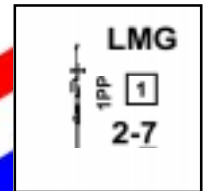
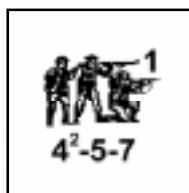
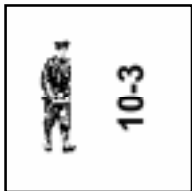


VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

Vol '95
UK £4.00
US \$8.00



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EMOTICONS

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

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

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

PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of *View From The Trenches*. It's a little bit later than planned, but I wanted to be able to confirm the details about this year's INTENSIVE FIRE convention. Which you can find by checking out the back page.

I hope you like the un-mounted counters for unarmed German paratroopers, with art courtesy of Klaus Fischer, resident Critical Hit artist. I realise a lot of you dislike un-mounted counters, but *VFTT* doesn't have the resources to produce counters as good as *Time on Target*. Maybe one day though. In the mean time, I hope you find them useful - I know I have in a PBEM game of *Cemetery Hill!* And because no game of *ASL* is complete without them, I have added some bonus 'Ice Hole' counters :-)

With the release of *VFTT'95*, which gathers issues 1-6 into a one-off special, I have received a note from one reader asking if I had considered doing this every year, making an annual out of each year's material. To be honest, it hadn't occurred to me, I just did it in this case to make those issues available to new readers. The letter did make me think though, especially as some of us have discussed the idea of producing a British scenario pack - why not produce an annual *VFTT* special, featuring perhaps some reprints, some new stuff, and a batch of scenarios? What does everyone else think about this?

The latest edition of Avalon Hill's price list (enclosed with *Pegasus Bridge*) does not list *Streets of Fire*, the first *DASL* module. I don't have either *DASL* module yet, but I've really enjoyed the scenarios I've played at INTENSIVE FIRE '96 and BERSERK (although the late night drinking that accompanied them probably contributed to the fun!), so it might be time to start hunting down a copy, before it become as rare as the *ASL Annual '90*.

Well, until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

COVER: The British at war. A series of images from *ASL*, including a Bren Gunner by Klaus Fischer (bottom left).

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is the bi-monthly British *ASL* journal. As of 1st January 1998 it costs £2.00 per issue (overseas £3.00), with a year's subscription costing £10.00 (overseas £15.00). Payment should be in pounds sterling, with cheques made out to PETE PHILLIPPS.

Issue 17 will be out early in January 1998.

Back issue prices are:
VFTT 7 - 9 £1.00 (overseas £2.00)
VFTT10 - 13 £1.50 (overseas £2.50)
VFTT14/15 £3.00 (overseas £4.00)
VFTT16 £2.00 (overseas £3.00)

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.

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THE CRUSADERS

The British *ASL* Players' Association

Spearheading the advance of *ASL* in the UK

THE CRUSADERS aims to promote the playing of *Advanced Squad Leader* and all of its modules and variants in the UK. The Association is formed of members from the wargaming community of the UK (although overseas players are welcome, and should get in touch if they are interested).

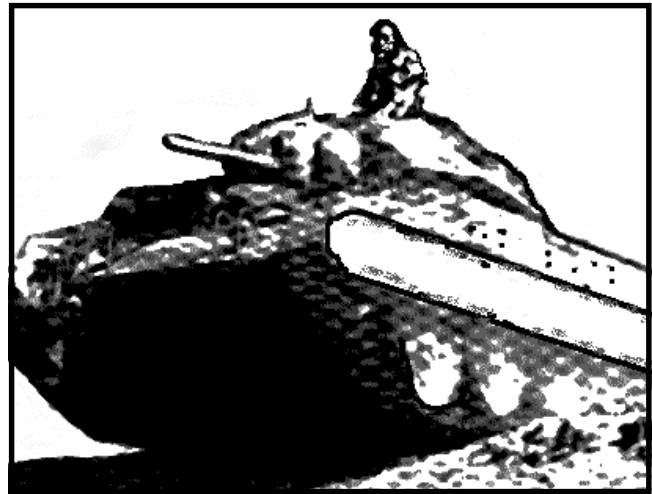
Members of the Association pay an annual membership fee, for which they get:

1. Free entrance to INTENSIVE FIRE, the UK's premier *ASL* convention.

2. An annual subscription to *View From The Trenches*, the UK *ASL* magazine containing all the latest news and views of the *ASL* hobby from around the world, as well as CRUSADERS report in every issue.

3. Membership of a British-based AREA Rating System. Submit your results and see your rating grow or fall dependant on your success. For every set of game results that you submit you will get a reply with your new player rating. The rating system used is the same as that used by the AREA system in the USA enabling you to compare yourself directly with the real grognards of the hobby over in the States (note that the AREA rating system is not mandatory for games between Association members. It is there purely to add to your enjoyment of the game and if "increasing your points score" is not for you then you do not have to participate in this system).

4. Free postage on all third party *ASL* products brought from the Association.



5. A forum in which all players can air their opinions on the state of the hobby and life in general!!!

If you think there are other things we can offer, please let us know, and we'll see what we can do!

The Crusaders also aims to raise the visibility of *ASL* within the general wargaming community. We want *ASL* players to be present and counted at all of the major wargaming conventions that occur within the UK so we can encourage new and younger players to the wargaming party. This is your chance to do something to help - after all, we all need opponents!

To join THE CRUSADERS just drop a note, with a cheque/money order for £20.00 (£6.00 if under the age of 16 yrs) made payable to "INTENSIVE FIRE" to Neil Stevens, 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8AE.

Please note that enlisting in THE CRUSADERS is not mandatory for attending INTENSIVE FIRE or for receiving *View From The Trenches*.

All those in favour?



THE CRUSADERS PRODUCT PRICES

The following price list is effective from 1st May 1997.

For the latest on stock availability telephone The Crusaders on (01258) 459851, or by email at NeilSStevens@compuserve.com.

<i>Time On Target #1</i>	£8.00
<i>Time On Target #2</i>	£14.00
<i>Time On Target #3</i>	£17.60
<i>WCW Colour Scenario Pack</i>	£8.00
<i>Critical Hit #1</i>	£6.80

<i>Critical Hit #2</i>	£8.00
<i>Critical Hit #3</i>	£8.00
<i>Critical Hit #4</i>	£8.00
<i>Critical Hit #3-1</i>	£11.00
<i>Critical Hit Xmas Special</i>	£13.60
<i>SS Schwere 102</i>	£5.60
<i>Jatkosota</i>	£10.20
<i>Soldiers of the Negus (CH Edition)</i>	£13.80
<i>Platoon Leader</i>	£8.00
<i>Platoon Leader (2nd edition)</i>	T.B.A.
<i>Cemetery Hill</i>	£7.25
<i>Armored Stand (PL2.0)</i>	£ 8.00
<i>Primisole Bridge (PL2.0)</i>	T.B.A.
<i>Aussie '96 Scenario Pack</i>	£8.00
<i>Rout Pack I</i>	£6.80
<i>Rout Pack II</i>	£8.00
<i>OAF Pack I</i>	£8.00

<i>Leathernecks</i>	£8.00
<i>Gembloux: The Feint</i>	£14.40
<i>Defeating Enemy Armor</i>	£7.20
<i>Schwerpunkt</i>	£8.00
<i>Baraque de Fraiture</i>	£12.75
<i>God Save The King</i>	£16.00
<i>King Of The Hill</i>	£16.00
<i>ASL News #28</i>	£8.00
<i>ASL News #29</i>	£8.00

All orders should have 10% added for postage and packing [EXC: Crusaders are exempt P&P charges] and be sent to Neil Stevens, The Crusaders, 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8AE.

DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE GERMANS USED A BEWILDERING VARIETY OF VEHICLES. EXPAND YOUR AVAILABLE ORDER OF BATTLE...

Kinetic Energy Productions presents:



KVAM, NORWAY, 25 APRIL 1940: In the first days of Operation Weseruebung (the German invasion of Norway), the Germans enjoyed considerable success. Striking up the central valley towards the beachheads at Trondheim and Narvik, the German forces - using tanks to excellent effect in spite of the seemingly tank-hostile terrain - brushed aside the main Norwegian and British units deployed to conduct a delaying action. Now a fresh British force arrives to slow the German advance by force of will alone - and the help of several anti-tank guns...

KHOLOVDEVCHIYA, RUSSIA, 14 AUGUST 1943: On the southern rim of the Kursk salient, the Russians launched a massive hammer blow on the German units maintaining that line in early August of 1943. The elite Grossdeutschland Division is immediately brought forward and launches a series of counterattacks on the Russian breakthrough. On this day, their assignment is the elimination of the threat created by a Russian bridgehead. The Grossdeutschland Division calls upon its attached assault/demolition company - Panzer Kompanie (Funklenk) 311 - to handle the job using its radio-controlled B IV demolition vehicles...

BOSANKI PETROVAC, YUGOSLAVIA, 7 FEBRUARY 1943: In their first action as a combat division, the troops of the SS-Freiwilligen Division 7 (Prinz Eugen) mount a sweep of a sparsely-populated area deep in the heart of Tito territory in Yugoslavia. Battling the bitter cold as well as the partisans, the green Prinz Eugen troops have a frustrating time attempting to tie down the enemy in a truly decisive battle. On this day, however, the partisans have been caught preparing to evacuate a village, and the SS troops are able to deploy a flame-throwing tank...

PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 8 MAY 1945: On the day the war ends in Europe, the fighting in the city of Prague is just approaching a crescendo. German units - still in control of the city - are battling the local Czech partisans who started the Prague Uprising several days previously. The partisans, desperate for help in any form, invite the Russian Liberation Army to fight the Germans for them, in return for asylum once the war ends. Unfortunately for the Russians under General Vlasov, the communist partisans have no intention of allowing Russian traitors asylum, and brutal three-way fighting erupts throughout the city.

This is the third issue of the *Advanced Squad Leader* newsletter *Time On Target*, which conducts a study on a group of oft-forgotten German vehicles from the Second World War - vehicles that have been left out of the standard *ASL* countermix - until now! Experience scenarios using vehicles previously unavailable - or that have been depicted by some half-baked method that is historically inaccurate or an eyesore. No Longer! Add these vehicles to your Order of Battle and expand your playing horizons now!

Issue #3 of *Time On Target* comes with a sheet of 64 full-color mounted and die-cut counters depicting over a dozen new vehicle types, as well as complete historical notes and rules for each vehicle. Also included are thirteen scenarios, each printed in two color on high-quality card stock, depicting historically accurate actions highlighting these and other rarely-used vehicles. The newsletter contains articles on the scenarios, an interview with noted German armor author Tom Jentz, a bibliography, and other *ASL*-related items.

All items in *Time On Target* #3 are fully compatible with Avalon Hill's *Advanced Squad Leader* Game System.

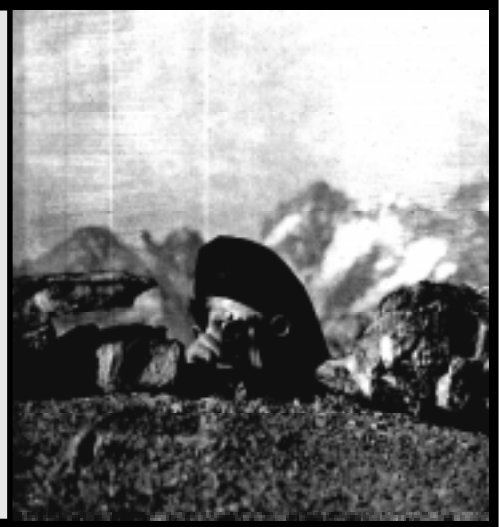
This is not a complete game. Ownership of the *Advanced Squad Leader* Rule Book (including Chapters A-H, J, O, and P), *Beyond Valor*, *Yanks*, *West of Alamein*, *Partisan*, *Code of Bushido*, *Croix de Guerre*, *Red Barricades*, *Kampfgruppe Peiper I and II*, and *Time On Target* Issue #2 (as well as boards 5, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 31, 33, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 42) is required to play the scenarios included in *Time On Target* Issue #3.

Time On Target #3 is available from Kinetic Energy Productions at a cost of \$22.00 (plus \$3.00 Shipping and Handling for every two copies ordered [FRU]), and may be ordered by sending a check or money order in U.S. funds to Kinetic Energy Productions, P.O. Box 291580, Hollywood, CA 90029. It is also available from The Crusaders at a cost of £17.60 (plus 10% postage), and may be ordered by sending a check or money order in U.K. funds (made payable to INTENSIVE FIRE) to The Crusaders, 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8AE.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Number 1

Mar 95



PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to View From The Trenches, the first of what is hoped to be a (semi-)regular British ASL fanzine. Although ASL 'zines seem to come and go, none has come from Britain, and offered a British view on ASL. Until now.

So, what can you expect to find in View From The Trenches? Well, news, reviews, tactics, scenario hints, stories, in fact anything to do with ASL. Most importantly, I want to give us British ASL players a chance to share our views, and allow us to keep into touch with each other.

