

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

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CRUSADER LADDER - updated

FIRST TO FIGHT - campaigns for Polish troops in *SASL*

SPW 250 - a look at the SPW 250 half-track

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COVER: A Bren gunner from C Coy, 5 Black Watch provides covering fire to an advance in February 1945.

PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of *VFTT*, a bit later than planned but until early February I only had Nick Smith's article on Polish *SASL* campaigns and the INTENSIVE FIRE 2010 report, which would have made for a rather thin issue. Thanks to Craig Benn I've got a large article on OBA lined up for the next issue, but the lack of material is making it very difficult to produce *VFTT* nowadays, and if things don't improve then the future looks grim....

'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 82 should be out at the beginning of May 2011.

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 should 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

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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.asml.net/listinfo.cgi/asml-asml.net>.

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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 or go to 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, or go to www.secondchancegames.com.

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

BATTLEQUEST GAMES, 29 Victory Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2JF. Telephone 01403 242003 or go to 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.

INCOMING

MMP NEW YEAR BLITZ

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 Daglish'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 be \$20.00.

ASL Starter Kit Expansion Pack 1 is a standalone *ASL Starter Kit* package which included everything needed to play (except dice) and is suitable for all levels of *ASLSK* player. 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. 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 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.

Festung Budapest is planned for release in the first half of 2011. It covers the Russian siege of Budapest against a combined German and Hungarian defender. The battle focuses on the final reduction of the Buda (west) side of the city from January 1 through February 11, 1945. Units include German Wehrmacht, SS, Hungarian Army (including elite Vannay units), and Arrow Cross militia vs. Russians and Hungarian members of the Buda Volunteer Regiment. The game will include 4 historical maps, 9 counter sheets, 2 campaign games, and 16 scenarios. In addition to new Hungarian units mentioned above, counters will include SS infantry 4-6-8s, 5-4-8sm 4-4-7s and their HS (blue only).

Design and initial play-test work on the Korean War module has been completed and it has now been turned over to MMP for in-house play-testing. Among the new rules will be rules for "Korean War Terrain" (in a manner similar to PTO), Steep Hills (essentially hills that are impassable except to infantry), Tactical Air Controller Parties, Infantry Platoon Movement, Searchlights, and the various nations that took

part, in particular the People's Republic of China.

Players will need *Yanks* for the Americans, *Gung Ho* for the USMC, *WoA/FKaC* for the Brit/Commonwealth and *BV* for the North Koreans (who use Russian counters), with the module including new counters for the ROKs, CPVA and OUNC (Other United Nations Command: French, Turks, Dutch, Columbians, Ethiopians, etc.), as well as some new American, British and Russian (North Korean) counters for units (mainly vehicles) not already represented in *ASL*. Two-tone counters are likely to be used for the new nations to facilitate the use of Russian, GMD and American SW, Guns and Vehicles, with the CPVA being Russian brown outside and British tan on the inside, the ROK being American green on the outside and yellow on the inside, and the OUNC being American green on the outside and French blue on the inside.

AUSSIES REGAIN CONTACT

Break Contact, the Australian *ASL* producer, have returned after a four year break with two new products. *Razorback Pack* includes four scenarios set around the Shaggy Ridge area of New Guinea in late 1943/early 1944, plus 15 counters for individual soldiers plus rules for their use, Gun Bunkers, and razorback ridges. *Aussie Battler Pack* contains eight large scenarios, half covering Australian actions, with others set in Nanking, Syria in 1941, Kurks, and the Philippines in 1945.

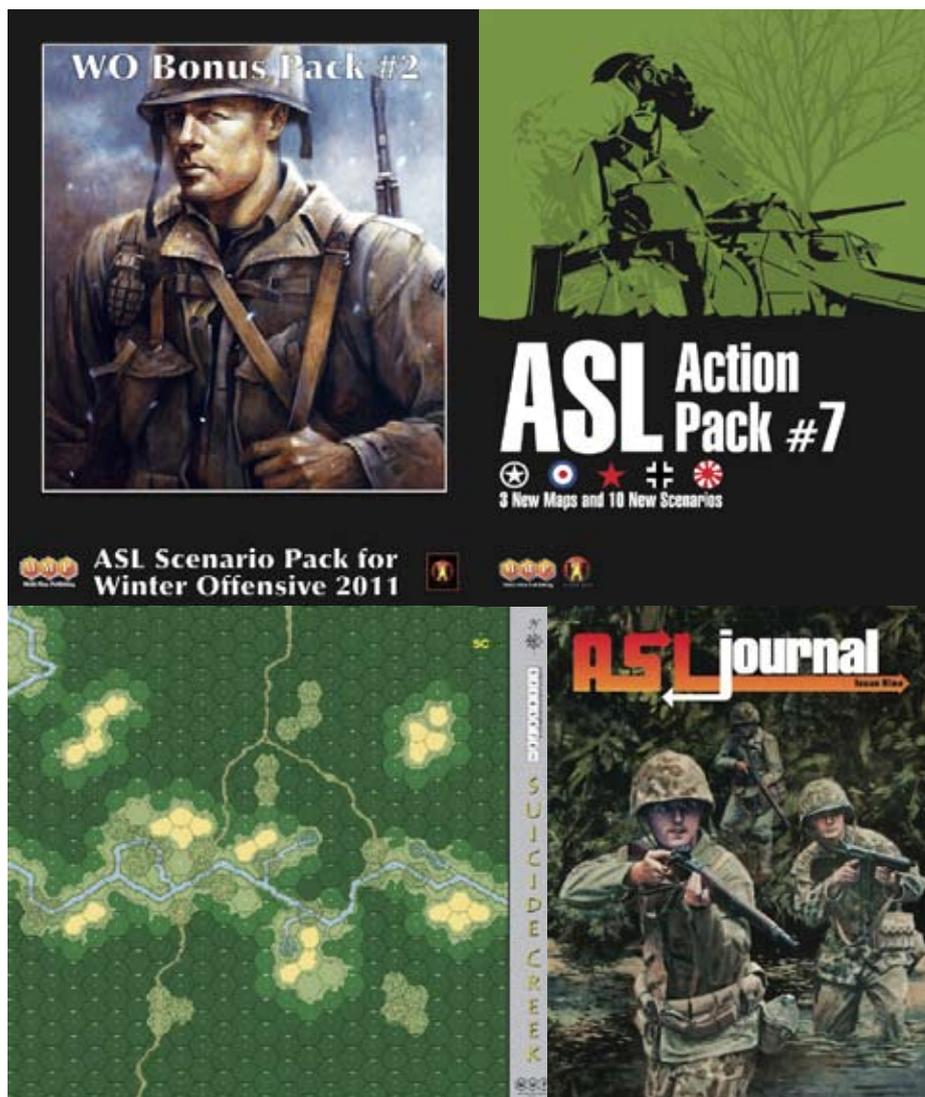
They can be ordered direct from Break Contact by emailing them at breakcontactpacks@gmail.com; prices are \$AUD15.00 for one pack and \$AUD25.00 for two packs, and include international postage.

BUNKER BASHING

The scenarios for *Dispatches From The Bunker 32* are being playtested now. 'Lack of Communication' is a tournament-sized scenario which sees a German force attempt to break through American lines and exit on the way to blowing up the Ludendorf Bridge over the Rhine. 'Jumonji Pass', the first *DftB* scenario from Steve Swann, sees a Russian infantry unit, aided by a T34 M43, trying to pry a reinforced Japanese platoon out of Jumangji Pass. 'Get Tito' is the latest part of Tom Morin's Operation Rosselsprung series and sees the SS Fallschirmjaegers of Battalion 500 attempting to kill or capture Tito at his cave HQ near Drvar. The final scenario, 'No Rest for the Weary' sees a German combined arms force aided by Panther tanks, counter-attack a Soviet mech force at Sieffersdorf in Silesia in 1945.

Four issue subscriptions (starting with the current issue, number 31) are available for \$15.00 (\$18.00 outside the USA). Issues 1 to 20 are now out of print but PDF versions are available for free from www.aslbunker.com. Other back issues are \$4.00 (\$4.50 outside the USA) or \$35.00 (\$45.00 outside the USA) for a complete set of issues 21-31. A complete set of issues 21-30 and a subscription for issues 31-34 is available

Continued on page 6, column 1



WO Bonus Pack #2

ASL Action Pack #7

3 New Maps and 10 New Scenarios

ASL Scenario Pack for Winter Offensive 2011

ASL Journal

S U I C I D E R E E K



INTENSIVE FIRE 2010

The end of October 2010 saw the usual gathering of *ASL* players in Bournemouth for the INTENSIVE FIRE tournament.

The first arrivals were Pete Phillipps and Paul Case, who arrived in the hotel at 10:50am on the Tuesday morning! Neither bothered to play any *ASL*, but did consume alcohol.

Next to arrive was Ian Pollard, who arrived at 2pm on Wednesday afternoon, to find a cold beer waiting for him at the reception desk, and Pete and Paul playing *Ligny*, one of the games from the old SPI quad *Napoleon's Last Battles!*

Thursday saw the arrival of quite a few of the attendees, and a few games of *ASL* being played.

As usual, Friday saw a couple of mini-tournaments. The main tournament, based on scenarios featuring Russian Guard units, was over-subscribed, so the first eight players to put their names down played in the 'proper' tournament, while the four latecomers played in a 'mini' version of the tournament. The proper tournament was a straight knock-out tournament, and was won by Gerard Burton, while the 'mini' version was a round-robin version (IE each player played all the others in the tournament), and was won by Dave Schofield.

The other mini was not really a proper mini-tournament, but a chance for players to play some of the scenarios Ian Daglish

has developed for the Operation Sealion pack he has been working on for some years. As a result, these did not count for Crusader ladder points. A couple of games were played and the resulting feedback was greatly appreciated by Ian.

Away from the mini-tournaments a number of friendly games were played, along with some play-testing for Shaun Carter's *Kohima* pack.

Saturday morning saw the start of the Fire Team tournament. 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. Because of the number of available players being lower than normal (due to several regulars not being able to attend this year), there were only four teams in the Elite Division, and six in the First Division. One advantage of this was that it meant that all the teams in the Elite Division would play each other, which worked out quite well, and it is likely that this will be repeated in the future.

Around lunch-time, Pete Phillipps and Paul Case finally played their first game of *ASL*, four days after they had arrived! And even then it was only a play-test of a *Kohima* scenario! After a visit to the pub to watch the football in the evening a 'proper' game of *ASL* was finally played – or at least as proper as Pete and Paul can manage!

After the first two rounds, Battlegroup Tocher led the Elite Division by 3 points from Task Force Schofield, with both teams due to play each other on Sunday morning. Wins for both Derek Tocher and Tim Bunce allowed Battlegroup Tocher to be crowned winners, with Dave Schofield's win being enough to allow his team to take second place from Task Force Draper by virtue of beating better Crusader Ladder rated opponents.

Task Force Jones, Udarnaya Gruppa Gerstenberg, and Battle Group Legg were tied on 12 points overnight in the First Division, with Task Force Mayers close behind on 9 points. The final round saw Task Force Mayers face off against Udarnaya Gruppa Gerstenberg, the former team winning all three games to move up to 18 points. A similar clean sweep of games from Battle Group Legg against Task Force Jones gave them 21 points, allowing them to be crowned champions.

David Schofield was the Tournament Champion, going 6-0 over the weekend, though Gerard Burton ran him close, going 6-1. At the other end, Martin Baker managed to go 0-5 for the weekend, with Nick Ranson and Ian Pollard managing to go 1-5.

