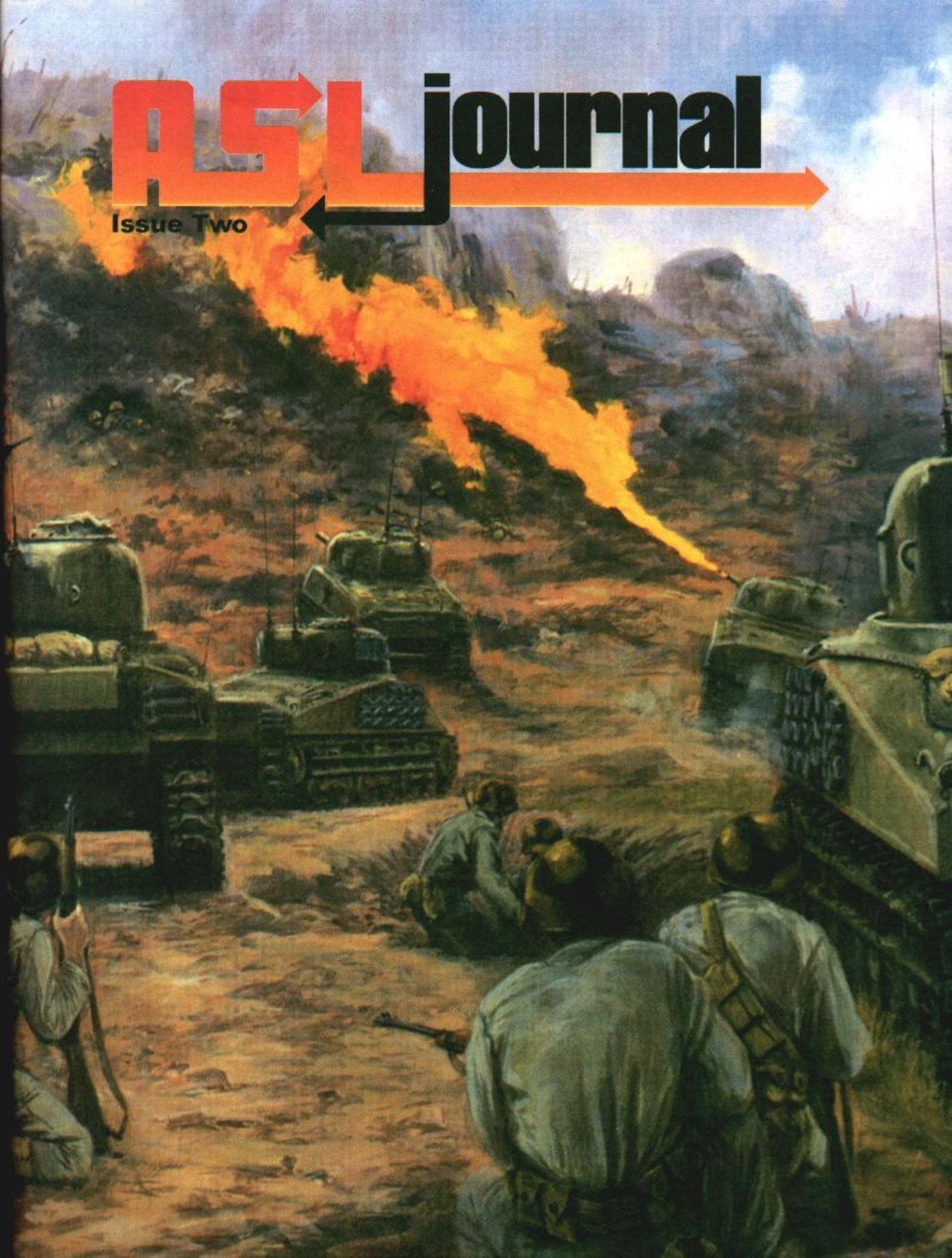
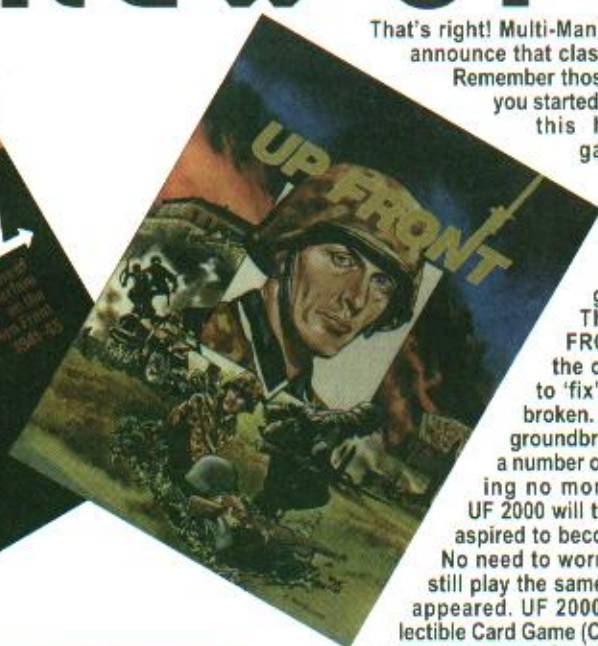


ASL journal

Issue Two



THE GAMES WE GREW UP WITH..... JUST GREW UP!



That's right! Multi-Man Publishing is proud to announce that classic wargaming is back!

Remember those state of the art games you started playing when you found this hobby? Those same

games are coming back with a bang! Slated to reappear in the first year of the new millennium is the most popular WWII card game ever, UP FRONT.

The Y2K version of UP FRONT will not stray from the original design-no need to 'fix' something which isn't broken. But, UF 2000 will feature groundbreaking new artwork and a number of modernizations including no more chits! That's right, UF 2000 will truly be the card game it aspired to become some 15 years ago.

No need to worry though, UF 2000 will still play the same way it did when it first appeared. UF 2000 will also debut a Collectible Card Game (CCG). This version will be entirely optional. Some of these cards are illustrated at left. The UF 2000 game cards will be slightly larger than the original version, but will also accommodate all of the information indicated by chits in the past-and they'll also be full color. The CCG will feature a variety of new cards, all fully compatible with the basic UF 2000 game. The CCG Starter Set will mirror the non-CCG cards but will feature one-of-a-kind photos for Vehicles and Personnel (as seen on the PFC Giffallen card at left). The CCG also brings rare cards such as the Sgt. Stahler and the Russian Sniper cards shown below. These cards offer unique opportunities and provide variety of play should you and your opponent agree beforehand to incorporate them into your scenario. The possibilities and fog of war created by these rare cards will make the collectible version of UF 2000 truly unique. American officers captured German SMGs, Fortified Buildings, the lethal Automatic KIA Sniper, and more! The possibilities are endless, and Up Front 2000 will be a must-have for those that still play their original version, as well as a great introductory wargame to finally persuade your buddy to become an opponent.

Just about everyone at MMP cut their wargaming teeth on Avalon Hill's Panzerblitz. Fond memories of a glorious time in our hobby are called to mind by the mere mention of this classic. Well it's time to shed the 'classic' label and stride boldly into the year 2000 with a new edition of Panzerblitz and its companion, Panzerleader. A dedicated group of gamers is hard at work to rebuild this timeless masterpiece and MMP is hoping to bring yet another classic boardgame back onto your hobby shop shelf!

Stay tuned for developments on these classic games, and many other former AH titles, on our website at www.multimanpublishing.com or contact your local hobby shop and inquire about their availability.

Multi-Man Publishing, LLC
PO Box 601
Gambrills, Maryland
21054
Fax: 410-519-4411
Phone: 410-519-4151

★ **SNIPER (R)**

Card 38 of 100

Play as **RUSSIAN** Discard only; May be used to replace ANY SNIPER discard by the **RUSSIAN** player. **Automatic KIA**; **RPC** determines victim. No **SNIPER CHECK** allowed by opposing player.

2	5
1	6
0	7

KIA:8

● #12 PFC Giffallen
Light Machine Gun

Bren
PT:48

Card 1134 of 2000

Morale:3

Malfunction RP 0-6 RM 5-6

2	2
1	4
0	7

KIA:9



Multi-Man Publishing

✠ #23 SGT STAHLE
Machine Pistol:

MP38
PT:55

Card 1 of 30

Morale:6

Malfunction RP 0-6 RM 5-6

Wounded: 1/2 FP

Wounded: 1/2 FP



Multi-Man Publishing's *ASL Journal* is devoted to the presentation of authoritative articles, tested scenarios, and occasional game inserts for the *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* game system, board wargaming's premiere tactical simulation. Such articles encompass, but are not limited to, the strategy, tactics, variation, the design and historical background of the *ASL* series of games. The *ASL Journal* is published by Multi-Man Publishing, LLC (P.O. Box 601, Gambrills, Maryland 21054-0601, USA) solely for the edification of the serious *ASL* aficionado in the hopes of improving the player's proficiency and broadening his enjoyment of the game.

While most of the material in the *ASL Journal* is solicited by the editors, articles from the general readership are considered for publication at the discretion of MMP's staff. Materials may be submitted either electronically (submission@multimanpub.com) or by mail (see above address), and should embrace the tenets of common English usage. There is no limit on word length. Photographs must have a caption and credits on the back. Rejected materials will be returned to the author *only* when accompanied by a SASE. Potential authors are advised that submitted material becomes the sole property of Multi-Man Publishing, LLC. Renumeration will consist of a flat fee of U.S. \$30 per 8"x11" text page plus one complimentary copy of the *Journal* in which the material sees print, payable upon publication of the materials. For further information, write to ASL Articles c/o MMP.

The *ASL JOURNAL* is produced by **Multi-Man Publishing, LLC**, which consists of Russ Buntin, Perry Cocke, Carl Fago, Curt Schilling, and Brian Youse.

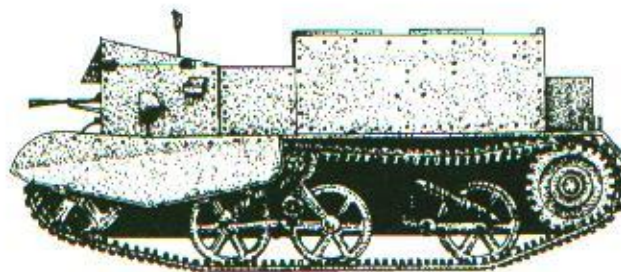
COVER ART: David Pentland

MAP DESIGN AND ART: Don Petros

ASL SCENARIO DESIGN: Chas Smith, Dan Dolan, Mark Bretherton, Vic Provost, Roger Best, Curt Schilling, Pete Shelling, Jim Stahler, Tim Van Sant, and Brian Youse.

SCENARIO PLAYTEST: Jim Stahler, Bret Hildebran, Randy Yeates, Guy Falsetti, Bill Heyward, Mike Conklin, Jeff Thompson, Lee Tankersly, Michael Libens, Robert Wolkey, and Ted Bleck (Special Thanks also to the Windy City Wargamers, the guys at Bounding Fire, the Paddington Bears, Chuck Goetz, and the Yousehouse Irregulars: Kevin Valerien, Ken Dunn, John Slotwinski, Steve Petersen, John Appel, Bob Lyman, Jeff Evich, Matt Deuber, Wayne Hadady, Tom Meier, and Darren Emge)

QUESTIONS: All questions on the *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* systems must be based on the rules of play (not historical or design matters), on the current rules edition, must be phrased in the form of a yes or no question, and should be accompanied by any appropriate diagram. Postal questions should be submitted to MMP (address above) and will not be answered unless accompanied by a self-addressed and stamped envelope. E-mail questions on *ASL* may be submitted via our web site at www.multimanpub.com or directly to asl_qa@multimanpub.com.



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A VIEW FROM THE MOUND

Well here we are, almost a year to the day after our first release under the MMP-Hasbro aegis, *ASL JOURNAL #1*, and we could not be happier. Last year saw the release of four official ASL products, five counting the second edition of *DOOMED BATTALIONS*. Believe me, there were times when we didn't think we could pull it off.

From day one the folks at Hasbro Games have gone out of their way to welcome and assist us in every way possible. Gale Steiner, Phil Jamison, Phil Jackson, Mike Hirtle, Mark Foster, Mark Stark, Mike Craighead and even Hasbro's President Alan Hassenfeld have gone way beyond anything we ever dreamed of in the way of support.

Along the way, we've had our rough spots, some *faux pas*, and just plain old mistakes. This will probably never stop entirely, but we've made tremendous strides to correct the problems we can control, and we will continue to try to eliminate these. Our goal from day one has been very clear—first rate customer service. While sounding narrow in focus, customer service encompasses everything we do here at MMP. From filling orders in a timely fashion, to handling phone calls in a polite, courteous and professional manner, to the historical research, development, playtesting, and presentation of the actual game itself, quality customer service is behind every product and every decision at MMP.

Over the past three months MMP has taken an even larger step into the wargaming hobby through our recent agreement with Hasbro that will allow MMP, via license, to work on former Avalon Hill titles many folks thought dead. Titles such as *PANZERBLITZ* and *PANZER LEADER, UP FRONT, BREAKOUT: NORMANDY* (and the area movement series), and Great Campaigns of the American Civil War are only the beginning. Reprints, updates, expansions, we are contemplating all of these and more. In some cases we are working with the game's original designers, and on other titles we have teams of highly respected gamers submitting already-designed expansions and updates, or we are assembling such teams to pick up where others left off. *UP FRONT* is a perfect example. Don Hawthorne is heading up a small team of designers and players for the reprint of *UP FRONT*. You might remember Don as a former managing editor of Avalon Hill's *The GENERAL* magazine, or perhaps as a well-known name in *UP FRONT*. We have seen this team's work and can only say that it will be nothing short of breathtaking if we can pull it off. Can you say full color personnel cards?

That is a lot of action on a new front, but ASL players out there need not worry. ASL will remain MMP's focus. There has been quite a bit of change taking place in the ASL world. The time of non-support from the offi-

cial source of ASL is truly over. ASL will now (and for as far as our eyes can see) have a highly motivated official producer—MMP. We have been eagerly working out agreements and arrangements with former publishers of third party ASL products. This Journal is an example of our desire to work with creative and talented ASL people throughout the hobby. Chas Smith and Sam Tyson, formerly known as Bounding Fire Productions, were enthusiastic about working with us and submitted some of the articles and scenarios seen here. The three scenarios ("The Merzenhausen Zoo", "Inhumaine", and "The Guns of Naro") from the 2nd Armored Division (Hell on Wheels) and two armor articles are all good stuff, as are the five brand new scenarios covering the Herman Göring Division and the scenario analysis of "Naro." Look for more of the same from these guys. Australia's Paddington Bears have also been highly receptive to discussions about this very same thing and you will find two of their high quality, tournament-sized gems inside these pages. We also feature two scenarios from the Bunker dudes out in western Massachusetts. Not to mention our other contributors. Along these same lines, MMP has engaged the services of Mike Reed, playtest chief of the former Kinetic Energy. Mike will head up the thankless job of playtest co-ordinator for MMP. We are currently trying to strike a deal for the entire body of Kinetic Energy work, some published, some not. There was never any question about KE's commitment to quality ASL, and such an agreement would be a win-win for MMP and ASL.

We are happy to provide some insight as to what's on the horizon. The 2nd edition of the *ASL RULEBOOK* is next on our list, and we are already hard at work on this. This will be one of the most important ASL products we publish. We hope to have it on store shelves and available to you sometime this spring. Then there is *ARMIES OF OBLIVION*. How long have you waited? Too long would be the near-unanimous answer, and we would have to agree. Work on *AoO* is well underway, friends. It's going to be a massive project, one of the largest ASL modules when all is said and done. Plans are for 5 geomorphic mapboards, 12-16 scenarios, and extensive coverage of all the axis minor nations, as well as completion of the German and Russian Chapter H vehicle notes, along with additional counters. Armored trains might finally make their appearance. The more we get into this the more it seems this product might not be ready until December 2000. No matter what it takes, however, we plan on the release date having the year 2000 on it.

Another product that might make its initial appearance this year is the "ASL Historical Study Series." The brainchild of Brian Youse,

this potential line of products finds its roots in the HASL series, but with some major differences: geomorphic mapboards with accompanying scenarios as well as one or more HASL maps with scenarios and Campaign games and a historical booklet. Counters are certainly a possibility as well. The first battles to receive this treatment look to be on Guadalcanal, with HASL maps for Edson's Ridge and Hell's Corner, based on a submission from Nadir El-Farra, the brains behind Baraque de Fraiture.

On the horizon for 2001 we can see Introductory ASL making its way to the forefront (complete with electronic ASL rule book), as well as the long-awaited and highly-anticipated Central Stalingrad HASL from Tom Morin and the Bunker dudes. Another SASL module to round out that system is also in the works, and a HASL module covering the battle for Ortona ("Italy's Stalingrad") is pretty far along in design by Canada's own Jim McLeod as well. We also hope to work out something cool with Virtual ASL (VASL) on the computer.