Let's get the British ASL scene going (and keep it alive and kicking).

The most important thing I personally would like is to see lots of stuff on general tactics and play. Too many people seem to enjoy coming up with 'perfect plan' scenario articles, which, while interesting, don't tend to be of much help when you are viewing a scenario for the first time. And, in common with most such articles, they tend only to concentrate on the start of the scenario, since the number of variables that can affect the course of a game, particularly ASL, make it difficult to predict what the mid and late game situations might be. So, what I want to do is to offer more of a look at tactics in general, much like the 'SL Clinic' use to do in 'The General'.

Scenarios are the lifeblood of any open-

ended system like ASL. So, I'm on the lookout for lots of these. Tested or not. I realise that a lot of players may not have time to give their own scenarios much playtesting, but that many players want to see new scenarios. So, feel free to submit any scenario you design. All I ask is that you include a brief scenario design notes covering any aspects of your scenario.

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

Anyway, 'til next time, roll low and prosper, as Spock might say.

Pete Phillipps

INSIDE

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COMMANDER'S NOTEBOOK

The aim of 'Commander's Notebook' is to provide brief notes on the play of ASL. These can be tactical hints, scenario notes, or even a look at a particular aspect of the system, such as armour, air support, or even seaborne assault. This time, a look at a few of the more popular infantry scenarios.

As an introduction to 'Commander's Notebook', I've taken a look at a few of the infantry scenarios the system offers, and provided a few statistics about them. They take the form of the initial impressions of the battalion commander as he approaches the situation, and his subsequent after action thoughts. As such, they are short, sharp, and to the point.

ASL-1 - FIGHTING WITH-DRAWAL

Played twice (Finns 0 - 2 Soviets), taking 4-5 hours to play. Based on play so far it seems pro-Soviet, as the Finns lack the time to break through the Soviet delaying action so they can exit the board.

The Soviets must delay the Finns, which means causing breaks. Outnumbered in firepower, they should rely on attacks from out of sight positions as the Finns advance. The initial defense is a concealed screen along hexrow AA, a second line along hexrow X (with concealed LMG in V4) and HIP squads in H9 and K4 (2nd Level). In GT1 move the MMG to W1 to cover hexrow W. The Soviets must try to keep the Finns north of hexrow O-Q until GT4.

The Finns must blast the Soviets out of their way, advancing fast. As they must use GT1 to kill the Soviet front-line they effectively have 6 GT to move, which means a rate of about 4 hexrows per GT. If they exit, they must also leave some forces covering south edge to prevent Soviets exiting. A broad advance doesn't allow the Finns to concentrate their FP, so a flank advance appears best. Tried in the north, but is too easy for the Soviets to defend, so might be worth trying the south.

The Soviet plan works, but costs squads. Lose 1-2 squads in rearguard each turn as the others pull back a little. Finns

haven't advanced fast enough in early GT and by GT4 have been struggling.

RB6 - TURNED AWAY

Played three times (Germans 0 - 3 Soviets), taking about 3.5-4 hours to play. Despite the lack of German wins, seems balanced as most games have been very tight.

So far, the basic Soviet set-up has seen a fortified DD41 used as HQ twice, and a fortified FF37 once, with the remaining units in a shield along the FF37-BB40-AA44 axis. The basic tactic is to force the Germans to waste valuable time breaking through, while also inflicting breaks and (hopefully) kills to gradually reduce their overall firepower.

The Germans should deploy into two equal assault groups, one in the north the other in the south. The basic plan is to develop three firebases around AA40, AA42 and AA45. The tactic is to seize the Soviet flanks and use firepower from there to reduce DD41. While this goes on a lone squad moves along the northern gully to FF37 in case this is the Soviet HQ - should EE45 be the HQ it can easily be reached from the south using the rubble to cover the approach.

GEN-T1 - GAVIN TAKE

Played five times (German 3 - 2 US), taking 2-3 hours to play. Seems to be fairly well balanced, as most games have gone to the last turn.

The Germans should set up with the aim of controlling the northern parts of rows I and Y by having a squad and MMG on the 1st Level of 3R3 and 3S3. The other forces should be spread around village, with the aim of sending a LMG armed squad up onto hill 522 (3W6) to deter US advance onto the hill. The plan is to gradually fallback to the area 3K10-3O8-3R8-3I10, and cover 3Q10 so shots may be taken against US forces trying to exit.

The US should enter Gavin and 3 squads along the northern edge to bring fire onto 3S3 and 3U3. Once these Germans are broken/eliminated, Gavin-Maloney push through the village and on to 3Q10. Ostberg Force comes over the hills and into the woods, trying to reach 3Q10 from the rear. It

might be worth trying to send Ostberg Force into 3M2 and then onto village, combining with Gavin to sweep thru the village.

The German plan works well, holding up the US. The US tactic entails destroying main the German forces. The superior US leadership allows the rapid rally of broken units, allowing them to keep going.

GEN-T14 - GAMBIT

Played once (Germans 1 - 0 New Zealanders), taking about 5-6 hours to play. A tense race that needs aggressive New Zealander play.

The New Zealanders should deploy the onboard platoon on one map edge and enter the other troops on the opposite edge, thus forcing the Germans to spread their forces out. The entering units should basically plan on breaking thru on their edge and running for the nearest exit. Use a couple of LMG-armed HS to interdict German units trying to move across. Remember the ATR makes a good LMG as there are no vehicles around. The mortars are best used to provide Smoke to cover movement across Open Ground.

The New Zealanders have 28 VP worth of troops. If they lose at least 9 VP of these they cannot win. Since the onboard platoon will be worth about 5 VP (2 squads and an 8-0) the Germans should concentrate against it so as to destroy it in the first two GT. The other units should be spread out so as to quickly respond to the New Zealander advance. Try to delay the New Zealanders until the onboard platoon is destroyed, then fall back towards their exit target.

GEN-T16 - STRAYER'S STRAYS

Played three times (Germans 3 - 0 US), taking 2-3 hours to play. Much depends on the state of the US forces at the end of US GT1. Seems to slightly favour the Germans though.

The Germans must delay the Americans, but initially doesn't know where they'll enter from. The long front makes it impractical to cover it all (he who defends everything defends nothing), so concentrating in the centre and lightly covering the flanks is the best idea. Deploy some HS to help cover the

Continued on page 4

DEFENSIVE PLANNING

A brief look at a number of factors to consider when planning and setting up a defensive position.

Whenever you are planning a defense, there are several things to bear in mind. First and foremost, always remember to defend the ground you must hold to win. Although this can be done directly, by placing troops in the area, it is more often done by defending the surrounding area and the approaches.

Any defense needs depth, so it can absorb the enemy attack and slow down its momentum. A "thin red line" can be easily breached. Although the easiest way to provide depth is to have troops spread out in ever-widening defensive circles, all too often a lack of troops prevents such depth. In these cases, each position should be able to provide mutual support to neighbouring positions. Ideally, each position should be able to bring fire to bear on its neighbours and the approaches to them. Without mutual support, it is all too easy for the enemy to overwhelm a single position and surge through the gap.

Also be aware of situations where a defensive position can be attacked from more than one direction, and allow for such situations when setting up. Such situations are common at night, when lines can easily be penetrated by a cautious attacker, and defensive positions must be prepared to face an attack from any direction.

Defensive positions should be concealed where possible. Ideally, key positions and sites should be set up HIP if possible. Many scenarios allow a Scenario Defender to set up one or two squads HIP, and one potential use for these units is to set them up inside your defensive perimeter in positions which cover the key ground. These units can then ambush any advancing enemy units, possibly catching under FFNAM and/or FFMO. Where HIP is not available, try to set up in positions out of sight of the enemy, so that Concealment may be gained.

Ω

NON-COM - MUNICATION

Non-com: a non-commissioned officer (EG a Squad Leader).
Communication: to talk, exchange ideas and information.

Well that's what this column is all about.

Or at least, it will be once I get some letters. Hopefully, this column will allow us to exchange ideas on playing ASL. I've written some of mine in this issue, so let me know what you think about them.

Ω

COMMANDER'S NOTEBOOK

Continued from page 3

flanks. Deploy a pair of Conscript HS and a pair of 2nd Line squads on each flank, and everything else in the centre. Have the 1st Line and the leaders around the chateau to act as a reaction force. Alternatively, lightly hold the centre and one flank and concentrate on the other (but still keep the 1st Line units around the chateau). Also, try varying the exact units deployed so the set up doesn't become predictable.

The Americans have the initiative but must decide where to enter from. As the Germans will be spread out to cover all possible entry options, entering in one area allows a local concentration of force. The terrain to the west is mostly Open Ground and Grain, which makes crossing it dangerous. The east is mostly Orchards, which offer plenty of LOS Hindrances. The centre has the chateau, which is an obvious German firebase and central point. The east looks to offer the best chance of making good progress, but wait until seeing the German deployment before making a choice.

GEN-ASL-C - THE STREETS OF STALINGRAD

Played twice (Germans 0 - 1 Soviet, 1 draw), taking about 8.5-9 hours to play. This scenario is very balanced, with the majority of games being draws.

Set up is pretty much pre-determined.

The Soviets should put the 10-2 leader and 3 6-2-8s in 1G4, two killer stacks in 1X3 and 1X4, and a randomly deployed concealed shield in the Factory frontline (this prevents a predictable set-up). It is worth taking a Commissar for the rally benefits. The reinforcements should mass in the north, as this offers the most direct route to the Factory. Because of this, KG Stahler should be concentrated in 1U2, with light concealed forces (mostly dummies) to the south. The Germans should concentrate the engineers in 1AA4, and KG Tienham in 1Z7.

The Germans need to break the Factory shield and move the engineers in to DC and FT the main Soviet stacks. Ample use of SMOKE is required to cover the engineers as they do this. The other Germans, particularly KG Stahler must simply hold out as long as possible, as the Soviet attempt to break and overrun 1F5, 1K5 and 1U2. Those Soviets trying to reach the Factory should try to enter from the north. Moving in from the south requires them to cross too much ground (much of it Open as well) to reach the Factory. Too, with no attack on building 1U2, it can dominate the ground they have to cross. They should also consider the possibility of making a Human Wave assault, or using Sewer Movement to enter the Factory. However it is tried, expect lots of casualties.

Ω

FINAL FIRE

That's all for this issue. Hope you enjoyed it. Feel free to write and tell me what you think.

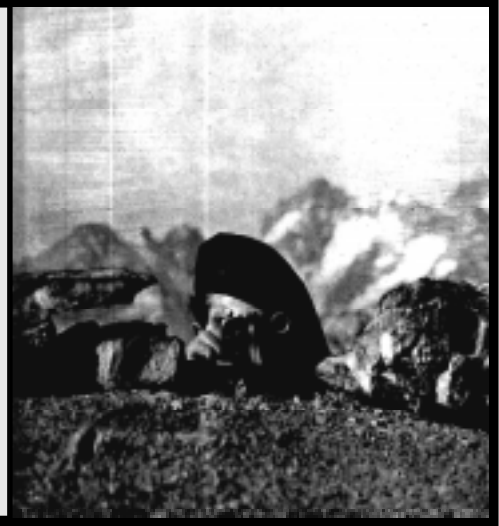
Whether there will be a second issue, and what it might contain, depends on you, the readers. VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is a chance for us ASL players to talk to each other, but if we don't talk, it will fail. It's future is in your hands.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is an independant British ASL newsletter. It is available free on request (although an SAE is much appreciated). All correspondence should be sent to Pete Phillipps, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, LE5 0FQ.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Number 2

May 95



PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the second issue of View From The Trenches, the UK ASL players 'zine. Despite the lack of response to the first issue, we're back, bigger (a lie) and better (a hope) than before.

My name is Pete Phillipps, and I'm the editor, writer, publisher, of this little thing. I'm a 27 year old long haired heavy metal fan, who's been involved in gaming for some 17 years now. I use to belong to a small group of friends who played games (mostly old SPI stuff, SL, or 3R) on a regular basis, but with everyone moving away, gaming opportunities in the past few years have been limited to say the least. Nowadays, my gaming is limited to occasional games of ASL, and even then I only play stuff that uses Chapters A-D (although I've got all the ASL stuff apart from the Deluxe modules and a couple of the scenarios from The General).

So why am I doing a 'zine for a game that I have limited experience with, and rarely play on a regular basis? Because, despite all that I enjoy playing ASL and love the system. What other game allows you to fight tactical combat anywhere in the world, with such a vast array of different forces? I've no doubt there are many in a similar situation, and doing this 'zine allows everyone to share our enjoyment of ASL.

The future for ASL support from Avalon Hill looks bleak to be honest, judging

by the problems they seem to have in getting the '94 annual, KGP II, and the minor allies stuff out. If Avalon Hill carry on like this, the only support for the game will be from the amateur press. So I'd like to repeat my request for contributions, letters, anything you'd like to say about ASL. I don't mind doing this 'zine but without any outside contributions, it'll feel like I'm just doing it for myself.