Evening saw the last few attendees go out for a meal. The next day everyone departed after breakfast, apart from Pete Phillipps who had to hang around in the hotel until 4pm before catching a train back



Essential supplies for the weekend arrive!



Left: Justin Key (left) and Tim Macaire playing a scenario from *St Nazaire*. Right: Play-testing of one of the scenarios from the forthcoming *Kohima* module.



THE SCENARIOS

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

| Scenario | Allied | Axis | Draw |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| I18 Downsizing the Uprising | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| AP59 Taking Heads | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| AP62 Shouting Into The Storm | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| CDN23 Notable Achievement | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| D The Hedgehog of Piepsk | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| FrF30 Bidermann's Escape | 2 | 6 | 0 |
| FrF44 Anhalt Pandemonium | 5 | 4 | 0 |
| FrF51 Bite of the Bassotto | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| FrF52 Dying For Danzig | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| FT StN3 Blowing the Gates | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| FT StN7 We'll Fight Our Way Out | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| FT153 Nailed to the Ground | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| J115 Last Push To Mozhaik | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| J125 Everything Is Lost | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| J63 Silesian Interlude | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| J94 Kempf at Melikhovo | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| RPT25 Cornwalls' Rum Ration | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| SP170 Halfhearted Hiwis | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| SP74 The Last Tiger | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| U28 Sowchos 79 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| VotG09 Eviction Notice | 3 | 7 | 0 |
| VotG16 Under Murderous Fire | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| TOTALS | 71 | 30 | 41 |

to London and then the sleeper back to Fort William at 9pm – he finally arrived home at 4pm Tuesday afternoon!

As usual Pete Phillipps would like to thank Dominic McGrath and Derek Tocher for their help with the scenario selection, Shaun Carter for help with the prizes, Trev Edwards and Ian Daghlich for organising the mini-tournaments, and Ian Pollard for taking the photos which are used here in *VFTT* and the *ASL* Tourneys web site. But most of all everyone for turning up and making

FIRE TEAM PLACINGS

ELITE DIVISION

| POS | TEAM & PLAYERS | PTS | OPPO |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| 1st | Battle Group Tocher Derek Tocher (3855) Tim Bunce (3375) Simon Croome (3145) | 21 | 23160 |
| 2nd | Task Force Schofield Dave Schofield (3475) David Ramsey (3325) William Binns (3010) | 15 | 16530 |
| 3rd | Task Force Draper Phil Draper (3740) Gerard Burton (3270) Sam Prior (3235) | 15 | 12530 |
| 4th | Task Force McGrath Dominic McGrath (3475) Malcolm Hatfield (3265) Martin Barker (3110) | 3 | 6750 |

FIRST DIVISION

| POS | TEAM & PLAYERS | PTS | OPPO |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| 1st | Battle Group Legg Paul Legg (2970) Paul Kettlewell (2855) Simon Taylor (2655) | 21 | 19020 |
| 2nd | Task Force Mayers Martin Mayers (2865) Miles Wiehahn (2850) Ian Pollard (2690) | 18 | 16120 |
| 3rd | Udarnaya Gruppa Gerstenberg Eric Gerstenberg (2955) Mat Haas (2835) Nick Ranson (2120) | 12 | 10745 |
| 4th | Task Force Jones Paul Jones (2930) Wayne Baumber (2845) Nigel Blair (2490) | 12 | 10675 |
| 5th | Gruppo Isaksson Hakan Isaksson (3000) Chris Walton (2820) Graham Smith (2735) | 9 | 8100 |
| 6th | Gruppo Wegener Nathan Wegener (3000) Ian Daghlich (2790) Jackie Eves (2410) | 9 | 7825 |

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

INTENSIVE FIRE the success it is.

INTENSIVE FIRE 2011 takes places from Thursday 27 – Sunday 30 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 then

for some tournament action, HEROES 2011 takes place in March 2010 in sunny Blackpool over the weekend Thursday 10 – 13 March – check out the ad elsewhere in this issue for the details.

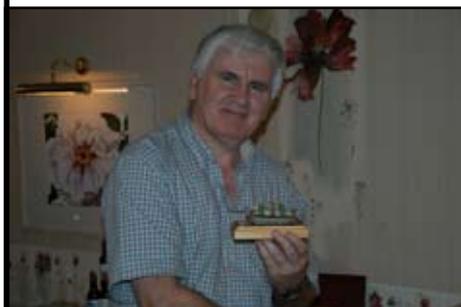
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Above Left: the First Division winners (left-right): Team captain Paul Jackson, Paul Kettlewell, and Simon Taylor.

Above Right: the Elite Division winners (left-right): Simon Croome, team captain Derek Tocher, and Tim Bunce.

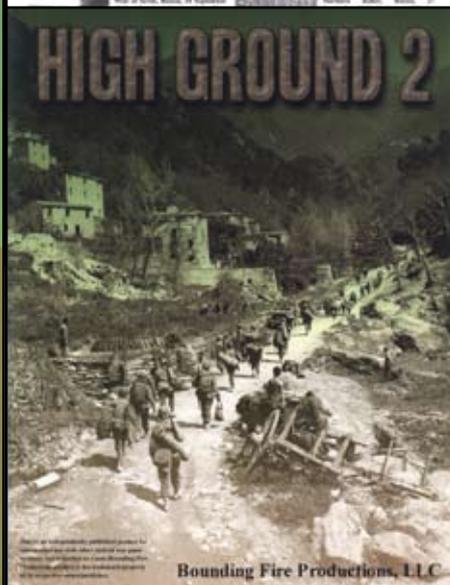
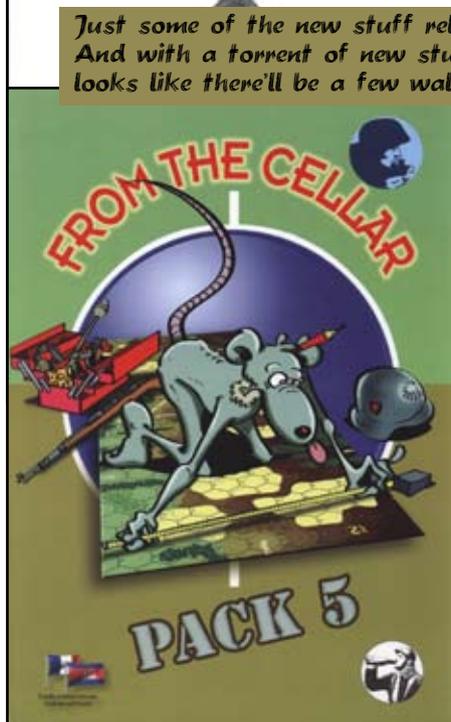
Bottom Left: Tournament champion Dave Schofield. Bottom Centre: Mini-mini tournament winner Dave Schofield. Bottom Right: Guards Mini winner Gerard Burton.



PLAYER RESULTS

Here are the individual win/loss records.

| PLAYER | P | W | L | D |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Martin Barker | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Wayne Baumber | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| William Binns | 6 | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| Nigel Blair | 7 | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| Tim Bunce | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Gerard Burton | 7 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| Paul Case | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Roger Cook | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Derek Cox | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Simon Croome | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Ian Daglish | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Richard Dagnall | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Phil Draper | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Jackie Eves | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Eric Gerstenberg | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Mat Haas | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Malcolm Hatfield | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Hakan Isaksson | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Paul Jones | 7 | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| Paul Kettlewell | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Justin Key | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Paul Legg | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Tim Macaire | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Martin Mayers | 7 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| Dominic McGrath | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Ian Parkes | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Pete Phillips | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Ian Pollard | 6 | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Sam Prior | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| David Ramsey | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Nick Ranson | 6 | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Dave Schofield | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Graham Smith | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Simon Taylor | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Derek Tocher | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Chris Walton | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Nathan Wegener | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Miles Wiehahn | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |



Just some of the new stuff released in the latter half of 2010. And with a torrent of new stuff due for release in 2011, it looks like there'll be a few wallets struggling to keep up!

INCOMING

Continued from page 3

for \$45.00 (\$55.00 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. You can email them at aslunker@aol.com.

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Ian Daglish (left) and Shaun Carter prepare for their next clash.

The Crusaders Open ASL Tournament Ladder

INTENSIVE FIRE 2010 Update The Champion – David Schofield

Derek Tocher

INTENSIVE FIRE 2010 was the 33rd British ASL tournament and there are now over 3000 results recorded on the ladder and we now have 268 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, 165, 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.

David Schofield was undefeated in the tournament (6-0) and is the new champion and now appears in 6th on the full ladder and third on the active players ladder after having picked up 235 points. David is one of only three players to have won INTENSIVE FIRE more than once. However his points total was bettered by Nigel Blair who had a 4-3 win-loss record but beat several substantially better players to net 290 points, although admittedly he still is only 212th on the ladder. No other player picked up over 200 pts during INTENSIVE FIRE.

Of course we also had a number of significant losers over the weekend.

Most prominent among these was Phil Draper who won this year's HEROES tournament but lost all three of his games in Bournemouth and lost 250 points in the process, dropping him from 2nd to 18th on the active players list. The biggest loss over the weekend however was recorded by Martin Baker who lost 255 points dropping him from 84th to 192nd. The only other player to have lost over 200 points was newbie Richard Dagnell who lost all three tournament scenarios and dropped 235 points.

Without more ado here is the Crusader Ladder as of 7 December 2010.

