used against infantry, buildings and soft targets. PzGr 39/43 was the standard anti tank round; it was a APCBC-HE (Armour Piercing Capped with Ballistic Cap-High Explosive) round. The AT round carried a base mounted high explosive charge; the ballistic cap gave the round better long range performance whilst the second cap aided penetration. The shell also included a tracer. Usual load was 50% AP and 50% AT rounds, total rounds carried was usually 86 in a Henschel Turret, 80 in a Porsche Turret, and 63 in a command tank. Keep in view on occasions tanks went into action with less than a full load, but if possible some crews preferred to carry more than a nominal load. In game terms a Tiger II has plenty of ammunition. One source I read said ammunition stowage in racks above the gun was discouraged after penetrating

rounds set fire to ammunition in the turret.

Special ammunition did exist. The sexiest was PzGr 40/43 APCR (Armour Piercing Composite Rigid) ammunition with a tungsten core. The round would penetrate an extra 40mm of armour out to 2000 metres. Not many rounds were produced, crews tended to keep them for targets like the IS series tanks and assault guns. A basic To Kill number would be about 31. The round is so rare it should only be included by SSR.

Not quite as rare was the Gr 39/3 HL (HEAT) round, sometimes substituted for standard high explosive rounds. This could be useful against lightly armoured targets such as half tracks or armoured cars, infantry or fortifications. Tank crews tend to load them when the nature of the next target was unknown, for example when destroying buildings in the vicinity of enemy tanks. Most sources give the round a penetration value of 90 mm, in *ASL* it would be perhaps a To Kill of 14. Only makes sense to include the round by SSR, perhaps in city fights.

### Armour

The Tiger II used very thick sloped armour, interlocked then welded in place. Frontal protection was extremely good. Virtually nothing could penetrate the front hull armour. The turret was shaped to deflect some shells, with work done to remove a shell trap present in early turret design. Very few Allied weapons could penetrate the frontal armour of a King Tiger, probably just the 17 pounder, the Russian 122mm and 100mm guns, and the US 90mm. Lesser weapons like the Soviet 85mm or American 76mm APCR rounds might get lucky and penetrate at very close range, other weapons would need to be phenomenally lucky to damage a Tiger significantly. There are many anecdotes

about Tigers being damaged by all sorts of weapons including Soviet anti tank rifles and the humble mortar. In practical terms though the frontal armour of a Tiger II was highly resistant against virtually every gun system the Allies used.

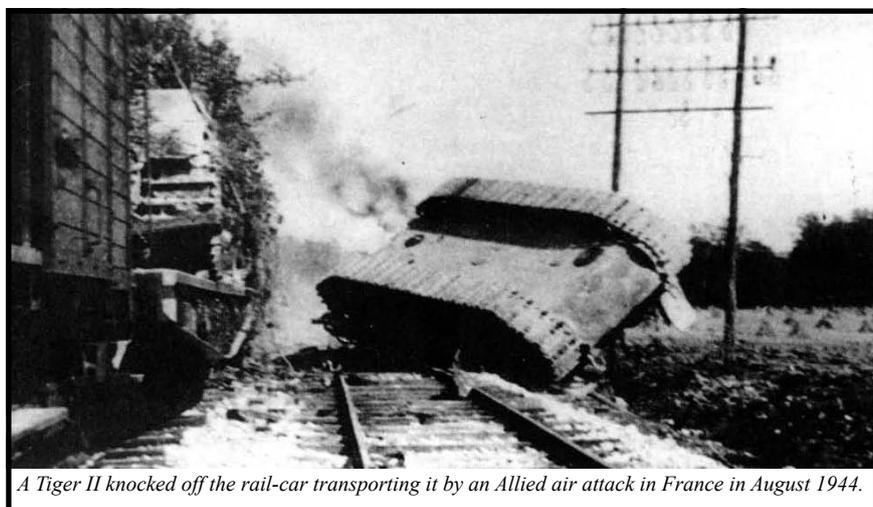
The Red Army did capture some Tiger II and subjected them to a series of trials against their guns. Comments were made about poorly executed welding, armour quality, engine reliability and issues with the transmission and suspension. It is likely armour quality did decline in the last year of the war due to shortages of manganese and other metals; the welding issue could be a one off. It would be interesting for existing Tigers' metallurgy to be studied for those two issues. Observations about the engine, transmission and suspension have prompted considerable debate. It's probably the case that the captured vehicles were due maintenance which the Russians couldn't do with the resources available.

Until September 1944 Zimmerit anti magnetic mine paste was applied to production Tigers. In October 1944 front line troops were told not to apply the paste to new or existing tanks. The Germans investigated a rumour that the paste was being ignited by artillery shells, but tests could not reproduce the effect. The paste contained small quantities of sawdust but was hardly flammable. Zimmerit fell out of favour and was not reintroduced. Zimmerit delayed the production of German AFVs, wasting time in their production whilst the paste was applied and dried, also adding to field maintenance and logistical tail. The Germans did make use of magnetic mines but the Allied forces did not develop a suitable weapon.

A much more useful defensive measure was the Nahverteidigungswaffe. This translates loosely as close defence weapon; it is, though it's more of an oversized pistol port that can be used by a flare pistol, or used as a hole to project smoke candles from without the crew being exposed to fire. For creating smoke the port is very effective. As a close defence weapon system the flare pistol round would be roughly equivalent to an air bursting grenade. Other flare pistol rounds could be fired, including coloured smoke and star shell.

### Opponents

The original Tiger II concept visualized a company of about 20 tanks in each Panzer division acting as an armoured spearhead in break through operations, or



A Tiger II knocked off the rail-car transporting it by an Allied air attack in France in August 1944.

as a solid bastion in defensive actions. By 1944 operational experience with the Tiger I suggested using the new tank in powerful battalions was the best idea.

Tiger II were organized into Heavy Tank Battalions (Abteilung) of about 45 Tanks. Four Abteilung fought on the western front, of which the 501<sup>st</sup> SS was transferred to the eastern front, while seven Abteilung (including the 501<sup>st</sup> SS) fought on the eastern front. In the west some small ad hoc units were formed from tanks held by training and research units and pushed into battle in the final days of the Third Reich.

With Tiger II concentrated in a small number of units, not all Allied tankers encountered them. For instance only about twelve clashes between Tiger II and IS-2 tanks are recorded, including fighting on the Seelow Heights and in the battle for Berlin. The Russians tried to identify and deliberately avoid strong concentrations of enemy armour, unless no other avenue of attack was available. Further, IS-2 tanks and assault guns were generally reserved as an offensive weapon and would not be expected where Tiger II are attacking.

Often Tiger II on the eastern front faced anti tank artillery, field guns, the odd SU-76m, T-34s, light SU, and the occasional light tank, plenty of infantry and anti tank rifles. In 1944/45 the exchange rate for Russian and German tanks was generally falling, as Soviet tactics and weapons improved. The Tiger II could seriously dent this trend. Typically ten Soviet medium tanks would be destroyed for each Tiger II, which includes losses for mechanical reliability. To penetrate thick armour Soviet gunners needed flank or rear shots that could only be gained by ambush or manoeuvre. The 100mm gun of the SU-100 or on an anti tank mounting could just penetrate the Tiger II turret armour, but neither was particularly common. Generally an engagement would involve the Tiger II opening fire and everyone else hiding or staying hidden whilst artillery or air assets were called in!

On the western front only the British 17 pounder gun, and US 90mm guns could do serious damage to a Tiger II frontally, and even then only from a solid hit on the turret. Tanks with 75mm or 76mm guns struggled, even with APCR ammunition. Any encounter with a Tiger II would call for extensive use of smoke, followed by air or artillery bombardment. Where possible reconnaissance sought to detect Tiger II before committing armour to action against it.

On neither front was the Tiger easy

to deal with. Who ever found one had two problems, firstly to extricate themselves from the line of fire, and secondly to plan a way of dealing with the threat. Often the solution was to bypass the position.

## Tactical Use in ASL

In ASL, the Tiger II does have a fearsome gun, effective machine guns, extremely thick armour, a potent close defence weapon, and an Elite crew.

It's weaknesses are large target size, Mechanical Reliability, relatively weak side armour and in some scenarios high CVP.

The gun is just superb. It is near certain death for most armour, except the Sherman Jumbo, and later model IS tanks. Only an IS-3 could stand in front of a PaK 43 with any confidence.

Against buildings and soft targets the 88mm gun is effective enough, used in conjunction with its machine gun armament a King Tiger can kill enemy infantry or persuade them to move.

Against all types of Target, Rate of Fire helps. Long range an also be an asset given the Tigers' superior optics and long gun. Most ASL scenarios are short range encounters, firing at sub 800 metres, the PaK 43 excels at ranges of 1500-2000m (50 hexes!) but we'll probably never see a scenario exploiting that!

From the front a King Tiger fears little. It's still worth going Hull down when you can for protection against Deliberate Immobilisation, and the odd immobilisation result on the AFV Destruction Table from near kills. There is scope to be aggressive with a Tiger, trusting its thick armour for protection

then closely approaching the enemy. This is something you can do with a Tiger I or Panther but not as often.

Although the Nahverteidigungswaffe is effective against assaulting infantry it's a bad idea to use it offensively. Accepted if a horde of enemy Infantry try to assault you, open the little hatch and fire the deadly flare pistol rounds into their midst, but generally try to kill infantry with machine guns or main armament as not being in or adjacent to infantry gives them fewer opportunities to hurt you.

Smoke from the Nahverteidigungswaffe (which must have a nickname!), is very cool though, costs one Movement Point and is tactically very useful.

Tiger crews are Elite within the Panzer force, as an inherent crew their morale is 9. This helps with most Morale or Task Checks. Probably the most likely is an Immobilisation Task Check for rounds striking an immobilised but not destroyed King Tiger. With such high morale there's always a temptation to go Crew Exposed, trusting to high morale and +2 TEM keeping IFT results out of K/KIA. Can be dangerous. Every Morale Check is potentially dangerous, fail a Morale Check and the mighty Tiger is stunned, or Recalled if you suffer a casualty Morale Check on a boxcars. Even weak attacks can cause Morale Checks. Another threat to an exposed crew is sniping, an active or lucky sniper will move towards an exposed tank commander. Think carefully before you go Crew Exposed. Of course there are times when it's a really good idea. If you are say using road movement or need to improve the chance of a vital To Hit attack. Pretty much you need to be in the situation



*This shot shows the size of the turret on the Tiger II. This particular example took minor track damage while engaging some Shermans west of Magny-en-Vexin on 29 August 1944, then subsequently broke its final drive turning too tightly. The crew blew up the tank but were fired at by French Marquisards, suffering two casualties. Later, Sergeant Roberts of A Squadron of the 23rd Hussars fired at the abandoned tank and claimed the "kill." It was later taken back to Great Britain and has been on display ever since at the Royal Military College at Shrivenham.*

where when an exposed crew is Stunned or Recalled you accept it as the result of a well calculated risk, rather than throwing the rest of your toys out of the pram because you've been unlucky. Generally though, high crew morale is a good thing.