Some of you are no doubt wondering why you get this 'zine. Basically you either get it because you replied to my advert in The General for ASL opponents, or you've had a similar ad in The General recently.

Like a number of ASL fans I've considered playing the game by mail (PBM), and I've got a copy of a PBM system from an American ASL gamer. It looks playable, and I'm due to start a trial game soon, so I'll let you know how it goes. If anyone wants a copy, I can send you a copy, although I might have to charge for photocopying.

'Til next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

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COMMANDER'S NOTEBOOK

The aim of 'Commander's Notebook' is to provide brief notes on the play of ASL. These can be tactical hints, scenario notes, or even a look at a particular aspect of the system, such as armour, air support, or even seaborne assault.

Before you start playing any ASL scenario, you need to come up with a plan of action if you want to win. But to come up with a reasonable plan, you need to take into account all the factors which might influence the scenario. Whether you have to attack or defend these factors are the same; the aim, the forces involved, and the terrain.

THE AIM

In any ASL scenario the aim is determined by the victory conditions. Whether you have to capture or destroy an objective, hold a feature, withdraw a portion of your forces, or simply kill a large portion of the enemy force, you must always bear them in mind.

THE FORCES

Knowing your aim you can now consider the forces you have, and those of the enemy. Look at firepower, mobility, morale. Can one or both sides fight at long range, or is close combat fighting preferred? Does either side have the mobility to move rapidly from one position to another? What special weapons (FT, DC, OBA, armour) are available to give one side an advantage? How can you minimise the advantages these give the enemy?

THE TERRAIN

At the same time it is also important to consider the scenario terrain. It is important to find the ground of tactical importance (the piece of ground which, if held, makes it difficult for the enemy to hold the surrounding area), the approaches to it, and the cover available from enemy LOS and fire (not necessarily the same thing). There may be several such areas spread across the board, particularly in a large action.

Any attacker will often have to take this ground, even if it is not a target, simply

because the defender controls the approaches while he holds it.

As an attacker, you must also consider the placement of fortifications such as WIRE or Minefields, which are often sited to channel an attacker into a chosen killing ground.

Do not forget to take into account the scenario length. As a defender it is simply a matter of holding out until the end of the scenario, but as an attacker you must take into account the time it will take to approach the objective as well as the time to take it. Scenario length will probably affect your choice of approach to the objective.

CONCLUSION

Having considered all these factors, you are now in a position to make an outline plan. Select your starting point(s), approach(es), and the best location(s) to provide any necessary covering fire. Having done all this, you put the plan to the test. If your plan is good you might win. If not, at least you live to learn and (re)fight it another day. Real soldiers do not have that luxury.

Ω

FINAL FIRE

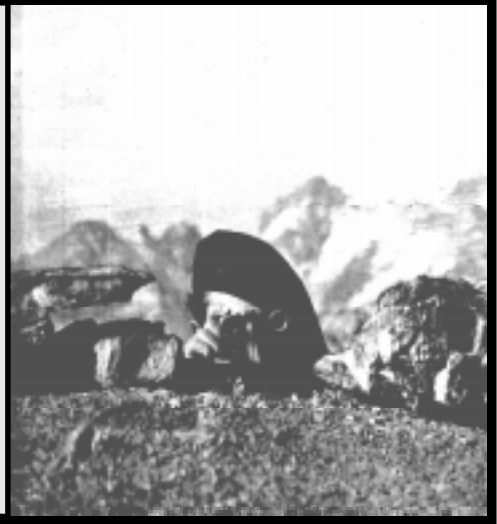
Well that's all this time 'round. The next issue will hopefully be sent out in early July. I hope I hear from you all before then. Remember, VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is a chance for us ASL players to talk to each other, but if we don't talk, it will fail. It's future is in your hands.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is an independant British ASL newsletter. It is available free on request (although an SAE is much appreciated). All correspondence should be sent to Pete Phillipps, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, LE5 0FQ.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Number 3

Jul 95



PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the third issue of *View From The Trenches*. For those of you who are getting this 'zine for the first time, *View From The Trenches* aims to give us British ASL players a chance to talk to each other about the game, so I expect to be hearing from you.

Some of you have already begun to respond. Nothing special, but it's an encouraging start. From the letters I've been getting, my impression of the average ASL player (at least in this country) is that he (I've not heard of any she's) is 25-35 and has been gaming for a number of years. The majority of ASL product is owned, even though everyone seems to consider themselves a beginner as far as ASL is concerned, with few having gone past Chapters A-D. Lack of opponents and lack of time seem to be the two main causes of the lack of playing experience for most people. Hopefully the effects of the former will be reduced soon with the arrival of the solitaire system, although however you play ASL it still requires a major commitment in time and effort.

Humble pie time. After my criticizing of Avalon Hill last time, it looks like ASL's future isn't so bleak after all. More HASL modules, new mapboards, even a solitaire system. No news on the minors though, but I

guess they'll see daylight one day.

View From The Trenches is produced on a 486SX-25 PC using PageMaker V5.0 and printed out on a 24 pin dot matrix printer before being photocopied. I don't have any training in the use of DTP or graphic design, just a healthy dose of enthusiasm, and work on a "does it look OK" principle. From what some of you have been saying, I seem to be doing something right.

I took advantage of getting a job at the end of June to purchase a modem and got connected to CompuServe, allowing me to get on-line. Although I've yet to check out the Internet, there does appear to be quite a large amount of on-line ASL activity, including a number of Play By Electronic Mail (PBEM) games of various ASL scenarios. Hopefully I'll be able to bring a full report of ASL on-line in the next issue.

So until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

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ASL ANNUAL '95 (WINTER)

Over-sized, over-priced, and over here. Yes, at long bleeding last, the new ASL annual is here. Over-sized? Yes, its 96 pages and has a wraparound card cover with 9 Deluxe ASL overlays. Over-priced? Well, yes, but the two '93 annuals each cost £7.95 for 48 pages, so in that respect £17.95 doesn't seem so bad.

And, at the end of the day, its the contents that determine whether its really worth it. So, what's inside? Well, a brief flick through reveals an article on Japanese airborne forces, a campaign game leader system, a look at the Normandy campaign, a discussion on routing, and finally a Series Replay of Festung St Edouard. Plus some 24 scenarios covering everything from the Spanish Civil War to a Soviet clash with Ukrainian nationalists in 1946.

Production wise, the annual is a joy to behold. Anyone who's seen recent issues of *The General* will be familiar with the improvements made by Avalon Hill recently. Extensive use is made of colour for maps, article sub-headings, and sidebars/tables. We are also treated to numerous photographs. The centre pages also feature a consolidated listing of all ASL errata and Q&A issued in previous annuals and issues of *The General*.

Anyone who has read Steven C. Swann's previous *Reference Notes For ASL* articles will know what to expect from "Airborne Samurai", in which Steve takes a look at Japanese paratroopers. The limited activities of these forces mean that the article is somewhat brief, but it is none-the-less informative and of much use for potential DYO scenarios. A couple of scenarios featuring Japanese paratroopers also accompany the article.

Reading an *Annual Crossfire* article always reminds me of a military exercise where they talk their way through a battle. This time Mark Nixon and Robert Banozic cover "Defeat In Java". It's worth reading just for the way the two argue and counter-argue,

although having never played "Defeat In Java" I can't say how accurate their observations are.

The campaign game leaders variant is basically an update of the system that was originally introduced in *Squad Leader*. Although it has been expanded to cover all the nationalities in ASL it does not cover armour leaders (which were introduced in *Cross of Iron*). I rarely used campaign leaders in *Squad Leader* and never thought of using them in ASL, so it's not of much use for me. None-the-less it's a well written piece.

Reading the Normandy articles show how late the annual is, as they are a celebration of the 1994 50th anniversary celebrations. But despite being a year late, they still make an interesting read. The primary article looks at the Normandy campaign and how it is reflected in the various scenarios. Some of these are GI and Rogue updates contained in the annual, and the second article looks at how they were updated and suggests various tactics for their play.

Most of the 24 scenarios in the annual have been seen before, in one form or another. Apart from the three updated Normandy scenarios, there are also a large number of scenarios taken from some of the ASL 'zines such as *Rout Report*, *Tactiques*, and *ASL News*. All look very good, and are not too rules intensive (although there is a D-Day beach assault and a night para-drop, and a couple of scenarios which feature snow).

The Gentle Art Of Routing deals with an all too common ASL occurrence. Following a review of the basic principles of routing, it offers advice on how to minimise effects of being Broken. Knowing this also allows you to take steps to maximise the effects on your opponent's units.

A series replay of Festung St. Edouard, one of the *Kampfgruppe Peiper* scenarios, brings the annual to a close. There's little you can say about a replay, but the use of full colour on the accompanying maps shows how much of an impression play of ASL can make when in full flow.

So, it is worth it? I'd have to say yes. Unlike the 93 annuals, this one has a lot of stuff that you'll keep going back to, even if just to read through. Too, much of it is

playable even by a relative beginner to the system. So, if this is what we can expect in the future, let's hope they can get the promised '95 (Fall) annual out this year.

Ω



INTENSIVE FIRE '95

This is an ASL convention being held at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, near Swindon, from 3-5 November. It will cater for both friendly and competitive play. Entry will be about £5 for the weekend.

Accommodation will be available for £35 per night full board (in the Officer's Mess) or £15 per night for room only. As the event is being held on military property advance booking will be essential.

Anyone attending on the Friday will be able to visit the displays of small arms and AFVs which are not normally open to the public. Among the displays are a King Tiger and a fully working T34/85.

The initial reaction has been described as great, with people from as far away as America, Sweden, Portugal and Germany expressing an interest in attending. These include Phillipe Leonard, designer of *Kampfgruppe Peiper* and editor of *ASL News*, although this is subject to confirmation.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Neil Stevens (18 Bower Green, Longcot, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7TU. CIS 100333,3652) for more details.

Ω

INCOMING

According to Avalon Hill, "ASL is alive and well!". Based on their talk of new products, this could be more than just hype, although any talk of availability should be taken with a pinch of salt.

Of most interest is probably *Solitaire ASL*. This looks very similar to an idea I had for solo ASL, in that it features a series of missions in which the terrain and opposition are randomly determined (a bit like in *Ambush!*, from what I've seen of that game). It also features a campaign system, so that you can take a company through the entire war. It looks good, and will no doubt be very popular. My only concern is that the vast amount of dr/DR it requires will make it slow to play. But we'll see. It's already out in the States and should be available here within 4-6 weeks.

Three HASL modules are also in the works. *Kampfgruppe Peiper II* is the follow-up to *Kampfgruppe Peiper*, and covers the LaGleize and Cheneux area. *The Third Bridge* is a HASL developed by the American *The Rout Report* 'zine and is based around the struggle at Arnhem. *Mud and Blood* is a Pacific HASL developed by Steve Swann (he of the *Reference Notes for ASL* series of articles) and is based around the 7th Australian Division at Gona.

Two new mapboards, 42 (woods, with a small village and orchard) and 43 (farmland, with a villa and brush), are out now. Avalon Hill plan to release a set of scenarios which use these boards, and the set will also include the boards. Whether the scenarios will also be available on their own is not clear though, so I wouldn't rush out to buy them yet.

Beyond Squad Leader, the computer game based on *Squad Leader*, will be available for both PC (running under Windows) and Mac, but only on CD-ROM. No release date has been determined, and based on Avalon Hill's record with computer games (EG *PC Third Reich*), I wouldn't expect to see this until 1996 (at least).

Ω

NON-COM - MUNICATION

Non-com: a non-commissioned officer (EG a Squad Leader).
Communication: to talk, exchange ideas and information.

GARY HEADLAND, HULL

It's great that a British ASL newsletter is on the scene seeing as our American friends at Avalon Hill appear to be in a right mess at the moment.

Have you heard any rumours from American gamers RE ASL, particularly solitaire systems?

Avalon Hill seem to have sorted themselves out a bit, and promise us a fair bit of ASL material in the coming months. See this issue's Incoming article for more details.

NICK BROWN, LEICESTER

Can you tell me anything about a SL scenario that has been shown in various *The General* back issue adverts from volumes 21 to 28? It is called "Death's Head At Lusho" and appears to feature SL Russians vs. GI Germans.

I'm afraid I can't help you there Nick. The advert first appears in volume 21 number 4, and I have most of the issues from that era, but it's not in any of them. If anyone can help identify this scenario, let me know and I'll pass the information on.

WILLIAM ROBERTS, WIMBORNE

Thanks for sending me a copy of *View From The Trenches*. I applaud your efforts to produce your magazine but think it is a tall order to match the ASL fanzines such as *ASL News*, *Critical Hit*, *Time On Target*, etc, which are professional periodicals and of extremely high quality. Take a look at the *Time On Target* Bulge scenarios - absolutely brilliant!

What is needed is an ASL newsletter to keep all players in touch with the scene and to promote FTF play by bringing players together in the UK.

Glad you like the 'zine William. For the moment at least the intention is indeed to

unite the ASL UK scene. Perhaps in the future I'll be able to compete with the quality of the major ASL 'zines. On the other hand, some of them come out somewhat irregularly, which is something I'm trying to avoid with View From The Trenches.