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| Rank | Player | P (W-D-L) | Pts | Rank | Player | P (W-D-L) | Pts | Rank | Player | P (W-D-L) | Pts | Rank | Player | P (W-D-L) | Pts | |
|------|-----------------------|----------------|------|------|-----------------------------|---------------|------|------|--------------------|---------------|------|------|----------------------------|----------------|------|--|
| 1 | Toby Pilling | 75 (68-2-5) | 4085 | 71 | Paul O'donald | 72 (44-1-27) | 3135 | 142 | Miles Wiehahn | 27 (13-0-14) | 2970 | 212 | Nigel Blair | 129 (48-1-80) | 2780 | |
| 2 | Derek Tocher | 125 (94-2-28) | 3935 | 71 | Freng Van Der Mey | 4 (3-0-1) | 3135 | 142 | John O'rielly | 5 (2-1-2) | 2970 | 212 | Chris Littlejohn | 14 (3-2-9) | 2780 | |
| 3 | Steve Thomas | 42 (32-1-9) | 3755 | 71 | Andrew Whinnett | 16 (9-0-7) | 3135 | 144 | Hakan Isaksson | 4 (2-0-2) | 2965 | 215 | Graham Worsfold | 3 (0-0-3) | 2775 | |
| 4 | Simon Stevens | 87 (60-1-25) | 3720 | 74 | Malcolm Hatfield | 59 (26-0-33) | 3130 | 145 | Paul Jones | 31 (14-0-17) | 2960 | 215 | Wayne Baumber | 73 (32-0-41) | 2775 | |
| 4 | Mark Blackmore | 60 (43-0-17) | 3720 | 74 | Chris Courtier | 13 (7-2-4) | 3130 | 145 | Elliot Cox | 2 (0-1-1) | 2960 | 215 | Richard Kirby | 7 (2-0-5) | 2770 | |
| 6 | Dave Schofield | 151 (110-0-41) | 3710 | 76 | Paul Sanderson | 41 (21-0-20) | 3125 | 145 | Ben Jones | 49 (23-0-26) | 2960 | 215 | Lee Bray | 14 (3-0-11) | 2770 | |
| 7 | Mike Rudd | 38 (32-1-5) | 3660 | 77 | William Hanson | 19 (11-0-7) | 3120 | 148 | Michael Maus | 7 (3-0-4) | 2955 | 218 | Simon Taylor | 18 (6-1-11) | 2765 | |
| 8 | Fermin Ramerero | 13 (11-0-2) | 3650 | 77 | Philip Jones | 5 (3-0-2) | 3120 | 149 | Neil Brunger | 48 (18-0-30) | 2950 | 208 | Richard Dagnall | 3 (0-0-3) | 2765 | |
| 9 | Michael Hasstrup-Leth | 45 (31-1-13) | 3615 | 77 | Paul Ryde-Weller | 10 (5-1-4) | 3120 | 150 | Pedro Ramis | 6 (3-0-3) | 2945 | 218 | Bill Hensby | 31 (10-0-21) | 2765 | |
| 10 | Aaron Cleavin | 6 (6-0-0) | 3565 | 77 | Lee Brimmicombe-Wood | 12 (8-0-4) | 3120 | 150 | Laurent Forest | 3 (0-0-3) | 2945 | 221 | Flemming Scott-Christensen | 6 (1-0-5) | 2760 | |
| 11 | Peter Bennett | 14 (12-1-1) | 3560 | 77 | Anthony O'boyle | 3 (2-0-1) | 3120 | 150 | David Murry | 5 (2-1-2) | 2945 | 221 | Andrew Hershey | 10 (4-0-6) | 2760 | |
| 11 | Bjarne Marell | 36 (26-0-10) | 3560 | 82 | Tom Jackson | 17 (9-0-8) | 3115 | 150 | Alex Ganna | 2 (0-1-1) | 2945 | 223 | Jonathan Townsend | 4 (1-0-3) | 2755 | |
| 13 | Tim Bunce | 67 (46-0-21) | 3550 | 82 | Mark Walley | 4 (3-0-1) | 3115 | 154 | Wayne Kelly | 11 (4-1-6) | 2940 | 224 | Peter Neale | 3 (0-0-3) | 2750 | |
| 14 | Steve Linton | 17 (14-0-3) | 3545 | 82 | Georges Tournemire | 5 (2-1-0) | 3115 | 154 | Paulo Ferreira | 9 (4-0-5) | 2940 | 225 | Andy McMaster | 34 (12-0-22) | 2745 | |
| 15 | Paul Haesler | 17 (10-2-5) | 3530 | 85 | Stewart Thain | 24 (12-0-12) | 3110 | 154 | Jon Williams | 14 (6-0-8) | 2940 | 226 | Burnham Fox | 23 (10-0-13) | 2740 | |
| 16 | Trevor Edwards | 122 (67-1-54) | 3525 | 85 | Steve Cook | 23 (14-0-9) | 3110 | 154 | Bob Nugent | 3 (2-0-1) | 2940 | 227 | Rupert Featherby | 3 (0-0-3) | 2735 | |
| 17 | Dominic McGrath | 156 (96-2-59) | 3495 | 85 | Luis Calçada | 43 (21-1-21) | 3110 | 158 | Martin Bryan | 19 (8-0-11) | 2935 | 227 | Nick Quinn | 14 (5-0-9) | 2735 | |
| 18 | Phil Draper | 73 (46-2-25) | 3490 | 85 | Luc Schonkerren | 5 (3-0-2) | 3110 | 158 | Martin Mayers | 40 (17-0-23) | 2935 | 229 | Stuart Brant | 8 (3-0-5) | 2730 | |
| 19 | Jes Touvald | 24 (16-0-8) | 3475 | 89 | Simon Morris | 11 (6-0-5) | 3105 | 158 | Derek Briscoe | 1 (0-0-1) | 2935 | 229 | Gareth Evans | 4 (0-0-4) | 2730 | |
| 20 | Gerard Burton | 38 (22-0-16) | 3440 | 90 | Russ Curry | 6 (4-0-2) | 3100 | 161 | Andy Price | 3 (1-0-2) | 2930 | 231 | Hamish Hughson | 4 (0-0-4) | 2725 | |
| 21 | Martin Vicca | 33 (23-1-9) | 3420 | 91 | Nigel Brown | 26 (11-0-15) | 3095 | 161 | Andrea Marchino | 1 (0-0-1) | 2930 | 232 | Steve Coocks | 4 (0-0-4) | 2720 | |
| 21 | David Ramsey | 49 (26-0-23) | 3420 | 91 | Mikael Siemsen | 6 (3-0-1) | 3095 | 163 | Paul Boyle | 5 (2-0-3) | 2925 | 232 | Mark Horton | 6 (1-0-5) | 2720 | |
| 23 | Lars Klysnar | 11 (8-0-3) | 3400 | 91 | Marc Hanna | 6 (4-0-2) | 3095 | 163 | John Sharp | 8 (3-0-5) | 2925 | 234 | Ray Jennings | 11 (3-0-8) | 2715 | |
| 24 | Ran Shiloah | 11 (7-0-4) | 3370 | 94 | Peter Michels | 3 (2-0-1) | 3090 | 165 | Tim Collier | 17 (7-0-10) | 2920 | 235 | Graham Smith | 46 (17-1-28) | 2700 | |
| 24 | Peter Struifl | 10 (8-0-2) | 3370 | 94 | Kevin Beard | 13 (9-1-3) | 3090 | 165 | Steve Allen | 6 (1-1-4) | 2920 | 236 | Simon Hoare | 4 (0-0-4) | 2690 | |
| 26 | Carl Sizmur | 21 (13-0-8) | 3365 | 94 | Jan Bal | 5 (3-0-2) | 3090 | 167 | Nathan Wegener | 3 (1-0-2) | 2915 | 236 | Brian Hooper | 165 (58-2-105) | 2690 | |
| 26 | Andrew Dando | 48 (27-2-19) | 3365 | 94 | Iain Mackay | 43 (22-0-21) | 3090 | 167 | Iain Ainsworth | 1 (0-0-1) | 2915 | 238 | Jeff Howarden | 7 (2-0-5) | 2685 | |
| 28 | Berni Ribom | 5 (5-0-0) | 3350 | 94 | Gary Lock | 2 (2-0-0) | 3090 | 167 | Edo Giaroni | 3 (1-0-2) | 2915 | 239 | Rupert Speis | 5 (1-0-4) | 2680 | |
| 28 | Craig Benn | 54 (38-0-16) | 3330 | 99 | Paulo Alessi | 6 (4-0-2) | 3085 | 170 | Joel Berridge | 3 (1-0-2) | 2910 | 240 | James Crossfield | 15 (6-0-9) | 2670 | |
| 30 | Joe Arthur | 21 (13-0-8) | 3305 | 100 | Dirk Beijaard | 5 (3-0-2) | 3080 | 170 | Brian Martuzas | 5 (2-0-3) | 2910 | 241 | Pedro Barradas | 7 (1-0-6) | 2655 | |
| 31 | Frank Tinschert | 15 (10-0-5) | 3295 | 101 | Robin Langston | 9 (4-2-3) | 3075 | 170 | Andy Smith | 4 (0-0-4) | 2910 | 242 | Chris Walton | 52 (16-0-36) | 2640 | |
| 31 | Aaron Sibley | 58 (35-0-23) | 3295 | 101 | Chris Milne | 5 (3-0-2) | 3075 | 173 | Phil Ward | 5 (2-0-3) | 2905 | 243 | Peter Phillips | 129 (55-0-77) | 2635 | |
| 33 | Phillippe Leonard | 9 (7-1-1) | 3285 | 101 | Billy Carlaw | 11 (4-0-7) | 3075 | 173 | Michael Essex | 33 (16-0-17) | 2905 | 243 | Nigel Ashcroft | 52 (19-1-32) | 2635 | |
| 34 | Will Fleming | 3 (3-0-0) | 3280 | 104 | Serge Bettencourt | 3 (2-0-1) | 3070 | 173 | Mark Caddy | 1 (0-0-1) | 2905 | 245 | Adrian Catchpole | 11 (2-0-9) | 2625 | |
| 34 | Ralf Krusat | 6 (5-0-1) | 3280 | 104 | Robert Schaff | 3 (2-0-1) | 3070 | 173 | James Neary | 5 (2-0-3) | 2905 | 246 | Adrian Maddocks | 12 (3-0-9) | 2620 | |
| 34 | Alan Smece | 4 (4-0-0) | 3280 | 104 | Jean-Luc Baas | 3 (2-0-1) | 3070 | 173 | Ian Gauenman | 3 (1-0-2) | 2905 | 247 | Arthur Garlick | 21 (2-5-14) | 2615 | |
| 37 | Dave Booth | 7 (5-0-2) | 3270 | 107 | Bob Runicelles | 3 (2-0-1) | 3065 | 178 | Mat Haas | 13 (6-0-7) | 2900 | 248 | Justin Key | 66 (25-1-40) | 2610 | |
| 38 | Daniel Kalman | 11 (8-0-3) | 3245 | 107 | Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire | 4 (2-1-1) | 3065 | 178 | Josh Kalman | 10 (5-0-5) | 2900 | 248 | Bryan Brinkman | 9 (1-0-8) | 2610 | |
| 39 | Jackson Keddell | 5 (5-0-0) | 3240 | 109 | Scott Byrne | 12 (7-0-5) | 3060 | 180 | Martin Kristensen | 6 (2-0-4) | 2895 | 250 | Ian Parkes | 10 (3-1-6) | 2595 | |
| 40 | Paul Saunders | 19 (10-0-9) | 3235 | 10 | Raurigh Dale | 38 (17-0-21) | 3060 | 181 | Jakob Norgaard | 6 (1-1-4) | 2885 | 251 | John Fletcher | 6 (0-0-6) | 2585 | |
| 40 | Daniel Batley | 4 (4-0-0) | 3235 | 109 | Patrik Manlig | 16 (9-0-7) | 3060 | 181 | Bernard Savage | 21 (9-1-11) | 2885 | 252 | Oliver Gray | 15 (4-0-11) | 2580 | |
| 42 | Ulric Schwela | 44 (20-1-23) | 3225 | 112 | Stefan Jacobi | 11 (5-0-6) | 3050 | 183 | Sam Belcher | 8 (3-0-5) | 2880 | 252 | Neil Stevens | 65 (25-2-38) | 2580 | |
| 42 | Ray Woloszyn | 31 (18-1-12) | 3225 | 112 | Bo Siemsen | 4 (2-0-2) | 3050 | 184 | Patrick Dale | 38 (15-1-22) | 2875 | 254 | David Blackwood | 13 (5-0-8) | 2575 | |
| 44 | Christian Koppmeyer | 15 (8-0-7) | 3220 | 114 | Scott Greenman | 8 (3-1-4) | 3045 | 185 | John Johnson | 1 (0-0-1) | 2870 | 255 | Ian Pollard | 119 (45-1-73) | 2570 | |
| 45 | Tom Stizewski | 5 (4-0-1) | 3215 | 115 | Steve Pleva | 6 (3-0-3) | 3035 | 185 | David Kalman | 5 (2-0-3) | 2870 | 256 | Chris Netherton | 30 (10-2-18) | 2560 | |
| 45 | Ian Percy | 12 (8-1-3) | 3215 | 116 | Paul Legg | 134 (56-2-76) | 3030 | 187 | Russell Gough | 81 (45-4-38) | 2865 | 257 | Mike Stanbridge | 47 (13-1-33) | 2555 | |
| 47 | Yves Tielemans | 3 (3-0-0) | 3210 | 116 | Mark Warren | 20 (11-0-9) | 3030 | 188 | Peter Ladwein | 21 (9-0-12) | 2860 | 258 | Michael Rhodes | 43 (10-0-33) | 2545 | |
| 47 | Nils-Gunner Nilsson | 5 (4-0-1) | 3210 | 118 | Peter Hofland | 4 (2-0-2) | 3025 | 188 | Neil Piggott | 4 (1-0-3) | 2860 | 259 | Roger Cook | 30 (9-2-19) | 2515 | |
| 47 | Klaus Malmstrom | 4 (3-1-0) | 3210 | 118 | Daniele Dal Bello | 4 (1-0-3) | 3025 | 188 | Luiz Prietschker | 4 (1-0-3) | 2860 | 260 | Robert Seenev | 5 (0-0-5) | 2510 | |
| 50 | Francois Boudrenghien | 3 (3-0-0) | 3205 | 120 | Vincent Kamer | 4 (2-0-2) | 3015 | 188 | Brendan Clark | 16 (6-1-9) | 2860 | 261 | Damien Maher | 9 (1-0-8) | 2485 | |
| 50 | Bob Eburne | 56 (32-0-24) | 3205 | 121 | Colin Graham | 5 (3-0-2) | 3010 | 192 | Martin Barker | 19 (7-1-11) | 2855 | 262 | Nick Carter | 121 (32-3-89) | 2475 | |
| 52 | Jean Devaux | 3 (3-0-0) | 3190 | 121 | Andrew Saunders | 33 (15-1-17) | 3010 | 193 | Nick Angelopoulos | 5 (1-0-4) | 2850 | 263 | Paul Case | 14 (4-0-10) | 2445 | |
| 53 | Armin Deppe | 13 (7-1-5) | 3185 | 123 | Eric Gerstenberg | 13 (8-0-5) | 3005 | 193 | Ian Daglish | 146 (67-2-77) | 2850 | 264 | John Kennedy | 24 (5-0-19) | 2415 | |
| 54 | Sam Prior | 64 (35-0-29) | 3180 | 123 | Allard Koene | 7 (4-0-3) | 3005 | 195 | Keith Bristow | 69 (39-1-29) | 2845 | 265 | Chris Ager | 26 (7-0-19) | 2400 | |
| 54 | Derek Cox | 18 (9-0-9) | 3180 | 125 | Thomas Buettner | 3 (2-0-1) | 3000 | 195 | John Martin | 6 (2-0-4) | 2845 | 266 | Ray Porter | 39 (4-0-35) | 2375 | |
| 54 | Bill Durrant | 5 (4-0-1) | 3180 | 125 | Steve Grainger | 8 (4-0-4) | 3000 | 197 | Bill Eaton | 21 (8-3-10) | 2840 | 267 | Jackie Eves | 45 (12-0-33) | 2330 | |
| 57 | Steve Crowley | 47 (21-1-25) | 3175 | 125 | Stephen Burleigh | 37 (15-2-20) | 3000 | 198 | Mark Furnell | 13 (5-1-7) | 2835 | 268 | Nick Ranson | 33 (4-1-28) | 2230 | |
| 57 | Jonathan Pickles | 8 (5-0-3) | 3175 | 125 | Phil Nobo | 11 (6-0-5) | 3000 | 198 | Dave Otway | 5 (1-0-4) | 2835 | | | | | |
| 59 | Grant Pettit | 7 (4-1-2) | 3170 | 125 | Nick Brown | 3 (1-1-1) | 3000 | 200 | Shaun Carter | 77 (34-1-42) | 2830 | | | | | |
| 59 | David Tye | 45 (20-0-25) | 3170 | 125 | Martin Hubley | 4 (3-0-1) | 3000 | 201 | Mike Daniel | 5 (2-0-3) | 2825 | | | | | |
| 59 | Bruno Tibermans | 3 (3-0-0) | 3170 | 125 | Ian Kenney | 4 (2-0-2) | 3000 | 202 | Mark Chapman | 6 (2-0-4) | 2820 | | | | | |
| 62 | Tony Gibson | 31 (17-0-14) | 3165 | 126 | Duncan Spencer | 4 (2-0-2) | 3000 | 203 | Michael Robertson | 4 (1-0-3) | 2810 | | | | | |
| 63 | Tim Macaire | 64 (35-0-29) | 3160 | 133 | Kris Pugh | 14 (6-0-8) | 2995 | 203 | Ian Willey | 2 (0-0-2) | 2810 | | | | | |
| 63 | Rodney Callen | 6 (4-0-2) | 3160 | 135 | Gilles Hakim | 5 (2-0-3) | 2995 | 205 | William Roberts | 11 (3-1-7) | 2800 | | | | | |
| 63 | Mel Falk | 9 (5-0-4) | 3160 | 135 | Matt Blackman | 2 (1-0-1) | 2985 | 205 | Michael Allen | 3 (1-0-2) | 2800 | | | | | |
| 66 | Jeremy Copley | 9 (6-0-3) | 3150 | 135 | Eric Baker | 3 (1-0-2) | 2980 | 205 | Clive Gardiner | 17 (8-0-9) | 2800 | | | | | |
| 67 | Simon Croome | 59 (31-0-28) | 3145 | 137 | Malcolm Rutledge | 3 (1-0-2) | 2980 | 205 | Clive Gardiner | 5 (2-0-3) | 2800 | | | | | |
| 67 | Nick Edelsten | 22 (14-1-7) | 3145 | 137 | William Farr | 4 (2-0-2) | 2980 | 209 | Nick Sionskyj | 8 (3-0-5) | 2790 | | | | | |
| 67 | Michael Davies | 75 (40-1-34) | 3145 | 139 | William Binns | 29 (13-0-16) | 2975 | 209 | Kevin Crosskey | 16 (6-0-10) | 2790 | | | | | |
| 70 | Bill Sheriker | 33 (17-2-14) | 3140 | 139 | Sergio Puzzeilo | 5 (1-0-4) | 2975 | 209 | Alistair Fairbairn | 3 (0-0-3) | 2790 | | | | | |
| | | | | 139 | Paul Kettlewell | 89 (42-0-47) | 2975 | | | | | | | | | |