If you ever stand next to a King Tiger in a Museum the first thing you are likely to notice is the sheer size of it. Shermans are big, as are Panthers and Tiger Is, but Tiger II are really enormous compared even to modern main battle tanks. A combination of factors led to the size, most important being the huge gun, that needed a large turret ring, which widens the hull and presto you end up with a big tank. The weight stops the vehicle going over a lot of bridges safely; in the real world the Tiger would generally ford shallow rivers, and could make use of the German Army's standard 16 ton portable bridge. In *ASL* keep the Tiger off ice, anything over 50 tonnes goes straight through.

Being big makes the Tiger II easier to hit. Not always a problem if the attacking weapon can't do damage. If there is a chance of damage or the crew bailing out you want to minimise the chances of being hit. Target size matters most when you are subject to Deliberate Immobilisation attempts. Usually such attacks qualify for a +5 modifier; this is partially offset by your large size. Don't dawdle close to a weapon trying to immobilise you. If you can move out of Line of Sight, use Bounding Fire or distract the attacker with other threats, try for Smoke, activate your sniper, wish lost rate of fire on your enemy, or better yet hope he runs out of ammunition or malfunctions the gun! If you are startled by the sudden appearance of a hidden enemy anti tank gun intent on

immobilising your best tank, you may panic and lose confidence. The surprise can be offset partially by looking at the scenario card for such potential threats, then trying to anticipate where the enemy are likely to put such weapons. It's very rare for immobilisation of a single unit to be crucial to play. If it is then you need to throw a protective ring around the Tiger. This cordon should consist of less vulnerable infantry. Half squads can cover a lot of ground, perhaps one of the most surprising ways of doing this though is to use a motorcycle to tear through Orchard, Brush, and grain, half tracks and carriers work fairly well. If the enemy could be hidden in building though, infantry are key. Remember you can search terrain, or fire to draw out enemy troops. White Phosphorous is one of the best ways of finding things, but it's not readily available to you. The most effective counter to Deliberate Immobilisation is undoubtedly range. If you can plant a Tiger on a hill half a board back from the enemy and bang away you are pretty safe. Hull down also provides complete protection so exploit terrain like walls, bridges and with a bit of luck hill crests.

Sadly the Tiger II doesn't need enemy units to end up immobilised. As it is subject to mechanical reliability it must risk immobilisation each time it moves. This isn't an issue where you are firing from a fixed position, generally this is what guns do, and it isn't always necessary to move a tank. If you must move it's a risk. In scenarios where you must exit units staying in Motion completely removes any risk of mechanical failure. Similarly if you must get a tank to a particular point either to satisfy a victory condition or for some tactical advantage don't stop and start more often than you

must. Because of mechanical reliability you have to think more carefully when using Tigers. Moving and firing may be essential but try if you can to always stop a Tiger in a place where it can provide or threaten something useful. You don't want to end up sandwiched between two buildings with a line of sight to another building, hearing foreign voices debating whether to attack you or leave you alone as you aren't hurting anyone!

The Tiger's thick armour and deadly gun will almost look after themselves, but you do need to be a bit careful or thoughtful moving.

The side and rear armour of a Tiger II is not very much stronger than a Tiger I. Against medium tanks like the T34/76, and most Shermans the armour is just about strong enough. Deadlier threats such as 122mm, 100mm, or 17 pounders will rip through it very easily, even 85mm and US 76mm guns are marginally dangerous. If you can protect your flanks. Use solid obstacles like woods or buildings that can only be entered with the risk of bog, and perhaps falling into a cellar. Be dug in if the scenario allows. Move your turret to face the threat, as you fire the main gun, or machine gun, pop Smoke if it's really looks bleak. Friendly troops can help. A squad either side of you will threaten enemy armour with Panzerfaust or Panzerschrek rounds, making massed attack more dangerous. If everything fails and you are hit in the side armour, plan B is not to be penetrated. Good luck with that.

Don't overlook other flank protection; canals, marsh, crag and complex village or town layouts can limit the approaches to your flanks. Be creative, especially if you have fortifications such as roadblocks, anti tank ditches, trenches, mines, even wire.

If you are playing scenarios with a CVP cap or exit requirement each Tiger II is a lot of potential points. Ten, including the crew, equivalent to five infantry squads. Exactly how important this is depends on the scenario, in each case it makes reading the scenario card particularly the objective notes crucial.

Tactically Tiger II can be deadly, if the enemy obliges by lining up targets in front of you and keeps away from your flanks. With reasonable gunnery a Tiger can expect to kill one tank a turn, and spend the odd spare moment machine gunning crews, or enemy infantry. Almost as good, the mere threat of your Tiger II will drive enemy tanks and infantry away, seeking protection by line of sight or cover, and creating opportunities for



*Tiger 222 was knocked out by the Ambleve Bridge in Stavelot during the Ardennes offensive.*



*Despite its thick armour, the Tiger II was not invulnerable. The front of this Tiger II was penetrated by a round from a IS-2, killing the driver.*

the rest of your troops. More often you will face cunning opponents, who seek to outflank you, or force you to move and risk mechanical reliability. In most cases Tigers are fun.

## Conclusion

The Tiger II was optimised as a heavily armoured tank, with an extremely powerful anti tank gun. Its main weakness was mobility. Tactically it was relatively slow, and subject to transmission or engine faults due to strains placed on the engine. The mechanical reliability rules in *ASL* capture this well, plus the inherent difficulty of moving anything that heavy on slightly soft or already damaged ground. Even so in combat against other tanks it could achieve kill ratios of 5-10 for each Tiger II lost, including mechanical write offs. Allied tankers were scared of the Tiger I let alone the Tiger II, something which doesn't readily transfer to the *ASL* game system.

When moving operationally, the King Tiger's steering and manoeuvrability was comparable to the Panzer IV, certainly good enough. Unfortunately a Panzer IV suffering a mechanical breakdown was easier to recover or repair in situ. Any problem with a King Tiger was an epic. Pulling it out of a ditch or up a river bank required another Tiger as nothing else was readily available to pull it. Any component was nearly twice the size of that on a medium tank, making routine maintenance harder. Changing tracks could be done in the field but would be exhausting. It is well documented that more Tigers were lost to mechanical problems than ground fire.

Strategically the Tiger II really did

have issues. Assembly was concentrated in north western Germany at Kassel. Thousands of tons of bombs from the USAF targeted tank production, with some additional support bombing from the RAF. Both air forces destroyed fuel, transportation assets, ball bearings and other strategic targets that also delayed production. Over 600 Tiger II were destroyed or delayed by air attack.

Strategic mobility was also a

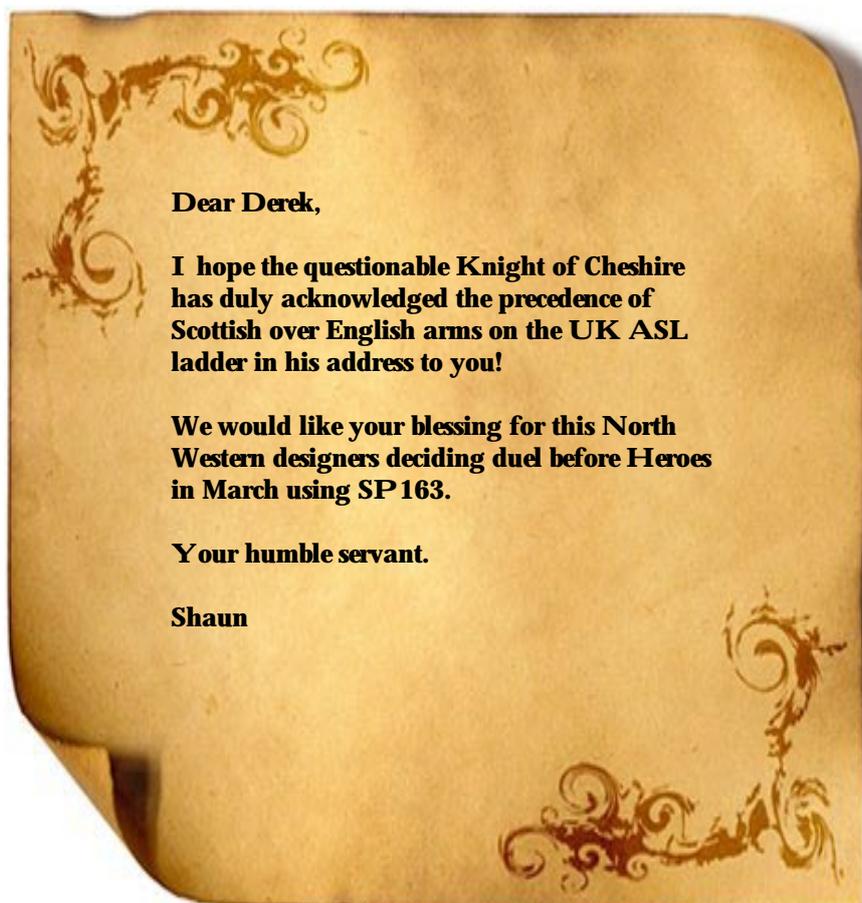
problem for Tiger Abteilung. Units tended to be formed then sent to the front, receiving few replacement Tanks, unless nearly destroyed and pulled from the line to reform. Tiger II were lost because they could not be withdrawn quickly enough.

Nowadays there are plenty of people who have an opinion on the Tiger II. My own view is the unit is tremendously useful in *ASL*. Used properly they can be deadly, particularly against opponents who in some way fear them! Playing against the Tiger II is perhaps more rewarding though. You can feel elated when one throws a track or you successfully ambush and immobilise one.

Think one approach is to bid for Tigers if you like them and try to get the balance in a scenario if you don't.

The one thing I've noticed though is almost every picture of a Tiger II with its crew shows them looking extremely happy.

Ω



# A DECADE OF WAR

1936-1945



ASL Action Pack #6  
10 Scenarios from 1936-1945



Multi-Man Publishing



## INCOMING

Continued from page 3

be \$20.00.

*ASL Action Pack 6 - A Decade of War* is a collaboration between MMP and Gary Fortenberry, Charlie Kibler, and Bob McNamara, three noted *ASL* figures from the days of The Avalon Hill Game Company. It contains three new maps (based on a concept that Gary has been toying with for a number of years) that resemble two half-boards placed side-by-side long edges abutting, which allow new mapboard configurations not possible before. Each map is backprinted with an almost-exact copy designed to fit geomorphically with existing maps no matter which orientation is used.

The included scenarios consist of a battle a year for the ten year period of 1936-1945 and among the campaigns featured are the Spanish Civil War, the Sino-Japanese War, France 1940, Malaya, the Philippines, the East Front, and the Bulge. Also included are optional Australian Balancing System (ABS) handicap bids for each scenario, providing 8 levels of balance for each battle. The expected retail price is \$34.00.

The long-awaited reprint of *Doomed Battalions* is also expected to be released at MMP's Winter Offensive tournament in mid-January. Combining the contents of the long out of print modules *The Last Hurrah* and *Doomed Battalions (1st ed)*, it will include *ASLSK*-style mapboards 9, 11, 33, 44 and 45, four countersheets, the 16 scenarios from *TLH* and *DB*, Chapter H notes of the Allied Minors and three sheets of overlays. It is expected to retail for \$72.00.

*For King and Country* is also being reprinted and should be available again soon.