This is by no means an all-encompassing list, as we have plenty of other irons in the fire. (Hang in there, guys.) We aren't lacking for ideas or submissions, but if you have an idea, a concept, or a design, by all means please contact us. MMP has yet to design an ASL product completely in-house, and we may never have the time to do so if the outside submissions keep flowing. That's a good thing, as much as we would love to take the time to do some of our own ideas.

We'd be remiss if we signed off without thanking a couple of people. First off, to the big guy upstairs for blessing me with three healthy kids, a beautiful wife, and a right arm that works on a different level than most others when holding a baseball. Secondly, to Lu Ann Youse. If you've ever placed a phone call to MMP, or received an order from us, you've been witness to one person's tireless efforts to maintain customer service and support. What she has accomplished for us has been nothing short of amazing. Hats off to Lu Ann. Lastly, to John Hill, Don Greenwood, Bob McNamara, and Charlie Kibler. Without these guys none of us would be playing ASL, and that would truly be a shame. It has been a major part of my life, and some of you out there can certainly say the same. It seems ironic that MMP sold the last copy of the original Squad Leader module on December 7th, 1999.

On behalf of myself and the rest of MMP—Russ Buntin, Perry Cocke, Carl Fago, and Brian Youse—Here's to a happy and healthy new millennium.

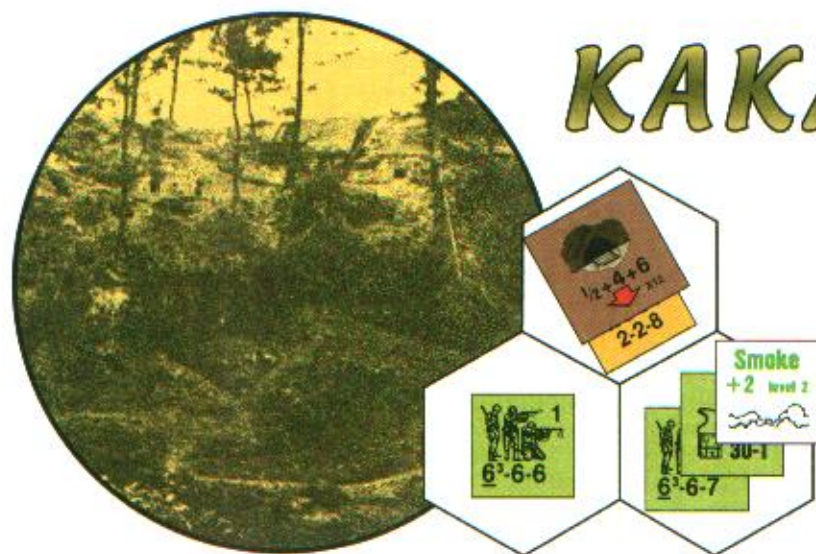
Thanks and God Bless.

Curt Schilling
President, Multi-Man Publishing, LLC

KAKAZU RIDGE

Historical Background and Designers Notes

by Dan Dolan



Easter Sunday 1 April, 1945 dawned cool and clear off of Okinawa. The officers and men on the 1300 ships of the Central Pacific Task Force couldn't have asked for a better day to launch what turned out to be the final amphibious invasion of the Second World War. They were about to assault the last bastion of the Japanese Empire outside of the Home Islands.

Operation Iceberg was the largest amphibious operation that American forces had mounted to date in the war. The distance from the U.S. mainland was one of the more daunting factors in the planning of this campaign. It was 6,250 nautical miles from the west coast of the U.S. and it took 26 days for a ship to sail from there to Okinawa. Proper planning was essential for this project to succeed. There was adequate shipping for the initial landings but after that the planners had to anticipate the needs of the forces ashore a month in advance.

General Buckner would command the 10th Army once it was ashore and knew the kind of fanatical resistance that could be expected from the Japanese defenders. The XXIV Corps would land four divisions abreast south of Hagushi and was expected to drive across the island and then wheel south and push toward Shuri. The 96th Division was initially required to capture the high ground that commanded the landing beaches to the south and southeast.

The invasion of Okinawa began at 0820. There was no initial Japanese response to the landings. Within an hour there were sixteen Battalion Landing Teams ashore, two from each of the two Regimental Landing Teams from the four divisions (6th Marine, 1st Marine, 7th, and 96th). The U.S. soon had over 16,000 men ashore and ready to begin the conquest of Okinawa. But the unexpected ease of the landings caught the U.S. planners off guard and a feeling of trepidation came over the men ashore. Where were the Japanese?

Defending Okinawa was the 32nd Army of Lt. General Mitsuri Ushijima which consisted of three divisions (9th, 24th, and 62nd) as well as the 44th Independent Mixed Brigade.

Totaling 31 battalions, this force was augmented by two regiments of 150mm howitzers and one regiment of 75mm and 120mm guns, plus one Heavy Artillery Battalion with 150mm guns and several platoons of large caliber (320mm) mortars. For the first time in the war all of the on-hand Japanese artillery assets (excluding the divisional artillery) were under unified control—that of the 5th Artillery Command.

Due to the excessive length of Okinawa's coastline, the Japanese never planned to contest the landings. They instead chose to have several small (battalion-sized) forces in strategic strong points supported by light mortar and artillery to harass the Americans as they searched out the main line of the Japanese defenses.

The first week was spent seeking out the Japanese and fighting several small sharp engagements against Japanese outposts. On April 3rd, after cutting the island in half, the XXIV Corps wheeled southward and began its drive toward Shuri. The two Army Divisions (the 7th & 96th) advanced with the objective of attaining a line along the Urasoe-Mura, Hill 178, and Ouki Hill mass.

For the 96th Division, April 5th marked the beginning of the fierce Japanese resistance that would characterize the remainder of the Okinawa campaign. At one point on the Ginowan Road, the men of the 3rd Battalion of the 383rd Regiment had 20 machine guns and a slew of mortars firing at them as they tried to move toward Kakazu Ridge. This was a portent of things to come for the 96th.

After the capture of Cactus Ridge later that week, the 96th Division was faced with the Japanese defenses in the Kakazu Ridge area. Intelligence had failed to realize just how extensive the Japanese preparations were on this insignificant looking little hill. These positions had been well prepared and were manned in the most part by the men of the 13th Independent Battalion who were willing to die in place fighting for their Emperor and their homeland. The final curtain was about to go up.

The Japanese use of the Independent Infantry Battalions to slow the American advance from the beaches to the main line of resistance had succeeded in delaying the Americans for a week. Using a series of local counterattacks supported by artillery and mortar fire, the Japanese had kept the Americans off balance and unsure of Japanese intentions. The time for delaying was over, however. Now the two combatants faced each other with the lines clearly drawn.

It is at this point that MMP and I begin our presentation of the actions on and around Kakazu Ridge. Allow me a moment here to explain how this project came to be. The publication of Kakazu Ridge brings to fruition the labors of many people, myself and Don Petros—the creator of the map—included among them. I had submitted a group of scenarios to Avalon Hill several years ago and during MMP's early days of running ASL I had spoken with them about publishing the scenarios in an ANNUAL. At the same time we were discussing this, I began working on a HASL version of Kakazu Ridge. MMP was rightfully concerned about my drawing skills, but my initial version of the map was a simple black and white work-up of the Kakazu area.

After the ASL Oktoberfest in 1998, MMP contacted me and told me that they had a map of Kakazu Ridge done by Don Petros and asked if I would be interested in working on the project with them. Once I saw Don's version of the map I folded mine up and haven't taken it out since. The thing that struck me was the similarity of the work that Don and I had done independently. Don's map was eerily similar to mine in its depiction of the area around Kakazu. I will never claim to be any kind of an artist, but I was looking at what is the finest HASL map produced to date. I instantly agreed to do the scenarios for this as I had several already done and had ideas for more. I wanted to show the scope and bitterness of the fighting that took place in the Kakazu area over the several weeks beginning April 9, 1945. I also wanted to utilize Don's excellent map to its fullest potential. Luckily,

the actions that occurred took place over most of the map area, so it was just a question of getting them into scenario form.

The 96th Division had its eyes set on the Urasoe-Mura escarpment as its objective. Kakazu Ridge was viewed as more of a speed bump than a significant obstacle to its advance. Just how wrong this was soon became evident.

A description of the area around Kakazu Ridge is in order here. Standing in front of Kakazu Ridge the Americans looked across a deep gorge that ran the length of the ridge and was covered with woods and brush. This gorge was considered impassable to armor, so that any attack against the ridge line would be without the benefit of armor. See SSR KR2. Even infantry would have to struggle through this gorge (although by virtue of being a Dry Stream, the stream bed of a woods hex is not filled with woods as a gully-woods hex would be). The Japanese had this area pre-registered with artillery mounted in the caves along the face of the Urasoe-Mura escarpment a mile to the south. The area was also dotted with numerous tombs that were dug into the sides of the gorge and of Kakazu Ridge itself. Japanese engineers had made extensive use of these tombs as pillboxes to hide machine guns and infantry in relative safety from the American air-artillery team. I felt that the use of caves to

represent these tombs was the way to go as it didn't require a new terrain type for what already has been done in the basic ASL system. It also allowed them to be connected to the cave complexes. More on the complexes later.

The ridge itself is a rather nondescript little hill with (looking north) a smaller hill to its west (Kakazu West to the 96th Division, Crocker's Hill to the 27th Division later on) separated from it by a saddle that drops off between them. Most of the vegetation had been stripped away by U.S. bombardments, with much of it lying on the ground, sometimes to a depth of several feet. Don's use of the blasted tree depiction allowed me to call this terrain Debris—an already-existing terrain type that functioned quite well for our purposes. See SSR KR3. (A tip to future designers: whenever possible utilize existing rules and avoid writing special terrain rules.)

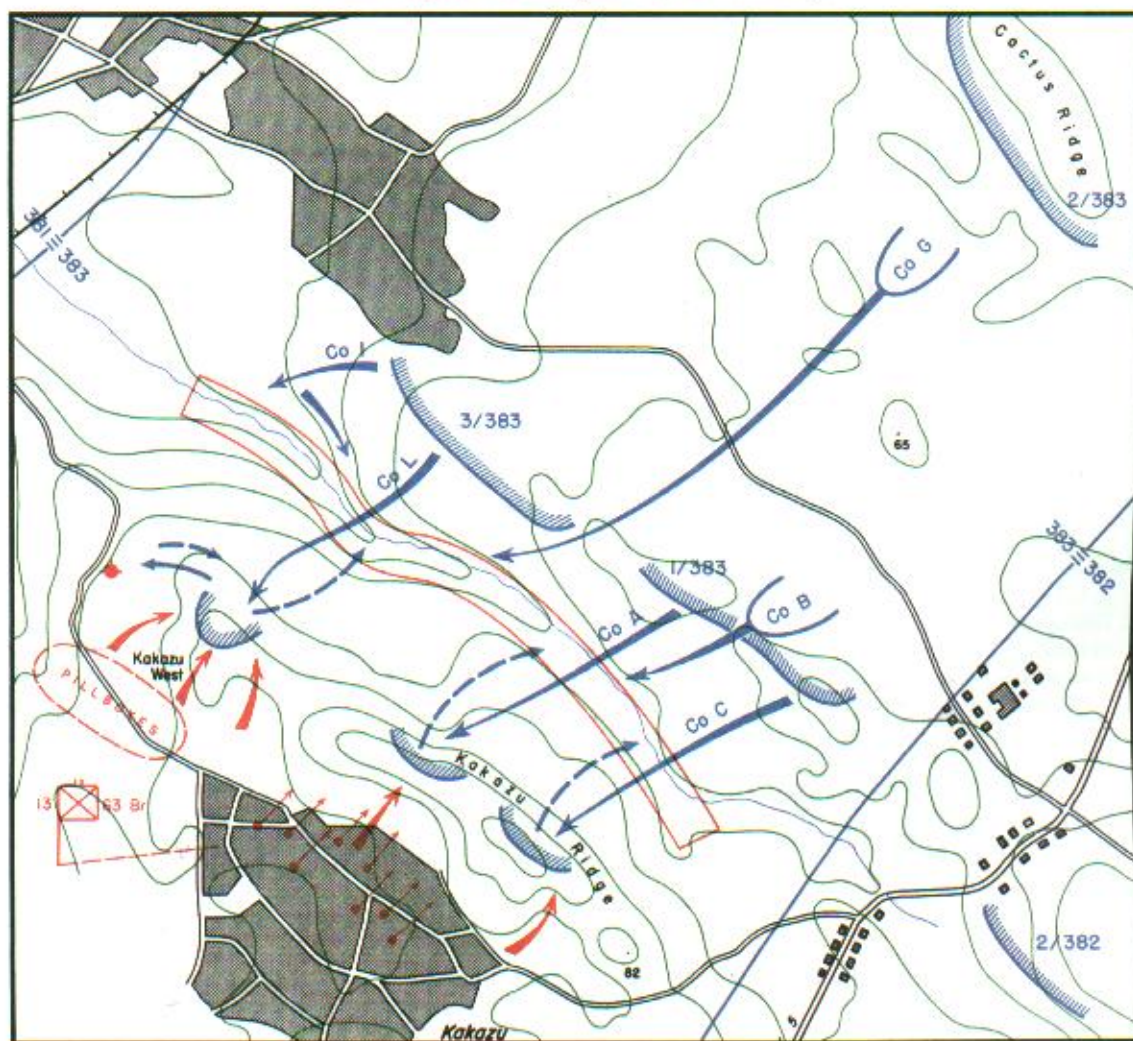
Located behind the ridge is the small village of Kakazu. At the point that we begin our narrative it has been hit pretty hard by American air and artillery and has been pretty well rubbed. The Japanese have dug in the rubble and have mined the approaches to the village realizing that if the Americans want to get armor up on the ridge the tanks would have to come around it from behind and not across the gorge.

The many caves on the reverse slope of Kakazu and Kakazu West dominate the village and, if unsuppressed, make any movement in it dangerous. On either side of the village there are fields that are excellent tank terrain, and the Japanese have utilized whatever cover there was in these areas to hide anti-tank teams.

Designating specific Cave Complexes (SSR KR6) was an idea that came out of design discussions over how to represent the use of extensive tunnels and caves by the Japanese to honeycomb Kakazu Ridge. I originally had one giant complex under both hills. MMP suggested breaking it up into a series of smaller complexes to prevent the Japanese from moving from one side of the hill to the other in one turn. They could still traverse the entire hill underground, but it would take several turns. Some scenarios give the Japanese player extra Cave Complexes, introducing the element of uncertainty as to exactly where the caves will be.

I also wanted to show the extent of the Japanese efforts in digging caves and utilizing tombs in this battle. Allowing only one cave per hexside didn't really show this and it also allowed a key position to be neutralized by taking out one cave. Allowing several caves per hexside was the way to go as the rules are eas-

U.S. Army Attacks on April 9th, 1945 (U.S. Army)



KAKAZU'S TOMBS



ASL SCENARIO J16

Scenario Design: Dan Dolan



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Japanese win immediately upon exiting $\geq$ 12 Exit VP (excluding Prisoners) off the north edge of the playing area.

KAKAZU RIDGE, OKINAWA, 13 April 1945: As night fell on April 12, Sgt. Beaufort Anderson and the members of his mortar platoon occupied several of the many tombs dotting the area between Kakazu Ridge and Kakazu West. Good things seldom happen when one is forced to sleep with the dead. This night would prove to be no exception as elements of the Japanese 272nd Independent Infantry Battalion launched a counterattack straight at Sgt. Anderson's position.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexes numbered ≥ 8 and ≤ 18 on between hexrows F-N are playable.)

BALANCE:

☆ In the American OB, replace one MMG in A Company with a .50 cal HMG.

● In the Japanese OB, replace one 8+1 with a 9-1.

TURN RECORD CHART

☆ AMERICAN Sets Up First [209]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
● JAPANESE Moves First [310]									



Elements of C Company, 1st Battalion, 381st Regiment and Mortar Platoon [ELR: 3] set up on/east-of hexrow J in hexes numbered ≤ 13 : {SAN: 5}

 6-6-7	 6-6-6	 2-2-7	 8-1	 8-1	 1-4-9	 8-15	 4-10	 60-13-45	 1+4+6
3	5	2					2	2	



Elements of A Company, 1st Battalion, 381st Regiment set up on/west-of hexrow H in hexes numbered ≤ 14 :

 6-6-7	 2-2-7	 8-2	 8-1	 6-12	 4-10	 8	 1+4+6
6	2				2		2



Elements of Akiyama Tai and Shimuzu Tai of the 272nd Independent Infantry Battalion [ELR: 3] enter on/after Turn 1 along the south edge [EXC: see SSR 5]: {SAN: 2}

 4-4-7	 2-2-8	 8-1	 8-0	 8-1	 3	 2	 2-8	 1	 30-1	 1+4+6
20	5		2	2	2	2	2	3		(see SSR 5)



SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. See KR SSR. Night rules (E1.) are in effect. Base NVR is 2. The Americans are the Scenario Defender and the Japanese are the Scenario Attacker. The Majority Squad Type of both sides is Normal.