First To Fight

The Polish in SASL

Nick Smith

This article looks at running Polish SASL campaigns, both as an Allied Minor company and then as a Free Polish company. Although most if not all of the Allied Minor nations (Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Yugoslavia and Greece) fell within weeks of being attacked by Hitler, many of their combatants not only fought in the campaign in their homeland but went on to fight in the West or East against the enemy, including in interesting and otherwise neglected campaigns. Another plus point of Allied Minor SASL campaigns is that the player gets the chance to play with AFV, ordnance and squads that otherwise might never see the light of day. This is also true of much German (and Italian) early war equipment, such as the Kfz 13 scout car or the Italian L3 tankettes.

1939

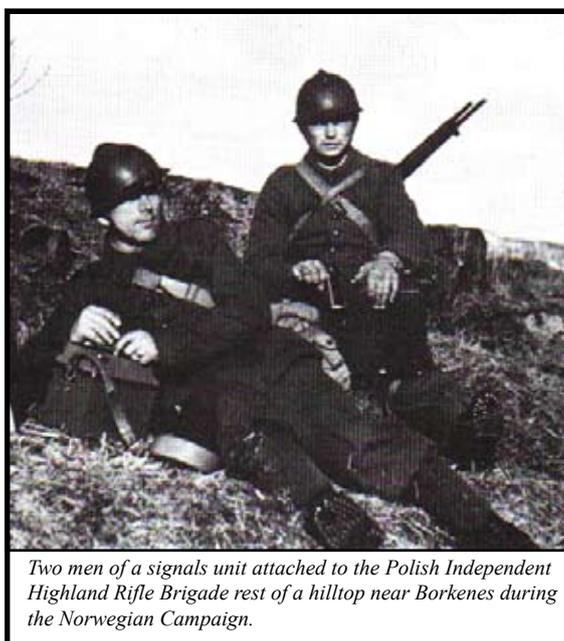
The history of the Polish campaign is too well known to need repeating. However the Poles were far from a pushover (which some histories seem to imply) and fought with courage and determination despite their horrendous strategic and tactical disadvantages.

The Polish company for 9/39 is listed in section S18.511. Note that when setting up your company a dr should be made on the table in S17.85 to determine a possible HMG or .50cal HMG, and remember that 1st Line and Elite Polish MMC have Assault Fire capability (A7.36). To get the most out of playing the Poles in this campaign I would suggest weekly Missions, as follows. Play the first two weeks against the Germans. To get a feel for how the Poles handled German armour, one of the Missions should be Mission 11, "Tank Attack". If you lose both Missions, the third is played against a German ENEMY, upon completion of which the Polish campaign ends. If you win both, play a third Mission against a

German ENEMY and then a fourth against a Russian ENEMY, upon completion of which the Polish campaign ends. If you win one Mission of the original two, play a third Mission against a Russian ENEMY, upon completion of which the Polish campaign ends. Then check your final score. If you have won the campaign you are eligible to continue with your Polish company in the 1940 French campaign (the company is assumed to have escaped into Romania under your leadership). A draw allows your company to escape and join the partisans. A minor loss means internment by the Soviets. Loss of every Mission means internment by the Nazis. (Note this is not meant to be a joke in poor taste – despite the horrendous nature of Soviet internment and especially the Katyn Wood massacre, some Poles survived to go on to fight under the Soviet flag, whereas German rule was harsher still).

France and Norway, 1940

About 85,000 Poles escaped to



Two men of a signals unit attached to the Polish Independent Highland Rifle Brigade rest on a hilltop near Borkenes during the Norwegian Campaign.

France to continue the struggle, and were organised (although not completely equipped or trained) by the French. Should your company escape to France, it is reequipped as a French infantry company (section) but with 4-5-8 counters. I would suggest using a broken morale level one higher than that printed on the back of the French MMC counters. Note that this company is *not* eligible to roll for an HMG on the S17.85 table. You have the choice of fighting in Norway as part of the Polish Independent Highland Brigade in 5-6/40 (monthly missions to reflect the short but chaotic campaign in Norway) in the Narvik area, or in France 5-6/40 as part of one of several other formations that existed. Again this should be a campaign of monthly turns, since the Polish reorganisation and the chaotic conditions of the historic battle meant that the Poles were not able to fully participate in the fight. All Missions in France should be rolled on the Defensive column (reroll if Mission 21 is selected), but the first Mission in Norway should be rolled on the Offensive column (reroll if Mission 4, 6, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20 or 21 is selected). A victory in either campaign means that your company has been evacuated to the UK, a draw, your internment in Switzerland, and a loss, internment by the Germans. Historically of the 85,000 Polish troops only about 20,000-35,000 (estimates vary) were able to escape to the UK, with another 13,000 interned in neutral Switzerland, so this is fairly accurate. Some Poles opted to remain in France and join the Resistance.