## BUNKER TESTING

Playtesting of the scenarios for *Dispatches From The Bunker 30* is underway. 'Task Force to Cotignac' is a medium-sized scenario which sees French Partisans with American support battling for control of the town of Cotignac from a mixed force of Germans, while 'Lack of Discernment' sees fighting in Canton, China between Red and Nationalist Chinese forces. 'The Western Cross', a tournament-sized scenario, is the next in the Operation Rosselsprung series, and sees a small glider landing by Fallschirmjaegers into the midst of Tito's Partisans at Driver. Finally, 'Mga Station' is the latest in the NKVD series and covers a NKVD assault on the railroad station at Mga in September 1941. Several railroad overlays are used to transform mapboard 45 into the station and vicinity.

There will also be an article from either Jim Torkelson or Carl Nogueira plus Carl's Tactical Tips, the summaries of the Bunker Bash and Albany tournaments, and a look ahead to the Nor'Easter tournament.

Four issue subscriptions (starting with the current issue, number 29) are available for \$15.00 (\$18.00 outside the USA). Issues 1 to 10 are now out of print but PDF versions are



available for free from [www.aslbunker.com](http://www.aslbunker.com). Other back issues are \$4.00 (\$4.50 outside the USA) or \$45.00 (\$55.00 outside the USA) for a complete set of issues 11-28. A complete set of issues 11-28 and a subscription for issues 29-32 is available for \$55.00 (\$65.00 outside the USA). Cheques should be made payable to Vic Provost and sent to *Dispatches from the Bunker*, P.O. Box 2024, Hinsdale MA 01235, or you can pay by PayPal to [PinkFloydFan1954@aol.com](mailto:PinkFloydFan1954@aol.com). You can email them at [aslbunker@aol.com](mailto:aslbunker@aol.com).

## BLOOD AND JUNGLE

*BFP 3: Blood and Jungle*, Bounding Fire Productions latest module focuses on the Pacific Theatre of Operations. 47 scenarios cover a wide range of actions from China, Burma, Borneo, the Philippines, Tarawa and many other locations throughout southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Also included are four countersheets depicting units, weapons, vehicles, and planes that are featured in the scenarios, and two new *ASLSK*-style mapboards. DW-1 is a double-wide 16"x22" geomorphic mapboard representing a large urban area made up of buildings and huts, printed in two 8"x22" sections on heavy card stock, while BFP G is a regular sized mapboard. Numerous rule pages describe new terrain counters, vehicle listings and notes, and special units, while a divider card lists the new unit capabilities and terrain counter notes.

The module is rounded out with a magazine with articles on subjects including tactics, histories, units, countries, and tank hunters.

The numerous contents make this one of the largest *ASL* product ever released, and it will cost \$125.00 in the U.S./Canada, and \$135.00 elsewhere.

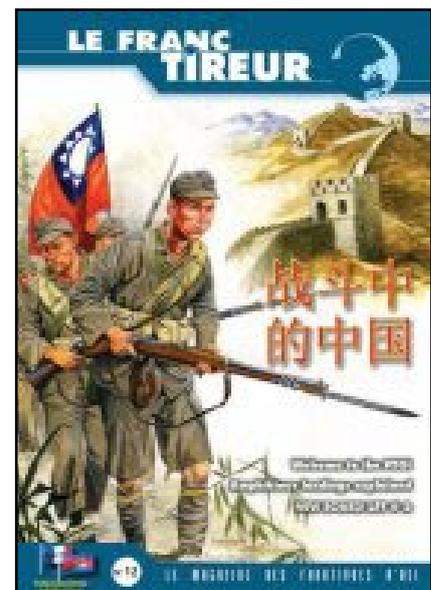
## FROM FRANCE TO CHINA

Out now is *Le Franc Tireur 12*, which focuses on the war between China and Japan, the PTO rules, and seaborne assaults. As usual there are ten new scenarios, printed on cardstock, as well as 2 *SASL* missions

and a new *ASLSK*-style map. 99% of the 80 pages are printed in English. It is available for €33.00 from <http://www.lefranc tireur.org/spip.php?rubrique1> and several *ASL* stockists.

## HOB MOVE ON WEB

As a result of administration errors, Heat of Battle have been forced to move their web site, which can now be found at <http://heatofbattlegames.com/index.php>.



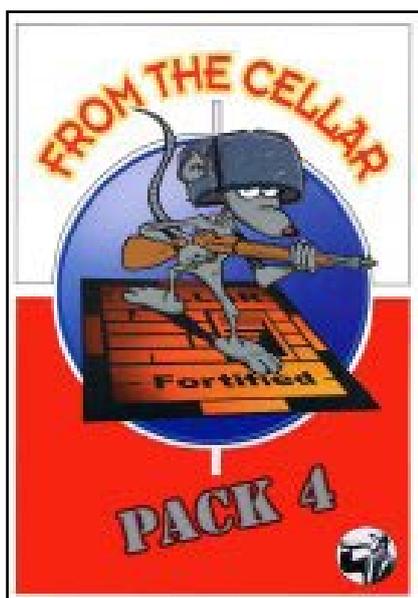
# THIRD PARTY MEGA-REVIEW

Trev Edwards

If the health of the *ASL* hobby were to be read solely from the quantity and quality of products from Third Party Producers (TPP) released in 2009, then you'd have to conclude all was well. There has been an avalanche of product, and all that I've seen (which is by no means all) has been really good stuff. I've spent the year just trying to try out something from each and not managing to get round to it. Can too much of a good thing really be bad? Well obviously the answer has to be 'Not if the products being released are well produced.' I'm happy to tell you, from my experience of the following products, that all is indeed well.

I've spent the most on magazines and modules from a TTP I had heretofore ignored because I understood that so much of their product was produced in the French language. Hearing that their content was now mostly in English, I purchased *Le Franc Tireur 10* and *11* early in the year and was very impressed, not least with the counters that came with *LFT 10*. 'SW First Fire' and 'PF First Fire Counters' were long overdue. *From The Cellar 3* was also very well presented. However they weren't released in '09 as far as I know. What I believe to have been released was the latest *From The Cellar* pack and something very special.

I'll start with *From The Cellar 4*, which is a scenario pack with



accompanying counters and rules devoted to the Russian Civil War in the East. This is a conflict I personally know too little about except that it was protracted and bloody and the Soviet Empire was the ultimate result. There are nineteen scenarios set from 1908 through to 1921 and they depict conflict between 12 factions of Russians or other nationalities, represented by most of the counter mixes in the game. The designers have looked at the factions involved (I never knew there were three types of 'Communist') and they've picked out the existing nationality counter mixes that fitted closest. Examples include White Russians using Axis Minor counters, Red Russians, Bolsheviks and the Social Revolutionary Party using Italians, Russians and partisans and French counters respectively. That's just a moderate sample of the oddly juxtaposed counter mixes that you will set up to fight. I think "Italian" vs. Japanese has to be the strangest. The British, Japanese and US are also depicted, getting involved to protect their interests, but they use their own counters. Oddly though there are WWII value squads involved. I'd have thought the US infantry squad of 1919 would have been best depicted by the 447 that came with *Gung Ho* (the Philippine units). Five FP seems a lot in the pre-Garand age.

In order to play the scenarios there are provided counter mix extensions. These include Russian (Maxim) type machine guns in nationality colours for the Chinese, Axis Minors and Italians. You also get Commissar and Taczanka counters in unusual nationality colours also and there are counters for 'Ice Sangars' and hasty roadblocks. These are clearly designed as if official *ASL* counters which do not look out of place. Finally, while they had their full colour palette out for the counter sheet, LFT saw to it that we got a set of nationality colour VCA counters for all AFV - using counter mixes. These are very nice, with the turret depiction being in white on the 'CE' side. I've adopted these straight away.

Counter quality is perfection in these LFT products. They look at least as good as official ones, however they are harder and smoother, reminding me very much of the Kinetic Energy counters from the last decade. They are so precisely cut out from the sprues that they come in an envelope, as practically all the counters had fallen

off. No ratty corners here. This was true of both *From The Cellar 4* and the module, which I will discuss below. Apparently the quality of production has to do with having the actual game components manufactured in Cambodia.

The scenario cards which LFT produce are beautifully presented on glossy thin cardstock in what I'd expect all producers' cards would look like if the game were new today. Standard looking scenario layout with the addition of a full colour rendition of the map boards as well as the counters and national symbols, also in full colour. Having the map boards presented in miniature immediately gives you an idea of the type of fight which is depicted and can help you choose a scenario. Scenarios set in snow have white as the background colour for the hexes, much like the *VASL* option. In short the presentation of the scenario cards is excellent. The only gripe I have is that a couple of them extend over to a second page and the SSRs run on to the back side of the one sheet. It's a pain in the bum to have to turn the scenario card over mid setup or mid game and I'd appeal to all producers to have the run-on appear on the back of another scenario card! Some do it already and to those I tip my hat.

Scenarios include infantry-only battles, OBs with armoured cars on each side, some sleighs on each side and a fair quantity of cavalry crops up. Anyone up for a fight between the Mongolian Militia and the northern Chinese Army circa



1908? (me, see you Thursday at HEROES! 2010 – Pete) I see several scenarios with variable OB's, which is another feature I'm dead keen on. Interestingly there is a genuine three-player scenario with Bolsheviks, Social Revolutionary Party and Red Russians battling over the city of Glaskov, Siberia in 1921. Sadly I have yet to play a scenario from this pack but I'll be giving them ago in the New Year, especially that three player number.

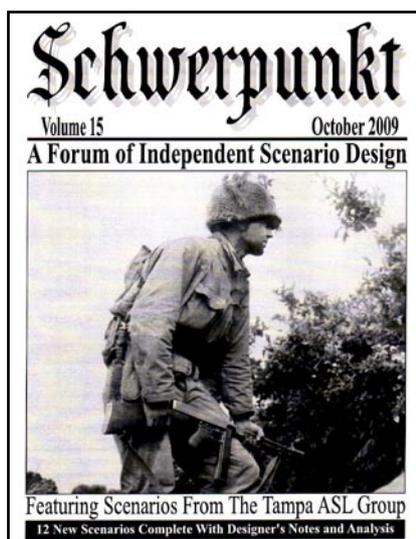
The most impressive single release of '09 for me was also a LFT product, their first full on- module, called *Operation Chariot*. LFT have definitely taken the lead in presentation. This is an *HASL* treatment of the Commando raid against St Nazaire which successfully destroyed the "Normandie" dry-dock, ramming the sea-doors with an explosive laden destroyer, and so denying the German navy a repair facility for the Tirpitz on the French Atlantic coast. Epic stuff. Within a glossy box-come-slipcase cover you get two A1 sized *HASL* maps depicting the docksides and buildings of the port, 210 counters including one three hexes long depicting HMS Campbeltown herself (you have to cut that from the body of the sprue). Counter quality is as good as the *From The Cellar* sheets (I heard they printed them at the same time). You get the Royal Marine Commandoes OB in counter form, which at first just look like 'normal' 648 and 348 British MMC with the Tommy Gun-And-Anchor symbol in the corner. However a closer look reveals custom artwork on the counters, the kneeling Tommy-gunner on the right is firing and a stream of shell cases is being ejected. Nice stuff. The Commandoes MMCs Self Rally and are Fanatic on shore. The SMC (again with custom artwork) are Heroic once ashore. The British player has to load these troops in the various parts of the Campbeltown, on or below decks, before game start and she will be escorted into the fray by a flotilla of Motor Torpedo Boats and motor launches. Lavish player aids make laying all this out a pleasure, with the many weapon covered arcs and vulnerable arcs depicted in valorous colour schemes. The German counters include extra 20 mm Flak guns (almost indistinguishable foirm 'official' counters) and Marine crews.