2. American units use caves as if they were Japanese [EXC: Cave Complexes (G11.2) are NA]. Japanese units may not enter a cave which currently contains an unbroken enemy MMC.

3. The OB-given American hero is exempt from Wound Severity the first time he becomes Wounded during the scenario. In addition, if in a hex containing an American 60mm mortar, he may elect to make a special Thrown Mortar Round attack in lieu of any other attack as if using a SW. A Thrown Mortar Round attack requires no TH roll, has a Multiple ROF of 3, and attacks with 4 FP; a CH occurs if the colored die roll of the IFT DR is a 1. The maximum range is one hex; an attack against a higher elevation attacks the hero's Location instead if the colored die of the IFT DR is a 6.

4. No Japanese MMC are stealthy.

5. The Japanese cave counter represents one Spigot Mortar Cave which is not part of a Cave Complex. Prior to American setup, the Mortar cave and one Japanese crew from the Japanese OB must be set up using HIP in a hex numbered ≥ 16 .

6. The American player receives one module of 80-mm battalion mortar OBA (HE, WP, and IR only).

AFTERMATH: The Japanese attack burst out of the village of Kakazu and up onto the slopes of the hill into the saddle between Kakazu and Kakazu West. Sgt. Anderson and the men holding this area found themselves fighting for their lives with the Japanese ferociously trying to batter their way past the American front lines into the rear areas. Action became so heavy that at one point Sgt. Anderson began throwing mortar ammunition at the onrushing Japanese after arming the rounds by pounding them on rocks. Over 170 Japanese dead were counted when dawn finally came. Sgt. Anderson was subsequently awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism.

TURNING OFF THE SPIGOT

ASL SCENARIO J15

Scenario Design: Dan Dolan



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win at the end of any Player Turn upon Controlling all existing Mortar Caves.

KAKAZU RIDGE, OKINAWA, 11 April 1945: After the failure of the "power-house attack" to dislodge the Japanese from Kakazu Ridge earlier in the day, the Americans tried a series of attacks in battalion strength against various portions of the ridge. The 3rd Battalion of the 383rd made one such attack. Part of the battalion's objective was to eliminate several of the huge Japanese 320mm spigot mortars that had been hurling garbage-can-sized shells at the attacking Americans over the past several days. Aerial reconnaissance had discovered the location of a pair of these weapons in a small series of caves on the eastern end of Kakazu Ridge.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexes numbered ≥ 12 on/ between hexrows T-BB are playable.)

BALANCE:

- Add one 1+5+7 pillbox and one Japanese LMG to the Japanese OB.

- ☆ In SSR 4, change "80+mm OBA (HE and WP)" to "100+mm OBA (HE and SMOKE)".

TURN RECORD CHART

● JAPANESE Sets Up First [164]	☆	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [221]									

Elements of the 14th Independent Battalion and 32nd Army Artillery [ELR: 3] set up anywhere (see SSRs 2 and 3): [SAN: 5]

1 4'-4-7	2-2-8	10-1	9-0	8-1	3 6-14	2 4-11	1 2-6	5 50-1-16*	1+5+7	1+4+6
8	6				2	2	3	3	2	12

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 383rd Regiment [ELR: 3] enter along the north edge on/after Turn 1: [SAN: 3]

E 7'-4-7	E 6'-6-7	1 6'-6-6	2-2-7	8-2	8-1	7-0	3 8-16	3 6-12	2 4-10	24-1	30-1	8
4	4	8	3		2	2		2	3	3	6	

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with a Mild Breeze from the southwest. See KR SSR.
2. The Japanese may use Kakazu East, Kakazu Front, and Kakazu Reverse KR Cave Complexes (SSR KR6) as well as one additional Cave Complex.
3. Two of the Cave counters in the Japanese OB are Spigot Mortar Caves (SSR KR 5). The Mortar caves must set up on board ≤ 3 hexes from W15
4. The American receives one module of 80+mm battalion mortar OBA (HE and WP only); the first Radio Contact Attempt is automatically successful and the first Battery Access draw is automatically black (remove one black chit from the draw pile).

AFTERMATH: The attack ran into immediate and furious Japanese resistance. Mortar fire from hidden units and machine gun fire from caves and pillboxes ripped into the advancing Americans. After several attempts to flank the mortar caves the Americans were forced to admit failure. The spigot mortars would continue their deadly fire on American positions on the front side of Kakazu Ridge.

ASL SCENARIO J14

ON THE HOSS' SIDE

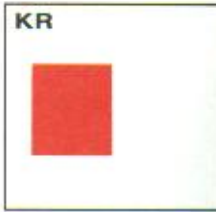
Scenario Design: Dan Dolan



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win at game end if there is ≥ 1 unbroken American MMC in hexes G11/G12/H11.

KAKAZU RIDGE WEST, OKINAWA, 10 April 1945: After advancing to the top of the smaller of the two summits along Kakazu Ridge, L Company developed a bit of a problem. It was sitting in the open above a Japanese underground complex specially prepared for just such a situation. Murderous artillery and small arms fire erupted around the suddenly isolated men of L Company. Led by First Lieutenant Willard Mitchell—nicknamed the “Hoss”—they were now fighting for their lives.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexes numbered ≥ 8 and ≤ 15 on/between hexrows E-K are playable)

BALANCE:

- Remove the FT from the American OB.
- ☆ Remove two 4-4-7 squads from the Japanese OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

● JAPANESE Sets Up First [280]	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [198]							

Elements of the 14th Independent Infantry Battalion [ELR: 3] set up anywhere within the playing area (see SSR 4): [SAN: 4]

4-4-7 2-2-8 9-1 8-0 8-1 3-3-14 2-2-11 2-2-8 3-2-10 30-1-10 30-1 1-4-6

20 2 2 2 3 3 2 12

L Company, 3rd Battalion, 383rd Regiment [ELR: 3] set up on/north-of the (alternate) Hex Grain D11-E11-F11-G11-H10-J10-K10-L9: [SAN: 4]

6-6-7 2-2-7 10-3 9-1 8-1 8-0 3-3-14 3-3-12 2-2-10 24-1 30-1 8

10 2 2 5

Elements of C Company 1st Battalion 383rd Regiment set up in hexes numbered 10 on hexrows K or L:

4 2

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Moist, with no wind at start. See KR SSR.
- The Americans receive one module of 80+mm battalion mortar OBA (HE and WP only).
- The Japanese may use the Kakazu West KR Cave Complex (SSR KR 6), and may set up one additional Cave Complex.
- The only Japanese units which can set up in an American setup area are ones IN caves. No Japanese unit or cave may use HIP in an American setup area.

AFTERMATH: L Company found itself atop the northern knoll of Kakazu West and out of contact with friendly forces on either flank as the rest of the American assault on the ridge floundered in a storm of Japanese fire. Lieutenant Mitchell rallied his troops throughout the day against numerous Japanese attacks—ranging from platoon to company strength—with the cries, “Watch out! Here comes the Hoss!” and “God’s on the Hoss’ side.” The men of L Company held out for the rest of the day before retreating under the cover of a smoke barrage once it became obvious to all that the position was untenable. The Japanese main defenses on Okinawa had been found.

THE GORGE



ASL SCENARIO J13

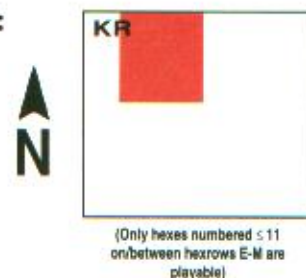
Scenario Design: Dan Dolan



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win at game end if they have Good Order units worth ≥ 15 CVP on Level 1 or higher hex(s).

KAKAZU RIDGE, OKINAWA, 9 April 1945: The 3rd Battalion had been given the task of pushing onto Kakazu Ridge by advancing through the series of stream beds that lay in front of the hill. The Japanese had placed some defenses in the approaches to the ridge, covering this route with mines and fire from several 320mm spigot mortars.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

- In SSR 4, change "100+mm OBA (HE and SMOKE)" to "80+mm OBA (HE and WP)".

☆ Add one U.S. HMG to the American OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

● JAPANESE Sets Up First	☆	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [192]											

Elements of the 14th Independent Brigade [ELR: 3] set up south of the gully running E2-K3-M3 (see SSR 4): {SAN: 6}

4'-4-7	2-2-8	9-0	8-1	3-11 6-14	2-11 4-11	1-11 2-8	6-11 50*(1-10)*	3-11 30-1	1-11 18	1-5+7	1-4+6
6	7			2	4	2	2	2	18	2	10

Elements of I Company, 3rd Battalion, 383rd Regiment [ELR: 3] set up north of the gully running E2-K3-M3 and/or enter along the north edge on/after Turn 1: {SAN: 3}

7'-4-7	6'-6-6	2-2-7	9-1	8-1	8-0	7-0	3-11 6-12	4-11 4-10	3-11 8-5	24-1	30-1
2	12	6						4	3	2	6

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. See KR SSR.
2. The Japanese may use the Kakazu Saddle and Kakazu West Cave Complexes (SSR KR 6) for those portions of the ridge in play and may set up one additional Cave Complex. The Japanese also receive four tunnels (in addition to those automatically received with pillboxes as per G1.632).
3. The Americans receive one module of 100+mm OBA (HE and SMOKE), directed by an Offboard Observer (C1.63) at Level 4 in a hex along the north edge of the playing area secretly recorded prior to Japanese setup. The module

receives one Pre-Registered hex and the Battery Access draw for Turn 1 is an automatic black chit (remove one black chit from the draw pile).

4. One of the Cave counters in the Japanese OB is a Spigot Mortar Cave (SSR KR 5).

AFTERMATH: As the attack jumped off, I Company plunged into the tangled terrain of the gorge. Although I Company was delayed and began its attack well after dawn, it actually reached the top of Kakazu West first. Meanwhile, I Company had discovered the hard way that the defenses of this unobtrusive hill contained more than originally met the eye. Running into minefields covered by fire from numerous machine guns and mortars, I Company spent the rest of the day clearing the approaches to the ridge.

ily adapted to this (SSR KR 4), and after some initial reluctance MMP was convinced. Half FP attacks vs any caves sharing a hexside with a cave that is the designated target of a non-DC attack seems simple enough. This rule allows the Japanese to construct a major underground position in a small area at the risk of putting a lot of eggs in one basket.

The first scenario represents the attack by the 1st Battalion of the 383rd Regiment on April 9th. The 1st Battalion attacked through the gorge on the American left flank, while the 3rd Battalion attacked from the right toward Kakazu West. The first attack is represented in "The Gorge."

In "The Gorge," we find the men of I Company of the 3rd Battalion trying to advance through the gorge and onto Kakazu Ridge and Kakazu West. The Japanese defense is represented by elements of the 14th Independent Brigade which had been recently fighting in several of the outpost battles in the preceding week.

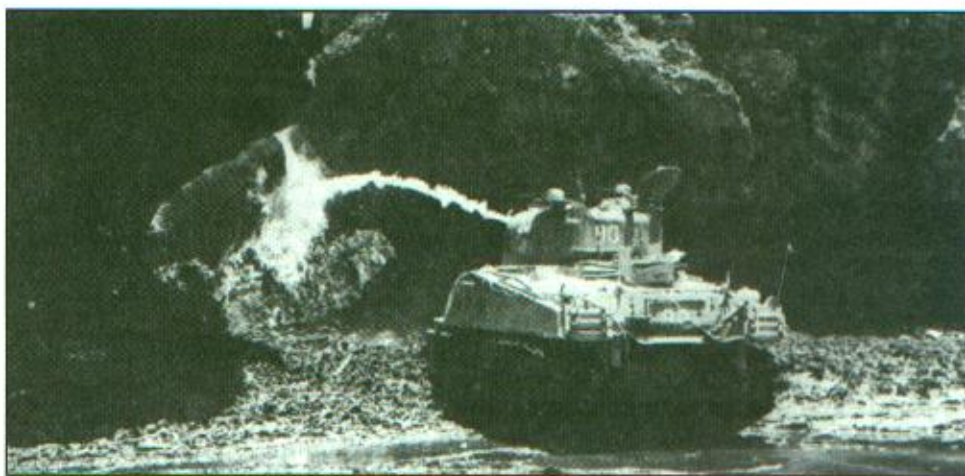
The attack jumped off and almost immediately ran into trouble in the twisting maze that was the gorge. Japanese fire from hidden caves in the sides of the gorge and on the front side of Kakazu and Kakazu West caused numerous American casualties. "Eye" Company would spend the rest of the day clearing the area of the gorge represented by the spurs off the main stream bed near hexes K4 and G5 running to the foot of the hill mass.

Meanwhile, on the U.S. left flank the men of the A Company 1st Battalion moved out in the pre-dawn darkness and made it through the gorge onto the foot of Kakazu Ridge in the area of hexes O9-T9. [A scenario representing this action, and one combining this action with "The Gorge" are still in playtesting.] C Company started out a bit later and was in the gorge near hex Z8 when a single Japanese sentry alerted the defenders. They responded with murderous fire along the length of the gorge and at the troops on the face of the hill.

During the fighting L Company made a rush and succeeded in gaining the top of Kakazu West. They would hold out there isolated from any friendly support for the remainder of the day under orders to "hold the ridge at all costs!" However, increasing Japanese pressure in the form of artillery fire mixed with violent local counterattacks had whittled down the strength of L Company to the point where at 1600 its commanding officer decided to pull back off the hill.

L Company's fight on Kakazu West is represented by the scenario "On The Hoss's Side," which is designed to show the Japanese counterattack capability from within the bowels of the ridge using the caves and small Banzai attacks to achieve their objectives. During the day's action G Company of 2nd Battalion tried to move between A and L Companies but was thwarted by the heavy Japanese fire that was pouring down on the gorge and the area leading up to it.

The fighting on April 9 opened the eyes of the Americans concerning the strength of the defenses on Kakazu Ridge. Even before the fighting died out and the last troops were with-



A flamethrowing Sherman clears out a cave on Kakazu. (U.S. Army)

drawn, Brigadier General Claudius Easley and the two regimental commanders were planning the next day's attack utilizing two regiments instead of one.

The "Powerhouse Attack" on April 10 saw the two regiments battle their way to the tops of Kakazu and Kakazu West. After much bitter fighting the Americans held the front of the hill while the Japanese remained in strength underground and controlled the reverse slopes. It was a stalemate. The unstoppable force had come upon the immovable object.

The 383rd Regiment controlled Kakazu West and on April 11th its 1st Battalion launched an attack to push into Kakazu village and open a path for the armor to get to the hill. This attack is represented by the scenario "The American Tragedy" [still in playtesting]. It shows the futile effort of the Americans to move down the reverse slopes of Kakazu Ridge and the dominating effects of the observers on the Urasoe-Mura escarpment on the actions at Kakazu.

April 11 saw several battalion-strength attacks against the ridge. The scenario "Turning Off The Spigot" illustrates one of the objectives in the 3rd Battalion's attack that day—eliminating some of the Japanese 320mm spigot mortars that had been hurling garbage-can sized shells at the Americans. Getting the Mortar Caves (SSR KR 5) to work was one of the toughest parts of the development process. I worked with MMP through several different permutations of the various factors involved: attack mechanisms, vulnerability while firing, stacking limitations, etc. Attacking like OBA without a Blast radius worked best. Given that we were bypassing the To Hit process, using an actual Gun counter seemed to just confuse matters, especially since we didn't want the Gun to just disappear when it was disabled as ASL Guns do. Since we wanted stacking to be restricted even if the Gun was disabled, having a special cave counter made sense, and then we didn't need a separate Gun counter. The mortars played a significant role in the battles, and I think we did a good job balancing rules simplicity with accurate simulation. All in all, they aren't that tough to use.

On April 12, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt died. The troops fighting on Kakazu learned of this news from Japanese pamphlets and loudspeakers.

During the night of April 12 several of the more aggressive-minded officers on the Japanese General Staff had convinced General Ushijima that now was the right time for a counter-attack to disrupt the American advance and perhaps push them back to the invasion beaches. One of the major worries of the Japanese was the effectiveness of American naval and ground artillery fire against massed troops. They felt, however, that the timing was right due to the losses suffered by the Americans in their first contacts with the Shuri Line defenses.

The Japanese night attack by elements (formed into "tai," or groups, named after their commanding officers) of the 272nd Independent Infantry Battalion is represented in the scenario "Kakazu's Tombs," which highlights the actions of Medal of Honor winner Beaufort Anderson. He received his medal for single-handedly breaking up the attack in the area of the saddle by throwing mortar shells at the charging Japanese from his position in one of the area's many tombs.