Independent Carpathian Brigade

Alternatively your Free Polish company equipped by the French can be treated instead as part of the Independent Carpathian Brigade, which was officially formed in Syria 4/40. After the French surrender and the decision

of the French authorities in Syria to support Vichy France, the Poles left French territory and went to British-controlled Palestine in 6/40, where they were reequipped by the British, trained and then moved to Egypt in 10/40. From this point on your Free Polish company is equipped as a British company (section S18.59), but with 4-5-8 squads. Don't forget the addition of a Temporarily Attached British MMG or HMG with 1-2-7 for each Mission. The Brigade (now renamed the Polish Independent Brigade Group) was motorised. At the end of 8/41 it was sent to besieged Tobruk, where it took part in the port's defence and in 12/41 took the offensive against the besiegers as part of Operation Crusader. Rommel counterattacked in 1/42 and the Poles and Germans faced each other along the Gazala defensive line until 17/3/42, when the unit was sent to Palestine again. Here it was joined by Poles under General Anders who had been released by the Soviets, and the brigade was reformed into the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division, the brigade officially ceasing to exist in 5/42. A monthly campaign for the Carpathian Brigade would thus last from 8/41 to 3/42 inclusive. The months 8-11/41 would see the Poles on the defensive in fortified positions, and again it is suggested that at least one of those Missions is Mission 11, "Tank Attack", not only from the point of view of using early- to midwar German or Italian tanks but also because Rommel did try at various points to use armour to break into the town. Reroll for the Mission if Mission 19 is selected. 12/41 should see the Poles on the offensive (reroll if Mission 6, 16, 17, 18, 20 or 21 is selected), and then in 1/42 on the defence again. In 2-3/42 at least one Mission should be Mission 8, "Patrol", to reflect the temporary stalemate along the Gazala line, otherwise the FRIENDLY posture should be Defensive. There are no other penalties or results for winning, losing or drawing this campaign, except of course if your company is completely eliminated during the course of a Mission. After this the company joins the 3rd Carpathian Division.

The Poles in Britain

The Polish troops that escaped to the UK following the fall of France were formed into the Polish I Corps. Despite its name this did not reach corps size and was not used as a corps until after the defeat and occupation of Germany. It was made up of four constituent units, the Polish 1st Armoured Division, 4th Infantry Division, 1st Independent Parachute Brigade and 16th Independent Armoured Brigade. The 4th Infantry Division apparently spent the war guarding the eastern Scottish coast and was deactivated afterwards, but the armoured division and airborne brigade both saw action in 1944-45 (I have been unable to find out details on the employment or otherwise of the independent armoured

brigade). The Polish 1st Armoured Division was sent to Normandy in and commenced operations in 8/44, playing a very significant part in trapping German forces in the Falaise pocket. Thereafter it pursued the German forces along the Channel coast and into Belgium and the Netherlands, being mainly active in the Netherlands until 4/45 when it crossed into Germany. On 6/5/45 the unit accepted the surrender of the key German port and U-boat base of Wilhelmshaven and was joined by the Polish 1st Independent Parachute Brigade (see below). A Polish 1st Armoured Division campaign should therefore comprise monthly Missions from 8/44-4/45 inclusive, starting with Mission 11, "Tank Attack", in 8/44 to reflect the desperate German attempts to break free of the Falaise Gap. For the following Mission in 9/44, Mission 15 "Pursuit" would be very suitable. All the remainder of the Missions should have the Poles in offensive posture as they liberate the Low Countries before crossing into Germany, with the possible exception of 10/44 which would be suitable for a "Patrol" Mission to reflect the temporary stalemate experienced by the 1st Armoured Brigade and the liberation of Breda without any civilian casualties. Should you receive tanks, my impression is that the Division used mostly M4 Shermans and Stuarts.

The 1st Independent Parachute Brigade was dropped into Operation Market Garden, where it had a very rough time (readers may remember the film and book *A Bridge Too Far*). Unable to leave in the first wave of attackers because of fog, some Polish elements (mainly AT guns and vehicles) were dropped by glider into Oosterbeek on the third day of the battle, 19/9/44, where they met very heavy German fire while descending. The rest of the formation were dropped on 21/9/44, but again suffered from heavy German fire and in addition had their supplies dropped miles away on the other side of the Rhine. The unit was intended to reinforce the British 1st Airborne Division, but with the Germans dominating the opposite bank and the ferry unusable, the Poles had to withdraw to Driel for the night. Thereafter the Germans assigned about 2,400 troops to face the Poles for fear that the latter would either recapture the Arnhem bridge or help cut off 10th SS Panzer Division. On 22/9/44 the Poles were joined by elements of the 43rd Division and that night attempted to cross the river in the face of great difficulties and enemy fire. Only 52 men survived the crossing to reach the other bank. The following day tanks from XXX Corps helped the Poles beat off



A Bren gunner from the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade scans the skies for German aircraft during the siege of Tobruk.

German attacks, and that night boats and engineers from the Canadian Army helped to place 150 more Poles on the other side of the river. On 25/9/44 the Polish 3rd Parachute Battalion covered the withdrawal of the survivors of 1st Airborne Division from the north bank. For their part in the battle, which cost the brigade about a quarter of its strength, in 2006 the Polish brigade were awarded the Dutch Military William Order by HM Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands. Although a short battle, should you wish to simulate the Poles at Market Garden, four Missions should be played. The first should be Mission 16, "Airlanding", followed by Mission 17, "River Assault", which takes place at night. The third Mission should be a defensive one to reflect the German pressure on the Poles. The final one should be "Escape" to reflect the rearguard nature of the final night of Market Garden. The company used is the British Airborne Company 12/43-45 (S18.59), remembering again the Temporarily Attached MGs. After the battle the Parachute Brigade saw no further action during the war, and after the German surrender joined the 1st Armoured Division in northwest Germany in 1945.

Anders' Army and the Polish II Corps

Stalin's initial treatment of the Poles was brutal, notoriously the Katyn Massacre in which 22,000 Polish officers and other elements of Polish leadership were murdered by the NKVD. However, the onslaught of his former allies in Barbarossa forced him to look for help wherever he could find it, and as a result a large number of surviving Poles were freed from the Gulag and joined "Anders' Army" (named after their general, appointed by Sikorski in London) under the Polish-Russian Military Agreement of 14/8/41. The Poles made their way to the Middle East where they

joined other Free Polish units who had been fighting alongside the British, and the two groups were amalgamated into the Polish II Corps. In 1944 the unit was transferred from Egypt to Italy where it took part in the fourth phase of the fighting at Monte Cassino (1-5/44), the Battle of Ancona (6-7/44) and Battle of Bologna in 4/45. The Polish II Corps relieved the 78th Division at Cassino on 24/4/44 and took part in the assault which opened on 11-12/5/44. Fighting took place between the Poles and German paratroops on the aptly-named Mount Calvario (Mount Calvary) in which both sides suffered heavy losses before the Poles were able to link up with the 78th Division west of Cassino. Heavy fighting followed for most of the summer and autumn before a lull in the winter, and then resumed in 4/45 with the final offensive in Italy.

Perhaps the most unusual member of the Polish II Corps was a brown bear (*Ursus arctos syriacus*), Wojtek. He was adopted as a bear cub by the Poles in Iran and subsequently helped to move boxes of ammunition at Monte Cassino. Apart from these military activities he came to enjoy drinking beer and smoking (and eating) cigarettes. Happily he survived the war and upon demobilisation of the Poles in 1947 was given to Edinburgh Zoo, where he was often visited by journalists and former Polish soldiers. He died in 1963 at the age of 22, and there are a number of memorials to his memory.

Recreating the Polish II Corps' campaign in Italy is fairly straightforward. The corps was in a passive defensive posture along the Sangro River 1-3/45, so this period could be summed up in one playing of Mission 7, "Patrol" (the month to be chosen at random). 4/45 saw the preparation of the Corps for the assault on Cassino, so this month should be ignored in favour of playing three Missions in 5/45 to reflect the intensity of the fighting. One of these should be Mission 4, and in both Missions Board 9 can be utilised to reflect the hilly terrain and the ruins of Cassino at the top. In this particular Mission, when the first German "?" is Activated, add -2 to the DR: any Elite German MMC thus activated is automatically a 5-4-8 to reflect the Poles' battle against the Fallschirmjaeger (note also Rule 12.22 on Special Forces Integrity if a 5-4-8 is the first ENEMY Activated). The third Mission should be 6 or 7 to reflect the Corps' subsequent advance on the heavily fortified town on Piedmont. An offensive Mission should be played each month for 6-7/44, after which the Corps went into rest and refit, having historically suffered heavy casualties again. However it was back in action towards the end of August in the battles around the River Metauro to pierce the Gothic line. Offensive Missions for 8-11/44 should include Mission 17 or 18 at

least once to simulate the fact that numerous rivers had to be crossed during this period. Apart from being withdrawn for three weeks halfway through September for a further rest and refit the Corps was continually in action until the end of November. The period 12/44-3/45 saw a lull in the fighting due to the difficult winter conditions and Allied reorganisation and buildup, so only one Mission, "Patrol", should be played during this period (month chosen randomly). However two Missions can be played in 4/45 to again reflect the fierce fighting that took place in and around Bologna and Ravenna that finally broke the German defences in Italy before the Polish II Corps was finally stood down on 23/4/45. Neither Mission 16, "Air Landing", nor Mission 20, "Amphibious Assault" should be played in this campaign.

In all the Italian scenarios the Polish player is eligible to receive a British or US ally. From 6/44 onwards he is also eligible to receive a Partisan Ally, to reflect the activity of Italian partisans.

Soviet-organised Polish formations

The Soviet relationship with the Poles during this period is fairly complicated, but needless to say not satisfactory to either party, to put it mildly. After the departure of Anders' Army and the victory at Stalingrad it became clear to Stalin that his need for allies was less pressing, and other Poles were often denied the opportunity to serve under Polish leadership and instead simply declared Soviet citizens and drafted into the Red Army. The low ebb in relations was reached with the revelation of the Katyn Massacre which caused a severing of relations between the Soviets and the Polish government in exile in London. The Soviets instead created the Union of Polish

Patriots (ZPP) in 1943 and simultaneously the Polish People's Army (LWP). In reality much of the officer cadre and technical support was provided by Soviet personnel, and morale was apparently low at least during the Battle of Lenino (see below). The first unit was the Polish 1st Infantry Division under General Berling, formed in 5/43 and ready in 7/43. In 8/44 the unit was enlarged to become the Polish 1st Corps (not to be confused with the Polish 1st Corps in Britain), a formation containing two infantry divisions including the 1st, one artillery and one armoured brigade, and other units including air. The 1st Polish Infantry Division first saw action in 10/43 (together with the 1st Polish Tank Regiment) at the Battle of Lenino, where it and its accompanying Soviet and Polish formations suffered heavy losses including a quarter of the division's strength, necessitating its withdrawal and rebuilding which took until the spring of 1944. The battle itself was to become politically controversial and further embitter Polish-Soviet relations. In 3/44 the corps was further enlarged to become the Polish First Army, and took part in the Lvov-Sandomierz operations from 7/44 onwards as the Soviets tried to cross the River Vistula. In 9/44 it fought around Warsaw in an attempt to aid the Warsaw Uprising, although Stalin in reality had little interest in helping the Polish Home Army and a motive to see them fail. In 1/45 it was finally able to take part in the liberation of Warsaw, after which it took part in successful breakthrough of the Pomeranian Wall in the East Pomeranian offensive, 2-3/45, capturing the fortified city of Kolberg in 3/45. The final act of the Polish First Army was participation in the Battle of Berlin in 4/45.