A 38 page rulebook, printed on glossy stock includes all the rules for the St Nazaire raid, and this includes such 'chrome' as rules for searchlights locking onto and blinding naval units, swing bridges, various methods of sabotage, submarine pens, super demo charges,

ramming and scuttling the Campbeltown herself and a couple of pages of designer notes. It all looks very thrilling and complex, and the level of detail is impressive to say the least. Of course it's going to be a steep learning curve and night is going to be the start of your rules research.

Also included is a separate game system allowing you to play MTB actions from other theatres of the war, with MTBs from the US and Japan, German E Boats, Russian Rocket Boats and Italian craft in addition to the British types. 7 of the 15 scenarios in the module are for the MTB game system.

All in all this makes up a very impressive package, and I only had to see one of these opened to be convinced to part with £62. This is a lot of money but I don't regret it for a minute. This sets the standard by which the presentation of future TPP modules will be judged. My one gripe is that the map is a bit soulless to look at. It's too obviously a crisp rendition done on a computer and it sadly lacks any aesthetic appeal. I don't think you'd notice one you've been playing for a while. The only other thing we have to be concerned with is how the thing plays out. At the moment I'd need to have a run at this to get my regular face-to-face players ready to fight night scenarios (the most frequent players are relative newcomers) and so this will be a big project later in the New Year. There's a new issue of LFT just released but I am yet to get my copy.

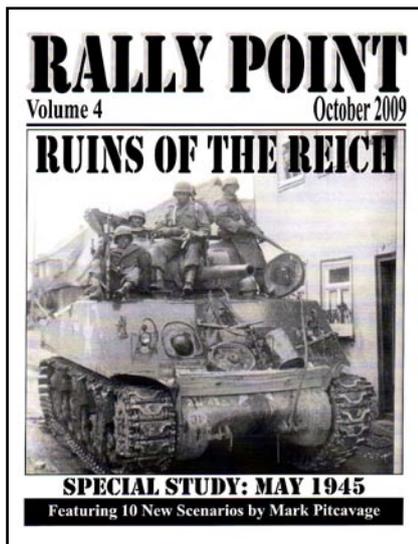


Aside from LFT product the only other items I bought at INTENSIVE FIRE in the October of 2009 were *Schwerpunkt 15* and its sister publication from Sherry Enterprises, *Rally Pont 4*. The legacy that

*Schwerpunkt* has already left the *ASL* community over the last fifteen issues (over thirteen years) has been one of consistent quality and a source of countless solutions to the problems of tournament directors throughout that time. Usually there's a sense that the producers have been quietly proud of their scenarios and have let the product speak for itself. However Evan Sherry's self congratulatory editorial grates a bit on first reading. He comes across more like Terrell Owens when he deserves the respect of Jerry Rice, however I can't actually argue with anything he writes there. I guess modesty is a cultural issue. After some thought I suppose he deserves his moment in the sun after all the work he has done. However praise from others is worth many times that which he may pen himself. That being said I always feel that I'll get great value for money from *Schwerpunkt* and that, if it ever came down to having to choose just one Third Party Product a year, it would always be *Schwerpunkt* that I'd buy. They've earned too much loyalty with real hard work and quality product not to be considered the benchmark of the TTPs.

Brook White's article on the way the Italians are depicted in *ASL* pretty much rails against their unit weakness when compared to (particularly) the Russians, before laying out the way he would expect an OB of various formations to look. Summary: He's not happy with the way the Italians are depicted in *ASL*. Then the rest of the magazine portion has the usual player's guide and designer notes for each of the dozen scenarios in the issue. As usual Evan has designed more than half but there are some well established names such as Bill Sisler and Pete Schelling in there also.

I've played Pete's 'Encircle This' which is a late war city and factory fight. The Russians get to place some 'hidden' rubble counters which can stymie the German attack. In my game I concentrated too much on defence of the factories and the Germans easily flanked my units, getting in to shoot up my T34/85s from behind with their Panthers. Good scenario though - I'd play again as either side with no qualms. The rest of the scenarios are the usual tourney sized actions we have come to love and there are, as always, some involving Tiger Tanks. Pete's 'Brittany Speared' depicts an action where the Medal of Honor (sic) was won posthumously and the SSR that generates the hero is right out of the *SP* pack from years gone by. Scenario title stinks though.



*Rally Point* however I'm not usually quite so keen on. I've played a few scenarios from earlier issues I either didn't like or found to be very poorly balanced. They have had issues dedicated to *Schwerpunkt* rejects, *ASLSK* board scenarios (not terribly keen myself) and a batch of Axis Minor stuff I found hard to love. I approached the current issue with some additional trepidation because the designer of all the scenarios is Mark Pitcavage, who designed all the scenarios in *Action Pack 3*. I didn't take pleasure in what I found there either.

However my experience (so far) of *Rally Point 4* is a vast improvement and I have enjoyed myself with what I've read and played. Mark chose to theme his 'Special Study' scenarios around the last gasp of the war in Europe and you get 10 scenarios set on many fronts. These scenarios are very unlike the ones found in *Schwerpunkt* because some are very long by those standards (RPT31 is 9 turns and has large OBs) and many have very long SSRs to deal with. The SSRs themselves will sometimes present a bar to spontaneous play. Fine if you are agreeing with an opponent to play a scenario next time you meet, but frankly a turn off when flicking through perspective scenarios at an *ASL* weekend somewhere. Many of these scenarios demand – and deserve – a quiet evening in with the 'phone off the hook to set up a defence. I know I'm not the only one who believes this to be no bad thing if you can find the time.

The first I scenario played was 'Attack To Retreat,' which depicts some Germans trying to battle their way through some of Tito's Yugoslavs (I did mention it covered many fronts). The Germans have captured T-34s and the Yugoslavs have both Italian guns/mortars and British and German SW's to try to stop them.

My defence was set up with most long-ranged weapons on the large hill mass of board 50 on the right, trying to make the German's lives a misery as they tried to roll across board 3 through the main force of my defending infantry. The exit VC specify a minimum number of infantry VP must exit, so I concentrated in the end on the German infantry because it is easier to harm than the German AFVs for the most part. The Germans were bottled in and unable to make progress without exposing themselves in the open streets of the village. This scenario has a tough learning curve for the Germans and, if I were to play again as them I'd attack both hills so as to shut down the long range weapons. It's easy to overlook how easy it is for AFVS to pass through woods, you'd only need to pass through one to open the left flank, create the TB counter, and that would open an easier route in my opinion.

In play as I write this review is 'Sword of Damocles,' which is a late-war city-fight including a river crossing. The recipe: take a city you never heard of. Flatten some of it, set fire to it, destroy a crossroads with shell holes. Then set up Russians who have ordinance SMOKE from six of their nine vehicles but must cross one of the three board 23 bridges to get started on achieving their exit VP, by crossing board 51. A mixed bag of Germans from elite to conscript stand in their way, with three well armed AFV. My only gripe is that I have been fighting my way across these same drafted bridges since about 1988 when I first bought *Beyond Valor* (a new canal-city board from MMP is overdue). To my horror I chose the bridge which my opponent defended with the 88LL AT gun and the three special PF-toting crews which set up HIP to ambush Soviet armour. I'm across in reasonable shape and ready to break out at the start of my turn 3. The scenario looks like it will be a close one.

The German armour is severely restricted by one of the variations on fuel shortage SSR that this pack contains. Although there were some low fuel rules included in *KGP*, the Mark has either gone for the option of arbitrary DR at the start of a turn (as in 'Attack To Retreat' – a 12 means no more fuel) or has granted the German player so much fuel to allocate to his vehicles as he sees fit from a limited resource. The armoured car in this scenario ('Sword of Damocles') uses less fuel per hex entered, so making it easy to move. The JgPz IV (there are two) cost three times as much fuel to move a hex and there isn't enough to give both of them full freedom to move. Again, the midnight

oil is burned setting up. Even the attacker is faced with a big question in one of the scenarios, 'The Kings Are Dead,' where exit VP are in the VC. You don't have enough petrol to get all the vehicles across the board to exit. So how much fuel to give the heavy slow but well armoured Tiger IIs compared to the quick, thin skinned halftracks and ACs? You have to love it.

These 'chrome' SSRs (as Mark refers to them) certainly add flavour to the scenarios but they also create pitfalls. For example it is not clear whether a vehicle that sets up with 0 fuel points is immobilised and therefore can't change VCA, which is what clearly happens to an AFV which starts with fuel but uses all of it up moving to new hex(es). For that matter the special crews are described as having the same characteristics as a full squad for PF firing purposes but what wasn't quite as clear what they can do with the 1 FP inherent FP. Can they fire that twice? Once and fire a single PF? You know it had to come up in my game of this. The Damocles scenario looks like it will be a close one.

One scenario presents itself as a three player affair. That's at least two bonafide three player scenarios in one year! 'Able Was I Ere I Saw Elba' has been designed to allow two Yugoslav players play one German but also to play each other if they want at the same time. Even if they decide to fight on their own, hoping for the win, they need to co operate to some degree to win. For the first time in a long time I'm actually praying for a (Liverpool *ASL* club) get together where there are an odd number of players... (instead of a number of odd players :-)

– Pete

There is one other scenario I'm itching to play which is 'Last Stand Of The Besotten Jenny' just because the OB is so unique. French re-armed Prisoners, a HS of African American soldiers riding a solitary (if aggressive) Sherman, some more US infantry and armour fighting alongside – get this – some Germans holed up in a castle against a force of SS who are trying to clear the area. All we need now is a dinosaur or zombies... or maybe a... a... spaceship, OJ Simpson and Ernest Borgnine and you'd have the best B war movie ever created! Some near forgotten English actor plays the 8-1 SS leader I'll bet.

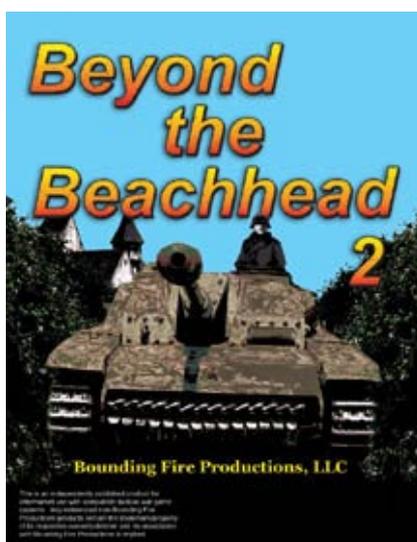
Overall this is a very impressive pack and I'm glad I overcame my initial reservations and bought it. In fact I'd say, based on what I've seen and played, that this is the outstanding issue of *Rally Point* to date. The one minor shortcoming

is that the format of the sister mag to *Schwerpunkt* denies the designer much more than almost no room to better explain his scenario designs. Don't let this put you off however.