After the failure of the Japanese night attack, the U.S. planners decided to try to get armor behind Kakazu Ridge and move infantry down the reverse slopes in conjunction with an armor attack from the north. The scenario "Hara's Horror" [still in playtesting] shows the Japanese defense against this armor incursion. The Japanese had realized that the only way to get armor onto the ridge was through Kakazu village and planned to stop any such attempt cold, utilizing the many tricks and traps that they had learned over the years. The rubble village was turned into a death trap for armor. The tankers—without any infantry support—charged into the village shooting everything in sight but were soon forced to pull back. A series of attempts to gain the ridge were rebuffed, with 22 out of 30 tanks knocked out. The failure to provide any infantry support was a lesson learned the hard way. The next time the American armor came into Kakazu village it would have infantry with it.

continued on page 14

Assaulting A Cave Complex

A One-Turn Study Of Kakazu Ridge

by J.R. Tracy

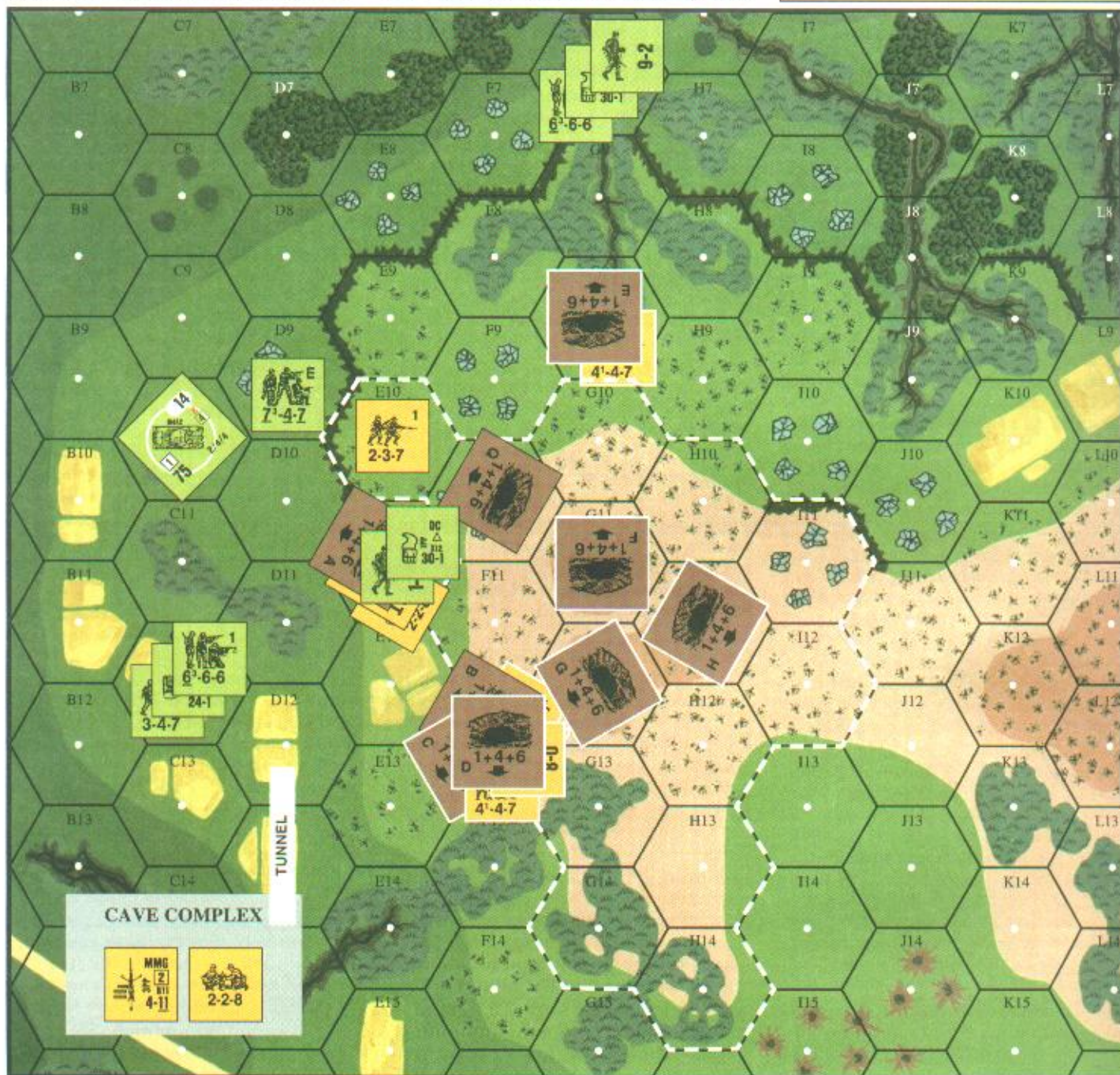
[We asked J.R. to come up with a tutorial on caves to accentuate the KAKAZU RIDGE mini-HASL. He responded with a single-turn of a SR which, through careful manipulation, touched upon many aspects of caves and cave warfare. All KR SSR apply. KR Cave Complex Kakazu West is in play. We skipped the Wind Change DR for simplicity. If you set it up and follow through this turn, you should be

prepared to do battle as either nationality at Kakazu—Eds.]

An American combined arms force is attempting to flank the western edge of Kakazu Ridge in April 1945. A smattering of Japanese is evident, but the American knows by bitter experience there is always more than meets the eye. He intends to neutralize the enemy forces

SETUP

- C10 BU M4A2 VCA/TCA E10
- C12 666/FT/347
- D9 747
- D12 Tunnel to Cave Complex Kakazu West
- E10 237
- E11 cave 146A facing 6, w/47L/228, plus American DC/149 on top of cave
- F10 146Q facing 6, empty
- F12 cave 146B facing 6, w/HIP 50mmMTR/237
- F12 HIP cave 146C facing 5, empty
- F12 HIP cave 146D facing 4, w/447, 8-0
- G7 9-2/DC/666
- G9 HIP cave 146E facing 1, w/447
- G11 HIP cave 146F facing 1, empty
- G12 HIP cave 146G facing 5, empty
- H11 HIP cave 146H facing 3, empty
- Cave Complex** MMG/228
- HIP units/caves are outlined in white



he can see, and seek out and deal with whatever lay yet hidden among the nooks and crannies of Kakazu Ridge's western spur.

AMERICAN PREP FIRE PHASE

Event	DRM	DR	Result
1. M4A2 fires WP at 146A	+4	1,5	miss, ROF, -1 1/2" Acq
(DRM: +1 BU, +4 TEM, -1 C6 Case L, place 5/8" white WP in D10 <G11.85, G11.832>			
2. M4A2 fires again w/WP	+5	3,6	no WP
(DRM: +1 BU, +4 TEM, +2 WP Hnd, -1 C6 Case L, -1 C6 Case N)			
3. M4A2 fires again w/HE	+5	5,2	miss, -2 1/2" Acq
(DRM: +1 BU, +4 TEM, +2 WP Hnd, -1 C6 Case L, -1 C6 Case N)			
4. M4A2 fires BMG/CMG vs 237 in E10, remove -2 Acq			
IFT 6 FP	+3	2,2	NMC
5. 237 NMC		4,5	Breaks

A Hero with a Demo Charge is poised to seal Cave A, but the American is concerned that the anti-tank gun therein may be a problem in the ensuing Movement and Defensive Fire phases. Therefore he attempts to fire WP into the Cave with the M4A2. He misses the cave, but still gains some protection because his TH DR is equal to or less than his Depletion #, thus placing a WP counter in the Entrance Hex (G11.85). After missing with HE as well, the Sherman fires its MG at the HS in E10, breaking it and assuring it doesn't interfere with the Hero's activities.

AMERICAN MOVEMENT PHASE

Event	DRM	DR	Result
6. D9 747 Assault Engineer declares Double Time and moves to D10			
7. E11 146A 47L DFF vs 747	-1	5,5	miss
(DRM: +2 WP Hnd, -2 C6 Case L, -1 FENAM)			
8. attempts to place WP in 146A		2	has WP avail
9.		2	placed in cave
10. 228 WP 4MC (auto WP CH)		3,4	Reduced to 128
<G11.85, G11.833>			
11. E11 DC/149 moves onto Climb counter at vertex D10/E10/E11, attempts to Place DC in 146A			
12. F12 146B 50mm MTR DFF vs DC/149			
	-1	2,4	hit, no ROF, -1 5/8" Acq
(DRM: -2 Hazardous Move, +1 F11 Debris)			
13. resolution IFT 2 FP		3,2	NMC
14. 149 NMC		4,4	passes
15. Placement dr	-1	4	succeeds, place DC in 146A
<G11.8331, G11.833>			
16. 666 in C12 moves to C13; and sees 146C in F12, but not 146G, as it's in Debris			
17. continues move to D13			
18. FT/347 in C12 declares Double Time and moves to E12			
19. 146B 237 SFF vs FT/347 in E12			
IFT 2 FP	-2	3,4	MC
(DRM: -1 FENAM, -1 FT)			
20. 347 MC		2,2	Passes
21. 9-2/DC/666 in G7 declare Double Time and move to G8; reveals 146E in G9, but contents remain HIP			
<G11.3>			

To further hinder the anti-tank gun, an Assault Engineer attempts to Place Infantry WP into Cave A. Successful die rolls place Smoke IN the Cave and the resulting automatic WP CH step-reduces the crew. The Americans will later gain some useful intelligence when

the Infantry WP counter is removed at the end of the Player Turn (G11.833, G11.85, G11.851).

Now the Hero mounts a Climb counter to make his DC Placement attempt against Cave A. He attracts the attention of the HIP 50mm Mortar HS in F12, Cave B.

The Mortar hits, but the Hero successfully Places the DC in the Cave. He will have to wait until the AFPh to see the result of his handiwork (G11.833).

Next an American 666 pushes south to see what pops up and catches sight of Cave C in F12. This hex looks like it deserves some special attention, so the FT-toting HS moves up onto the ridge to deal with it, shaking off the SFF of the Mortar-manning HS.

Finally, the 9-2 leads a DC toting 666 up the Gully and finds Cave E, whose HIP 447 holds its fire to retain HIP.

There is no Japanese Defensive Fire—the Crew manning the 47L in Cave A can not see the 747 or the Sherman due to the increased 'outgoing LOS' Hindrance of Smoke in a Cave—his total Hindrance is +6 (+2 x2 for the Infantry WP in Cave A, +2 for Ordnance WP in D10) (G11.85).

AMERICAN ADVANCING FIRE PHASE

Event	DRM	DR	Result
22. detonate DC in Cave A	+0	4,6	2MC
23. 128 2MC		3,3	Pins, NE on Cave
24. ex347 in E12 fires FT at F12			
24 IFT vs 146B	+1	3,1	K/4, elim 237
6 IFT vs 146C and 146D	+1		1MC
<G11.834>			
25. 8-0 in 146D takes 1MC		3,2	Pass
26. 447 in 146D takes 1MC	-1	6,6	Casualty Reduces, ELR, repl w/b137
27. ex9-2/DC/666 in G8 vs 146E			
IFT 6	+3	2,2	NMC, reveal 447
(DRM: -4 TEM, -1 CX, -2 Leadership DRM)			
28. 447 NMC		1,1	HOB
29. HOB DR	+4	2,6	Berserk, cave makes NE so Battle Hardens to 448
<G11.812, G11.97>			
30. exDC/666 in G8 throws DC into G9 146E			
31. Throw dr	-1	2	thrown into 146E
(DRM: -1 Adjacent)			
32. IFT 30 vs 146E	+0	4,1	1KIA, eliminate cave and 448
<G11.833>			

The American Advancing Fire Phase has plenty going on. The Hero's work comes to naught as the blast fails to seal the Cave or kill off the crew. The 9-2 and 666 have more success, discovering a 447 by fire and then sealing the Cave with a Thrown DC. The FT shot gets an unexpected bonus as it reduces the 447 in the out-of-LOS Cave D to broken 2nd Line HS, which activity is noted within the Cloaking Box (G11.71).

ROUT PHASE

33. dm137 in Cave D may stay or Rout into Complex; elects to stay (Note: if 128 Crew in 146A had broken on the DC

attack, it would have to Rout into the Cave Complex due to the presence of the 747 in D10.

<G11.6, G11.77>

34. dm237 in E10 routs into 146Q in F10, and can not rout any further

<G11.74>

The Rout Phase sees the 2nd Line HS duck into the Cave Complex, and the 1st Line HS on the surface Routs into Cave Q but can go no further (having entered a Cave this phase—G11.74). The presence of the Hero in E11 does not prevent this Rout as it is not in the Cave Q's Entrance Hex and is therefore not ADJACENT (G11.6).

AMERICAN ADVANCE AND CLOSE COMBAT PHASES

35. 666 in D13 Advance vs. Difficult Terrain to E13, mark with CX

36. exFT/347 in E12 advance to E11

37. 1/2" WP Smoke counter removed from 146A; 146F, 146G and 146H are placed on board but Tunnel exit (D12) remains HIP as it is at the same level as the Cave A. <G11.851>

After some Advancing by the Americans, the Infantry WP is removed from Cave A, revealing a number of other Caves that are part of the Kakazu West complex, but not the Tunnel Exit in D12, the same level as Cave A.

JAPANESE RALLY PHASE

Event	DRM	DR	Result
38. DM137 in F12	-1	3,4	Rallies
(DRM: 8-0 cancels DM, +1 ML for Japanese Ldr, -1 Rally terrain)			
<G11.1>			

JAPANESE MOVEMENT PHASE

39. MMG/228 in Cave Complex moves into hidden Cave H in H11 (zero MF since Cave is HIP) and retains HIP status since no American unit has LOS <G11.31>

The Japanese Player Turn sees the defender begin to shift his defense, sending an MMG team to the back of the ridge to cover the complex's rear. If Cave A were part of a Cave Complex, then the 128 could move the Gun into the Complex. No Manhandling DR would be necessary <G11.76>. The struggle for Kakazu Ridge has only begun.



continued from page 11

After the armor fiasco, the area around Kakazu settled into a period of relative inactivity as both sides focused on other areas and made preparations for a major attack along the entire front. The 96th Division was moved to the east between Kakazu and Nishabaru Ridges and the 27th Division moved into place around Kakazu.

During the following week the Americans laid plans for a massive attack and on April 19th they struck all along the Japanese lines. The bombardment was one of the largest of the war. Despite the best attempts of the navy and air forces to break down the Japanese positions, after the dust had settled, the Japanese line, although moved back some, was in no

way broken. Kakazu was bypassed during this attack, however, and the Americans managed to push beyond it on both sides. The Japanese troops manning Kakazu Ridge and village were in danger of being cut off from the rest of 62nd Army.

During the night of April 23-24 under the cover of a heavy fog and a fierce bombardment, the defenders of Kakazu pulled out and moved south to take up positions closer to Shuri. Taking their wounded with them and burying most of their dead, the Japanese left little in the way of prizes for the Americans. A small delaying force comprised of wounded and volunteers stayed behind in Kakazu village to delay the Americans and allow the rest of their comrades to escape to fight again. The

scenario "Clearing Kakazu" depicts the attack by Task Force Bradford against these remaining defenders of what had been the core of the Japanese defenses on the Shuri Line. Both sides knew that the end was approaching but that there was still much brutal combat to go before peace would come again to this Pacific island.

This brings to a close my presentation of the fighting at Kakazu Ridge. I hope you enjoy playing it as much as I enjoyed designing it. MMP's playtesters have done yeoman work in getting this project to you, and MMP's work adapting my versions of some of the SSRs into ASL rules that actually work was inspired. I would like to thank Don Petros for designing the map without which this project would never have been possible. I would also like to thank the people at MMP for their patience and hard work in bringing this project to completion. Without their knowledge and expertise this would be much less than it is.

[Needless to say, this wouldn't have happened without Dan. Thanks, Dan. We are thrilled to be able finally to publish your hard work on Kakazu. Also, you may have noticed that we have several more "Dolan gems" on Kakazu Ridge still being playtested. If you are interested in helping out in that effort (or in other playtesting action), please drop us a line.—Eds.]



Smoke rising above the tombs of Kakazu. (U.S. Army)

Internet Resources for the ASL Player

By Carl D. Fago

The wired-world, the net, the world wide web. By these or other names, the internet has had a significant impact on the gaming world and especially wargames. Today, with the number of wargame players dwindling, the activity in our hobby appears to be actually increasing. This increase might be attributed to the increased interconnection between wargame hobbyists. The world wide web has allowed players who previously would have never enjoyed a game of ASL (or Panzer Blitz or Third Reich) with each other due to distance, time constraints or many other possible factors, to play a scenario or game. Moreover, the world wide web is a place to share ideas and discuss our mutual hobby.