The Polish Second Army was formed similarly under the auspices of the ZPP and LWP, and faced similar problems with



T-34s of the Ludow Wojsko Polskie cross the Vistula, the rear T-34 piggy-backing a Lend-Lease jeep!

finding officers. It was formed in the period 8-12/45 and saw combat from 1/45 onwards when some elements of the Army joined the 1st Byelorussian Front. Indeed the Army was to serve as a reinforcement pool for the Front in 3/45 before joining the 1st Ukrainian Front. Given the task of advancing on Dresden and Bautzen in 4/45, it became entangled in heavy street fighting in Bautzen with the Hermann Goering Panzerkorps and suffered the heaviest casualties of any Polish military operation with the exception of the Warsaw Uprising, the German and Soviet forces also suffering heavy losses.

The recreation of Soviet-equipped and -led Polish formations seems less clear cut in the ASL Rulebook, but at least one scenario (ASL 3, “The Czerniakow Bridgehead”) implies that the Poles were at best 1st Line troops with a fragile morale (note the ELR of 2). This would appear to be justified historically, not because of the Poles’ lack of bravery but their manipulation and close control by the Soviets, not to mention the bitter history of the years since 1939. Perhaps like men of the Indian National Army who helped the Japanese, at least some of the Polish First and Second Army rank and file saw enlistment in these formations as their best way out of the infamous gulags. Perhaps the best way to recreate such a formation in *SASL* terms would be to use the standard Russian Rifle Company 12/42-45 but with an ELR 1 lower than the normal Russian ELR for the period, reflecting the political uncertainties, rigid control and lack of motivation. There appears to be no suggestion however that the Soviets were grudging with equipment, so the *SASL* company should be eligible to use any equipment available to a standard Russian unit, as well as to have a Russian Ally. However, given the Soviet stance towards the Polish Home Army and those Poles whose allegiance was to the London government, a Soviet-Polish formation should not be eligible to have a Partisan Ally after 7/44. Similarly as the Poles fought only in Poland and Germany they are *not* eligible to have a Romanian or Bulgarian Ally.

Perhaps the simplest way to recreate a Soviet-Polish campaign is to start in 10/43 with the Battle of Lenino, when any Offensive Mission except 6,7 or 21 () can be chosen. If the company survives this it can go forward to 7-8/44 when two Missions should be played, one of which should be (river crossing). A further Offensive Mission is then played in 9/44, and then the campaign resumes in 1/45 with either Mission 6 or 7, Mission 4 in 2/45 and again either Mission 6 or 7 in 3-4/45 to reflect the urban fighting that the Poles were engaged in during these last heavy battles of the war. Should you wish to focus exclusively on the Polish Second Army, simply start the campaign in 1/45 and play three Offensive

Missions before playing Mission 6 or 7 in 4/45. Neither Mission 16, “Air Landing”, nor Mission 20, “Amphibious Assault” should be played in any Soviet-Polish campaign.

Postscript and summary

Poland’s history of unhappy dealings with more aggressive and larger neighbours was repeated in 1939 with her dismemberment by Nazi Germany and the USSR, although she herself had profited from Hitler’s gains in Czechoslovakia by annexing Zaolzie in 10/38. After fierce fighting in the autumn of 1939 many Polish soldiers (and sailors and airmen) were able to escape and flee eventually to France and later to the UK, but many others were interned by the Nazis or the Soviets in harsh if not murderous conditions. The Free Polish units in the western theatres fought with distinction, but the picture of Soviet-led Polish units is more complicated due to heavy-handed Soviet control. Polish soldiers fighting in the West felt understandably betrayed by the western Allies’ agreements with Stalin that essentially moved their borders westwards while allowing the Soviets to dominate Poland, and after demobilisation most chose to remain in the UK or other western nations. Similarly those Polish soldiers who survived fighting under Soviet leadership were to experience the Stalinist grip on their nation, although this eased slightly with the death of Stalin in 1953. The indomitable Polish spirit lived on however and can be detected in the Poles’ resistance to complete servitude to the Soviets, the rise of Solidarity and ultimately the emergence of a multiparty system in 1989. The Soviet reformer Mikhail Gorbachev publicly admitted in 4/90 that the NKVD had carried out the Katyn massacre, and the USSR expressed “profound regret” for this episode. In 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin called the incident a political



Soldiers from the Polish 2nd Army pose at a crossroads on the Eastern Front.

crime, and in 2010 invited the Polish Prime Minister to the 70th anniversary memorial. During this time the 2007 Polish film *Katyn* was shown for the first time on Russian television. It is to be hoped that good relations with formerly fractious neighbours will continue for the foreseeable future.

Sources

Wikipedia has a good collection of articles on the Polish forces in WWII. The website www.polandinexile.com goes into some detail about both the western and eastern Polish forces and campaigns.

Ω



Universal Carriers of the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division advance near Montenero in March 1944.

HEROES 2011

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT

10TH - 13TH MARCH (THURSDAY THROUGH SUNDAY) 2011

COLWYN HOTEL, SOUTH PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, ENGLAND

THE EVENT

Following its success in previous years HEROES continues in 2011 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), 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 Colwyn Hotel is familiar to those who attended in 2010 (for those who have attended in previous years it is next door to the old venue the Hotel Skye, and owned by the same hotelier) 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 (Blackpool Pleasure Beach, on the Blackpool South line) is a 5 minute walk away.

Room rates are yet to be confirmed but in 2010 they were 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 2011.

HEROES 2011 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 COLWYN HOTEL) to Colwyn Hotel, 569 New South Promenade, Blackpool, England, FY4 1NG. You can also telephone them on 01253 341 024 to book your room.

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THE SPW250 Half-track

Michael Davies

The SPW250 is an armoured half-track developed by the Germans to transport a half squad in armoured reconnaissance units. It also proved useful for a number of other useful tasks. In this article I'll outline the history and development of the SPW 250, give a brief description of the variants used during WWII and suggest some tactics for *ASL* games. As with every vehicle the *ASLRB*, and vehicle counters contain a lot of useful information, which is always worth a look at when your opponent is setting up, or maybe before then.

Early History of Half tracks

The earliest known half track was designed in 1911 by a French Military engineer Adolphe Kegresse working for Tsar Nicholas II of Russia. He invented a composite rubber and steel track that could be fitted to a conventional car or truck to make a half track. He later returned to France working for Citroen designing other half tracked vehicles.

The idea became popular for moving artillery during WWI but gradually lost ground to fully tracked tractors. In the 1930's several countries returned to the idea of half tracked towing vehicles and infantry transports.

Armoured infantry transport had been attempted during WWI by the British, using a converted tank chassis. It was a low speed vehicle not very well protected and painfully slow, very close to walking space. Military theorists keenly advocated a new mobile form of warfare but were a bit vague on the subject of how the infantry would move. The most common solution was a truck or lorry, to deliver troops close to the battle, and then walk forward behind tanks moving at four to six miles per hour. For deep penetrations or with faster tanks the infantry would repeatedly mount and dismount at intervals. Other ideas were attempted; horses, bicycles, and motorcycles all worked to an extent. Curiously no one thought of tank descent despite troops cheerfully climbing onto any tracked vehicle from 1916 on as soon as a camera appeared or simply to keep out of the mud.

Post WWI British theorists ideas led to the development of armoured tracked carriers as troop and support weapon carriers. In Germany the armoured half track was a cheaper alternative. Both countries had previously used trucks for transporting troops on exercises, and understood the value of infantry support for armoured troops.

Half tracks have some advantages over fully tracked vehicles. In fully

tracked systems steering needs complex arrangements to control track speed. In half tracks the front wheel is used for steering as in a motor car. Generally half tracks do less damage to roads and were nearly as efficient cross country as a fully tracked machine. The half track wasn't as effective on really challenging terrain, climbing obstacles or trenches, flattening walls or tipping over trees; even a hedge could prove a challenge. When towing, a half-track was less effective than fully tracked tractors of similar weight and horse power. The main advantage of half tracks was lower cost.

The German Army developed a range of artillery tractors with half tracked drives, some truck sized ranging down to the fly weight Kettenkrad (SdKfz 2) tracked motorcycle. The SPW250/251 designs were different as they were intended to transport combat infantry and their support weapons.

SPW250 Development

The SPW250 was developed by modifying a Demag D7 artillery tractor and adding light armour protection. The design was very similar to the squad-carrying SPW251, but could carry fewer passengers. Aside from the driver and radio operator, four soldiers could be carried comfortably, plus standing room for another one or two. The vehicle had doors at the rear; experienced crews were able to jump in and out over the sides if under fire or in a hurry.

Estimates of production range from 6,628 to 7,232; both figures are credible. The higher one might include rebuilds or vehicles produced but not delivered. A number of units would have been reserved for training units and other destroyed in transit. Undoubtedly there were never enough produced.

Production trailed off in 1945 when Allied bombing and the general situation forced the Third Reich to concentrate on

production of other weapons more suited to defence.

I'll list the main variants of SPW250; keep in view the majority were basic personnel carriers and the specialist vehicles comparatively rare.

SPW250/1 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen

This variant was used as transport for a half squad in armoured reconnaissance units. Its main armament was an MG34 in an armoured shield fired by the crew and a rear mounted MG34 used by the passengers. Ammunition was usually in 50 round drums though 50 round belts and twin 75 round drums (150 total) were also used. The 50 round belts could be linked to form larger belts. Best source I can find suggests 2,010 rounds were carried, but crews often carried more. Ammunition was stored under the seats; expended loose rounds were trapped in sacks. Spare barrels and tripods for both guns were carried. Later models were fitted with MG42. A fifty round belt would weigh about 5 lbs.

Both the MG34 & MG42 fired 7.92*54mm Mauser ammunition. Ball, tracer, armour piercing and incendiary rounds being used. Cyclic rate of fire for both machine guns was high, 800-900 rounds per minute for the MG34, even higher for the MG42 maybe 1,000-1,300. The limiting factors were the crew, ammunition supply and barrel. Barrel changes were recommended after 250 rounds; perhaps 400 could be fired before a jam but accuracy would be badly degraded. In action both machine guns were noisy, especially the MG42 which made a distinctive sound like ripping cloth. Although heavy the guns were popular and formed the firepower base of German infantry units till the widespread use of automatic weapons late in the war. Certainly



SPW250-1 of the Gross Deutschland Division somewhere in Russia in 1942.

during the invasion of France, the Low Countries and Poland, even small German units could outshoot predominantly rifle armed opponents.

The vehicles assets were mobility, very reasonably firepower, and being able to carry a half squad of infantry. As it was used by reconnaissance troops the SPW250/1 main role was collecting up to date information on the location and strength of enemy forces. Driving close to expected enemy positions the crew and passengers would look for enemy troops using field glasses or the MK I eyeball, record and report their findings up the chain of command. On occasions the unit might actually fire on enemy positions to cause damage, cause alarm or launch a small scale attack. Aside from a pure reconnaissance role SPW250/1 were used to screen an advance or retreat, set up small delaying positions or ambushes and as a flanking force for attacks by larger formations. The role of reconnaissance was very similar to that of horsed cavalry, Dragoons or Hussars had been for centuries. Another vital role was patrolling, covering occupied territory looking for signs of enemy incursions, and ensuring remote friendly positions were still secure.

The basic SPW250/1 did carry a radio, a short range transmitter/receiver the FuG Spr Ger f. This was short range equipment, perhaps 3 Km when stationary, even less when a vehicle was moving. As with all radios environmental and atmospheric conditions could affect range. It was used to communicate between vehicles in a platoon and with higher command up to company level within range.

SPW250/1 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (s MG)

A minor variant of the SPW250/1 carried a support Halbgruppe (half squad) with two MG34/42, tripods for both weapons, spare barrels and sights. The front machine gun was fitted in a heavy mount with sights to allow for long range fire, the rear machine gun would be mounted on the usual AA pintel mount. Both guns could be removed and mounted on tripods for heavy support.