Well in *From the Cellar 4* we already saw esoteric subject matter. From *Heat of Battle* this year we got something else a little like that but at least it's something I know a little more about, and it lies closer to the WWII time frame of mainstream *ASL*. *The Long March* is a study of the battles between the Communist Chinese and the KMT (Nationalist) Chinese, during a protracted period of pursuit of the former by the latter. There are 17 scenarios, no counters. The scenarios are infantry based, generally gun light (mortars make rare appearances) and some scenario OBs don't even have a single SW on either side. One scenario (only) has a non-boat vehicle, although some cavalry pops up. A test if ever there was one of your pure infantry combat skills here. You're as far away from mechanised 20th Century warfare as you'll ever be. The designers tell you that you can play 14 scenarios back to back as one long CG. You get points for winning the scenario (obviously) but gain points for the CVP you inflict. Brutal stuff.

Scenario layout is the by-now familiar HOB style with a vertical turn track and the 'I can't believe it's not MMP' counter artwork. There is no full colour here, just black and red on white but they still look smart and they are a signature layout by now. Black and white renditions of the boards are better than nothing. This looks to be a solid product which even includes some *DASL*, if that's what floats your boat.



One time bigwig at HOB (I neither know, nor feel the need to know what caused the recent rift) Chas Smith has reverted to Bounding Fire Productions and has released two packs: *Beyond The Beach Head 2* and *Bounding Fire 2: Operation Cobra*. (*Bounding Fire 1* was not the venerated *Hell on Wheels* pack from way back when – egad was it really 1999?! – but *Into The Rubble*). When I ordered these two packs I did so as though they were just one product, and it was probably well that I did so, because the *Operation Cobra* pack relies heavily on the boards from *BtB* (only one scenario uses none). The magazine/booklet from it also has a brief description of the *BtB* scenarios – which really reinforces the fact that these two products make one whole. I'd not buy one without the other.

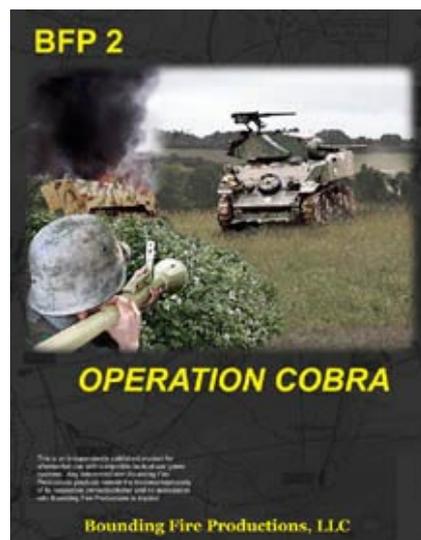
*BtB 2* includes all the parts from the original *Beyond The Beach Head* from HOB, although some of the items are renamed. The board HoB IV is now BtB C for example. There are four *ASLSK* style boards, 16 scenarios and six overlays along with a page of special rules (light bocage and small outbuildings which cross a hexside are all that you need to worry about here).

The scenarios in both packs are beautifully presented on glossy stock in full colour with colour renditions of the boards and HoB-style artwork on the counters. There's a finely rendered sepia photo (no naff image badly distorted by digital processing) and there's little more you could possibly ask from these cards. Note that one of my pet-hates in other packs – the two sided scenario card on one card – is absent here as the producers have had the nous to print the extra page on another card, so you can lay them next to

each other. Well done. Thank you. Really.

So what about the scenarios? There are 16 in *BtB*. I loved what I played of *BtB1* and I found that *AP 4* reminded me of it, rather than the other way round. It really is a very nice treatment of the bocage country fighting which some of us really like (despite the mind bending rules for bocage - see below). All this without having to use board 55! It seemed like I spent two years fighting may way up and down that board and if I never see it again then it will be to soon (oh-oh what's this in *ASL Journal 8?*). Really, if *AP 4* was your thing then get this. If it wasn't because you don't like bocage... then I'd probably avoid these packs.

The boards that come with *BtB* are very like the *ASLSK* style MMP maps – specifically those from *AP 4* – except the hedgerow artwork is significantly chunkier and comes in two shades, allowing the existence of normal hedges alongside bocage or the pack-SSR driven 'light bocage' Overlays (large ones) offer further variation. Nice pack.



*Operation Cobra* portrays actions of the US armoured breakout on the "weakly defended" flank of the Normandy front in late July and August 1944 (weakly defended = 10 Jagdpanthers in one scenario!). Given the quagmire the Allies found themselves in during the weeks after Overlord, this was a refreshingly fast movement of really well, equipped US forces with massive close air support resources and there are probably many more thrilling scenarios that could yet be portrayed, in addition to those provided here. Can't fault what I see here though.

*Operation Cobra* comes with no boards but includes 12 scenarios, a

crossroads village overlay and 88 matt finish counters. Dark US AFV on an olive green background, most of them representing the various US AFV you might expect to see in Normandy, either equipped with the Culin hedgerow breaching ironwork or flamethrowers. It is only as I looked at these latter variants that I realised the fundamental limitation of the US AFV mounted FT – they only have a normal range of 1 hex! Makes the Crocodile look even more impressive in my book. There are 5/8" counters and rules to represent the Püppchen which is basically a super Panzerschreck on wheels. This seems very powerful to me: Not only does it have a good chance of hitting out to range 6, a TK # of 26 and 12 FP equivalency, but it has 3 ROF. I advise it is best avoided by an opponent... or send that tank with the busted MA to deal with it!

Finally there are a set of variant US Thunderbolt counters armed with various weapon loadouts rather than the standard Allied '44 FB with Bombs.' There's a page of rules which goes into the various types and how they work. I'm personally agnostic as to the need for refinement of the air support rules by variant of armament. Any old '44FB would have done me. However I've no doubt that there are some out there who love the chrome, and I guess if you could have Sturmoviks over Orsha with all sorts of weapons, then why not Normandy? I'll get excited when I see an RAF Typhoon properly modelled.

The pack comes with a 56 page booklet which starts off with a detailed examination of the bocage rules. It points out that there is a major issue with the inability of a HIP unit to gain WA and therefore no bore sighting is possible except in the adjacent hex. It also points out that the gun you want to fire will not have LOS to a moving target until the very moment it fires, thus invoking the extra case J penalties. Ouchy. Errata are expected from headquarters any time soon. As good as this booklet is on the subject of bocage, it still ends up falling foul of the complexity of those datted bocage rules. Our own Tim Bunce has written to Chas Smith raising a couple of points where the WA and concealment rules don't seem to have been applied correctly. Chas was very graceful in his reply, having pretty much expected that this might happen (by implication). As far as I'm concerned it's still a pretty good effort and probably those examples in the booklet represent a better stab at bocage/WA than many experienced players might manage in a game. It's hard to play bocage without error.

The booklet is more than just an

analysis of bocage rules, however, as it continues with a piece on the Püppchen – historical and play examples, a long section on the *BtB* scenarios and then Chas rounds the publication off with a review of Operation Cobra, including a breakdown of the units involved on both sides. It's a great read from cover to cover. Tremendous stuff.

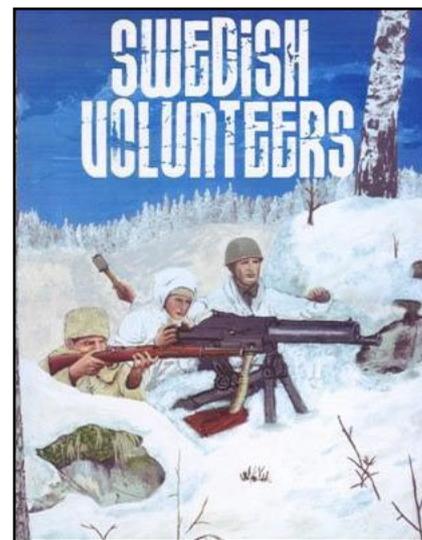
As I finish my review of *BtB 2* and *Operation Cobra* I'm very much in awe of the effort and attention to detail and overall production values. It's hard to find fault here and they really do set the standard for a TPP product based on its own geomorphic maps. I paid more for these combined than I did for the LFT St Nazaire pack, and I do believe you'd have to consider them one product in all but name. However I don't regret a penny spent.



The last two products I am reviewing here are both produced in Sweden. *Friendly Fire Pack 5* follows on from the first four in a similar style. The success of the earlier packs has made *FrF* the closest rival *Schwerpunkt* has had for the title of 'most valuable source of tournament scenarios.' It's a compliment to both to say this in my opinion. My appreciation of the reasons behind this is that both are the publishers of scenarios specifically designed for tournaments (in Florida and Sweden). The similarity doesn't end with the type of scenario, since the counters on the scenario cards are just represented by the unit strength or designation, rather than artwork. In fact, although the layout of *SP* and *FrF* differ slightly, the overall effect is similar.

Ten scenarios covering theatres

from Finland to Burma, but mostly set in Europe. Five turns through to eight, but the balance being towards the shorter end of that scale. Interesting to see the Wunderwaffe (PAK 41, a squeeze bore APCR only 75LL gun) from the earlier pack getting mounted on a Pz III chassis and set to defend a village and hill from a Russian attack. This looks like a great pack and I regret not yet having had time to play any scenarios.



Finally, and by no means least most, I'm going to review the *Swedish Volunteers* pack, which amusingly bills itself as *ASL module 12.5'* since the Swedes will not appear in *Hakkaa Päälle*. I thought they just exported ore to Germany during the war, so making them Axis Miners (sorry – really sorry about that).

This is a sweet pack and has held my attention since I received my copy. I'd probably not have bothered ordering one if someone hadn't put an image of the counter sheet of the Swedish units up on Gamesquad. They are blue on white and I can immediately perceive you thinking (from the secret camera behind your monitor as you read this) that they'll clash with information counters. Take it from me that they don't – you get used to them very quickly. The attention to detail is excellent: on one side of the sheet the only use of red ink is to put the dot in the roundel of the British on the turn counter (I absolutely love turn counters). The counter art resembles that of the official product, but the artwork is all custom and has been lovingly created in great detail, even down to the leaders wearing different uniforms for the three different areas of conflict the Swedes got involved in. Some

128 counters depict three squads types, some Crews and Leaders, and a mix of SW, Guns and the Sniper counter. Quality is very much like an official counter.

There are 14 scenarios depicting Swedes fighting in Norway alongside British or Norwegian forces, Fighting in Finland in the Winter War and also fighting in Finland in the Continuation War against the Soviets. I have played many of these by now and found them all good to excellent. The first I played was 'Norwegian Edelweiss' which is a beautifully balanced, flowing game of defence against a main and flanking force in defence of some buildings. Timing of disengagement for the Allies is tricky as you need to get your British back to help the Swedish platoon defend the town before the flanking Germans cut you off. Very enjoyable. 'Trap By Mishap' sees some unfortunate Soviet attackers caught in between defending Finns/Swedes and a force of Finns who come on in right behind the line of attack. If a Soviet squad is unlucky, breaking means death as routing is impossible. 'Day at Night' sees an advancing unit of Finnish/Swedish StuGs and infantry suddenly come across a massed force of Soviet armour, preparing themselves to attack out of the mist of an Arctic Circle midnight in 1944. Getting your armour away from the T-34s alive so you can set up a proper defence across the open ground of board 19 is a challenge. In my game of this at IF '09 Ian Daghli manoeuvred his Red infantry quietly in the mist for a couple of turns and set up a really well executed human wave, which ran through my Finnish MMG fire lane set diagonally across their front. Six squads and a leader set out; only one squad and the leader made it to enter the hex of the Finnish AT gun. This collapsed the Finnish defence on that side, leading to a clear route of exit for the Soviet armour. It was epic stuff I can tell you! 'Ten Ton tank' sees radioless Soviet T-26 tanks with accompanying infantry in 1940 battling through deep snow to get past a well dug-in Swedish defence, including some 37L AT guns in a trench line. This is another tight little number as there is little time available. I also played 'Lions And Tin Men,' which is a really well designed infantry-only affair, where the Germans fight their way up half of the board 24 valley against a defence made up evenly of Norwegians and Finns. It's deceptively simple, not flashy, but a very sound design.