NEIL STEVENS, FARINGDON

Thank you very much for sending me issue #2 of *View From The Trenches*. I was very interested to see you are trying to get a British ASL newsletter off the ground. Out of small acorns...

"Out of small acorns..." indeed. From an initial circulation barely into double figures, I've now got over 50 people receiving the 'zine. I soon hope to see if I can get any mail order shops will send out a flyer with every ASL-related product.

ANDY DAGLISH, CHEADLE

Thank you for *View From The Trenches*. A British ASL magazine has been tried before, or at least thought of, though the last attempt folded when one went to Australia. I got caught by ASLUG, and whereas they cashed the cheque, nothing ever appeared.

Until View From The Trenches becomes established, I don't see the point in charging. At least if the 'zine folded I wouldn't owe anyone anything.

Ω

FINAL FIRE

That's all for this issue. Hope you enjoyed it. Feel free to write and tell me what you think, or even contribute.

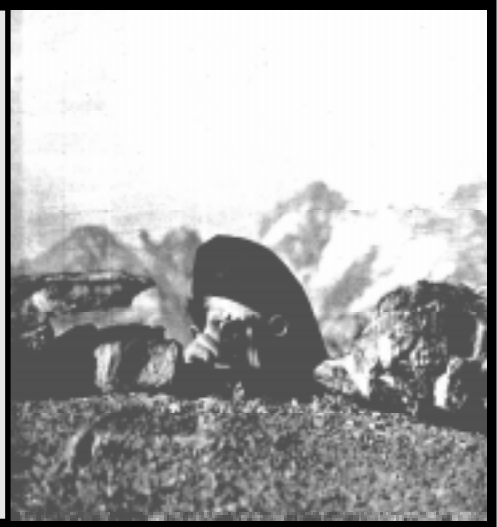
Issue 4 should be out in September.

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VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Number 4

Sept 95



PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to issue four of *View from The Trenches*. Things are beginning to grow at last, as the UK's ASL players seem to be coming out of the closet. Maybe it just took someone to do something.

Talking of which, one or two of you have offered to send stuff in for publication, but are worried that it might not be too good. Don't be. It's not the quality of the writing that counts, it's the fact that you are writing, communicating your ASL experiences with other ASL players that's important. That's one of the main reasons for *VFTT* existence, communication (I'll bet you can't talk ASL with many of your friends and workers without confusing them).

Talking of communication, it's good to be getting letters from some of you, even though I don't always write back. Lack of something to say back is the main reason why I don't always reply, for which I apologize. Some of your letters can also be answered a lot easier through *View From The Trenches*. None the less, keep those letters coming in.

And now, a question. Just how do you store your ASL counters? By my reckoning, there are some 9,828 counters in total for the system. That's an awful lot of counter trays if you use them, but does anyone have any other ways of storing their counters?

There seems to be much debate at the moment about the state of Avalon Hill. They have recently split with Atomic Games, who hold the copyright on the software for *Beyond Squad Leader*, the ASL computer game. It seems unlikely *BSL* will now see the light of day, and if Atomic Games do release it, it won't have the words *Squad Leader* in its name. Avalon Hill also seem to be plagued by financial problems, although they don't seem to be about to collapse. What this means for the next annual, *KGP II* and *March To Oblivion* is unknown at the moment. Let's hope they can get themselves sorted out and continue to support ASL.

I hate to end on a sombre note, so, who's looking forward to Intensive Fire '95? Ten years of ASL, and this is the first time there's been an ASL convention in this country. So I hope to see you all there.

So until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

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SOLITAIRE ASL

“It’s already available in the States and should be available here within 4-6 weeks.”, I wrote in the news feature last issue. So *Solitaire ASL (SASL)* decides to enter Britain on the day I mail the issue out. Oh well.

For £29.95, you get 22 pages of rules (Chapter S) and divider, numerous quick reference cards, one sheet of 260 counters, and 14 Mission cards. The production is up to the usual ASL standards, although table S17.82 is only partially printed on the divider, and also has different DRM listed (Bob McNamara has stated online that the rules are correct, and the extra DRM on the divider should be ignored).

The majority of the rules deal with the handling of enemy (or ENEMY in *SASL*-speak). Initially all you see are hoards of “S?” counters, which represent suspected enemy units. These remain in place until certain situations arise, such as a friendly unit moving within LOS of a S?, at which point a check is made to determine if the S? is an ENEMY unit, and if so, what sort of unit it is. Each nationality has its own set of tables for this purpose, with those for German, American, Russian and Partisan ENEMY forces included (the rest will eventually be released or printed in the annual).

Active ENEMY unit actions are determined primarily by DR on various tables, although there are a number of Automatic Actions which tend to over-ride any DR. Various rules deal with the handling of ENEMY fires, movement, routs and advances. The system itself is fairly straightforward, but does require a lot of die rolling and table checking, something which tends to be inevitable in any sort of solitaire system.

The player must also contend with the problem of Command Control. Basically a unit can only perform any non RPh/RtPh activity in its Player Turn if it makes a Command DR or is within 2 hexes of a leader who has already made his Command DR. Since the DR is based on Morale, it is easier to attack with good troops, which is historically accurate. I would love to see this rule

adapted to regular ASL (and suspect it probably will be).

SASL is designed to be used with its own Missions, rather than standard scenarios, which will no doubt disappoint some people. These cover a generic situation, such as “Cautious Advance”, “Take The Highway” or “Tank Attack!”. Most of the specifics, such as the mapboard, enemy placement, game length, and victory, are randomly determined before or during play, so no two Missions should be the same.

SASL also has a campaign game similar to those in RB or KGP. The rules suggest that one Mission be played per month of hostilities (or one per week for short campaigns such as Poland 39), but there seems to be no reason why you couldn’t play more frequently (anyone for WW2 from Poland 1939 to Berlin 1945 day by day?).

My only reservation about *SASL* is that, like all solitaire games, you play on your own. To me, gaming is a social activity, and part of the fun of gaming is interacting with your opponent. You cannot simulate this with solitaire games (or computer games either).

Overall, *SASL* is a good system, which offers a good way to practice tactics and play of ASL without having to worry about making embarrassing mistakes in front of your opponent. I’m not sure if it’s worth buying if you’ve got a regular FTF or PBM/PBEM opponent, but if you’re re a lone squad leader, then I’d have to recommend it.

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Continued from page 4

sources. Most have come from Neil Stevens (the organiser of Intensive Fire '95) who passes on any responses he gets to his convention flyer. Others have come from an old-ish AHIKS list or from readers sending in names. I also had a few replies to an ad I placed on CompuServe.

As for frequency, check Final Fire at the bottom of the last page for details.

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TIME ON TARGET

Time On Target is an American ASL 'zine. Unlike many other US ASL 'zines, which tend to look at the play of ASL, *Time On Target* concentrates on producing a set of scenarios for a specific campaign in each issue. The first (and, to date, only) issue covers the Battle of the Bulge.

The twelve scenarios are varied enough to cover most levels of ASL play. Most of them feature infantry and armour (some also have OBA), but even some of these are small enough to play in an evening or a day. There are a pair of Deluxe scenarios, and three that use the KGP Stoumont Map Group, although one of these is not actually set around Stoumont. Although many of the scenarios make use of the KGP SSR, particularly Mist, none of them are too rules intensive [EXC: those that use Night (E1.) rules].

Time On Target also presents two new rules. Bayonet Charges are basically Human Waves useable by any nation, while Supplemental Armour covers the use of improvised vehicle armour in the field. Although both have been designed specifically for use in several of the *Time On Target* scenarios, they are both presented in such a way that they could be used in other scenarios by SSR.

The 'zine itself is twelve pages long, and presents designer's notes for each of the scenarios, and articles on the background behind the new rules. Although these are only brief, they are none the less interesting. A bibliography is also supplied so readers can follow up the articles if they wish.

Production wise, *Time On Target* is excellent for a fanzine. The scenario cards, like the more recent Avalon Hill ones, all feature photographs instead of line art. To be honest, if it wasn't for the producer's logo on them, you could easily mistake them for actual Avalon Hill scenarios.

I can certainly recommend *Time On Target*, especially if you're interested in the Battle of the Bulge. \$13 may seem like a high price to pay for a fanzine, but *Time On Target*

is more of a scenario pack with a set of designer's notes and extended SSR than a fanzine. In that respect it is excellent value.

Time on Target costs \$13 (including postage) and is available from Kinetic Energy Productions, PO Box 291580, Hollywood, CA 90027, America. Issue two should be out soon, although as yet its content has yet to be confirmed.

Ω

INTENSIVE FIRE '95

This is an ASL convention being held at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, near Swindon, from 3-5 November. It will cater for both friendly and competitive play

Entry will be £5 for the weekend. Accommodation will be available for £35 per night full board (in the Officer's Mess).

The Friday will see tours of the College's AFV Hangar (with its King Tiger and fully working T34/85), the Small Arms Armoury, and the Wargaming and Simulations Laboratory. It will end with a get together in the Mess Bar.

Phillipe Leonard, designer of *Kampfgruppe Peiper* and editor of *ASL News*, will be bringing along the maps for *Kampfgruppe Peiper II*, while Paul Saunders will be bringing along a playtest version of *The Third Bring*.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Neil Stevens (18 Bower Green, Longcot, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7TU. CIS 100333,3652) for an application form.



NON - COM - MUNICATION

Non-com: a non-commissioned officer (EG a Squad Leader).
Communication: to talk, exchange ideas and information.

BOB EBURNE, MILTON KEYNES

It was a pleasure to receive *VFTT*, well done! I hope along with Intensive Fire 95 that it will help to unite British ASL players.

I feel that we still have a lot to offer ASL. Look at the ratio of Normandy scenarios. A definite bias to American vs. German rather than British.

True, but look at any American wargame. Most tend to feature Americans or Russians, so ASL isn't alone in that respect. One way to change that of course is to design scenarios featuring British forces (hint, hint).

DEREK TOTCHER, MITCHAM

Thank you for sending me issue 3 of *VFTT*. I was pleased to see you are trying to get a British ASL newsletter off the ground and hope you are successful in promoting the ASL hobby in the UK.

I think that one of the biggest services you might provide through *VFTT* is to regularly publish a list of UK ASL players (with addresses and phone numbers of course).

I agree, but I'm not too sure about how people would feel if I printed their name and address. So, how would many of you object if I just printed my mailing list next issue? Or would you be happier if I just printed a full name and address on request, as I have done with a couple of readers this issue? Let me know what you all think about this.

GEORGE JAYCOCK, NOTTINGHAM

Thanks for the issue of *VFTT*. Much appreciated, but what is that view your graphics depict!?!?

It's suppose to be a soldier in a dug-out looking through his binoculars. Unfortunately it doesn't print too good on my printer. But it looks good on my computer!

Attempting myself to produce a periodic *Diplomacy* newsletter, I have sincere

appreciation for your efforts (honest!)

In response to Nick Brown's letter, "Death's Head At Lusho" (both versions) appeared in *The General* volume 20 number 6, under a *SL Clinic* article entitled "Have Your Own Scenario Published?" Version 1a as submitted was classed 85/15 pro-Russian and was rejected, as was the modified version 1b, still 60/40 pro-Russian.

STEVE TREASE, ABERDEEN

If there are any ASL players in the Aberdeen area I would like to meet you. My address is 67 Gairn Road, Aberdeen, AB1 6AP.

LEE BRIMMICOMBE-WOODS, LONDON

Anyone who is in the area should feel free to pay me a visit for some ASL. My address is 128d Barking Road, Canning Town, London, E16 1EN. Feel free to call me on (0171) 4746092.

BILL DURRANT, SOUTH DARENTH

Just got your mailing of *VFTT* which was a pleasant surprise. I am very keen to see any ASL related matter succeed and wish you all the best.

How often do you intend to publish? Issue 3 was my first so I'm unaware how often you mail. In fact I don't know how you got my details.

Names have come from a number of

Continued on page 2

FINAL FIRE

That's all for this issue. Hope you enjoyed it. Feel free to write and tell me what you think, or even contribute.

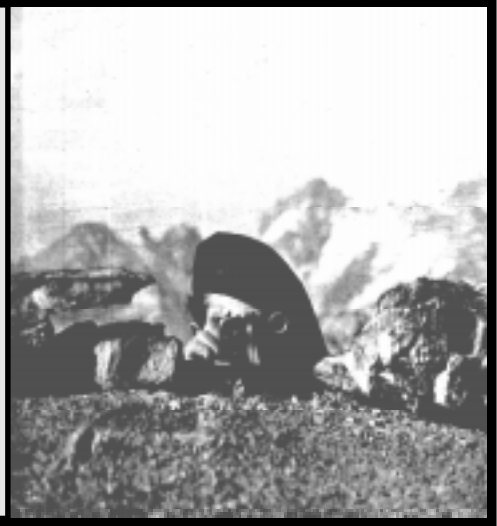
Issue 5 should be out in November, just in time for Intensive Fire '95.