The heavy machine gun mounting could turn up on other vehicles, not just those specifically designated for heavy support.

Missions would be in support of other reconnaissance units.

SPW250/2 Leichter Fernsprechpanzerwagen

The Third Reich was big on signals. Radio traffic carried the risk of interception particularly if broadcast in



A SPW250-1 SMG in Russian in 1942.

clear, any receiver on the correct wavelength could hear broadcast traffic, whilst more sophisticated equipment could jam it. Telephone lines were more secure and when possible the Germans set up exchanges and lines to create a network.

The SPW250/2 was designed for telephone and telegraph cable laying. The lines were fed off a spool as the vehicle moved forward, guided by a pole either into a ditch or over trees or existing telephone poles. Spools could be deployed from the sides or rear of the vehicle, guided by the crew using long poles. The crew of four carried their own personal equipment plus tool to assist their communications work. A small switch board could be carried.

A FuG Spr Ger f. radio would be carried for short range communication with other vehicles. Another radio for contacting more distant higher echelon units might also be depending on who was in the vehicle.

For close defence an MG34 or MG42 behind a standard armoured shield was mounted.

When not used for its primary role the vehicle could be used for command functions or observation tasks. In this role it would carry small hand periscopes or episcopes.

To most casual observers the vehicle would look much like a standard troop carrier.

SPW250/3 Leichter Funkpanzerwagen

The basic SPW250/1 did carry a radio, a short range transmitter/receiver the FuG Spr Ger f, good up to 3 Km. For longer range communications something else was needed. These command variants carried distinctive aerials. The earliest was a frame shaped aerial often described as a "bedstead", later 1.5 to 2m whip or mast aerials with a star shaped array were introduced. Both drew attention and fire from enemy units. The Luftwaffe used a

vehicle fitted with an eight metre whip aerial that was raised and lowered by a winch for long range communications, using the FuSprGer 8 radio which could transmit and receive messages up to 40 Km away.

Other radios carried included the FuG 4,5,7 & 12, with ranges of up to 50 Km, some used for liaison with higher command, others with air or artillery support.

Anything communicating with regimental or divisional command might carry an Enigma machine for coding and decoding messages.

The SPW250/3 would carry an MG34 or MG42 and some ammunition. It might also carry additional radios, observation equipment such as periscopes, binoculars or episcopes, depending on the passengers' requirements.

Signals really were important to the Third Reich, coordinating units and communicating intelligence to higher command. Some of the early success of the German army owed much to the rapid processing of intelligence, identifying weak spots in enemy defences, concentrating force at areas of weakness and rapidly exploiting a break through.

SPW250/4 Leichter Truppenluftungs-panzerwagen

Experimental design for a twin MG34 AA mounting, project abandoned pre production as better alternative platforms available using cannon released from Luftwaffe units up gunning in 1943.

SPW250/4 Leichter Beobachtungs-panzerwagen

Designed as an observation vehicle for Sturmgeschutz (StuG) detachments, equipped with a FuG Spr Ger f, FuG 15,

and FuG 16, both used the same 2 metre aerial with a range of 2-4 Km. An MG34 or 42 was fitted. Late production models were supplied with factory fitted observation equipment.

SPW250/5 Leichter Beobachtungspanzerwagen

Armoured observation vehicle with a FuG 4 & 8. Used the distinctive frame aerial initially, late models had the 2 metre whip aerial with star array. Used for field artillery rather than StuGs.

SPW250/5 Leichter Aufklärungspanzerwagen

Pretty much a SPW250/5 Leichter Beobachtungspanzerwagen but with a FuG 12 radio. It carried various periscopes for observation and a special rotating seat for the observer. It carried an MG42 in the usual armoured front mounting. In one photo I've seen a second MG42 was stowed which could have been mounted on the rear pintle if needed.

SPW250/6 Munitionspanzerwagen

Light ammunition carrier for StuG units. The Ausf A variant was a carrier for 70 rounds of 75mm ammunition for the L/24 gun. Rounds were stowed in boxes stacked inside the vehicle. An MG34 with about 1,000 rounds was carried and both a FuG Spr Ger f, and a longer ranged FuG 16, a standard transmitter/receiver for Sturmartillerie, with a range of 2-4 Km. Could tow a small trailer. Was used in StuG units primarily to transport ammunition, and as a utility vehicle for errands. Armed for close defence.

When StuG units rearmed with the longer 75mm L/48 a modified vehicle the Ausf B was introduced. The new ammunition was longer and shipped in cylindrical tubes. Sixty rounds could be carried, more in a small towed trailer. Armament would be an MG42, same radios carried as in Ausf A.

Crew was two, plus the odd passenger. Both variants could be overloaded in an emergency.

SPW250/7 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (Schwerer Granatewerfer)

Two of these vehicles were used in the fourth (Heavy Weapons) Platoon of the Aufklarungs Company. The main armament was an 8cm GrW34/1 mortar, a slightly modified version of the standard infantry

mortar. A base plate was built into the floor with recoil being absorbed by the suspension and slight flexing. Fire was limited to the vehicular frontal arc. A standard base plate was carried to allow dismounted fire.

An MG 34 or 42 was carried; this could only be mounted on the rear pivot. A standard radio and a longer range one would be carried. Ammunition was stored on the floor and sides in boxes. Standard load was 42 rounds.

With a crew of five space was cramped.

Overall the SPW250/7 was a popular vehicle, able to drive into position quickly then drop rounds onto a target, driving away after a mission or if attacked. It meant fire support was available without contact with a higher command. The slight snag was the low ammunition load; a mortar can fire up to fifteen rounds per minute, though rate of fire would have been reduced by the confined space and need to unpack ammunition.

SPW250/7 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (Munitionsfahrzeug)

To provide more ammunition a third vehicle was used in the Heavy Weapons platoon. A standard SPW250/7 had its mortar tube removed creating space to stow 66 rounds. The frontal MG position was used, and often a second MG added.

Often the vehicle was used by the section or platoon leader, carrying additional radio, and sighting and ranging equipment.

SPW250/8 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (7.5 cm)

The KwK37 L/24 was originally mounted on early StuG III Assault Guns and Panzer IV Tanks. As the Allies deployed tanks with thicker and better armour longer barrelled 75mm guns were fitted to improve anti tank performance. The spare L24 barrels were mounted on some armoured cars and the Panzer III tank. Some were also installed in modified SPW250 & SPW251 half-tracks.

In the SW250 the gun was mounted next to the driver, firing through the vehicle's frontal arc. An MG42 mounted coaxially could be used against targets not needing a 75mm round, and when firing tracer act as a quick aiming device to check line of sight and approximate range. Limited ammunition was stowed, twenty rounds officially. Ammunition could be AP, High Explosive, HEAT or occasionally

Armour Piercing.

The crew was a driver and either two or three gunners. One or two radios would be carried as well as a range finder and sights for the gun.

The weapon was popular, serving in the Heavy Weapons platoon. It fired an effective high explosive round, and using HEAT the gun was effective against the light armour the enemy might use for scouting, carriers, armoured cars, or light tanks.

For whatever reason very few were produced, less than 70. It had been intended to use the SPW250/8 as a replacement for the SPW250/10 as the bigger gun was more versatile and effective against most target types.

SPW250/9 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (2cm) or Panzerwagen mit 2cm KwK 38 L55

An important component of the Blitzkrieg tactical method was reconnaissance, probing the enemy front line to plan where to attack or defend and how to bypass resistance. Part of the success of the German Army in France was having a much better idea of Allied dispositions once contact was established.

Early war light wheeled armoured cars and troops on motorcycles or light trucks were used. As the war moved into Russia the roads grew steadily worse. Something with better cross country performance was needed. A stop gap solution was to place a steel roof on a SPW250 and install the turret from an SdKfz 222 scout car on it.

The turret had a 2cm KwK 38 L55 gun and a coaxial MG34, sights and hinged mesh covers. The covers served to keep grenades out of the turret and protect the crew from branches, wire or other hazards.



A SPW250-5 in service in Russian in 1942.

The main gun was developed from an Anti Aircraft cannon. It was effective against personnel and light armoured vehicles, ammunition included High Explosive tracer (HE-T), High Explosive Incendiary tracer (HEI-T), & High Explosive Incendiary (HEI), Armour piercing High Explosive tracer (APHE-T), and Armour Piercing Incendiary tracer (API-T). Most common load was armour piercing APHE-T, which was effective against most lightly protected targets, including Infantry. Ammunition was in ten or twenty round box magazines, about 1,000 rounds carried for the main gun, and about 2,000 for the machine gun. The KwK had a cyclic rate of fire of 800 RPM; it's loud with a decent muzzle flash.

In 1942 30 experimental vehicles were built and three sent for trials on the Eastern Front. The results ended production of the SdKfz 222 and put the SPW250/9 into mass production, something like 796 were produced.

Two radios were carried; a FuG Spr Ger f and FuG12 for longer range communication. Crew of three, driver and two gunners.

The SPW250/9 could hold its own against Allied light combat vehicles.

SPW250/10 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (3.7 cm PaK).

The PaK 36 (Panzerabwehrkanone) was originally developed as a horse drawn anti tank weapon first issued to the German Army in 1928. The design was updated for mechanised warfare by replacing the original wooden wheels with metal ones and rubber tyres. The gun was fairly easy to move and conceal, had a decent rate of fire of perhaps 13 rounds per minute and was effective against surplus WW I armour, tankettes and lightly armoured vehicles. AP rounds could defeat about 30 mm of armour, the APCR round maybe 60 mm at 100 metres range. From 1940 onwards the anti tank capability was marginal and the Third Reich started to remove the gun from medium tanks, replacing them with 50mm guns. Something like 15,000 PaK 36 were produced.

PaK 36 were mounted in SPW251 platoon leader vehicles as early as 1940, the idea was tried in the SPW250 from late 1942 using surplus or spare guns. The gun fired through the vehicular covered arc. In early models the crew were protected by a gun shield. The gun and shield made the vehicle look special drawing fire from curious enemy units. Later models dispensed with the shield to reduce the height and conceal the appearance of the SPW250/10. Typical ammo load was 216 rounds of 37mm. It's possible only basic AP rounds were carried, although these were effective against infantry. Another possible

load was the 37mm High Explosive Anti tank grenade, available to anti tank gunners a SPW250 crew might have picked one up somewhere?

Crew was four, platoon leader, driver and two gunners. At least one radio would be carried, maybe one or two others for communication with higher command. Sources are split between whether an MG 34 or 42 was carried; suspect it would be the crew's choice.

Production ceased in 1943 after only 151 SPW250/10 had been made. Most were destroyed in combat, or cannibalised to keep other half tracks running.