The pack comes with six pages of chapter A25 rules, Chapter H ordinance and SW notes and a long section on design issues and the history of the Swedes in

WWII. The scenario cards themselves are so like the original AH/MP in style, layout and quality that you have to notice the Swedish Tri-Crown National symbol in the corner to realise they are from a TPP. Crisp, clean print, the counter artwork on the cards, use of just the usual MMP colours as well as the right weight of cardstock all add to the illusion. Bravo! Even in a banner year for TPP, the design philosophy and execution of *Swedish Volunteers* has impressed me very much indeed.

In a period where the official products seem very far spaced, it is very comforting to see so many well produced packs coming from so many countries. Hats off to all to those who made the effort in 2009.

Swedes!

Ω

## A Request For Support

Guys (and gals)... my name is Russ Curry and I am a longtime ASLer. I know a bunch of you guys from over the years going to ASLOK, BERSERK, Arnhem, Winter Offensive, Wild West Fest and other ASL tournaments.

Late last year I signed up to participate in the 2010 Disney Marathon Weekend. It consists of a ½ marathon on Saturday and the full marathon the next day. What I have actually signed up to do is the Goofy Race Challenge which means I will run both races back to back...that is 39.3 miles in two days! Why? Not sure...but as time went by I thought why not try to do some good with the race. That is when I came up the idea of trying to raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP).

The Wounded Warrior Project ([www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org)) is a non-profit organization that "works to raise awareness and enlist the public's aid for the needs of severely injured service men and women, to help severely injured service members aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs."

If you are able and would like to help out please go to <http://WWProudSupporter.kintera.org/faf/r.asp?t=4&i=308932&u=308932-270716745&e=2851722275> and donate any amount you can. The website is set up through WWP (it is on their server) and everything goes directly through them. If you don't want to donate online there is a form on the webpage you can print and mail a donation in.

Or if you just want drop me a line with some encouragement like "you are crazy.....39 miles in two days is nuts" etc. by all means feel free to do that too.....If you have any questions please drop me an email at [catky6@aol.com](mailto:catky6@aol.com).

## Soviet ATR

### Corrections on Use in ASL

Arnaud Sanchis pointed out an important mistake in Michael Davies' ATR article in the last issue of *VFTT*. On page 17, first column, fourth paragraph, Michael wrote (about Deliberate Immobilization): "To attempt this your target must be at six hexes or less range, and its weakest hull Armour Factor has to be less than the basic To Kill of your PTR, which is eight for adjacent or same hex targets, seven for anything beyond that."

This is wrong, the basic To Kill of a Russian ATR is always 6. The Modified To Kill can be improved by range, but here the rule is clear so you can't attempt DI against a target with, say, 6 side Hull AF even if adjacent.

This error with the basic and Modified To Kill number also prevents Michael's suggested tactic of using an ATR against a pillbox (again page 17, first column, first paragraph) as per B30.35, as the basic TK of 6 is not greater than twice the Covered Arc defence modifier of even a wooden n+3+5 bunker as noted in the article. Additionally, as per Note 1 of C8.31 "ATR can use AP HE Equivalency only if it is 20 mm.", which does not include Russian ATR. Thanks to Dana Sandarusi and Chris Doary for pointing those out.

Chris Doary does go on to note that the tactic of firing AP against a pillbox using HE Equivalency (B30.35 and C8.31) is otherwise valid, but:

"The tactic is rarely used for attacks outside a Pillbox CA because one needs at least a TK# of 11 for "wooden" PB and a whopping TK# of 15 for a "concrete" PB. Apart from the slight advantage afforded to otherwise poor-performing ordnance (e.g. 37LL, 45LL, and 47L), I can think of much better things to fire at than a PB with a puny one or two flat shot. In any case, once you get to the 75L/76LL calibre plus range, you will rarely want to sacrifice a potential 12 FP attack (at another target) for a 2 FP one. However, if you're stuck with a pathetic Brit tank sporting a six-pounder (e.g. Churchill Mk IV AP only), it may be worthwhile firing away at a PB flank with your 2 FP attack. In fact, all those other Brit tanks that can fire only AP would certainly benefit from this tactic."

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# "THIS IS THE CALL TO ARMS!"

This is the latest edition of the *ASL* Players Directory. It is broken down by country and then by postal code region. Where a date (in dd mm yyyy format) is shown at the end of each entry this indicates when it was last confirmed.

## England

Joss Attridge, Newtown Linford, Leicester, Leicestershire (14/04/2007)  
F. B. Dickens, 62 Yarnfield Road, Tyseley, Birmingham, W. Mids., B11 3PG ( )  
Billy Carslaw, 52 Spring Lane, Birmingham, B24 9BZ (19/03/2005)  
Stuart Brant, 16 Kings Court, 25 Cox Street, Birmingham, B3 1RD (25/10/2007)  
Garry Cramp, 25 Ferndale Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, W. Mids, B92 8HP (31/10/1996)  
Gary Lock, 7 Dover Place, Bath, BA1 6DX (25/03/2004)  
Jeff Hawarden, 9 Laburnum Road, Helmschore, Rossendale, Lancs., BB4 4LF ( )  
Craig Ambler, 2 Queensbury Square, Queensbury, Bradford, W. Yorks., BD13 1PS (28/02/1997)  
Phil Ward, 7 Burnsall Mews, Silsden, Keighley, W. Yorks., BD20 9NY (06/03/2000)  
Mat Haas, 8A Farcroft Road, Poole, Dorset, BH12 3BQ (03/09/2008)  
Dave Schofield, 11 Longfield Drive, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 8TY (03/09/2008)  
Stuart Holmes, 1 Milne Street, Irwell Vale, Ramsbottom, Lancs., BL0 0QP (08/03/2002)  
Shaun Carter, 3 Arnside Grove, Brightmet, Bolton, Lancs., BL2 6PL (06/03/2008)  
Mike Standbridge, 31 Hunstanon Drive, Bury, Lancs., BL8 1EG (09/03/2006)  
Ian Kenney, 53 Withdean Crescent, Brighton, W. Sussex, BN1 6WG ( )  
Marc Hanna, 42 Sancroft Road, Eastbourne, Sussex, BN20 8HB (10/03/2009)  
Graham Smith, 56 Durham Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 0SW (01/08/2008)  
Andy Tucker, 78 Constance Crescent, Hayes, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7QQ (11/11/1999)  
Bill Durrant, 5 Gatcombe Court, 65 Park Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 1QG (19/06/1999)  
Neil Piggot, 2 Beechmount Grove, Hengrove, Bristol, Avon, BS14 9DN ( )  
Mark Warren, 5 Gazzard Road, Winterbourne, Bristol, BS36 1NR (26/10/2006)  
Rasmus Jensen, 17 Berkeley Road, Bishopston, Bristol, Avon, BS7 8HF (29/10/1997)  
Gauts Strokkenes, Girton College, Cambridge, CB3 0JG (23/10/1998)  
Paul O'Donald, 13 Archway Court, Barton Road, Cambridge, Cambs., CB3 9LW (07/08/2002)  
Martin Barker, Tradewinds, Wrating Rd, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 0DA (17/09/2008)  
Ken Watson, 18 Arrendene Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 9JQ (03/10/2007)  
Andrew Eynon, 36 Greenbank Drive, Pensby, Wirral, CH61 5UF (08/07/2005)  
Gareth Evans, 29 Hillfield Road, Little Sutton, Cheshire, Merseyside, CH66 1JA ( )  
Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RD (02/09/2008)  
Brendan Clark, 5 Borda Close, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 4JY (25/10/2007)  
Miles Wiehahn, 37 Nursery Rise, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 1XW (06/09/2009)  
Alistair Fairbairn, 3 School Lane, Brantham, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 1QE ( )  
Martin Johnson, 16 Wick Lane, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3TA ( )  
Matthew Leach, 12 Lodge Road, Little Oakley, Dovercourt, Essex, CO12 5ED (19/08/2002)  
Rob Gallagher, 153 Halstead Rd, Stanway, Colchester, Essex, CO3 5JT (31/07/2001)  
Nick Ranson, 31 Ashlong Grove, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2QH (24/08/2008)  
Derek Tocher, 19 Tyrell Square, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3SD (25/10/2007)  
Derek Briscoe, 129b Melfort Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 7RX (18/01/1999)  
Joe Arthur, 33 Cedar Close, St Peters, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 3BU (31/10/1999)  
Peter Wenman, 12 Clementine Close, Belting, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6SN (26/07/1998)  
Andy Back, 21 Elmwood Court, St Nicholas Street, Coventry, W. Mids., CV1 4BS ( )  
Hubert Noar, 39 Rugby Road, Cifton, Rugby, Warks., CV23 0DE (06/01/2004)  
Tim Collier, 71 Kinross Road, Leamington Spa, Warks., CV32 7EN (09/05/2005)  
Tony Wardlow, 6 Beech Tree Avenue, Coventry, W. Mids., CV4 9FG ( )  
Ray Jennings, 4 Dame Agnes Grove, Coventry, West Midlands, CV6 7HL (03/09/2008)  
Ian Pollard, 19 Doria Drive, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4HS (05/09/2008)  
Aaron Sibley, 61 Ridgeway Avenue, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 5BE (29/08/2008)  
Kris Pugh, 22 Norfolk Place, Welling, Kent, DA16 3HR (25/10/2007)  
Carl Sizmur, 81 Millfield, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8HN (25/10/2007)  
Sean Pratt, 19 Premier Avenue, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 1LH (07/08/2002)  
Neil Brunger, 72 Penhill Close, Ouston, Chester Le Street, Co. Durham, DH2 1SG (03/09/2008)  
M. W. Jones, 1 Cheviot View, Front St, Dipton, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 9DQ ( )  
Brian Hooper, 38 Ridsdale Street, Darlington, County Durham, DL1 4EG (07/09/2008)  
Chris Bunyan, 89 Hallcroft Road, Retford, Notts., DN22 7PY (17/10/1998)  
Roy Quarton, 8 Bassey Road, Branton, Doncaster, S. Yorks., DN3 3NS (01/11/2000)  
David Farr, First Floor Flat, 259 High Road Leyton, London, E10 5QE (25/04/1999)  
Larry Devis, 104 The Mission, 747 Commercial Road, London, E14 7LE (21/07/2001)  
Michael Chantler, Flat 7, Pickwick House, 100-102 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DH (04/05/2004)  
Lee Bray, 1 Oakfield Road, Exeter, Devon, EX4 1BA (04/03/2009)  
Mike Elan, 26 King Edward Street, St. Davids, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4NY (01/06/2000)  
Andrew Saunders, 3 Torbay Court, 221 Devonshire Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY2 0TJ (29/12/2000)  
Nigel Brown, 3 Chestpost Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY3 7NN (31/10/1996)  
Ulric Schwela, 18 Stuart Road, Thornton, Lancashire, FY5 4EE (15/09/2008)  
Arthur Garrick, 23 St. Annes Road East, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs., FY8 1TA (04/05/1998)  
Michael Davies, 36 Heyhouses Court, Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St Annes, Lancs., FY8 3RF (06/03/2008)  
Russell Gough, 'Bellare', New Road, Southam, Cheltenham, GL52 3NX (09/03/2006)  
Tim Bunce, 33 Ryde Court, Newport Road, Aldershot, Hants., GU12 4LL (03/09/2008)  
Perry Tatman, 6 Foxley Close, Blackwater, Surrey, GU17 0JZ (02/09/2008)  
Jeff Cansell, 24 Upper Queen Street, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1DQ (17/03/1997)  
Giulio Mangonani, 111 Kings Road, Godalming, Farncombe, Surrey, GU7 3EU (30/04/1996)  
Simon Croome, 1 Dowling Parade, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx., HA0 1AJ (25/10/2007)  
Jackie Eves, 1 Dowling Parade, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx., HA0 1AJ (25/10/2007)  
Malcolm Hatfield, 336B Alexandra Ave, South Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9DB (03/09/2008)  
Neil Stevens, 8 Trenchard Avenue, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 6NP (14/02/2007)  
Chris Littlejohn, 214A Field End Road, Eastcote, Pinner, Middx., HA5 1RD ( )  
Ben Kellington, 12 Clayton Fields, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD2 2BA (21/04/2007)  
Fish Flowers, Church Farm, Westerns Lane, Markington, HG3 3PB (27/11/2004)  
Paul Kettlewell, 1 Puffin Way, Watermead, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP20 2UG (06/03/2008)  
Nick Edelsten, 139 Hivings Hill, Chesham, Bucks., HPS 2PN (05/09/2001)  
Malcolm Holland, 57 Westfield Rise, Barrow Lane, Hessele, Humberside, HU13 0NA ( )  
Ruairigh Dale, 77 Riverview Avenue, North Ferraby, HU14 3DT (27/10/2005)  
Steve Balcam, 1 Cornwall Street, Cottingham, N. Humberside, HU16 4NB (01/01/1996)  
Mark Furnell, 123 Roycraft Avenue, Thames View, Barking, Essex, IG1 0NS (10/09/2008)  
Tony Maryou, 41 Benton Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 4AU (15/08/2000)  
Kevin Gookey, 95 Willingdale Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 2DD (17/02/2001)  
David Austin, 86 Lindsey Way, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 2PD (04/01/2000)  
Paul Legg, 21 Grimsey Road, Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4BW (24/09/2008)  
Andy Smith, 31 Egerton Road, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4AP (23/06/1999)  
Craig Benn, 122 Larkfield Road, Aigburth, L17 9PU (03/09/2008)  
Andy Ashton, 62 Earlston Drive, Wallasey, The Wirral, Merseyside, L45 5DZ ( )  
Wayne Kelly, 12 Grassmere Road, Lancaster, Lancs., LA1 3HB (19/03/2005)  
Adrian Bland, 15 Blankney Road, Cottesmore, Oakesham, Rutland, LE15 7AG (10/12/2004)  
Patrick Dale, 28 Bancroft Road, Cottingham, Market Harborough, Leics., LE16 8XA (25/10/2007)  
Nick Brown, 53 Henley Crescent, Braunstone, Leicester, Leics., LE3 2SA (15/11/1996)  
John Overton, 68 Brantingham Road, Whalley Range, Manchester, M18 8QH (18/09/2002)  
Bernard Savage, 73 Penrhyn Avenue, Middleton, Manchester, M24 1FP (10/03/1998)  
Simon Savers, 21 Barlea Avenue, New Moston, Manchester, M40 3WL (21/11/2008)  
Bob Eburne, 33 Whitton Way, Newport Pagnell, Bucks., MK16 0PR (28/10/2004)  
Chris Walton, nb Burgan Pod, Cosgrove Marina, The Lock House, Lock Lane, Cosgrove, Milton Keynes, MK19 7JR  
Jamie Sewell, 115 Cresent Road, Alexandra Palace, London, N22 4RU ( )  
Jas Bal, 63 Gardner Park, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 0EA (09/03/2006)