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VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Number 5

Nov 95



PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to issue five of *View from The Trenches*.

This issue concentrates on playing non-FTF ASL, which is ironic when you consider it is coming out in time for Intensive Fire '95, the first ASL convention in the UK! It also sees the publication of the first two *View From The Trenches* scenarios. The first has been submitted by a reader, the second has been taken from the InterNet. I've no doubt many of you would be interested in seeing the InterNet scenarios, and in future I hope to have at least one in every issue. I'll still like to see your own scenarios as well though.

Talking of the InterNet, would anyone be interested in seeing articles based on the debates that can be found on the ASL Mailing List, such as a recent debate on the effects of a 2 CC DR. Linked with this, does anyone have any queries they would like me to post so that I can gather the resulting debate into articles in future issues?

Some of the newer readers among you have asked me for copies of issues 1 and 2. I can't help any of you really as far as back issues go. I tend to print enough for everyone on the mailing list and a few spares to cover newcomers. If I get enough requests though, I might consider reprinting the articles from the first couple of issues, or perhaps gather them into a special edition.

On the personal side, does anyone have issues 103 and 111 of *On All Fronts*, as I would love to see their Central Railway Station extension for *Red Barricades*. Would anyone like to lend me these issues, or perhaps bring them to Intensive Fire '95 so I might have a look at them?

Talking of which, the UK's first ASL convention is nearly here (and will be gone by the time some of you get this issue). With over 55 players attending, some of them from Europe and even America, it should be an exciting weekend. I look forward to meeting many of you there, so I can put faces to the names of some of you. For those unable to attend, a full report will be in the next issue of *View From The Trenches*.

Until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

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MAIL SHOTS

Bill Durrant

Play By Mail (PBM) has been a big part of wargaming for years now, with Diplomacy being one of the most common postal games. Here though, is a look at something many might find difficult to imagine - playing ASL by mail.

Since the advent of ASL we have been promised an official PBM method (it was even given the designation Chapter L in the original Table of Contents) but so far nothing has materialised. It even got a mention in the 93b annual's *Forward Observer* as following *March To Oblivion* and *Doomed Battalions*. All pigs refuelled and ready for take off!! Necessity being the mother of invention, over the years a PBM system has been designed and refined. I'm here to tell you it can and do work. It can even become quite enjoyable.

PBM ASL is not without its problems but with a little application these are not insurmountable. Sent with the defenders set up are sealed paper folds containing HIP and Concealed units. Concealed units are represented by the identity of the '?' counter with the number of counters underneath shown afterwards in brackets. When called for these are opened. The first fold contains the identity of just one unit for detection purposes (A12.15). Obviously HIP can only be revealed during the owner's mailing which causes problems if movement starts into a HIP. This rarely happens as one rarely resists the temptation of point blank fire.

Each event is given a number as in a *Series Replay*, and each player mails off the pre-designated phases. These go as follows: Attacker - RPh, PFPh, MPh; Defender - DFPh; Attacker - AFPh, RtPh, APh, CCPh, RPh; Defender - RtPh, CCPh, RPh, PFPh, MPh; etc, etc. In this way a game turn takes six mailings (other than for initial set up) and thus an eight turn scenario can normally be completed in about a year. As such, given enough space I would say roughly four games going at once will keep you more than occupied.

All die rolls are conducted by the mailing player, including those for an opponent. This obviously calls for total trust and honesty. A system has been devised to use

pre-designated die rolls but is too complicated to explain here. If you can't hack your opponent rolling three threes on Random Selection for a 1KIA (twice in a row - thanks Paul!) then maybe PBM ASL is not for you.

The main problem comes with the MPH as all movement has to be pre-determined. Movement is recorded in such a way that each hex is revealed without seeing the next (again you must be honest and make a decision as to First Fire before revealing the next hex - it may be a stop). The idealist would say this is more realistic. The realist would say this is likely to upset play balance. Personally I'm sitting on the fence. Bounding First Fire is dealt with as it occurs on the movement record. Very occasionally it may be necessary to send a search mailing, IE send the moves of only half your units to try and reveal HIP and/or concealment.

A few other problems can arise, such as multiple Sniper targets (A14.2 - preferences can be given at the start of a scenario, IE Leader, hero, crew, squad, HS) and voluntary abandonment of a vehicle by its crew immediately after immobilisation. I'm sure that are others, but, after, they are very rare.

Close Combat can pose another problem. The player mailing CC pre-designates his targets and rolls the CC DR. These results are sealed and the opposing player conducts all his CC DR before revealing them. This works equally well regardless of ambush.

It is normally a good idea to confirm the position of all counters at least once per player turn. This is ideally done after the DFPh and completed by the mailing player. A PC with spreadsheet software can save an immense amount of time during a larger scenario. I am fortunate to have this, and the space to leave my scenarios set up which I definitely recommend.

In general, PBM ASL does work and has its advantages as well. The temptation in a FTF game is to look for a rule for about five minutes and then let common sense prevail. PBM gives you time to find the right answer. Okay, there's a fair amount of book-keeping but it's sometime just as interesting to read your own series replay, rather than those of

Continued on page 6

ELECTRONIC WARFARE

Neil Stevens

Electronic mail has begun to replace postal mail in business in recent times, and now more and more gamers are beginning to do the same for PBM, resulting in Play By Electronic Mail (PBEM). Although the two are very similar, there are some differences, as the following article shows.

‘What ever has the Information Super Highway got to offer me?’

To be absolutely honest I wasn't really sure but, being a bit of a lover of technology, I decided to find out and, as a wargamer and ASLer, I have never looked back.

First of all I wanted to get on-line. There are a number of ways of achieving this and by far the best way is to do it as a student through your college or university. If you achieve this you will not have to pay for telephone connect charges. If you are too old to be a student (Heck! I'm a student and I'm 30 years old!) then you have to find yourself a modem for your computer and a provider. A provider is a firm that will; provide you with suitable software, give you a couple of access telephone numbers to dial in and ask for an address to send the monthly bill to. I chose CompuServe which many of you will have heard of. They are not the cheapest provider around but the software they provide is 'Windows' based and accessing the 'Net' is intuitive.

On CompuServe I quickly found the Forum where the gamers hang out. Located in the PBMGAMES Forum there is a section for Board Wargames and there there is a lively group of ASL enthusiasts from all over the World. From the Forum Library a number of ASL related articles and features can be downloaded to your hard disk for reading at your own leisure. There will also be a number of Play By Electronic Mail (PBEM) games underway and they are all played openly. This allows anybody to read the game turns and follow the run of play. Well, one has to keep an eye on the opposition! Any questions about rules or any aspect of the game will usually be answered within 12 hours of being posted on the Forum. And remember a lot of

the ASLers are in the States with access to the very latest information about the state of our hobby.

One of the CompuServe members actually runs an ASL Ladder. This is open to anybody and involves you challenging somebody else to a game of ASL on a mutually agreed scenario. The game is then played over the course of a few weeks until a winner/loser is found and the results are then reflected on the Ladder - or 'The Greasy Pole' as it is affectionately termed. Do not be afraid of feeling out of your depth on the Ladder it is for everybody, beginners or experts, and I can promise one thing - you will learn a great deal more about the game. If you believe that ASL cannot be adapted for PBEM then try it. It is VERY successful and actually is an ideal way to play. You can play your game turns at your own speed and take as much time as you like to look up rules and sort things out for yourself. The gamers on CompuServe are also a friendly bunch and, should you make an error, it will be resolved in an amicable fashion; after all none of us are perfect.

As well as the PBEMGAMES Forum CompuServe also provides access to the Internet. To log on to the Internet ASL Mailing List you send a simple coded message to the List Server (the computer in the States that runs the List). Then you will receive, in your electronic mail box, every message or conversation that is held on the Internet about ASL. This is an extremely rich vein of thoughts, views and opinions of ASL. With over 300 people on the List anything that there is to know about the hobby is there. If you wish to ask a question or make a comment you send your message to the List Server and it automatically re-transmits it to everybody on the Mailing List. There is humour, comments, reviews, questions, scenario after action reports, Convention news and all sorts of things available. What's more it means that your EMail pigeon hole always has something in it!

Anybody who wishes to join the ASL Internet Mailing List and has access to a computer with a modem should EMail listserv@psuvm.psu.edu with the message

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CRITICAL HIT!

By Steve Trease

Critical Hit! is a biannual American ASL fanzine billing itself as 'The Independent Journal of the ASL Hobby'. It is produced to a high standard as a black and white magazine the same size as *The General*. Issue 1 has 32 pages, issue 2 has 48 and issue 3 (the latest) has 60.

Critical Hit! 3 contains 15 ASL new scenarios, two SASL scenarios and one Platoon Leader Campaign. The scenarios are all presented in the usual ASL format and are quite varied in their scope, with situations ranging from Ethiopia 1936 to Israel 1948 and South Korea 1950, and taking in the East Front, western Europe, the desert and the Pacific along the way. Something for everyone! All scenarios are balanced using the ABS system: there are three handicaps described for each side of increasing severity; whoever chooses the most severe handicap for a side gets that side.

'Arajian Rose' is a Platoon Leader mini campaign. Platoon Leader is a 3rd party add on for mini campaigns using existing maps, although I have not seen a copy yet. It uses a system like *Red Barricades* and *Kampfgruppe Peiper* to run small campaigns up to five or six scenarios in length.

There are also a series of articles reminiscent of those in the Annual, including an interesting history of Chindits and Long Range Penetration Groups in China/Burma/India; an article about playing ASL with a chess clock (?); a detailed scenario replay; quite a cliquey retrospective of ten years of Oktoberfest (an American ASL convention) and a couple of editorial type pieces. In some ways the most useful pieces are a detailed flow chart documenting procedures to use for OBA and a set of supplementary SASL rules for infantry only SASL.

All in all I would recommend *Critical Hit!* to any ASLhead looking for more material. It is available for £7.95 from Esdevium Games, 6 Wellington Street, Aldershot, GU11 1DZ.

Ω



IS THERE ASL LIFE AFTER AVALON HILL?

Andrew Saunders

There seems to be a big "To do" just now regarding Avalon Hill. Some people are panicking about the prospect of them "Going to the wall". Who cares! Not me, that's for sure!! OK. What have they got left to offer us ASL'ers? Let's see...*March To Oblivion*, *KGP II*, and one or two historical modules. With regard to *March To Oblivion*, ask yourself how many scenarios you expect to play pushing some "crappy" Polish tankettes around your mapboard.

What we need to do is look on the positive side of things. This mag for instance, *ASL News*, *Tactiques*, *Time On Target*, *Backblast*, and *Critical Hit*. I believe *Critical Hit* offers a series of campaign games called Platoon Leader. I haven't seen it yet but I'm led to believe it's very good.

Basically, my point is this. Avalon Hill is NOT ASL. ASL players are the game. It will never fade away if Avalon Hill disappear because ASL players are just too committed to the game.

Ω

Editor's Note: Since this was written, Bob McNamara, ASL Q&A man extra-ordinaire, has left Avalon Hill. They have also turned down a £200,000 offer by noted US baseball player and ASL player Curt Schilling to buy the rights to ASL. According to a message posted by Schilling on the InterNet, they would not part with ASL for less than \$500,000, so, if anyone wins the lottery, and is interested....

NON - COM - MUNICATION

Non-com: a non-commissioned officer (EG a Squad Leader).
Communication: to talk, exchange ideas and information.

STEVE COCKS, HEREFORD

If there are any ASL players in my area, feel free to get in touch. My address is 3 Tavistock Drive, Hereford, HR2 7XN (CIS 100112,2276). I apologise in advance for any delay in replying as I am often in Sweden on business.

TREVOR EDWARDS, PRESTON

I received *View From The Trenches*. Very good! I have *SASL* but I may not play it for a long while for the reasons you mentioned (because of FTF and PBEM opponents being readily available). The picture on the front is the only let down I'm afraid. Strange how the picture of the two Americans and their LMG came out so well.

The reason for the difference is that the cover picture is a scanned photograph, and the other is a scanned black and white drawing. It also doesn't help that VFTT is only printed on a dot matrix printer. One of these days I'm gonna try and find some time so I can clarify the cover picture, as a number of people has commented on it's poor quality (or buy a laser printer).

IAN DAGLISH, CHESHIRE

Thanks for yet another *View from The Trenches*.

I feel you should definitely aim to assemble and publish a list of UK ASL players' names and addresses. Ideally, phone numbers too. The listings of "Non Coms of Company A" in the annual has been invaluable in looking up potential opponents when visiting the USA.

Some ideas for *VFTT*. For those of us who do not yet have access to the Internet, how about a review of some of the more interesting news and views being posted? From what I have seen, there are a few pearls among a heap of dross, so editing down should not be a problem!

As I mentioned in the editorial, I am considering this as far as the scenarios are concerned. Any news will probably be out of date though by the time VFTT gets printed.

Linked to this, how about a rules Q&A section. I would be happy to receive any queries that are puzzling ASL players, and if necessary seek 'expert' guidance.