It is probably not possible to know all the resources that might exist on the world wide web for a particular subject. This article presents just a portion of the information that is

available out there for ASL enthusiasts to find and peruse in pursuit of their favorite hobby. MMP believes that, as we enter a new millennium, the future of wargaming will be dependent on the inter-connectivity that the world wide web provides. The following list and description of ASL resources is current as of the beginning of the year 2000. Unfortunately, as the nature of the world wide web is one of rapid change, the reader is cautioned that these resources may change without notice. They may move or they may disappear. That's the bad news. The good news is that this list is not intended to be all inclusive and new information and resources are being continually added. Frequent use of the available search engines and frequent inquiries to the keeper of the various internet resources will help the reader stay informed of the changes and additions to the web of information.

ASL-Related World Wide Web Resources

The Official Advanced Squad Leader Website (<http://www.advancedsquadleader.com>)

MMP entered the e-commerce revolution in January of 1999 with the introduction of the official ASL website. This site provides ASL-related news and information as well as a place to purchase all official in-print ASL products. A listing of ASL tournaments and events from around the world is provided as well as up-to-date official ASL Q&A. This site is updated regularly and is the first place to find official ASL news. MMP has also provided an internet first, the Provence Pack, a free historical study, complete with ten scenarios, of the Operation

continued on page 25

MERZENHAUSEN ZOO



ASL SCENARIO J19

Scenario Design: Chas Smith



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win at game end if they Control ≥ 38 stone building Locations within the German setup area.

MERZENHAUSEN, GERMANY, 22 November 1944: After six days of fighting, XIX Corps believed it was ready for a quick push to the Roer. Although, intelligence reports showed some German units withdrawing, Merzenhausen was expected to be the best defended town the Division would face west of the Roer. Because the town was the key to the defenses west of the Roer River and protected the north-south communications link, and in preparation for the Ardennes offensive, the Germans had to hold it at all costs. The 246th Volksgrenadier Division had been involved in heavy fighting and was undergoing a relief in place by the 340th Volksgrenadier Division. Task Force 1/66, with an attached battalion from the 30th Infantry Division soldiers and British tanks, launched an attack before the relief was completed. Its assault ran headlong into the 246th Volksgrenadier Division and elements of LXXXI Corps.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✦ In the Victory Conditions, change "≥38" to "≥40."

☆ In the Victory Conditions, change "≥38" to "≥34."



OG1	O1
O1	43

TURN RECORD CHART

✦ GERMAN Sets Up First [151]	☆	1	2	3	4	5 [✦]	6	7	8	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [204]										

Elements of Volksgrenadier Division 246, SchwereAbteilung 506, and LXXXI Corps [ELR: 3] set up on board 10 on/east-of hexrow P and/or on board 43 on/east-of hexrow R in hexes numbered ≥ 5 : [SAN: 4]



5 ¹ -4-8	4 ¹ -6-7	4-4-7	2-2-8	8-1	8-1	8-0	8-0	7-15	5-12	3-8	12-4	7 morale
4	4	5	3					2	2	4	2	6

13 8 3	13 2 2	11 14 3	10 10
2			

Enter on Turn 5 along the east edge of board 10 and/or the north edge east of hexrow V:

5 ¹ -4-8	4 ¹ -6-8	8-1	8-0	3-8	12-4	9-1	11 26 8
3	3			3			2

Elements of 1/66 Armored, 1/119 Infantry, 30th Infantry Division, Squadron B Fife and Forfar Yeomanry [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 along the west edge of board 10: [SAN: 3]



6 ¹ -6-7	6 ¹ -6-6	8-2	8-1	8-0	4-10	8-4	7 14 11	8 14 11
2	6				2	2	2	

Enter on Turn 1 along the south edge of board 43:

6 ¹ -6-6	8-1	8-1	8-0	3-8	4-10	8-4	8-1	17 6 3	15 8 4	15 11 4	12 18 8
10								2	2	2	2

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet, with no wind at start. Kindling (B25.11) is NA. Place overlays as follows: OG1 on 10G8, O1 on 10H6. No buildings are Rowhouses. Rowhouse (i.e., black bar) hexsides are treated as normal building hexsides for all purposes.
2. The board 10 path (B13.6) is considered an unpaved road (for the purposes of A4.132, the brown path artwork forms the "road depiction"). Additionally, the following hexsides are considered unpaved road hexsides: 10E4/D4, 10D4/C5, 10G6/H6, 10H6/H7, 10I1/I2, and 10J1/I2 with an unpaved road running between them.
3. The Germans may use HIP for ≤ 1 squad-equivalent and all SMC/SW set up with it.
4. Immediately prior to the start of play, all non-hidden German Infantry must take a NTC. Failure of this NTC results in the unit(s) being pinned throughout American

Player Turn 1, loss of concealment (regardless of LOS), and loss of any Boreighting for SW/Guns possessed by the unit. Each Dummy stack takes this NTC with a single DR and has a combined morale of "7."

5. The American player may secretly record two eligible vehicles as having functioning Gyrostabilizers (D11.). American units (only) are considered Elite (C8.2).

AFTERMATH: Upon seeing Crocodiles, many Germans raised their hands in surrender. Suddenly, one of the Crocodiles exploded when hit by an AP round. This rejuvenated the defenders, who quickly remanned their positions. The fighting was intense and both sides took heavy casualties. The G.I.s pressed their attack and fought their way into the town. The assault was halted when two Tigers, with supporting infantry, counterattacked. The Germans pushed the Americans back to the western edge of Merzenhausen. The Americans maintained a toehold, though, and launched a renewed attack the next day with fresh troops from the 41st Armored Infantry Regiment.

THE PINNACLE

Scenario Design: Dan Dolan



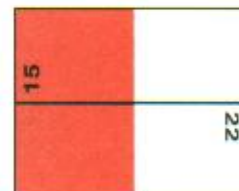
ASL SCENARIO J18



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win at game end if they Control building 22X7, and hexes 15N4 and 15N5.

IE SHIMA, 21 April 1945: The 1st Battalion of the 306th pushed through the town of Ie and had reached positions near the Government House and the lower slopes of the Iegusugu Pinnacle. The Pinnacle was the nerve center of the Japanese defenses on the island, with fire from it causing the Americans many casualties in the preceding days. After beating off several fierce Japanese attacks during the night, the 306th was ready to attack the final Japanese bastion on Ie Shima.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexrows A-P on board 15 and R-GG on board 22 are playable)

BALANCE:

- Add two 3-3-6s to the Japanese OB.
- ☆ Delete both the roadblocks and the three AT Mine factors from the Japanese OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

● JAPANESE Sets Up First [215]	☆	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [276]										



Elements of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Unit, 44th Independent Mixed Brigade (Igawa Unit) [ELR: 4] set up on/north of any board 22 hexes numbered ≥ 4 (see SSR 3): [SAN: 5]

1 4-4-7	2 3-4-7	C 3-3-6	2-2-8	10-1	9-0	8-1	HMG 3 6-14	MMG 2 4-11	LMG 1 2-6	MTR 50*(1-16)*	DC 30-1	?
3	7	6	7				2	3	4	2	10	
Minefield 11	1 AT Mine	ART M 150*	INF M12 70* (130*-70)	AA M 25LL (12)	1+5+7	1+4+6	Roadblock					
18 factors	3 factors			2	3	7	2					



Elements of Companies A and B, 1st Battalion, 306th Regiment, 77th Division [ELR: 4] set up on board 22 in hexes numbered ≤ 3: [SAN: 3]

E 7-4-7	1 6-6-6	9-2	9-1	8-1	8-0	7-0	HMG 3 6-12	MMG 2 4-10	MTR 60*(1-16)*	BAZ 45 311 WP 8-5	FT 24-1	DC 30-1
4	20						2	2	3	4	2	4
15 33 75	24 3 76L	17 6 75*										
2	2											

Elements of the 306th Regimental Cannon Company and 706th Tank Battalion enter on Turn 1 along the South edge of board 22:

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Dry with no wind at start. Coral Soil (G13.82) is in effect. The 22R7 bridge does not exist. Kindling attempts are NA.
2. The stream is Dry. Hexes 15F2, 15F3, and 15G3 are considered Level 2 hill hexes. The Cliff depictions along hex 15F2 still exist.
3. The G11.91 subtractions for Upper Cliff caves (G11.113) are NA. Pillboxes may not set up on hill hexes. A-P mines may not be exchanged for A-T Mines/Daisy Chains.
4. The Americans receive one module of 120-mm NOBA (G14.6; HE and WP), directed by a 2-2-7 crew which is this battery's Shore Fire-Control Party

(G14.61); all LOF (G14.62, 11.84) for this battery is traced through 22Y1.

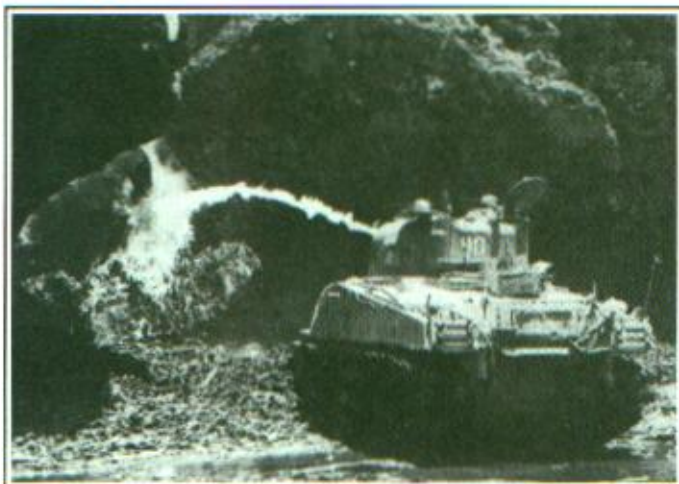
5. The American 7-4-7s/3-3-7s are Assault Engineers (H1.22). American AFVs may not enter Level 3 or 4 hill hexes.

AFTERMATH: The attack jumped off just after dawn supported by naval gunfire and self-propelled guns. The Government House was captured and then used as a MG position to support the troops' final assault on the Pinnacle. The Pinnacle rose sharply 600 feet from the surrounding countryside and the Japanese had dug numerous caves into its imposing structure. The men of the 306th scaled the sheer sides and, using demolition charges and flamethrowers, managed to raise the American flag atop the hill at 1025 hours. While the Japanese would use the many tunnels dug into the surrounding area to infiltrate and harass the Americans for several days to come, Ie Shima was on its way to becoming a vital air base for U.S. operations against Okinawa and Japan.

CLEARING KAKAZU

ASL SCENARIO J17

Scenario Design: Dan Dolan



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win at game end if they Control ≥ 22 building/rubble hexes.

KAKAZU RIDGE, OKINAWA, 24 April 1945: During the night of April 23 and early morning of April 24, a heavy Japanese bombardment masked the withdrawal of most of the remaining defenders of the Kakazu pocket. Several small units were left behind to delay the American pursuit. At the same time, General Hodges was forming a special task force to eliminate the Japanese forces still holding out in the pocket. Four battalions from the 7th, 27th, and 96th Divisions were assembled, designated Task Force Bradford, and assigned this unenviable job. The attack stepped off at 0730.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

- Remove the .50 cal HMG and the 7-0 from the American OB.

- ☆ Add one 7-4-7 squad to the American OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

● JAPANESE Sets Up First [157]	☆	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [166]									



Rearguard elements of the 13th Infantry Battalion [ELR: 3] set up using HIP on/west-of hexrow V and south of the road that runs L21-I16-K16-N16-P17-T16-V17: [SAN: 5]



4-4-7	2-2-8	9-0	8-1	HMG 3 6-14	MMG 2 4-11	LMG 1 2-5	NTR 2 50-110	DC 3 30-1	Minefield 11	1+4+6
9	4				3	2		2	12	2



Elements of Task Force Bradford [ELR: 3] enter on/after Turn 1 along the north edge: [SAN: 3]

7-4-7	6-6-6	2-2-7	9-2	8-1	8-0	7-0	50-110	30-1	24-1	30-1	Radio 8
2	10	4			2			2	2	2	

Enter on/after Turn 1 along the east edge:

75	13 2/4/4	13 2/4/4	8-1
	2		

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Overcast, with no wind at start. See KR SSR. At the start of play, Rain (E3.51) is falling.
2. The Americans receive one module of 100+mm OBA (Smoke and HE).
3. The Japanese have MOL capability (A22.6), may fortify $\leq$ three building Locations in their setup area, and may use one DC as a Set AT DC (G1.6121).
4. The Japanese may use the Kakazu Village KR Cave Complex (SSR KR6).

AFTERMATH: The battalions of Task Force Bradford pushed right over Kakazu Ridge and swept through the stragglers and small rearguard units left behind by the Japanese withdrawal during the previous night. Within two hours, all American units had reached their objectives. By the afternoon, the 96th and 27th Divisions had linked their division boundaries at the foot of the Urasoe-Mura escarpment. Over 600 Japanese dead were counted in the Kakazu area and there were further signs of mass burials and other dead sealed in the numerous caves that riddled the ridge. The course of the war had passed through and left behind a burnt and decimated Kakazu.

THE GUNS OF NARO

ASL SCENARIO J20

Scenario Design: Chas Smith



North of NARO, SICILY, 11 July 1943: The attack on Sicily was underway. U.S. forces had broken out of the Gela bridgehead. Armored forces were rapidly advancing against weak opposition—mostly delaying units who would simply fire a few token shots then fall back to new defensive positions. After successfully capturing Naro on 11 July, recon elements of the 2nd Armored Division received the order to move on to Canicatti.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(only hexrows A-P are playable)

BALANCE:

III In the VC, change "≥ 32" to "≥ 34."

☆ In the VC, change "≥ 32" to "≥ 30."

VICTORY CONDITIONS: Provided the Italians do not have ≥ 1 Gun possessed by an unbroken crew and/or have not amassed ≥ 32 CVP (prisoners and captured equipment do *not* count double), the Americans win at game end if the Italians do not have Good Order units with LOS to any hex of the A5/A6–P3 road that are capable of applying ≥ 10 FP (including SW and PBF, but disregarding Multiple ROF and treating TPBF as PBF) to a hypothetical attack vs those same hex(es).

TURN RECORD CHART

III ITALIAN Sets Up First [80]	☆ 1	☆ 2	III 3	4	5	6	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First							



Elements of the 207th Coastal Division [ELR: 3] set up in hill hexes on/north-of hexrow C (see SSR 4): {SAN: 3}



 3-4-7	 1-3-7	 2-2-7	 9-1	 8-0	 7-0	 HMG 3-3 6-12	 MMG 2-2 4-10	 2-2 1-12	 ATH 1-12	 ART M-8 100+
7	6									4



Elements of 82nd Recon Battalion, 2nd Armored Division [ELR: 3] enter on Turn 1 on/between A5–A7 (see SSR 2): {SAN: 2}



 3-4-7	 7-0	 1-0	 19-0	 17-0	 37-0	 37-0	 37-0	 37-0
3			2	2				

Elements of G Company, 41st Infantry Battalion and D Company, 66th Armored Battalion enter on Turn 2 along the south edge (see SSR 2):

 6-6-7	 8-2	 8-1	 1-0	 1-0	 13-0	 13-0
6					3	3

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. Boresighting is NA.
- All American Personnel must enter as PRC. The Turn 1 units (82nd Recon) may use the road rate in either of hexes A5/A6, regardless of which offmap hex is used. Jeeps may form firegroups as if they were armored HTs (D6.64).
- The Italians receive Air Support (E7.) in the form of two '42 FB with bombs which arrive automatically on American Player Turn 3. If still in play, the FBs are automatically recalled (E7.24) at the end of American Player Turn 4.
- Italian units (and SW stacked with them) setting up in suitable terrain may begin the game entrenched (B27.1).

- Malfunctioned Italian Guns repair on a dr ≤ 2.

AFTERMATH: Coming upon a narrow pass, two light tanks proceeded slowly through. A curve in the road was defended by four large caliber guns. The entire recon force came under intense machine gun fire, and two assault guns were ordered to the front to help provide covering fire. Using skill and maneuver, the recon force evaded the trap and the infantry was called in to assist in clearing the blocking forces. Tanks from Company D, supporting infantry from Company G, made slow progress against the dug in Italians. In the midst of this, German aircraft began strafing the advancing troops. Despite the setbacks, the 2nd Armored Division continued to move steadily forward. As night fell, the enemy pulled back—leaving Canicatti in Allied hands.

THE GUNS OF NARO



I immediately took a shine to "The Guns of Naro" during playtesting. I thought it could be a real winner for several reasons. First of all, the tactical situation and board layout are very interesting. Board 9 is rarely used, giving the veteran player a new look. Secondly, it is small enough to be categorized as tournament-sized without being so small as to be trivial. Thirdly, the options available to the players, especially the Italian side, give it a strong replay value. Lastly, I thought it was tightly balanced and would often go right down to the end. So far, results have proven my intuition correct.