SPW250/11 Leichter Schutzenpanzerwagen (sPzB 41)

This variant mounted the 2.8 cm Schwere Panzerbuchse 41 L61.3, in most respects similar to the SPW250/10. It was a squeeze bore or cone bore weapon that compress a projectile from 28mm at the chamber to 20mm at the muzzle. The big gain from this was pressure, pushing the shell up the long barrel to gain phenomenal velocity. Speeds could reach 1430 metres per second or 4593 feet per second. At speeds above 2700 fps steel shells would shatter on impact so tungsten carbide shells had to be used. Penetration for such a small gun was very reasonable, 60 mm at 100 metres, better than to the larger PaK 36. The big gain was the gun was very light, 260lb, compared to 952lb of the PaK 36. It was also cheap to produce, less than half the price of a 50mm gun. Production started in 1940 and continued to 1943, in all 2797 was produced but less than that will have seen front line service. Initially ammunition was exclusively Pzgr.41 (APCR) tungsten carbide cored ammunition; from 1941 a tiny explosive charge of 5 grammes was included in a new HE shell the Sprg.41. It would be marginally effective against armour and generate little blast or fragmentation, it would travel quickly and damage any individual or object it hit. A combined total of over two millions rounds were produced. One criticism of the gun was barrel wear. Most high velocity guns need a rebore or new barrel after about 1,000 rounds. The sPzB 41 generally needed replacing after 500 rounds. This would be a valid criticism of long range artillery using indirect fire but for a gun that is generally firing over open sights at ranges less than 500 metres any crew who cranked off 500 rounds deserved a new gun.

A crew of six was carried, together with 168 rounds for the sPzB 41, an MG 34 or 42, with 1,100 rounds, and one or two radios. A very light field carriage was supplied which allowed the gun to be dismantled and used outside the vehicle.

Performance was comparable to the

SPW250/10, the light gun was effective against most contemporary scout cars, light armoured vehicles and Light tanks.

SPW250/12 Leichter Messtruppenwagen

This variant was used as an artillery survey and plotting platform. It was armed with an MG 34 or 42, with about 1,110 rounds, and carried a FuG Spr Ger f radio. Longer range FuG 8 or FuG 12 was used to communicate with higher command. A crew of three to five was carried, as well as equipment for sighting and plotting, periscopes, episcopes and a map table.

SPW250 Field Variants

A small number of field conversions of SPW250 existed. Most were various types of 20mm gun mountings for anti aircraft or anti personnel use. One example survives of 50mm gun mounting similar to the SPW250/10 or SPW250/9 described above. Other weapons fitted include captured light guns and anti tank rifles.

The most puzzling conversion though is the Lastkraftwagen in which the rear armoured body was removed to create a load carrier based on the SPW250. Possibly the armour was used to repair another vehicle, and the load carrier would have greater cargo capacity than a standard armoured vehicle.

SPW250 Tactics in ASL

The primary mission of reconnaissance units in WWII was to locate enemy forces, then to report their position accurately to higher command. On occasions they would ambush or attack enemy forces if the operational situation required it.

Against a small village garrisoned by conscripted or second line troops, or a convoy of horse drawn wagons a SPW platoon could do considerable damage. Against stronger opposition an ambush might consist of a few mortar rounds and a couple of belts of MG ammunition followed by a hasty withdrawal.

The Recce unit might also be used to bolster an attack by shock infantry or armour if other troops were not available.

In ASL most of the missions above can be simulated.

The main strength of SPW units is their mobility; they are light units with low ground pressure, half tracked with considerable movement points. Potentially by starting in Motion and moving along a road net an SPW250 could cover 36 hexes in a single turn firing along the way at targets of opportunity. Sometimes this is very useful. It allows you to slip around defensive positions either to move off board or to take up positions to encircle enemy



A captured SPW250-9 in Italy in 1944.

units or complicate their rout paths.

SPW can conduct overruns, admittedly fairly weak ones, but a threat to units defending with low firepower. Sometimes the threat is enough, positioning yourself close to an enemy unit to deny it's rout can be enough, similarly moving adjacent to a broken stack makes it subject to desperation morale. Any positive combat result without the risk of an adverse consequence from a bad die roll is useful.

When you do need to attack you do have enough firepower to conduct up to three attacks in the same turn. Work out the odds before you attack, and assess the enemies counter measures. This doesn't have to mean a series of calculations several times a turn, with practice you'll just factor in whether the targets status and available firepower, and have a rough idea of the risk. Generally broken units, those who have final fired troops in open ground and crucially important targets are worth considering. Anything with an anti tank weapon, in a foxhole or fanatic isn't.

The most important consideration is how important the target is to completing your game objectives. A defending unit with enough firepower to destroy your attacking SPW might be worth the sacrifice if it allows other of your units freedom of action. Be ruthless with expendable units. Most of us have lost games with plenty of OB left and no CVP cap to explain why!

Firepower is important. At the very least an SPW will have an MG 34 or 42 with a respectable eight hex range and three firepower factors. The range is enough to allow you to stay away from enemy units and blaze away beyond the effective range of their weapons. At eight hexes range you can't be hurt by Russian conscripts, and are beyond the effective range of enemy light machine guns trying to destroy your vehicle.

Placed behind your own troops SPW can exploit range to assist with firepower

whilst being protected by an Infantry screen.

As an armed AFV SPW is an asset for VBM. Derided by some as sleaze the rules allow it. Chances are if there was a tank or even an armed half track outside I'd focus on it rather than more distant targets so the rule makes sense to me. As an open topped vehicle staying adjacent for too long is going to be fatal so follow up with other assaulting units.

The main weakness of SPW 250 units is their armour. Sometimes this isn't too important, if the enemy has few or no anti tank weapons. Certainly early war SPW are as heavily armoured as some light or even medium tanks and as well armed as a few of them. Most scenarios you'll be facing at least one machine gun, maybe an anti tank rifle both of which are a threat to your armour. If the enemy has anything bigger say 45mm gun armour offers limited protection. The best defence is line of sight. If you are being fired at though you need to make yourself the worst possible target, being in Motion helps, as does being small, you can also try for Smoke grenades. As a small moving target the basic To Hit is modified by +3. Factor in other modifiers such as the firing unit being buttoned up or restricted aim, TEM or any hindrances and just hitting you can be difficult.

At times you might want to use the SPW to draw fire. If it is protected by over watching heavier units an SPW can tease hidden guns or try to draw the fire of known or suspected units. At times you can be really cheeky and even drive into a hex containing an enemy unit or concealed stack just to draw fire or try to strip concealment. It's a form of reconnaissance that works best against dummy stacks.

If no CVP is in play for your units SPW are expendable in a good cause. Not to be thrown away for no reason, but a useful sacrifice to inflict casualties, gain territory information or time.

If enemy anti tank defences are strong some SPW weapons can be dismantled. From a basic SPW250/1 you get a crew and a LMG. The crew has Self Rally ability making it a valuable sub unit. You can also remove an HMG from a SPW251/sMG using its inherent passenger. The vehicle can still move and fight with its own HMG. A SPW250/7 mortar carrier can dismount its 81mm mortar, increasing rate of fire. Another option is spotted fire. Keeps the mortar out of line of sight, drops rate of fire and adversely effects accuracy. A nice idea is to place the spotter high up in a building, historically accurate and stylish. As you gain acquisition the accuracy penalties are negated.

The SPW250/11 isn't currently included in the game system; when it arrives dismantling it is valid.

SPW can transport some personnel and equipment. Passengers can fire without being subject to the mounted fire penalty. You also get any leadership benefits. Armoured assault helps troops cross ground under enemy observation. A crew exposed leader can provide the MF bonus to accompanying Infantry.

Even a destroyed SPW can be useful. If it's burning the smoke can screen your troops, if it's knocked out it still provides limited cover, plus there's slim chance of the crew surviving or some of the armament being scrounged.

In scenarios which prohibit inherent crews dismantling a little used sleaze is to try and immobilise a vehicle then destroy it's armament to allow the crew to bail. ESB is one way to go, look for terrain that needs a lot of MP, like moving up a hill onto an elevated road, or into a gully or stream then roll high. Alternatively look for bog terrain, mud, snow, the odd hedge. Totally sleazy but within the rules system. Once immobilised fire everything till you run out of ammunition or the gun is disabled. Not a tactic for everyone, I'd attempt it in a friendly game and I'd already lost, wouldn't think of doing it deliberately in a tournament.

As a tracked vehicle SPW can leave trails through minefields for other units to exploit. There is also a better way to find hidden mines than more valuable armour.

Other tactical play include using ATR from a SPW, also demolition charges, flamethrowers, molotov cocktails, maybe panzerfausts or a panzerschrek if the target value merits it. Smoke really is a good idea, it's only a simple die roll costs a single MP and shows your opponent you've read the rule book.

The important thing is to be creative. The SPW has good mobility, tolerable fire power and some protection against small arms fire.

"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.

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Bill Hensby, 4 Beechey Way, Cophorne, W. Sussex, RH10 3LT (10/08/2008)
John Barton, 32 The Vineries, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, RH15 9NF (18/06/1999)
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Paul Jones, 11 Irwin Drive, Handforth, Wiltshire, SK9 3JS (04/03/2009)
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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 - contact me if you need your user name and password to do so.

LASL

London'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@doubleone-online.net to arrange a game and ensure there are no last minute problems.

THE SPW250 HALF-TRACK

Continued from page 17

Conclusion

There is a controversy about the cost effectiveness of the design. A SPW251 cost about 22,000 Reich Marks to produce and equip, the SPW250 about 20,000. The overheads of driver, engine, radio and operator plus armament were identical, but the SPW250 could carry fewer passengers.

There's a lot to think about as the SPW251 was always in chronically short supply. I can't really resolve the controversy here; it's the sort of debate that was triggered when the BMP was introduced and later the Bradley variants, and troop carrying helicopters. I would say the SPW250 was tactically useful, more capable than wheeled transportation and generally well regarded by its crews. In their day panzer grenadiers considered themselves something special, a cut above line infantry and an important part of Blitzkrieg. The SPW250 gave them more mobility and protection than clinging to a tank would have done and provided them with a mobile home as well as a fighting platform.

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.

Ω 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 Phillippis, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email heross@vftt.co.uk. For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at www.asltourneys.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, or Brendan Clark by email at brendan.clark@virgin.net. Check out the web site at 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. 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 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@attel.net. Check out the web site at 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.

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 Phillippis, 9 Pier Road, Kilchoan, Acharacle, Argyll, Scotland, PH36 4LJ. Phone (01972) 510 350 (evenings only) or email if@vftt.co.uk. For up to date information check out the UK *ASL* tournament web site at www.asltourneys.co.uk.

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Double One 2011



Friday June 24th to Sunday June 26th

The London ASL tournament "Double One" returns in 2011, over the weekend of June 24th to 26th, with the same venue and continued support from its main sponsor, **Leisure Games** - www.leisuregames.com.

The Writtle College 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 9am on Friday 24th June for a couple of one day 8 man mini tourneys. Last man standing after 3 rounds wins! Early arrivals may instead wish 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 the main tournament. Participants that want to take part in this will be entered according to their "UK Crusaders" ASL ladder rating. Subject to demand, we will also be running a Starter Kit mini tournament.

Each mini tournament will have capacity for up to 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 December 2010 and will be sent to all those pre-registered at the time.

Mini-tournament sponsors last year included MMP, East Side Gamers and Le Franc Tireur. Like Leisure Games, they 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. Room opening times are 9am - 11pm Friday, 8am-11pm Saturday, and 8am-1pm Sunday (prize giving circa 2pm)

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). Contact the organisers for a booking form and T&Cs, or Jenny Phillips at the college (phone +44 (0) 1245 424200 ext 25645 or e-mail jenny.phillips@writtle.ac.uk).

The college has a licensed bar which will be open during the weekend. 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 30th April 2011, 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 or contact the organisers as follows:
Derek Cox, 25 Cramphorn Walk, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1 2RD, United Kingdom. derek.cox@dsl.pipex.com
Brendan Clark brendan.clark@virgin.net

We look forward to welcoming you to Double One in 2011!