As I mentioned in my editorial, I am willing to post questions on the InterNet for a response as well. If any readers post questions directly to you, let me know so I can reprint them in future issues.

Finally, a request. My long-planned ASL historical module covering the 82nd 'All American' in Normandy is taking shape, with maps complete and scenarios ready for playtesting. If anyone has access to any info on the 82nd and its actions in June '44, especially to do with the US glider troops of the 325 Regiment and the German troops defending the area west of St Mare Eglise, I'd be grateful for references. Send them to me at 5 Swiss Hill Mews, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7DP.

ROBERT HARTWELL, SURREY

Thanks for sending me a copy of the third edition of your 'zine. It is good to know that there are some people out there who take an interest. I have been a lone gamer for many years, I was beginning to think I was on my own!

If the 'newsletter can be successful in promoting FTF play and bring together UK ASLers then it will certainly have been a very worthwhile endeavour. The 'zine is interesting and very worthwhile - keep up the good work!

Sounds like a teacher's report remark that does. Actually, VFTT, is trying to promote all types of ASL gaming, not just FTF, as can be seen from the PBM and PBEM articles in this issue.

DOMINIC McGRATH, BERKSHIRE

Thanks for sending me *VFTT*. As you say, it's great to know that at long last the British ASL fraternity is getting itself organised - and special thanks are due to you and Neil Stevens for getting things moving.

Thank you. All it needed was someone

to do something though. Luckily, two of us started doing something at the same time.

I think your approach of keeping people in touch rather than trying to compete with the other fanzines at this stage is spot on - keep up the good work. It's an excellent idea to distribute *VFTT* free at this stage because it ensures that all (known) British ASL players are in touch. You ask if people would mind having their name and address published. I certainly have no objection and would, in fact, welcome it. And my telephone number too. One approach may be to send out a questionnaire with your next issue. This would firstly mean that you could get consent for publication of details but would also mean you could include other details including experience, whether able to host gamers, etc.

I'm already thinking of putting a questionnaire in soon (either issue 6 or 7 probably). For now though I'm waiting to see what sort of response Neil Stevens gets from the mini-questionnaire he included with his Intensive Fire '95 application form.

ANDREW SAUNDERS, BLACKPOOL

Firstly, congrats for your efforts on producing your fanzine. Keep up the good work!!

As a suggestion, why not try and include a scenario in every issue.

I'd love to include a couple every issue, but until people start sending some in, there's not a lot I can do. Although I am looking into the possibility of printing the scenarios that can be found on the InterNet. So all you budding scenario writers out there, let's be hearing from you.

RICHARD CORNWELL, AUSTRALIA

Thank you for sending me a copy of *VFTT*. It is very interesting, and very good to see some UK activity. I always found it hard to find opponents in the UK. I did go to ASLOK in 1993 and did OK though (beat Gary Fortenberry in a preliminary tournament!)

I applaud your initiative and wish you all the best.

Thanks very much. Now that you've moved to Australia, perhaps you can let us

know what the ASL scene is like down under.

Ω

Continued from page 2

the hotshots from "across the pond".

By no means is this an extensive explanation of PBM ASL but a taster to convince you that it does work. I am indebted to the articles published in the AHKS newsletter *EureDespatch* compiled by Mike Davies and Rhett Richwell. My thanks also go to my regular PBM opponents Rhett Richwell, Paul Rideout, and Jeff Hawarden.

Ω

Continued from page 3

sub asl-I. There is no need to write anything else because the list server computer will interpret it. Be prepared though to empty your mail box regularly or you will be deleted from the list. This is not being anti-social because if you let your mail box fill up the Server will keep trying to send you messages and will itself clog up. Alternatively send **set asl-I digest** and you will receive all the days messages in one large mailing.

If you have any further questions feel free to EMail me on:

100333.3652@compuserve.com.

Happy Surfing!

Ω

FINAL FIRE

That's all for this issue. Hope you enjoyed it. Feel free to write and tell me what you think, or even contribute.

A few copies of issues 3 and 4 are still available upon request.

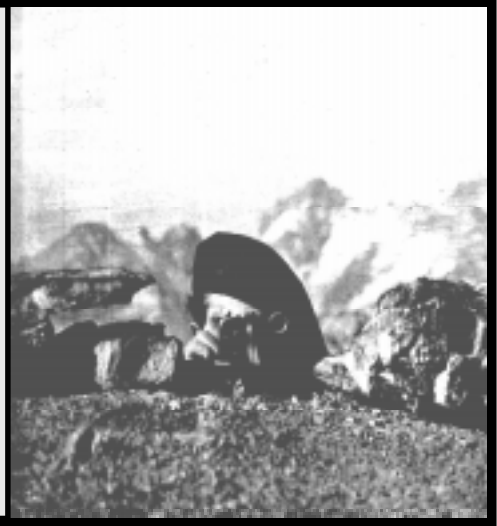
Issue 6 should be out at the start of January, although this depends on how Christmas goes (glug, glug, glug!).

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is a newsletter for the British ASL community. It is available for the price of an SAE. All correspondence should be sent to **VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES**, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, LE5 0FQ or **100665,267@compuserve.com.**

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Number 6

Jan 96



PREP FIRE

Hello and welcome to the last issue of *View from The Trenches*.

Actually, that should read "last free issue". *View From The Trenches* has grown far beyond my initial expectations. Issue 1 - 4 pages, 12 readers. Issue 5 - 8 pages, 125 readers. I simply cannot afford to carry on producing and posting that many for nothing. So, it's either fold or charge.

View From The Trenches will cost £1 per issue from now on. I'm a bit wary about taking subscriptions (I don't want to the worry of folding and refunding), but anyone sending in £5 between now and the end of February will get issues 7 to 12. Overseas readers should send me three international reply coupons per issue.

So, what will your money get you? A better *VFTT* I hope. I am allowed to use the photocopier at work to copy *VFTT* for free, but it does not handle large print runs too good, as some of you will have noticed last issue. With your money I shall be able to have a print shop produce *VFTT*, so that the quality does not deteriorate.

As you will no doubt have noticed, this issue is in a booklet format rather than the loose leaf format of previous issues. Further layout changes are also planned from the next issue. Future issues will be 8 pages long for the moment, but if you lot send me enough

material, expect to see possibly 12 pagers per issue before the end of the year.

I'd also like to include 2 scenarios in every issue, but that also depends on what I am sent. If you have an idea for a scenario, write it up and let others see it. It doesn't matter if it isn't playtested, as long as you make that clear. A few brief words on your design would also be nice. If anyone plays any *VFTT* scenario, send me an after action report and your views, so I can pass them on to the designer. I'm sure they'd be interested in how their scenario worked (or not).

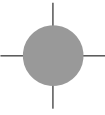
Many of you have asked me to publish names and addresses in *VFTT* to help you find local opponents, and to that end I hope to print my mailing list in future issues (assuming I have space). If anyone DOES NOT want their address made available to everyone, please let me know.

Until next time, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

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INTENSIVE FIRE '95

Intensive Fire is often risky, but for Neil Stevens, his risk turned into a Critical Hit.

OK, so it sounds corny, but to be honest, it is the only way to describe the success of Intensive Fire '95, the UK's first ASL convention. A risk? Sure, trying to organise the first ASL convention in a country, unsure of the response you would get. A Critical Hit? Definitely, since 60 ASL players turned up (three times the number Neil hoped would attend), making it probably the biggest ASL gathering outside America.

THE VENUE

Intensive Fire '95 was held at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, near Swindon, from Friday 3rd November to Sunday 5th November. Accommodation was available in the college's Halls of residence at a cost of £35 per night, which included all meals. The gaming was held in the college's purpose-built Conference centre, with three large open rooms being used.

“The organisation was superb, I don't think I've ever seen anything that is even close. Of course, since this was organised by people with ties to the military, maybe that was to be expected?”

Patrik Manlig.

Located in the 'Headquarters', a room set aside for non-gaming activities, were a couple of PCs (which were running Steel Panthers, Battleground: Ardennes, and a copy of the unofficial ASL GAP produced by Steve Zundel), playtest copies of the Kampfgruppe Peiper II mapsheets and The Third Bridge, copies of God Save The King! and Soldiers of the Negus. Copies of various fanzines were also on display and available for purchase (these went very quickly, especially Critical Hit! 3). See elsewhere for reviews of many of these products.

Many people seemed very happy with the bar prices. 80p for a pint of lager - haven't seen those prices for years. Strangely enough, few people seemed to frequent the bar during the evening, although a few four packs were consumed.....

“Saturday evening was great fun. I tried to get a game going, but ended up drinking beer and talking ASL with assorted people. Very enjoyable.”

Pete Phillipps

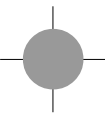
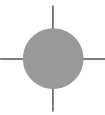
The atmosphere throughout the weekend was very friendly and easy-going. The only formal time was during dinner, which was taken in the Officers Mess and thus required a jacket, shirt and tie.

THE TOURS

One of attractions of Intensive Fire '95 was the opportunity to visit the college's small arms armoury, the AFV hangar and their wargaming laboratory. These are not generally open to the public, but as a serving Army officer studying a degree there, Neil was in a position to offer those arriving on Friday the chance to visit all three, and strangely enough many took advantage of the opportunity.

The most impressive sight in the AFV hangar had to be the King Tiger, although also on display were a T34/85, and a number of modern MBTs, APCs, and scout/armoured cars. All but the Tiger were fully operational, and there are plans for the Tiger to be restored to full working order by 1997. We were allowed into all of the vehicles on display, and many seemed to become CE 6+1 Armour Leaders for an hour, with the Tiger probably being the most popular, even though it could only be accessed by the rather small driver's escape hatch under the hull (and having struggled to get through that hatch, I can understand why CS is so low for many vehicles).

“I'm back from my foray into the international ASL scene. I had a great time at the Intensive Fire tourney. The tours were a big hit - where else can you try a King Tiger on for size! This is



definitely the place to be next year if you can sell it to the wife.”

Bob Schaaf.

The small arms armoury contained examples of 20th century small arms from around the world, as well as a number of LATW such as the Panzerfaust, the Bazooka and the PIAT. An arms expert talked us through some of the more common German and British weapons of World War Two, after which we were allowed to walk around the room and handle many of them. No live firing opportunities unfortunately.

In the Simulation and Synthetic Environment Laboratory we were shown some examples of military computer wargaming. The first was an operational level game, set around the Darlington area (simply because they had maps available for the area) for up to three players on each side. This game was used to provide combat data on weapon systems, both real and hypothetical. The second game was a 3D shoot-em-up type vehicle simulator. Although not graphically impressive compared to some home PC games, up to 200 people could be linked together at once to play a real-time engagement! We were also shown a video of a similar American operation where units engaged each other in the Gulf of Mexico

without leaving their bases, simply by having all the data from their onboard computers transmitted to each other.

THE ACTION

The tournament itself commenced on Saturday morning and was based on 14 Fireteams of 4 players. Over the course of the weekend, each team would play 4 matches with each having two scenarios so in Fireteam A two plays would play one scenario, on as attacker and the other defender, and the other two would play the second.

The scenarios played were:

Saturday morning - Le Manoir and North Bank.