Weapons Comparison

The Italian guns may look impressive at first, but short barrel length and no AP ammo hamper them. Their HEAT availability number is only 6. If they get HEAT, the Basic To Kill # of 14 isn't a sure thing against the front AF of any of the American tanks, since the Stuarts have a 6, the M4s have an 8, and the M4A1s have a circled 11. Using HE, the Basic To Kill # goes down to 10, which can't be counted on to penetrate any U.S. tanks frontally without a bit of luck. The 20L ATR has a basic kill number of 6, modified to 7 within 6-hex range, and so has a pretty good chance against the halftracks and the jeeps (with a Final TK# of 7). The machine-guns of a 42FB have a basic kill number of 5. Aerial advantage and rear target facing would increase this to 7 against a close-topped AFV, 8 against an open-topped one. The Stuarts have an Aerial AF of 2, the Shermans have a 3, and the halftracks have a 0. So all of the American armor is vulnerable to the fighter-bombers. A direct hit with the 120mm bomb would have a Modified To Kill # of 14 (15 vs OT), and a near-miss would have an 8 (9 vs OT), to use against the aerial AF of its target. Clearly the aircraft are the most dangerous foes

of the U.S. armor. **Rules Warning**—both sides must use red To Hit numbers for $\frac{5}{8}$ " ordinance.

Italian Advantages:

Setup options, air support

Italian Disadvantages:

Troop quality

In many ASL scenarios the defensive side doesn't have a large number of options with regard to how to play the scenario. Sure, they can position a unit in one place rather than another, but often there is only one reasonable defensive philosophy to adhere to. This is not so with "The Guns of Naro." As I see it, the Italians can choose one of two extremes in defensive philosophy, or a combination strategy falling somewhere in between. In any case, the Italian philosophy and setup will dictate the course the game will take. This is a big advantage for a defender. They also get two German fighter-bombers to help out, at least for a couple of turns. Working against the Italians, as usual, is their overall troop quality. Each Italian squad is only about as good as an American HS.

Italian Defensive Philosophy and Sample Setup

The Italian player gets to decide what kind of game this will be right from the start, usually by virtue of his setup, particularly of the artillery pieces. He can choose a toe-to-toe strategy, wherein he is counting on winning by the casualty cap. Such a strategy usually involves placing all four guns in good positions to shoot at the American entry areas, and showing no reluctance to firing all weapons at his disposal at any reasonable target that might garner a few more CVP, particularly the tanks. The German fighter-bombers, when they enter, certainly ought to be helpful in racking up some points. This toe-to-toe approach might very well intimidate an American opponent into throwing in the towel before he is actually beaten, because it has the potential to score a lot of CVP early in the game. If the game isn't won by the time the air support leaves, however, the Italians could be in trouble, because there will be no guesswork left for the Americans, and they can simply blast away and use all their resources to reduce the Italian positions. By that time the guns will probably have run out of most of their special ammunition, and one or two might even be malfunctioned. On the other hand, the Italian player could opt for a hide-and-seek strategy. The idea here is

A Tactical Analysis

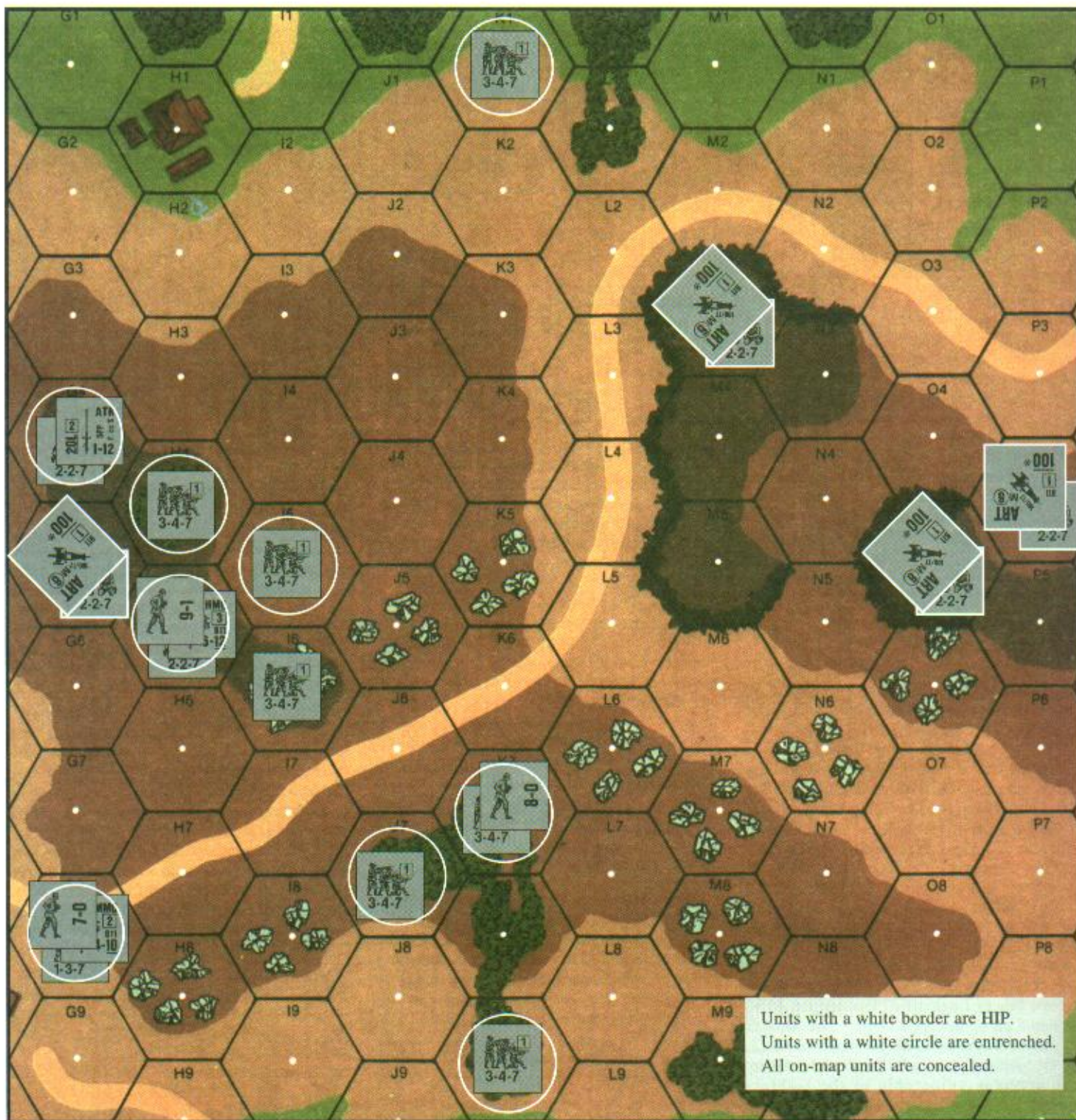
by Matt Shostak

to use the HIP capabilities of the guns to maximum advantage, making the Americans waste valuable time looking for them. This option usually counts on winning the game by the other aspect of the victory conditions, that of having a gun crewed at game end, or having 10 IFT factors able to hit the road. As a final option (really a series of options in a spectrum), the Italian player can try to strike a balance between the two extremes. He could hide one gun and fight with the other three, hide two and fight with two, or hide three and fight with one. I suspect that most players who try a balanced approach will go with the hide one, fight three idea. This last defense might in fact be the most effective one of all. Two or three guns on the firing line, in addition to the other Italian weapons, should be able to cause enough American casualties to keep the opponent worried about the cap, while the still-hidden gun will make him nervous about achieving his own objectives on time. Forcing the opponent to simultaneously keep track of his timetable and limit his losses is a good way to make him work very hard indeed.

Which of these philosophies is the best? I don't know. Each ASL player will probably have his own opinion, based on personal preference and style. If you play the same opponent more than once in this one, you may want to alternate your defense among the various strategies in order to keep him off balance. For the sake of argument let's do a sample setup. Here we'll go for the hide one, fight three strategy with the guns. If one of the guns is going to remain hidden, M9 or N9 might be a very good place to put it. Other good places include L1, N4, and P4. Here we simply pick one of these.

Note that three of the four guns will lose their HIP status very easily. The general rule of engagement for this force will be for the 3 guns to shoot at worthwhile targets, especially the Stuarts, halftracks, and M4s. The HMG, MMG, and ATR will be the only other weapons firing very much. They will engage the softer targets and halftracks, always looking to maximize CVP. The rest of the force will try to remain concealed as long as possible to try to put the Americans behind schedule. In the later stages of the game, surviving Italian infantry will make use of the crags to protect them from overrun and VBM freeze by the remaining American tanks.





American Advantages:

Troop quality, armor, leadership

American Disadvantages:

Entry restrictions, CVP cap, time

The American squads far outclass their Italian counterparts, a fact that should be obvious. As usual they bring with them a plethora of smoke grenades, as indicated by their very generous smoke exponent of 3. The American armor is actually pretty darn good, and they've got lots of it. Six Shermans and two Stuarts can dish out a lot of punishment once they start achieving some hits. The Americans also

boast the 9-2 leader, who should be able to influence many events in the U.S. favor. The Americans have a tough job though. Their initial group only has three hexes on which to enter, and the Italians can, if they choose, attempt to obliterate them as they come on board. The U.S. troops also must contend with a casualty cap, so they can't be completely reckless in their advance. Each tank loss hurts more in terms of CVP than it does in lost combat power. Lastly, the Americans don't have a lot of time to do their job, which works hand-in-hand with the CVP cap to make things difficult.

American Offensive Philosophy

I will not try to show a sample American entry, or sample dispositions after the first two turns. It is simply too variable based on how the Italian player defends and how the dice fall early. Instead I will make some comments that should be generally applicable.

The first few turns of this scenario can be a serious gut check for the Americans. Especially if the Italian has chosen to duke it out, casualties can mount rapidly in the early game. Patience is usually rewarded, however, because often by the time the airplanes leave the defenders have lost a lot of their bite and

can barely hope to cause any more American casualties. I have seen several games where the Italians only needed to score one or two more CVP during the last turn or two, but simply couldn't do so, because by that time they had little or nothing left. They simply had to watch the Americans mop them up in the endgame, ever vigilant for an opportunity to get that one lucky sniper or some other kill to win the game. It can get very tense. Even though they can come back strong, however, I still think the Americans have to be very careful to limit their casualties as much as possible. The first group may look very vulnerable with such a restricted entry area, but the Italians can't boresight and must use red To Hit numbers, so it is possible to get most of them on board without a huge number of casualties.

There are a few things the Americans can do to limit casualties. One is to keep an eye out for the fighter-bombers, and to position units in such a way that it will be difficult for an airplane to hit more than one or two units with a single strafing run or point attack. Another is to get the .50cal into AA mode right before the airplanes show up. Dade Cariaga shot down one of Mike Seningen's aircraft this way at WWF IV in Denver in 1998, so we know it can be done. Furthermore, as a general rule of thumb, I like to abandon the jeeps as soon as possible, removing the machineguns. This would give you an extra .50cal and MMG. To do otherwise, in my opinion, is to risk handing the Italian some cheap and easy CVPs, which you might regret later. The halftracks should be used carefully, because they are vulnerable to nearly everything, and each one counts as an easy 5 CVP if its crew is destroyed with it. Keep these guys tucked away until the threat to them has been diminished somewhat.

Although the Italians can determine the general course of the scenario, the Americans can still control the pace because they are the attackers and the defense is largely static. Therefore the Americans should not be afraid to take advantage of this and use their mobility to focus the attack wherever they want. The American tanks should be CE for much of this scenario in order to make use of their excellent AAMG, especially since a Recall result won't impact on the CVP total. Getting behind the Italians in order to encircle them and also cause failure to rout will be a key for the U.S. in the late parts of the game.

Conclusion

I really think this is a great scenario. It has come down to the last turn every time I have played it, and it has enough replay value that I would play it over again in a heartbeat. It has interesting terrain, victory conditions that keep both players honest, and enough chrome to keep savvy veterans interested. Give it a try, I think you'll like it too.

Evolution at Naro

by Russ Buntin

Some of you may be familiar with an earlier version of scenario J20. We made two small but significant changes—significant enough to warrant discussion. We expanded the American entry area to include hex A7, and we clarified SSR3 to make clear that the Fighter-Bombers (FBs) are available for two American Player Turns.

When I first played this scenario at March Madness '99, I was immediately struck by the unique situation and intrigued by the opportunity to construct an Italian defense which could withstand the American onslaught. My defense was similar to the one illustrated in the accompanying article, and I was successful in holding out until the end for an Italian victory, despite the fact that we only allowed the FBs to participate during one American MPH due to the wording of SSR 3.

Following the scenario, my opponent and I began tinkering with the Italian setup and discovered that the Italians could probably win two of three games by setting up everything right on top of the American entry hexes and pounding the initial force. At that time, the Americans were forced to enter on hexes A5 and/or A6 only. The goal of this up-front defense was to push the American CVP total as close to 32 as possible and then let the FBs do the rest. We ran through a trial run or two in the time we had available between rounds and discovered that the odds might even be a bit better than two in three, but failure would almost certainly result in an American win.

The description below illustrates a sample setup using this tactic. It depends on killing the unarmed jeep (1 CVP), both armed Jeeps (4 CVP each), their passengers (if any), both HTs (5 CVP each), and any riders which enter on the M5A1s. It is highly possible that the Italians can amass 29 CVP on turn one. That only leaves the Americans 3 CVP for the remainder of the game. While this was no sure thing, we felt that adopting this strategy went contrary to the intent of the designer and led to an unrealistic setup.

Setup:

C4 (CA C5/D4): HIP 100* ART/2-2-7
C5, C6, D5, D6, E6, E7: 1S Foxhole/3-4-7
D8 (CA D7/E8): HIP 100* ART/2-2-7
E8 1S Foxhole, ATR/2-2-7
G5 (CA F4/F5): HIP 100* ART/2-2-7
G5 1S Foxhole, 7-0, MMG/1-3-7 HS
H5 (CA G5/G6): 100* ART/2-2-7
H5 1S Foxhole, 9-1, HMG/2-2-7
N5 Sniper

The primary objective is to place as much Residual FP as possible on each of the two American entry hexes. The jeeps would find it difficult to maneuver through this FP undamaged, and there is hardly any counter to it. The Americans have little smoke making capability until the squads arrive on turn two. A cau-

tious American might enter the Stuarts first in order to "freeze" two of the Italian squads, but if they strayed more than a hex or two from the entry area, they would find themselves surrounded by the Italian Guns and the ATR. If the Italian could bag one of these M5A1s on Turn 1, the situation quickly became desperate for the Americans. However, the Stuarts were not the primary targets of the Italian Guns. The Guns would concentrate on the HTs. A hit against them is typically a kill and these Guns must take the one opportunity to get them before it was too late.

The shots against the HTs would not be guaranteed to hit them. The T30s are small targets and would be moving. Additionally, the Italian player might not be able to see the HTs for ≥ 4 MPs so case J1 or J2 may also apply. Placing the Guns within 6 hexes of the entry area avoided the disadvantage of using the red TH#s. Thus, even if the T30s entered, turned, and immediately ran behind the cliff, they would get hit on a DR of 6 or less. Not the best shot to be sure, but success would garner another 5 CVP.

The Italian setup is designed with several caveats in mind. First, if the T30s want to smoke the Italian MG positions for the Turn 2 reinforcements, they will have to be in the sights of at least one Italian Gun. Second, the Italian positions are high enough on the hill that they cannot be reached on Turn 1. Finally, if the Stuarts do run up the slope on Turn 2 to "freeze" the Italian MGs, they will be subject to rear shots from two Italian Guns and the ATR (not to mention the in-hex fire from the other two Guns).

Given such a setup, the Italians are just gambling, but with the odds on their side. The problem is not that the Italians have a guaranteed victory with this setup, but rather that the odds are too tempting to forego the opportunity and perhaps prevent a number of players from enjoying what this scenario really has to offer.

We then consulted with Chas Smith and Sam Tyson, who were originally responsible for this scenario. They had already realized that the original SSR did not match their intent that the FBs should be available for two American Player Turns. They also agreed with our idea of adding hex A7 to the American entry area. In our minds, that one hex makes all the difference. In its current form, the Italians may still set up in the face of the American advance, and may even do enough damage to win the game very early. But it is far riskier gamble than it was when the entry area was only A5/A6. We hope that you all enjoy the scenario more with this minor alteration in place. Personally, I think it makes for an exciting confrontation.



SASL IS NOT ASL

by Robert Delwood

By some measures it seems Solitaire Advance Squad Leader (SASL) needs no introduction. Since its 1995 debut, everyone knows that it is the solitaire version of our beloved game. This quick categorization of the module encourages players to casually make unfounded assumptions. SASL may be the most overlooked and underplayed module in the series. No other module is dismissed as readily. We accept desert or PTO scenarios, for instance, even though we do not all play them. No one forces PTO on others and, likewise, no one advocates SASL replacing face-to-face (FtF) play. Yet, many players look down on SASL, perhaps seeing a series of clunky, automated formulas that do not provide any fun. Many look at it only superficially, see it using the ASL rules, counters, and map boards, and give it no further thought. True, SASL can be played like ASL, but to do so overlooks its beauty. Many have formed opinions about SASL while never having tried the game. To complicate matters, their assumptions have been bolstered by previous less successful attempts at solitaire systems.