Philip Jones, 10 hazeldene, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, NE32 4RB (09/03/2006)  
Steve Jones, 90 Biddick Lane, Fatfield Village, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE38 8AA (04/04/2005)  
Martin Sabais, 36 Chalfont Road, Walker, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne & Wear, NE6 3ES (17/09/2008)  
Andy McMaster, 29 Kingsley Place, Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 5AN (06/03/2008)  
Andrew Cochrane, 19 Churchburn Drive, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2BZ (04/08/2009)  
Mike Rudd, 2 Blaeberry Hill, Rothbury, Northumberland, NE65 7YU (12/03/2002)  
Geoff Geddes, 30 Sheepwalk Lane, Ravenshead, Nottingham, Notts., NG15 9FD ( )  
Ian Willey, 17 Strawberry Bank, Huthwaite, Sutton-In-Ashfield, Notts., NG17 2QG (26/03/2002)  
George Jaycock, 51 Burtleigh Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Notts., NG2 6FQ ( )  
Chris Gower, 7 Boxley Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Notts., NG2 7GQ (28/09/1998)  
L. Othacche, 17 Russel Drive, Wollaston, Notts., NG8 2BA ( )  
Duncan Spencer, 33 St Anthonys Road, Kettering, Northants, NN15 5HT ( )  
A. Kendall, 12 Hunsbury Close, West Hunsbury, Northampton, NN4 9UE (13/12/1998)  
Nigel Ashcroft, 5 Grasmere Way, Thornwell, Chestport, Gwent, NP16 5SS (28/10/2004)  
Clive Haden, Holly House, The Street, Swanton Abbott, Norfolk, NR10 5DU (09/05/2005)  
Tom Jackson, 40 Keys Rd, London, NW2 3XA (02/09/2008)  
Steve Joyce, 23 South End Close, London, NW3 2RB (31/01/2001)  
Peter Fraser, 66 Salcombe Gardens, Millhill, London, NW7 2NT ( )  
Nick Hughes, 15 Layfield Road, Hendon, London, NW9 3UH ( )  
Martin Mayers, 41 Frank Fold, Heywood, Lancs., OL10 4FF (28/10/2004)  
Stephen Ashworth, 1 Nelson Street, Walsden, Manchester, Lancashire, OL14 7SP (12/12/2006)  
Tony Pilling, 51 Wensum Drive, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7RJ (09/03/2006)  
John Sharp, 3 Union Street, Oxford, Oxon, OX4 1JP (23/10/1998)  
Simon Stevenson, East Dairy Cottage, Welton Le Marsh, Spilsby, Lincolnshire, PE23 5TA (28/05/2005)  
Hamish Hughson, 65 Gloucester Road, Wyton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 2HF (11/03/2008)  
Jason Johns, 26 Hamerton Road, Alconbury Weston, Huntingdon, Cambs., PE28 4JD (22/01/2003)  
Alan Anderson, Penmareve, Maddever Crescent, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3PT (11/12/1998)  
Nigel Blair, 105 Stanborough Road, Plymstock, Plymouth, PL9 8PG (03/09/2008)  
Paul Rideout, 5 Fisher Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants., PO14 3RA ( )  
Keith Bristow, 39 Carronade Walk, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 5LX (25/10/2007)  
Simon Stevens, 14 Teddington Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 8DB (25/10/2007)  
Justin Key, 25 Hilary Avenue, Portsmouth, Hants., PO6 2PP (03/09/2008)  
Simon Hunt, 26 Inhurst Avenue, Waterlooville, Portsmouth, PO7 7QR ( )  
Steve Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YL (23/10/1998)  
Trevor Edwards, 11 Thirlmere Road, Preston, Lancs., PR1 5TR (02/09/2008)  
Phil Sherlick, 16 The Heathers, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancs., PR5 8LJ (09/09/2008)  
Phil Draper, 8 Chesterman Street, Reading, Berks., RG1 2PR (25/10/2007)  
Paul Sanderson, Flat 4, Russell Street, Reading, Berks., RG1 7XD (26/03/2000)  
Michael Strefford, 3 Walton Way, Shaw, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2LL (05/06/1998)  
Dominic McGrath, 19 George Street, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 7RN (06/03/2008)  
Chris Netherton, 36 Eungar Road, Whitechurch, Hants, RG28 7EY (26/10/2006)  
Kevin Croskey, 4 Beechey Way, Cophthorne, W. Sussex, RH15 0NF (18/06/1999)  
Bill Hensby, 32 The Vineries, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 0NF (18/06/1999)  
John Barton, 194 Chanctonbury Road, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 9HN (08/05/2007)  
Gerard Burton, Flat 7 The Beacons, Beaconsfield Road, Chelwood Gate, London, RH17 7LH (08/08/2009)  
Wayne Bamber, 39 Station Road, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6DZ (25/10/2007)  
Keith Graves, 51 Humbar Avenue, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5JL ( )  
David Higginbotham, 18 Westfield Garden, Brampton, Cheshire, G40 3SN (03/07/2000)  
Andy Osborne, 42 Atlantis Close, Lee, London, SE12 8RE ( )  
Simon Horspool, 188 Leahurst Road, Hither Green, London, SE13 5NL (03/08/2007)  
Martin Edwards, 127 Pepsy Road, London, SE14 5SE (02/09/1999)  
Michael Essex, 1B Wrottesley Road, London, SE18 3EW (11/06/2009)  
David Ramsey, 25 Grenville Way, Stevenage, Herts, SG2 8XZ (03/09/2008)  
Chris Milne, 19 Redoubt Close, Hitchin, Herts., SG4 0FP (25/03/2004)  
Andrew Dando, 26 Constable Drive, Marple Bridge, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 5BG (17/09/2002)  
Andrew Daglish, 7 The Spinney, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 1JA ( )  
Paul Jones, 11 Irwin Drive, Handforth, Wilmslow, SK9 3JS (04/03/2009)  
Ian Daglish, 5 Swiss Hill Mews, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7DF (03/09/2008)  
Pete Bennett, 84 Littlebrook Avenue, Burnham, Slough, Bucks., SL2 2NN (16/09/2002)  
Steve Crowley, 2 Mossy Vale, Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 7RX (23/10/2003)  
William Binns, 150 Carshalton Park Road, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 3SG (25/10/2008)  
Adrian Catchpole, The Malting Barn, Top Lane, Whitley, Melksham, Wils., SN12 8QJ ( )  
Jon Williams, 17 Larch Road, Colerne, Chippenham, Wils., SN14 8QG (06/12/1998)  
William Roberts, 20 Clayhill Copse, Peatmoor, Swindon, Wils., SN5 5AL (03/09/2008)  
Bill Gunning, 14 Eagles, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7DT (14/09/1997)  
Roger Cook, The Brick Farmhouse, Cleuch Common, Marlborough, Wils., SN8 4DS (26/10/2006)  
Chris Riches, 3 Bernwood Grove, Blackfield, Southampton, Hants., SO45 1ZW (06/02/2007)  
James Crossfield, Lower Langham Farm, Langham Lane, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5NT (15/02/2009)  
John Fletcher, 191 Trent Valley Road, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 5LE (23/10/1998)  
Robert Seoney, 43 Priory Road, Newcastle Under Lyme, Staffs., ST5 2EN (19/03/2005)  
Ronnie Tan, 250 Hydehorpe Road, Balham, London, SW12 0JH (21/07/2001)  
Simon Taylor, 81 Valley Road, London, SW16 2XL (05/09/2008)  
Julian Blakeney-Edwards, 1 Elmbourne Road, London, SW17 8JS (21/10/1998)  
Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, 49 Edgecombe House, Whitlock Drive, Southfields, London, SW19 6SL (03/08/2009)  
Christopher Chen, Flat 11, 14 Sloane Gardens, London, SW1W 8DT (25/02/1999)  
Jonathan Pickles, 115 Wavertree Road, Streatham Hill, London, SW2 3SN (26/03/1999)  
David Tye, 35 Redburn Street, London, SW3 4DA ( )  
Chris Courtier, 17b Hargwyne Street, London, SW9 9RQ (23/10/1998)  
John Sparks, 2 Standfast Place, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8QG (01/03/2007)  
Paul Case, 4 Brymas House, Rockwell Green, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 9BZ (06/03/2008)  
Nick Carter, 13 Oak Tree Court, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1TT (03/09/2008)  
Mike Batley, 2 The Gables, Argos Hill, East Sussex, TN6 3QJ (29/04/2001)  
Bill Eaton, Dart House, 20 Bridgetown, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5BA (02/09/2008)  
Ivor Gardiner, 19 Gibson Road, Ickenham, London, Middlesex, UB10 6EW (03/09/2008)  
Aaron Patrick, 9 Arundel Gardens, London, W11 2LN (31/12/2004)  
Nick Quinn, 7 Woodgrange Avenue, Ealing, London, W5 3NY (04/03/2002)  
John Kennedy, 2 Hawthorn Road, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 9RG (23/10/2003)  
Alan Lynott, Woodlands Parkway, Cheshire, WA15 7QU (10/12/2009)  
Dave Booth, 47 Dunnock Grove, Oakwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6NW (07/10/1996)  
Paul Ryde-Weller, 44 Farm Way, Watford, Herts., WD2 3SY ( )  
Robin Langston, 105 Little Bushey Lane, Bushey, Herts., WD23 4SD (19/09/1996)  
Sandy Goh, 12 Mornington Road, Radlett, Herts., WD7 7BL (31/10/1996)  
Matt Blackman, 10 Alfred St, Wigan, Lancs., WN1 2HL (14/03/2008)  
Ian Parkes, 45 School Lane, Standish, Wigan, Lancs., WN6 0TG (23/09/2008)  
Michael Murray, 34 Bell Road, Walsall, West Mids., WS5 3JW (30/03/1999)  
Ian Price, 19 Upper Green, Yettenhall, Wolverhampton, W. Mids., WV6 8QN ( )  
Michael Clark, Wold View, East Heslerton, Malton, N. Yorks, YO17 8RN (12/02/2002)  
David Murray, 29 Middle Street, Nafferton, Driffield, S. Yorks, YO25 4JS (02/09/2008)