“I used to compute in figure wargaming competitions but was put off by all the cheating and arguing (and sometimes crying and fighting!) that went on. I expected similar goings on at Intensive Fire, how wrong I was! I had one ‘argument’ over a dodgy LOS when an opponent fired so out came the string. After checking he said there was no LOS, but I disagreed. On closer inspection there was a single dark green printers dot about a 10th of a millimeter wide on the other side of the string! Well

Continued on page 5

SCENARIO WIN/LOSS STATISTICS						
SC#	SCENARIO NAME	PLAYS	ALLY	AXIS	DRAW	
13	Le Manoir	14	10	4	-	
16	No Better Spot to Die	15	5	10	-	
A15	Stand Fast the Guards	1	0	1	-	
A25	Cold Crocodile	14	8	6	-	
A38	North Bank	14	6	8	-	
A33	Tettau’s Attack	13	5	7	1	
A73	Not Out of the Woods Yet	14	6	6	2	
F	Paw of the Tiger	1	0	1	-	
T1	Gavin’s Take	13	6	7	-	
T3	Ranger Stronghold	7	3	4	-	
G19	A Tough Nut to Crack	1	0	1	-	
ASLN60	Call Them Ironsides	1	0	1	-	
CH26	Close Order Driel	1	0	1	-	
BB5	Going to Church	1	0	1	-	
BB10	Surrender or Die	3	3	0	-	
	Totals	113	52	58	3	

THE TEAM TABLES

	<u>TEAM</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>PTS</u>	<u>PLAYED</u>	<u>PTS</u>
1st	TEAM 7					20.50	15	22.00
	Patrik Manlig	4	3	0	1	5.00		
	Klas Malmstrom	3	2	1	0	3.50		
	Bernt Ribom	4	4	0	0	6.00		
	Nils-Gunnar Nilsson	4	4	0	0	6.00		
2nd	TEAM 10					18.00	14	20.50
	Peter Bennett	3	2	1	0	3.50		
	Bob Eburne	4	4	0	0	6.00		
	Nick Edelston	4	4	0	0	6.00		
	Paul Case	3	1	0	2	2.50		
3rd	TEAM 5					13.00	12	17.50
	Philippe Leonard	3	2	1	0	3.50		
	Pedro Ramis	2	2	0	0	3.00		
	Serge Bettencourt	3	2	0	1	3.50		
	Roger Cook	4	1	0	3	3.00		
4th	TEAM 3					18.00	16	17.00
	Carl Sizmur	4	2	0	2	3.00		
	Aaron Sibley	4	2	0	2	4.00		
	Derek Tocher	4	3	0	1	5.00		
	Trevor Edwards	4	3	0	1	5.00		
5th	TEAM 13					13.50	13	16.50
	Kevin Beard	3	3	0	0	4.50		
	Chris Littlejohn	4	2	0	2	4.00		
	Chris Coutier	3	1	1	1	2.50		
	Dominic McGrath	3	1	0	2	2.50		
	TEAM	P	W	D	L	PTS	PLAYED	PTS
6th	TEAM 12					16.00	16	16.00
	Alan Smee	4	4	0	0	6.00		
	Neil Piggott	4	1	0	3	3.00		
	Nick Ranson	4	1	0	3	3.00		
	Ian Kenney	4	2	0	2	4.00		
7th	TEAM 8					14.00	14	16.00
	Bob Schaaf	3	2	1	0	3.50		
	Dave Booth	3	2	0	1	3.50		
	Ian DGLISH	4	2	0	2	4.00		
	Andrew Dando	4	1	1	2	3.00		
8th	TEAM 4					14.00	14	16.00
	Luc Schonkerren	2	1	0	1	2.00		
	Lutz Pietschker	4	1	0	3	3.00		
	Christian Koppmeyer	4	1	0	3	3.00		
	Ralf Krusat	4	4	0	0	6.00		
9th	TEAM 1					16.00	16	16.00
	Toby Pilling	4	2	0	2	4.00		
	Tim Collier	4	1	0	3	3.00		
	Mike Rudd	4	4	0	0	6.00		
	Mike Standbridge	4	1	0	3	3.00		

	<u>TEAM</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>PTS</u>	<u>PLAYED</u>	<u>PTS</u>
10th	TEAM 9					11.50	13	14.00
	Lee Brimmicombe-Wood	3	1	0	2	2.50		
	Michael Rhodes	4	0	0	4	2.00		
	Simon Morris	3	2	0	1	3.50		
	Phil Nobo	3	2	0	1	3.50		
11th	TEAM 2					12.00	14	13.50
	Steve Cocks	4	0	0	4	2.00		
	Luis Calcada	4	3	0	1	5.00		
	Pete Phillipps	3	1	0	2	2.50		
	Nick Brown	3	1	1	1	2.50		
12th	TEAM 11					10.00	14	11.50
	Paul O'Donald	3	1	0	2	2.50		
	Alistair Fairburn	3	0	0	3	1.50		
	Paul Ryde-Weller	4	1	0	3	3.00		
	Robin Langston	4	1	1	2	3.00		
13th	TEAM 14					9.50	13	11.50
	William Roberts	3	0	0	3	1.50		
	Neil Stevens	3	1	0	2	2.50		
	Jon Williams	3	0	0	3	1.50		
	Duncan Spencer	4	2	0	2	4.00		
14th	TEAM 6					8.00	14	9.000
	Paul Saunders	4	0	0	4	2.00		
	Andrew Saunders	3	0	1	2	1.50		
	Nigel Brown	4	0	0	4	2.00		
	Arthur Garlick	3	1	0	2	2.50		

A word on scoring: each player was awarded 1.00 per game won (1 1/2 if won in the allotted playing time), a 1/2 for a draw, and a 1/2 point for losing with within the allotted playing time.

Since many teams were unable to complete their 16 games (due to a number of reasons, such as players leaving early), the team scores have been adjusted to take this into account.

Continued from page 3

I suppose the rules do say that if the terrain is visible on both sides of the string LOS is blocked, but in this case the width of the white center dot and where you put the string made a difference, I would have given him the shot, but he wouldn't take it and lost his fire."

Arthur Garlick.

Saturday afternoon - No Better Spot to Die and Cold Crocodiles.

"Guys. Intensive Fire '95 is rocking and rolling here at Shirvenham, UK. After the first two tournament rounds the Belgique team and the Swedish team

are showing us all the ropes and both teams are neck and neck in terms of points scored. Just as well they are playing each other tomorrow then!"

Message posted on CompuServe by Jon Williams while at Intensive Fire '95.

Sunday morning - Tettau's Attack and Not Out of the Woods Yet.

"My only real claim to fame was burning 2 Shermans in the Wooded Hills in Not out of the Woods Yet ('95 Annual) with 2 Panzerfausts. Subsequently the WHOLE hill was on fire with about 25 Blaze Counters. A pretty impressive sight especially on the 5th November 'Bonfire Nigh'".

William Roberts.

Sunday afternoon - Ranger Stronghold and Gavin's Take.

I lost all four of my games, what an awful performance. Just shows us all the difference between FTF and Email and the fact that we have so much time in which to think of our moves. It was a lot of fun and I look forward to next year."

Steve Cocks.

The scenarios were chosen to keep the first Intensive Fire relatively easy, so that it would be open to as many players as possible.

A number of unofficial friendly games were also played in the spare time that players had in the evenings, particularly on Friday. Nobody tried to play a HASL scenario, although one or two people were tempted.

THE RESULTS

The Swedish team, consisting of Patrik Manlig, Bernt Ribom, Nils-Gunnar Nilsson and Klas Malmstrom, were the clear winners of the tournament, winning 13 of the 15 matches they were able to complete. For their superb performance they were rewarded with a set of engraved glass tankards.

Bernt Ribom of Sweden won all five matches he played and was awarded with the Player of the Tournament trophy, a British paratrooper mounted on a stand. Other notable performances were put in by Patrik Manlig (Sweden) and Ralf Krusat (Germany) with 5 wins and 1 loss each, Nils-Gunnar Nilsson (Sweden) and Derek Tocher (England) with 4 wins and 1 loss each, and Alan Smee (Australia), Nick Edelston, Bob Eburne, and Mike Rudd (England) who all won the 4 matches they played. As the top English player, Derek Tocher walked away with a copy of Critical Hit! 3.

"The best thing is the friends I made, both on my team and amongst near neighbours who I did not know existed. There are three guys who play in Blackpool (where I work) and are

real eager to get it on for some serious dice time in the near future."

Trevor Edwards.

Mention must also be made of Christian Koppmeyer who managed to play seven games during the tournament (winning 2, losing 5) and Michael Rhodes who managed to lose all five games he played. Never mind Michael. A Critical Hit consolation prize is on its way from the organisers!

"I played 7 matches, lost 5 and won 2. It was this convention that showed me the difference between a good player and me. I thought if I had played ASL for four years then I would know the game. Wrong, Wrong, Wrong !!! So I came back at home not only with new ideas but with new aims too."

Christian Koppmeyer.

AFTERMATH

To Neil, William, Jon, and Duncan; congratulations on a job well done. For all the time and effort you put in to organise the convention, you are all hereby promoted to 7-0's!

"That was a great weekend. If they do it again next year I sure will be there."

Luis Calcada

Look for news about Intensive Fire '96 (tentatively scheduled for November 15th - 17th) in forthcoming issues of *VFTT*.

"Games without frontiers. War without tears."

Neil Stevens, quoting from Peter Gabriel.

Intensive Fire '95 was organised by Neil Stevens, Jon Williams, William Roberts and Duncan Spencer. They wish to express their deepest gratitude to Ray Tapio and Critical Hit!; the authors of God Save the King!; Time On Target's Mark Neukom; and Philippe "ASL News, Kampfgruppe Peiper, Support ASL in Europe" Leonard for the support they gave. They would also like to especially thank Melissa Schaaf, "who travelled all the way from the States to end up helping us out by doing the odd jobs nobody else wanted to do!"

AVALON HILL TAKES BACKBLAST

Backblast, one of the best ASL zines to have appeared in recent years, is no more. However, Multi-Man Publishing, it's publishers, have been joined by Curt Schilling and together they are teaming with Gary Fortenberry (previously in charge of the ASL Union of Gamers, and editor of the 95 Winter annual), to act as Avalon Hill's in-house ASL team. Together they will be responsible for putting out the Annual, for supplying ASL articles and scenarios for The General, developing submitted products, designing products in-house, and coordinating the rules used in all these as well as answering Q&A and maintaining errata.

Naturally, these events have raised a number of questions. Fortunately Brian Youse, president of MMP is present on the ASL Internet Mailing List, and has been answered many of them. What follows is based on those answers.

"So Brian, how did this deal come about?"

Avalon Hill contacted Curt Schilling to work on ASL. Curt, realizing he needed help and familiar with our work, asked us to join in. JD Frazer had just asked off the MMP staff, so we had a slot to fill and the rest is history.

"A couple of months ago you were announcing that ASL was dead and that AH wasn't worth bothering with. Curt Schilling also had a lot of bad things to say about AH and the Dotts following his failed attempt to acquire ASL off them. Now you have both joined up with the dreaded enemy :-). What has brought about the change of heart towards AH?"

Giving that our only concern is the continued flow of quality ASL stuff, this seemed like a chance to get more quality stuff in/out of the pipeline. It seemed by AH's

talking to Curt that they're committed to getting ASL stuff out. My posts on ASL were legit and truly my feelings based on ASL being "dead". Clearly, now, ASL is not dead. Thus my "change of heart".

"Do you feel confident that you can have a good working relationship with Gary Fortenberry/the Dotts?"

Yeah, we do. Gary has told us that he is "rededicated" to ASL and has sold his magic cards to boot. We're confident that this arrangement will work out.

"I understand if you don't answer this, but what are you guys getting out of this arrangement? And do you think that Avalon Hill's commitment to ASL has changed with this deal?"

We get a pittance, and out of that we have to pay for submissions. In other words, I ain't quitting my day job. 8) We feel it is for the good of the hobby, because quality products should be rolling out of Avalon Hill for some time to come. More quality ASL can only be GOOD for the hobby. We hope that Avalon Hill's commitment has changed with the signing of this deal.

The six of us are part-timers with Gary being closest to being "full-time".

"What does this deal mean for Tactiques, who are/were distributed by MMP?"

We're not sure right now about Tactiques. I would suspect that we will no be facilitating the distribution of Tactiques in the US. If this is the end result, all I can say is that I'm glad if we somehow helped even one gamer receive that excellent fanzine.

I would like to make it clear that we will no longer be selling any issue of Backblast magazine, including back issues.

"Will you be maintaining a presence on the list? Personally or as a group?"

We will still be frequent posters. We are working out the details on how to accept email questions.

"So what are the plans for future ASL products?"

Our first efforts will be to help Gary with KGP II. It is very close to being finished and we've been working with him for the past few weeks to complete this task. Next up will

be the '96 Annual, and after that is a HASL project MMP has been working on for some time, which is based on the British attack to take and hold the Pegasus Bridge. We've reached an agreement with Steve Dethlefsen where he'll submit his Tarawa module to us for publication by Avalon Hill, and we're talking to Kurt Martin about The Third Bridge.

"What about Mud and Blood, and the scenario/map pack mentioned in the 95 annual?"

We're trying to get in touch with Mr. Swann about Mud and Blood, but until that happens we can't really say if we'll be putting that out or not. Currently, we do not have a signed contract for "Mud and Blood".

We're gathering some scenarios for a possible "pack", but as with everything else it isn't our call what gets published or when it gets published.

We would be interested in talking to the other amateur publishers about any products they would like to submit for publication by Avalon Hill. On that note, we are looking for help! Submissions in the form of articles suitable for The General or the annual, historical scenarios with references, and modules. You can send submissions to either MMP or AH.

There is also a strong desire amongst us to finish the game system and get out the Allied/Axis Minor Armour and Ordnance.

"Any plans to release additional material for SASL, such as tables for the other nations?"

AH asked us if we thought it was worth supporting, I responded that it seemed real popular on the list. If anyone's got some tables worked up and tried out, submit 'em. I wouldn't expect to see another SASL module or anything (but who knows?) but they could be used in the Annual/General I guess.

"What direction will ASL take after KGPII, Tarawa, your HASL module, and the minors are finished?"

Too soon to tell.

If you just took the ideas that I have received over the past few days, we'd more than double the existing ASL product line! Clearly, we can't do it all the first year or two (or five!).

Things we work on will be driven by submissions we receive - we can't design it all in-house since that would stifle the creative energies of the ASL hobby and would also take forever - and approval by Avalon Hill for any products - I may find the Spanish Civil War to be the be all/end all with regard to ASL, but they may not want to see anything on that period relating to ASL. They're the boss.