In short, many think that SASL and its solitaire system is just a way to play ASL scenarios by yourself. And therein is the misconception. In truth, SASL is really its own game, different and distinct from ASL. The introduction to Chapter 5 attempts to point this out. If a player plays SASL as if it was ASL, or expects it to be the same as a FtF game, he will be disappointed. For example, think of the differences between Japanese infantry and more conventional forces such as the British. You could play Japanese infantry as you would the British units. And you might even win, too. You would be, however, completely missing the point. Most likely you would lose and walk away feeling that the Japanese are pretty disappointing. You have to adapt your tactics if you want to get the most out of the Japanese. This is hard for some people, at least at first, since all their experience has been with conventional infantry tactics. The same need to change one's mindset holds true for SASL. SASL introduces new types of scenarios and a new kind of opponent. Both require a new style of play. This article will examine some of the unique aspects of the SASL system and the differences in playing style the system forces. I hope you gain some new insight for the game and maybe try it, or try it again.

Solitaire Game Mechanics

Of course, the challenge of solitaire game design is producing a useable artificial intelligence (AI). Too simple and it does not produce a good opponent. Too complex and it becomes unplayable. In SASL, the AI controls the "Enemy" side (while the player controls the "Friendly" side). The SASL AI accomplishes its task with four main game mechanisms: Suspect Counters, Activation Tables, Action Tables, and Hierarchy Lists. Any AI for a solitaire system involves some compromise. In SASL, players trade knowledge of the AI's behavior for the uncertainty of the opposing forces. Because of this trade off, SASL play is not the same as FtF ASL. This fact does not make SASL better or worse than ASL, only different.

Suspect ?

Suspect Counters

Enemy forces are marked initially only by Suspect counters (S?). In practice an S? is similar to a cloaking counter: you know where it is but not how many, if any, units it represents, or if such units are $\frac{1}{8}$ " or $\frac{1}{2}$ " counters. The actual composition of an S? is not revealed until an attempt is made to activate it. The Mission card (SASL scenarios are termed "Missions") describes the initial placement and combat attitude for all S?. Hold attitude, as the name implies, represents a holding or defensive posture, while Advance attitude means the opponent will advance towards your units. In some circumstances, the Enemy side may have Suspect counters in both attitudes at the same time.

Activation Tables

Activation is the two-step process by which Suspect counters turn into actual units. First, an Activation attempt is made in response to Friendly units moving or firing. Its success depends on the range, the DRM for any attack versus the moving Friendly unit, and the Enemy's nationality. A dr is made and compared to the scenario-defined Activation number. An unsuccessful activation removes the Suspect counter (as if it was a dummy stack). A successful activation requires the player to consult the appropriate Generation Table to determine what unit or units now appear. SASL includes Generation Tables for the Germans, Americans, Russians and Partisans. (Additional tables may become available in future SASL releases.) These tables cover a range of possible units based on the date and theater of the scenario and are designed to keep historically rare vehicles uncommon. The tables appearing in the SASL module are the most comprehensive and the most general, while the tables for solitaire Historical ASL (S/HASL) that appeared in *ASL JOURNAL #1* are much more restrictive and represent only units historically present during the battle depicted.

Action Tables

Every PFPh, each active Enemy unit rolls against its combat attitude for its activity. This determines if it fires, moves, or Panics. Panic is unique to SASL. For Infantry, the effects of Panic are similar to those of TI—the affected unit may not move, advance, or fire (EXC: the

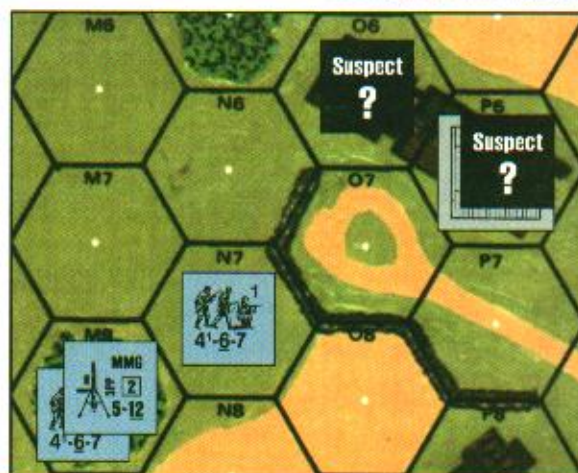


Figure One: Two German squads approach a building with unknown occupants.

A2: ENEMY Action Tables (6.2)			
A2a: Advance Attitude		A2b: Hold Attitude	
DR	Action	DR	Action
doubles	Panic ¹	doubles	Panic ¹
2-7	Move ²	2-4	Move ²
8-10	Fire ³	5-9	Fire ⁴
11	Entrench ⁵	10-11	Entrench ⁶

Footnotes:

¹ An Elite unit Panics on each doubles DR of ≥ 10 ; a 1st Line unit Panics on each doubles DR of ≥ 4 ; a Conscript or Green unit Panics on all doubles DR (6.21-213).

² An Immobile armed vehicle Fires if it has a Target; otherwise it does nothing (6.22-222).

³ Move if the unit has no Target (6.23).

⁴ If no Target exists a non-Immobile armed vehicle Moves or an Infantry MMC attempts to Entrench if it is in an eligible Location and is not already Entrenched. Otherwise the unit does nothing (6.23).

⁵ A non-Immobile armed vehicle Moves; an Infantry MMC with a Target Fires if already entrenched, or Moves if not in an eligible Location in which to Entrench or if no Target exists (6.24).

⁶ A non-Immobile armed vehicle Fires; an Infantry MMC with a Target Fires if already entrenched or if not in an eligible Location in which to Entrench, or Moves if no Target exists (6.24).

unit must use FPF whenever possible). A Panicked vehicle stops if in Motion or moving and like Infantry cannot fire. Note that Enemy units also may Panic during DF.

Hierarchy Lists

Hierarchy lists are at the heart of SASL's AI. Once a unit's action is generated, these lists determine the actual target or destination of the unit. A roll is made for each unit on either the Action or Movement Table, as appropriate, resulting in a set of options in a hierarchical list. The unit must attempt to follow these options in the order listed. If no target meets that criterion or if multiple targets are available, then the player proceeds to the next step in the hierarchy. For example, during its Prep Fire Phase an Enemy Infantry unit with LOS to some of your units is ordered to fire. It rolls a five on the appropriate table (Enemy Attack Table A3a): Fire all FP at closest target in VPO (Victory Point Objective) hex; at closest Known target; etc. Among the potential targets in VPO hexes, it would fire at the closest one. If there were more than one eligible target or if none were available, it would fire at the closest Known unit regardless of VPO proximity, and so on. A similar procedure is used if an Enemy unit generates a move action, but with directions to move toward different listed destinations. For combat, there are four different charts: IFT vs. Infantry, LATW vs. Vehicle, Ordnance vs. Infantry, and Ordnance vs. Vehicle. Taken as a whole, all of these various charts provide an impressive array of options.

So what conclusions can we draw about the SASL AI? First, it is difficult to second-guess the AI. While one can perhaps narrow down the options to a few generalities (e.g., the closest, the most units or the least TEM), even within such a given type there are just too many variations. There are several kinds of "closest" targets: closest, closest in VPO hex, closest PRC, closest Known unit, etc. In the

end, this is similar to a FtF ASL game. For example, you might suspect your opponent is going to fire at the closest stack, the biggest stack, the stack with the highest FP (i.e., the most dangerous), or the stack in the lowest TEM. Second, because the tables are well thought out and designed, they reduce the apparent randomness of the system. Assuming a unit is going to fire, for example, the AI works to select that unit's targets logically. There is none of the randomness of sniper attacks.

Command Control

Just as Enemy units roll for Panic, your own troops also have the ability to Panic. For a unit to function without penalty, it must be in Command Control. Basically, this means the unit

must be within two hexes and LOS of a leader who has passed a special type of TC—called a Command (CMD) DR. For example, if a 10-3 leader passes a CMD DR, all units and other leaders within two hexes are considered in command; that is, they may move and fire normally. A subordinate leader within this two-hex radius in turn may provide command to other units outside the original leader's command radius, but within two hexes of that subordinate leader. If the original 10-3 leader fails its TC, it has Panicked and the next highest leader must attempt a CMD DR. After the command status for all leaders has been determined, all units not in the command radius of any leader within Command Control make a CMD DR. Naturally, a CMD DR of 12 automatically results in Panic.

Many players, including those not partial to SASL, like the Panic rules and have tried to use them as house rules in their normal ASL games. However, the implications of the Panic rule are tricky and force three new considerations for players.

First, leaders acquire an additional role. ASL leaders already have much to do during battle. The good ones lead fire groups, while the lesser ones are relegated to radio operations, assisting with movement, and rallying. Rarely does a side ever have enough leaders. The Panic rules, however, effectively require your leaders to be the center of your battle group in order to keep your other units in command. This role now becomes more important than most of their regular functions in ASL. Second, because leaders may not be directing fire as often, players must develop new fire philosophies. The effectiveness of your fire is going to decrease. Leaders are likely to be near the front, but not actually on the front, in order to maximize the number of units they can keep in command. Third, forces are not going to be spread out as much. It is common in FtF ASL games to have a line of units across the map, perhaps with some units in flanking positions. In SASL, players may still attempt such tactics, but they become problematic because

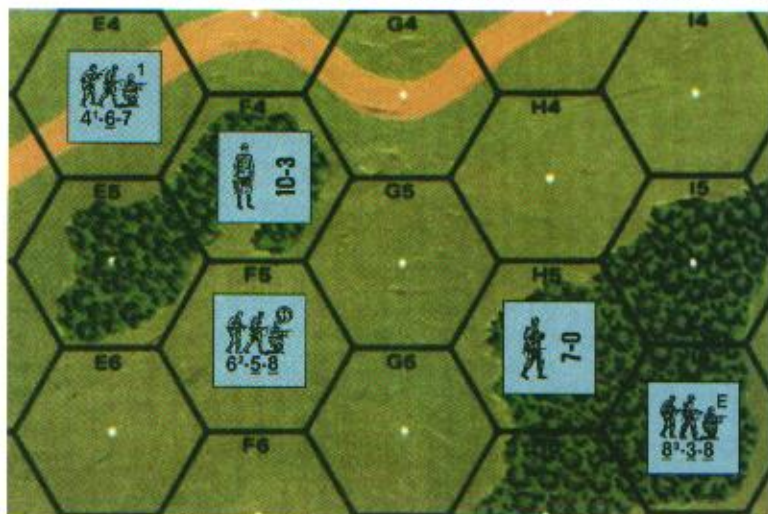


Figure Two: Command Control. If the 10-3 leader passes his CMD DR, then all units are in command control since every unit would be within two hexes of a leader who is in command. If the 10-3 fails, the 7-0 may attempt a CMD DR and, if successful, both the 8-3-8 and 6-5-8 would be in Command Control. Regardless of the 7-0's success, the 4-6-7 would have to attempt a CMD DR based on his current morale since he is neither within two hexes nor LOS of an in-command leader. If the 7-0 fails, the 8-3-8 and 6-5-8 must each try a CMD DR against their morale.

of increased likelihood of Panic (and its attendant loss of combat effectiveness) when your units are spread out. In-depth defenses carry some of the same risks. Players will find themselves with a stronger up-front position and less ability to fall back in an organized manner. For these reasons, command control must be a prime consideration for any SASL player. If a SASL player keeps too many leaders from the front, more troops are likely to Panic each turn. A careless SASL attacker will thus discover he has no troops moving forward. Likewise, an unprepared defender will find his Panic-stricken units quickly overrun.

Random Events

SASL also introduces random events into play. Each SASL scenario sets the Random Event (RE) numbers for each side, from a low of 2/3 to a maximum of 6/7. During the ATTACKER's Rally Phase, the Wind Change DR doubles as the RE check. If the DR is either one of the RE numbers, a random event occurs. Another DR is then made on the appropriate RE table for that nationality.

Random events range from the innocuous to the drastic. Like other tables in SASL, though, the RE tables are weighted, making the more influential affects less probable. Some generated events may not even be applicable and thus will have no effect. The random events in SASL fall into three main categories. First,

there are reinforcement type events, resulting in the appearance of new troops, possibly including partisans, assault engineers, elite troops, or even various $\frac{5}{8}$ " counters such as a platoon of field guns, assault guns, tanks or half-tracks loaded with infantry. Second, it may be a limited event or one time occurrence such as certain squads going berserk, ammo shortage, an immediate activation check of select Suspect counters, or a change in the RE values. Third, the event may be a scenario changer. Such events include a change of the victory point schedule or having the Enemy defender suddenly switch to the attack. The most drastic "scenario changer" forces an immediate withdrawal of Friendly units and alters the victory conditions.

In terms of play, there is not much that can be done to anticipate random events. They occur randomly and their severity, while varied, is likewise difficult to predict. You just have to always be aware that unpredictable things can happen at any moment. This concern is similar to the FtF ASL player's need to realize a sniper could pick off his best leader. You cannot completely prevent it from happening, but players can take small steps to protect a valuable leader from the sniper (e.g., stacking the leader with other units, having others units in lesser TEM nearby, etc.).

While some SASL players prefer not to use RE, I strongly recommended their use with S/HASL because it is more specialized and the

scope of the fighting is such that friendly units often need the additional reinforcements. For example, in S/HASL with *RED BARRICADES*, attackers sorely need assault guns which generally are not available, or available in sufficient numbers, by OB alone.

Fog of War

The fog of war definitely covers SASL. You do not know the opposing forces or when reinforcements, Enemy or Friendly, will appear. While these elements are too much of a "wild card" for some, many players feel they actually enhance the game. For example, most HASL campaign games have variable scenario lengths. When that concept was first introduced in *RED BARRICADES*, some—familiar with fixed length scenarios—viewed it with apprehension. Now the concept is a proven mechanism that players have come to like, if not expect, in an HASL CG scenario. Players have voluntarily and willingly accepted the new challenges inherent in variable length scenarios, changing their strategy and tactics accordingly. For example, in *KAMPFGRUPPE PEIPER*, should one risk an attack on the sanitarium late in a scenario knowing failure would mean a very bad position for the next scenario? Obviously, introducing uncertainty can make the game better.

Like variable scenario length, lack of exact knowledge of the Enemy forces creates an additional set of challenges. To view unit activation as completely random, however, is unfair to the game system. The Enemy side is not pulling units out of a bucket containing all the counters in the system. The activation charts are well thought-out and while it may be possible to activate an unstoppable King Tiger or KV behemoth, it is probable the Suspect counter is nothing or only a squad or two. This uncertainty also raises the issue of balance. That is, do both sides have the means to win? In truth, as in real life, not all SASL engagements are even handed. Tasked with your victory conditions, you often have what you need to do the job, but not much more. Frequently, you encounter a stronger force. Part of the SASL challenge involves utilizing your forces in ways you had not previously considered. In some instances, you may meet a force you absolutely cannot defeat, thereby experiencing another part of the SASL decision making challenge: knowing when to withdraw. Rarely encountered in ASL scenarios, the concept of wholesale withdrawal becomes important during any SASL CG, where you risk losing a sizable portion of your experienced troops if you continue to fight a losing battle. Play balance is for wimps!

By the same token, SASL has a high replay value. As Suspect counters activate randomly and the terrain generates anew for each scenario, each playing of a SASL scenario is wildly different from the previous one. In addition, changing the Enemy nationality introduces even more variability. Just as in FtF ASL games, fighting the Germans in SASL requires different tactics than fighting the Rus-

A3a: ENEMY IFT Attacks vs Infantry/PRC



DR Fire Command

- | | |
|------|---|
| ≤ 3 | Fire all possible Spray Fire FP at closest Target; least TEM; most Targets; Target(s) possessing most SW/Guns; most Target SMC. Fire any non-Spray FP at Target in least TEM; Location with most Target SMC; closest; most Targets; combine with Spray Fire if necessary. If spray fire not possible (for whatever reason) fire all FP at closest Target; Location with most Targets; most SW; least TEM. |
| 4 | Fire all FP at closest PRC Target; PRC with least TEM; PRC with most SW. If no PRC Target exist fire all FP at any vehicular Target; otherwise fire inherent FP at closest Target; least TEM; Location with most Targets; most SW; most Good Order Targets.
SW: Fire any SW at Target in least TEM; Location with most Targets. Combine with inherent FP if necessary. |
| 5 | Fire all FP at closest Target in VPO Location; at closest Known Target; Location with most Known Targets; least TEM; most Known Target SMC. If no Known Target exists fire at closest concealed Target; least TEM; stack with most Infantry counters. |
| 6 | Fire all FP at Target in least TEM in maximum (long) range of firer's inherent FP; closest; Location with most Known Targets; most Target leaders; most Weapons; most Good Order Targets. |
| 7 | Fire all FP at closest Target in VPO Location; at unbroken Target in least TEM in normal range of firer's inherent FP; closest; most SW. If no unbroken Target exists in firer's normal range conduct Fire Command 5. |
| 8 | Fire all FP at Location with most Targets within normal range of firer's inherent FP; least TEM; most SW. If no such Target exists extend range to firer's maximum (long) range with same priorities. |
| 9 | Fire all inherent FP at Location with most Known Targets; least TEM; closest; most Target SMC; most SW; most Good Order Targets.
SW: Fire SW at Target in least TEM; most Targets; closest. Combine with inherent FP if necessary. |
| 10 | Fire inherent FP at closest Known Target; most Known Targets; least TEM; most Good Order Targets; most Weapons; most Target SMC. If no Known Target exists fire at concealed Target with same priorities.
SW: Fire SW at Target in least TEM; closest; Location with most Targets; most Target SMC. Combine with inherent FP if necessary. |
| ≥ 11 | Fire all FP at closest Target; most Known Targets; most SW; most Target leaders; least TEM. |

sians—even when playing the same basic SASL scenario.