## Scotland

Steven Trease, 2 Charlestown Circle, Cove, Aberdeen, AB12 3EY (17/06/1999)  
Tony Gibson, 107 Queen's Drive, Hazelhead, Aberdeen, AB15 8BN (06/03/2008)



# ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL

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

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

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

## MARCH HEROES 2010

**When:** 11 – 14 March.

**Where:** Hotel Skye, 571-573 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NG. Tel 01253 343220. Room rates are £25.00 for a shared room or £30.00 for a single room and include breakfast. Bar meals and good beer are also available at the hotel.

**Fee:** £10.00 if registering with the organisers prior to 1 March, £15.00 thereafter and on the door (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). In addition to a discount on the entry fee, players pre-registering will receive a tournament program in February.

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

**Contact:** For more details or to register contact Pete Phillipps, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email [heroes@vft.co.uk](mailto:heroes@vft.co.uk). For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at [www.aslturnneys.co.uk](http://www.aslturnneys.co.uk).

## JUNE DOUBLE ONE 2010

**When:** 25 – 27 June.

**Where:** Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3RR. On-site facilities include en-suite and standard bedrooms, free car parking on application, mini market, cash points, a self-service cafeteria and licensed bars. Bedroom rates start at £30.00 for a single room and breakfast.

**Fee:** £15.00 if paid before 30 April, £20.00 thereafter.

**Format:** A two day tournament with two rounds on Saturday and one on Sunday offering a choice of scenarios. Friendly games will also be available.

**Contact:** For a booking form contact Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RD or by email at [derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com), or Brendan Clark by email at [brendan.clark@virgin.net](mailto:brendan.clark@virgin.net). Check out the web site at [www.doubleone-online.net](http://www.doubleone-online.net) for the latest details.

## OCTOBER ASLOK XXIV

**When:** 3 – 10 October.

**Where:** Holiday Inn Airport, 4181 W. 150th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44135, phone 216-252-7700, fax 216-252-3850 or visit [www.holidayinn.com/cle-airport](http://www.holidayinn.com/cle-airport). Rooms are \$75.00 plus tax if reservations are made by 21 Sep - request "ASL Oktoberfest" to receive this discounted rate. Check the ASLOK web page for the hotel discount code to book on-line.

**Fee:** \$25.00 in advance, \$30.00 on the door.

**Format:** Same as always. Weekend tournament plus numerous mini-tournaments. There is also

Steve Cook, 159 Lee Crescent, Aberdeen, AB22 8FH (13/03/2009)  
Martin Vicca, 37 Dean Gardens, Westhill, Aberdeen, AB24 2UB (02/09/2008)  
Paul Saunders, 59 Grampian Gardens, Arbroath, Angus, DD1 4AQ (03/09/2008)  
Michael Green, 27 Rotchell Park, Dumfries, DG2 7RH (12/09/2002)  
Mark Chapman, Flat 7, 265 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, EH11 1TX (01/12/2005)  
Garry Ferguson, 30E Forrester Park Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9AW (07/12/1998)  
Stewart Thain, 77 Birrell Gardens, Murieston, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 9LF (25/10/2007)  
Bill Finlayson, 19 Taymouth Road, Polmont, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, FK2 0PF (16/06/2001)  
Sam Prior, Flat 4, 264 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5RL (03/09/2008)  
Andrew Kassian, Flat 14/2, 20 Petershill Court, Glasgow, G21 4QA (01/01/1996)  
Ellis Simpson, 4 Langtree Avenue, Whitecraigs, Glasgow, G46 7LW (20/04/1999)  
Oliver Gray, 117 Upper Dalgairn, Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JQ (04/02/2009)  
Garry Marshall, 24 Allardice Crescent, Kirkcaldy, Fife, KY2 5TY (21/05/2001)  
Pete Phillipps, 9 Pier Rd, Kilchoan, Argyll, PH36 4LJ (02/09/2008)  
Jonathan Swilliamson, Da Croft, Bridge End, Burra, Shetland Islands, ZE2 9LE (01/05/1998)

## Wales

Andrew Whimmet, 6 Aquilla Court, Conway Road, Cardiff, CF11 9PA (03/09/2008)  
Paul Jones, 9 Cwm Nofydd, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF14 6JX (22/11/2002)  
Martin Castrey, 1 Thomas Cottages, The Highway, Hawarden, Flintshire, CH5 3DY (03/09/2008)  
Key Sutton, 1 Gorphwysfa, Windsor Road, New Broughton, Wrexham, LL11 6SP (25/02/1999)  
C. Jones, Deer Park Lodge, Stepaside, Narbeth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8LJ ( )  
Emyr Phillips, 2 Cysgod Y Bryn, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 4LR (27/08/2002)

If there are any mistakes, please let me know so I can correct them for the next edition. If you have Internet access you can also correct your details on the VFTT web site at [www.vftt.co.uk/aslers.asp](http://www.vftt.co.uk/aslers.asp) - contact me if you need your user name and password to do so.

an informal USA vs. World Cup where everyone keeps track of their games and a plaque is presented to the winning side.

**Notes:** T-shirts are \$10.00 ea (XXL \$13.00, XXXL \$15.00, 4XL \$18.00)

**Contact:** Bret Hildebran, 17810 Geauga Lake Rd, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023-2208 or by email [damavs@alltel.net](mailto:damavs@alltel.net). Check out the web site at [www.aslok.org](http://www.aslok.org) for the latest details.

## INTENSIVE FIRE 2010

**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 £37.00 per night, double rooms £30.00 per night per person if booked prior to 1 October – thereafter normal rates apply. Remember to mention INTENSIVE FIRE when reserving to qualify for the special rates. You can also book online at [www.kiwihotel.co.uk](http://www.kiwihotel.co.uk).

**Fee:** £10.00 if registering with the organisers before 18 October, £15.00 thereafter and on the door (entry is free for those only able to attend for one day). In addition to a discount on the entry fee, 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, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email [if@vftt.co.uk](mailto:if@vftt.co.uk). For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at [www.aslturnneys.co.uk](http://www.aslturnneys.co.uk).

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## THE CRUSADERS PRESENTS CLASH OF THE DESIGNERS

A heavyweight clash between

Shaun 'Wittman' Carter and Ian 'Bocage' Dalglish



for the undisputed UK ASL Designer crown.

March 11 - 14, 2010  
Hotel Skye  
Blackpool

EVENT  
NOT LIKELY TO BE  
SOLD OUT

Ω

## THE TRENCHES



# HEROES 2010

## ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT

11<sup>TH</sup> - 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH (THURSDAY THROUGH SUNDAY) 2010

HOTEL SKYE, SOUTH PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, ENGLAND

### THE EVENT

Following its success in previous years HEROES continues in 2010 to fill the gap for UK ASL action in the first half of the year. As normal the action starts on Thursday and continues through to Sunday so you can play in an ASL tournament and/or play friendly games (or even try your hand at a campaign game if you can find an opponent). The focus of the weekend will be the main tournament, in which players of like record are paired off to allow us to determine the winners - depending on numbers attending there will be four or five rounds. The first round will start on Friday afternoon and each round sees players choose from three carefully selected scenarios. Main tournament entrants are to be familiar with the rules through to the first half of Chapter G.

### BOOT CAMP

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

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

### THE VENUE

The Hotel Skye is familiar to those who have attended in the past and offers plenty of gaming room for the whole weekend. Meals and good beer are also available in the hotel, and numerous alternative food outlets are close by. The hotel is easily accessible from the M55 and the train station is a 5 minute walk away. Room rates are the same as 2008, just £25.00 per person for a shared room or £30.00 for a single room for bed and breakfast.

### THE COST

The weekend, whether you enter a tournament or just play games with the people you will meet, is fantastic value at only £15.00, or just £10.00 if you register before the beginning of March 2010.

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## HEROES 2010 HOTEL BOOKING FORM

To book your room simply fill in this form and send it with a cheque for £10.00 to cover your deposit (payable to HOTEL SKYE) to Hotel Skye, 571-573 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NG. You can also telephone them on 01253 343220 to book your room.

NAME							
ADDRESS							
NIGHTS ROOM REQUIRED FOR (tick each one)							
THURS		FRI		SAT		SUN	
SINGLE ROOM				DOUBLE ROOM			
NAME OF PERSON SHARING WITH							