I'd like to see more ASL in The General, a smaller, more responsive, twice a year annual (a and b), intro ASL, complete SASL, pre/post WWII (Israel, Korea, SCW...). Will all this happen? I hope so! We plan on reinvigorating ASL at Avalon Hill, and we won't fail for lack of trying.

TIME ON TARGET

Ω

Time On Target 2 is out now. For \$22 (including postage) you get 20 (!) scenarios based on the fighting between the German 2nd Marine Infantry Division and the British VIII Corps and XII Corps in April of 1945, a sheet of full-color Railway Embankment overlays, and 32 counters. Expect to see a full review next issue. It is available from Kinetic Energy Productions, P.O. Box 291580, Hollywood, CA90029.

Ω

FINAL FIRE

That's all for this issue. Hope you enjoyed it. Feel free to write and tell me what you think, or even contribute.

Issue 7 should be out at the start of March.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is the newsletter for the British ASL community. It costs £1 per issue (overseas readers should send three International Reply Coupons). All correspondence should be sent to VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES, 49 Lombardy Rise, Leicester, LE5 0FQ or 100665,267@compuserve.com.

VI⁹⁹ HIGH DANGER

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

LOCATION: 10 miles west of El Alamein

DATE: 31 October 1943

COMMENTARY: As the 9th Australian Division advanced westwards, a German-held salient in the north projected into their lines. To hold Rommel's attention, it was decided that the division would advance northwards to the sea to pinch out the salient. After heavy fighting, they were stopped just short of the coast, leaving a narrow tapering salient running north to south. At 1230 hours, elements of the 21st Panzer Division attacked, hoping to eliminate the threat.

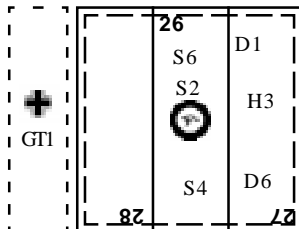
Advance elements of the 21st Panzer Division soon overran B Company of the 2/32nd Battalion, destroying it as a fighting force, but then Valentines from the 40th Royal Tank Regiment intervened, hoping to stop the slaughter. By days end, the 40th RTR had driven the 21st Panzer Division from the field, but had lost 25 tanks in the process. October 31st 1942 is recalled by those who survived it as a day of "High Danger".



TURN RECORD CHART

AUSTRALIAN Sets Up First [107]	* 1	2	3 [Ⓢ]	4	5	6	END
GERMAN Moves First [52]							

THE BATTLEFIELD AND CONDITIONS



Place overlays as follows: **H3** on 27S6/R5; **D1** on 27Y5/X4; **D6** on 27I6/J6; **S6** on 26X6/Y6; **S2** on 26S7/T7; **S4** and 26G8/H7. Hex 27S4 is a Hillcock summit (F6.6) hex.

EC are Dry with No Wind at start.

Intense Heat Haze (F11.621) and Light Dust (F11.71) are in effect.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Germans win by Controlling hex 27S4 at game end.

SCENARIO SPECIFIC RULES

1 Board 27 is subject to a pre-game Bombardment (C18).

Elements of 21st Panzer Division enter on the west edge on GT1.

BALANCE: add a MMG to the German order of battle.

ELR: 4
SAN: 2

Elements of B Company, 2/32nd Battalion, 9th Australian Division set up on board 27.

BALANCE: add a MMG to the Australian order of battle.

ELR: 4
SAN: 2

Elements of 40th Royal Tank Regiment enter on GT3 along the east edge of the board.

V2⁹⁹ TEBBE'S TIGERS

© 1995 Jeff Shields

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

LOCATION: The outskirts of Sporonyy, on the Manych River

DATE: 15 January 1943

COMMENTARY: One of Stalin's attempts to cut off Army Group A involved a massive drive by the 2nd Guards Army between the Don and Manych rivers. The Russian attack reached its peak as General Rotmistrov's troops pushed into the outskirts of Bataysk, a suburb of Rostov. Under General Manstein's direction, Count Schwerin disengaged the "Greyhound" Division from the fighting south of Stalingrad to redirect a spearhead into the deep right flank of rotmistrov's penetration.

Captain Tebbe, commanding the new Tigers, drove his troops through the Russian lines to the high ground near Sporony, then turned and assaulted the village. After a short fight, in which the Russians lost several T-34s and AT guns, the village and the nearby bridge on the Manych were secured for further actions against the Russian flank.

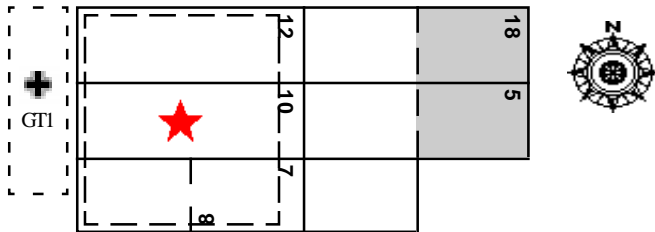
The German successes at Sporonyy and later at Samodurovka seriously hampered the Russian attack on Rostov and led to the successful withdrawal of Army Group A from rapidly closing encirclement.



TURN RECORD CHART

★ RUSSIAN Sets Up First [166]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	END
⊕ GERMAN Moves First [156]											

THE BATTLEFIELD AND CONDITIONS



Only hexrows GG-Q are playable on mapboards 12 and . Mapboard 8 is placed under mapboard 7 so that hexrow Q abuts hexrow A on mapboard 7 .

All buildings are wooden [EXC: buildings 12U5 and 10Z6 are stone].

All woods are brush.

There is a two way vehicular stone bridge in 7AA6-7AA8.

The river is deep but not frozen. All ponds and streams are frozen.

EC are Moderate with No Wind at start.

Ground snow is in effect.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Prior to Russian set-up the German player secretly records which three conditions he must fulfill at game end to win:

1 Control hexes 7AA5 and 7AA9

2 Control buildings 12U5 and 10Z6

3 Have at least twice as many CVPs as the Russians

4 Control all multi-hex buildings on board 12 between hexrows I-Y inclusive

5 Control all multi-hex buildings on board 10 between hexrows R-GG inclusive

SCENARIO SPECIFIC RULES

1 Each rowhouse complex is treated as one multi-hex building for Mopping Up Control purposes.

Elements of 60th Motorised Infantry Regiment, 16th Motorised Division, with attached elements of Tiger Battalion 503 and Panzer Battalion 116 enter on the east edge north of the river; some, all or no units may enter on each turn.

BALANCE: remove the 9-1 leader from the Russian order of battle.

ELR: 3
SAN: 3

Elements of 2nd Guards Mechanised Corps, 2nd Guards Army set up east of hexrow B on boards 12, 10 and/or 7. In addition to their Guns, 1 MMC and any SMC/SW stacked with it may set up HIP.

BALANCE: bore sighting is NA.

ELR: 4
SAN: 2

V3⁹⁹ ASSAULT ON A QUEEN

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

LOCATION: The Hague, Netherlands

DATE: 11 May 1940

COMMENTARY: Following the spectacular success of the parachute drop on the fortress of Eben Emael, it was feared the Germans would attempt a similar raid to seize Queen Wilhelmina, infant crown princess Beatrix, and other members of the Dutch Royal Family. Fearing the Germans would strike at any moment, it was decided to move the Royal Family from Huis ten Bosch Palace to the Palace of Noordeinde deep in the Hague.

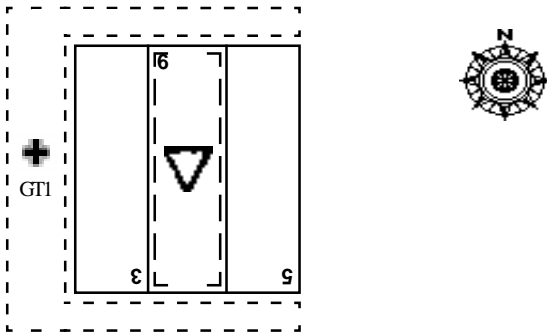
Dutch fears were well founded, as an elite element of the 22nd Luftlande Division had been brought in to stage such a raid. The mission had been well prepared, with accurate maps and up to date intelligence information regarding the Queen's movements. The raid was scrubbed however when the Ju-52s carrying the group crashed during landing.



TURN RECORD CHART

▽ DUTCH Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	END
+		①	②	③	④	④	④	⑤	⑤		

THE BATTLEFIELD AND CONDITIONS



Treat all hills as ground level terrain. Woods and buildings on those hill masses still exist, but at ground level.
All buildings are wooden (EXC: buildings 6K8 and 6N4 are stone). Hex 6J8 is a third level building hex.
Ignore all shellholes. Treat shellholes according to the other terrain in the hex.

EC are Moderate with No Wind at start.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The German player wins by exiting the Royal Family off any mapboard edge except the west.

SCENARIO SPECIFIC RULES

- The Prisoner HS represents the Dutch Royal Family. The Royal Family must set up HIP in either building 6K8 or 6N4. It may only move/advance if accompanied by a Personnel unit or if it is a Passenger. The Dutch player may not make fire attacks from a Location containing the Royal Family (EXC: he may fire at any enemy unit which has fired at that Location). The Royal Family may not attack, escape, scrounge, possess SW, use Double Time or Dash. If a side eliminates the Royal Family it immediately loses.
- Beginning on GT2, the Dutch player makes a dr in his RPH to determine if his reinforcements arrive. If the dr is £ the circled number on the Turn Record Chart the reinforcements enter that turn.

+ **Special Raid Detachment, 16th Grenadier Regiment** enter on any one mapboard edge except the west.
BALANCE: add 1 to the Dutch reinforcement dr.

ELR: 4
SAN: 0

▽ **Elements of the Royal Dutch Grenadiers** set up anywhere on board 6.
BALANCE: deduct 1 from the Dutch reinforcement dr.

ELR: 3
SAN: 2

Elements of the 6th Jager Regiment [ELR:3] enter along the west edge as per SSR 2.

V4⁹⁹ ONLY THE ENEMY IN FRONT

© 1996 Neil Stevens

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

LOCATION: Eyne, Belgium

DATE: 3 September 1944

COMMENTARY: After the encirclement and destruction of the German forces in the Falaise pocket, the Allies were able to push on rapidly with their advance into Europe. The British XXX Corps was tasked with an armoured dash across Belgium and on into Holland. In order to prevent the Germans from cutting the Corps' route behind the lead elements, the 61st Regiment of the Reconnaissance Corps moved into a holding position on the flank along the Escaut Canal from Ghent to the south of Oudenarde. Just north of Oudenarde a party from B Squadron was holding the bridge at Eyne when a German attack materialised from out of themist.

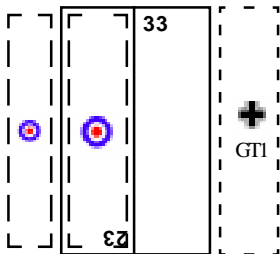
As the Germans approached the bridge the anti-tank gun, directed by Sergeant Atkinson, waited until all of the enemy vehicles converged and then opened fire, "brewing up" four of them. Changing to HE the anti-tank gun then engaged the advancing infantry while the rest of the detachment opened fire with everything it had. At 1300 hrs, a German officer approached under a Red Cross flag to collect the wounded. About 60 German dead and wounded were counted. The British were unharmed. The Germans were harangued by the British company commander to surrender but stubbornly refused: battle was subsequently rejoined.



TURN RECORD CHART

BRITISH Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
GERMAN Moves First [110]								

THE BATTLEFIELD AND CONDITIONS



The bridges in hexes 23H4, 23X3 and 23BBB5 do not exist.

EC are Moist with no wind at start. Weather is Mist (E3.32).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The German player wins immediately when he controls buildings 23O10, 23Q9 and the rowhouse in 23M8, or if he has ³ 20 Casualty VPs at game end. Any other result is a British victory.

SCENARIO SPECIFIC RULES

1 If in the same Location as the ATG, the British 8-1 leader may direct its fire, by applying his Leadership to its TH DR. If he sets up with the ATG he may set up HIP as per A12.34.

2 If, at the end of every RPh commencing with GT5, the Germans have < 5 squad-equivalents in Good Order then the German player must request a truce which ends the game immediately.

3 Kindling is NA for the British.

+

Elements of 718th Infantry Division, XV Army enter on turn 1 along the east edge of mapboard 33.

BALANCE: change the German 9-1 leader to a 9-2 leader.

ELR: 3
SAN: 2

4 ¹ 6-7							13	16	16
11				4	2		1	3	1

●

Detachment of B Squadron, 61st Reconnaissance Regiment [ELR:4] set up anywhere on board 23. One squad-equivalent and any SW/leaders stacked with it may be set up HIP. The Carrier crews are elite HS (D6.82).

BALANCE: add five "?" counters the the British OoB.

ELR: 4
SAN: 4

5				2		

16	16	AT
APP A	B 11 B	6-pounder
1	1 PIAT	3 7-cwt
2 BMG	4 BMG	57L
2		

28	31
IV AC	III LRC
1	1
37LL	AA MG
1	1

Counter artwork taken from *Virtual ASL (VASL)* and used with the permission of Rodney Kinney (programmer) and Carl Fung (artist).