Changes in Strategy

Generalities are hard to make in ASL and the same is true for SASL. Naturally, each particular situation is different. However, SASL tends to reward the use of the sacrificial HS. On the attack, some unit must risk activating Suspect counters. Afterwards, powerful firegroups need to be ready to respond to any activated enemy units. Thus, a SASL attack tends to be more localized to allow Suspect counters activation in smaller, more manageable numbers. The terrain does not always accommodate this approach, but in general the attacker prefers to activate as few Suspect counters as possible. On the defense, the opposite is true. You want to activate as many S? as possible at long range so you can pick them apart as they come towards your units. Again, the sacrificial HS is important. This unit needs to be placed forward with the best LOS to the most areas. Several might be needed to cover the battlefield.

You may prefer to stack more in SASL in order to form more effective FG. In some

ways stacking is less risky, too. The SASL Enemy is more predictable when Defensive First Firing. As long as the stack you're moving does not meet the movement-based activation requirements, it can actually move around the battlefield more freely than in FtF ASL play. Except by RE, there are no HIP units to suddenly appear.

SASL also has a more leisurely pace. Because there is no opponent to prod you on and games do not have to over by the end of the evening, a SASL player can take more time to think about his moves. He is free to better evaluate each move and option, a feature many players enjoy. This comes closest to practice for ASL since new options may be explored, and even retracted afterwards if they don't work out. It is similar to learning chess by replaying old games and, more instructively, playing alternatives the author proposes.

In the same way, the lack of opponent may distract players. The situation is no longer truly adversarial. Even though players have more time to look up rules, they are not required to and may lose the motivation. In this sense, SASL falls short as a training tool as some players will need the interaction with other players to learn certain rules correctly.

For the reasons outlined above, it is difficult to categorize SASL. Clearly, it is form of ASL. It uses the same maps, counters and rules. Players already familiar with ASL should be comfortable with SASL. Use of the AI is the only new material SASL introduces. I hope I have convinced you that the AI rules are well designed. They give the Enemy a reasonable behavior, introducing just enough randomness to keep you from getting complacent. Because the SASL AI system sets up rules of engagement in a consistent and logical manner, beginners might consider following the AI in their own games.

We all know, however, that SASL was never intended to replace a live opponent. But it does bring up common rules questions, allowing players to better learn some situations. On the other hand, many SASL situations lack counterparts in a FtF ASL game. Thus, some claim SASL isn't even good practice for playing ASL. But the designers were aware of these differences and made SASL a distinctively different game. Obviously, if the Enemy in SASL does something illogical, change it. But you will likely find such changes are less frequent than you expect.

continued from page 14

Anvil landings in southern France in August of 1944. (Special thanks to Laurent Cunin and the gang.) The official ASL website is definitely one site to bookmark and check regularly.

ASL Crossroads

(<http://www.tigertank.com/aslcrossroads>)

Jacques Cuneo has assembled a number of scenario after-action reports, tactical analyses, etc. But the most valuable part of the ASL Crossroads is the page of ASL-related links. From this site, one can find almost any other ASL-related site on the world wide web.

ASL Bulletin Board

(<http://members.xoom.com/brienmartin/index.html>)

Brien Martin has turned the ASL Bulletin Board into a great compendium of ASL-related information, player aids, tactics articles, amateur scenarios, and scenario analyses. Brien has also introduced the concept of "Scenario of the Month" where a scenario is chosen and participants play the scenario and then discuss tactics, tips and their general impressions of the scenario. The concept is very similar to the book reading clubs popular in some areas.

ASL WebDex

(<http://underworld.fortunecity.com/postal/598/index.html>)

The ASL WebDex provides a one-stop location for links to practically every ASL-related piece on the world wide web. The compilation provided on the ASL WebDex is very impres-

sive and the links are organized by subject matter using the ASL Rulebook chapters as the indexing criteria. Therefore, if one wished to find articles related to Solitaire ASL, clicking on the Chapter S depiction would provide a list of SASL-related articles. Likewise for links to Red Barricades material from the Chapter O link, etc.

ASL Mailing List

(<http://www.pitt.edu/~pferraro/asllist.html>)

The ASL Mailing List is probably the oldest ASL resource on the internet and puts more ASL players in touch with each other than any other ASL resource. The ASL Mailing List, hosted by Paul Ferraro, is not a website but a large group of players who exchange email on many ASL topics. The ASL Mailing List is a great place to ask questions about the ASL rules, exchange ideas about scenario tactics and generally keep up with the hobby. And for those who don't want all the email going to their mailbox, Mike Bowling's website at <http://gs105.sp.cs.cmu.edu/~mhb/aslml> provides a web-based interface for perusing the ASL Mailing List discussions without subscribing to the ASL Mailing List.

Virtual ASL

(<http://vasl.thegamers.net>)

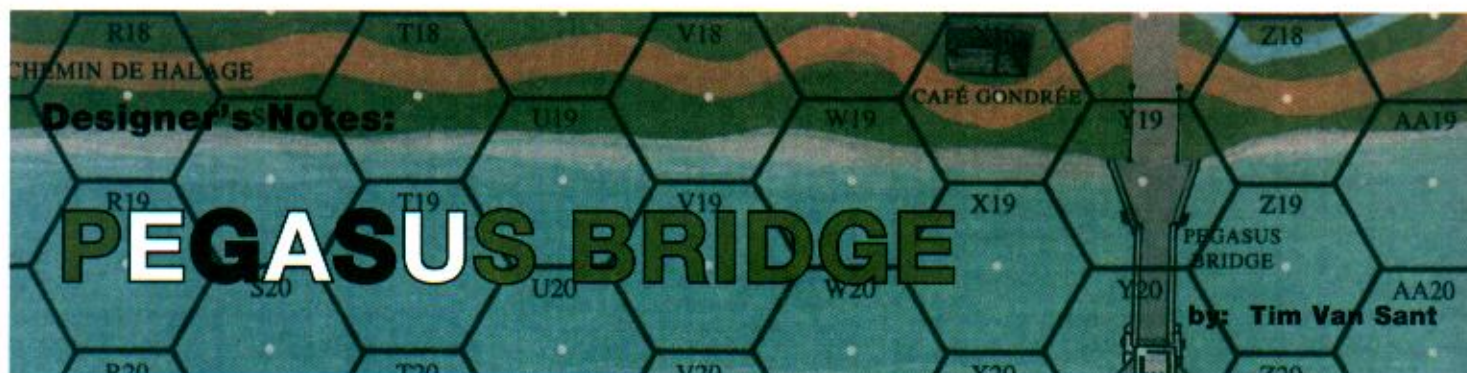
Virtual ASL (VASL) stands as one of the premier on-line ASL resources. Developed by Rodney Kinney as an experiment in computer programming, it is not Computer ASL. Rather, VASL is a computer program that provides an electronic substitute for the ASL playing components including the boards, counters and dice. The strength of VASL is its capability to

provide a way for ASL players to play ASL live through the internet. Using a VASL server, a computer operating 24 hours a day set up to specifically facilitate the transfer of information from one ASL player to another in real time, two players see the ASL boards and counters on their computer screen. As one player moves his ASL counters using the computer mouse, the other player, who could be on the other side of the world, sees the opponents counters moving across the boards on his screen. VASL includes a utility that allows players to "chat" with each other by typing in their messages that are immediately seen by their opponent. In this way, the players can partake of the normal conversation that occurs during regular face-to-face ASL games. This brief description does not do justice to the revolutionary concept of VASL. To get the full effect of VASL, visit the site and give it a try.

The ASL-specific resources listed in this article are just a very, very small sample of the information that is available to the ASL player on the world wide web. Web sites on WWII history, biographical sites of WWII veterans, places to get books for scenario research, and other wargame sites are just some of the other resources available. Information is being added daily. A list all of the resources would fill this magazine and be obsolete the day of publication. But using the above listed information, one can start using the world wide web to enhance your hobby experience and find links to all the other excellent sites on the vast world wide web.

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Shortly after midnight on D-Day, in the first sizable combat operation of Operation Overlord, a glider company, reinforced with two additional platoons and Royal Engineers, landed and captured bridges over the Orne River and Caen Canal. This coup de main attack, commanded by Major John Howard, had been deemed the only likely way to seize the bridges intact. The bridges were a vital link between the British 6th Airborne Division, dropped east of the Orne River and the seaborne forces landing the next morning at Sword Beach west of the river. Howard's reinforced D Company quickly established a defensive perimeter around the vulnerable canal bridge and awaited reinforcement by Lt. Col. Geoffrey Pine-Coffin's 7th Parachute Battalion presently landing near Ranville to the east (scenario PB1 Ham and Bloody Jam).

The Germans, though hamstrung by the absence of their garrison commander who had been wounded and taken prisoner at the river bridge, tentatively approached the bridge with a force of tanks and infantry. The lead tank was destroyed by a PIAT bomb, a particularly fortunate shot for the British. Its violent death made the Germans reconsider the wisdom of a night attack on what suddenly seemed a strongly defended bridge and served as a clarion call for the reinforcing British parachute battalion. Guided in part by the flaming tank, the paras hurried across both waterways greatly expanding the strength and size of the bridgehead west of the canal assuring control of the bridges till daybreak (scenario PB2 Howard's Men).

After daybreak, the British were pressed back from the forward positions they had staked out but still clung tenaciously to a portion of central Benouville, a position astride the Caen-Ouistreham road that complicated convergence of German forces to the north and south of the bridgehead. The Germans launched numerous uncoordinated attacks that morning that were beaten back, although some Germans infiltrated perilously close to the bridge. (Scenarios PB3, PB4, & PB5, Piece-meal, Killeen's Red, and Taylor Made Defense.)

Early that afternoon, the 6th Commando Battalion of Lord Lovat's 1st Special Service Brigade, pushing aside opposition in the village of Le Port, crossed the bridges to reinforce the 6th Airborne at Ranville (scenario J31 Lovat First Sight). By mid-afternoon, the rest of Lovat's brigade had crossed the bridges, and although 3rd Commando Battalion remained close at-hand just east of the Orne if

needed, 7th Para and the men of Howard's D Company still held the Germans at bay. It was not until the evening hours that the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Warwickshires pushed into Benouville (PB6 It's About Time). The 7th Parachute Battalion was relieved of defense of the bridge near midnight climaxing almost 21 hours of continuous fighting for Pine-Coffin's men. Along with Major Howard's company, they had survived not only ground attacks but also dealt with gunboats on the canal, frogmen intent on destroying the bridge, and a rare appearance in the evening by a German fighter-bomber whose bomb struck the bridge control tower—but inexplicably failed to explode.

This is the setting for *PEGASUS BRIDGE*, the fourth historical ASL module. It brings the British into the HASL fold and is the first to depict an airborne landing. The name of the bridge over the Caen Canal was changed to Pegasus Bridge in honor of the symbol of the 6th Airborne (Bellerophon mounted on the winged horse Pegasus). The action at Pegasus Bridge has been depicted on film (in the movie version of Cornelius Ryan's classic, *The Longest Day*) and been chronicled by Eisenhower scholar Stephen E. Ambrose in his book *Pegasus Bridge*.

These two treatments of the action at the Caen Canal bridge on D-Day served both as inspiration and source material for the initial design of PB. The film *The Longest Day* was certainly my first exposure to the subject and despite its wooden re-creation of the senior Allied commanders, many trite touches, and a tone that seems increasingly quaint with the passage of years, it has maintained an ability to fascinate and entertain me.

Ambrose's book is vastly more consistent, though it's probably unfair to compare the tone of a movie (especially one with "42 international stars" and several directors) to that of a written historical account. After reading the book a person comes away with the impression that life is indeed stranger than fiction. The book is not without some minor flaws. Ambrose's extensive personal contact with the veterans of D Company (literally tens of hours of interviews with Howard and other important battle participants) and emphasis on their preparation, battle, and aftermath necessarily results in less attention to the deeds of 7th Para. The strategic significance that he ascribes to Pegasus Bridge at times seems oddly conflicted between inordinate elevation of the bridge's importance and a more measured assessment. That said, the book is one of

the richest and finest accounts of a small unit action ever written. The evident wealth of research, the depth of detail it conveys on the order of battle, topography near the bridges, and even the mind set of the antagonists, long ago planted a seed that this battle was not merely suitable for depiction as a HASL module—it *had* to be one.

Examining these two "sources"—the film version of TLD with its indelible dramatization of Pegasus Bridge and Ambrose's book—makes an interesting departure point for a discussion of the design of the HASL module *PEGASUS BRIDGE*.

The Best and Worst of Movies

When I was about twelve years old, I remember hearing that the movie *The Longest Day* was the greatest black & white movie ever made. At that time, I wouldn't have argued the point. I vividly remember seeing the movie with a squad of friends and, after the 3-hour colossus was over, eagerly discussing which scene was our favorite. Everyone agreed that the scene at Ste. Mere Eglise was certainly a great part of the movie. It had everything—especially those paratroopers with their way-cool Thompson submachine guns (we presumed that the US Army must have bought a truckload from gangsters in Chicago).

Right up there with the Tommy guns at Ste. Mere Eglise though, was the Sten wielded by the British Paras in the film. The way it was fired from the abdomen, with the ammo clip pointing horizontally not vertically was an obvious indicator of superior style.

The Orne River Bridge?

All of the relevant action shown in the movie is that from the Caen Canal bridge and was shot on location. Yet it is always referred to as the Orne River bridge and there is no mention of a second waterway and bridge 500 meters away. Of course almost all of the significant combat occurred in the vicinity of the canal bridge. Depicting the assault of two bridges in a movie that's already three hours long would have needlessly complicated a story line already burdened with exposition.

The final version of PB lacks the river bridge as well. Early maps included the river bridge and several hexes of the eastern bank of the Orne. The original version of the assault scenario, "Ham and Bloody Jam", included the

glider landing at the river bridge. The utility of this map section was over once the Orne River bridge was seized, though, as little combat otherwise occurs there. Moreover, the flavor of the ASL combat at the river bridge, renamed Horsa Bridge after the war, was adversely affected by the nearness of the map edge as well, with little room for maneuver on the narrow east bank of the Orne creating highly unrealistic bottlenecks moving south or north of the bridge.

Given a standard HASL map size of 22 inches by 33 inches, the inclusion of the Orne River also meant that the western board edge was unrealistically close to the significant action in Benouville. Ultimately, the game developers wisely shifted the map about 8 hexes west. The excision of the eastern portion of the mapboard did, however, doom depiction of the capture of Maj. Hans Schmidt, commander of the bridge garrison, whose Mercedes Benz car was shot up crossing the river bridge soon after its seizure. Aside from this colorful vignette, little was lost and much gained by the shift in the mapboard.

One special effect from TLD that thrilled me on the big screen twenty-five years ago (but now seems sadly quaint on video) was the approach of the gliders to the canal bridge. In the film, the gliders approach from the north, pass to the west and within sight of the bridge at an altitude of no more than two hundred feet or so, then somehow execute a tight, 180° turn and land, one immediately after another in the marshy area southeast of the bridge.

The reality of the approach of the gliders, while lacking the once-stunning visual of the movie, was actually much more astonishing. The bulk of the approach to the landing zone was performed without eye contact of useful landmarks of any kind. The gliders approached from the north and performed two right-hand turns that brought them west and then north toward their landing zone (LZ X). These turns were performed only with stopwatch, compass, airspeed indicator, and altimeter. It was but one minute before landing, while the lead glider was speeding north just two kilometers from the canal bridge, that the moon broke through the clouds and the canal and river became visible. As the three gliders were spaced one minute apart and had no visual contact with one another in flight, this feat of aerial navigation was repeated twice by the aircrews of the second and third gliders. Air Chief Marshal Leigh-Mallory justly called it "the finest piece of airmanship thus far in the war."

There was no difficulty in incorporating the canal bridge glider landing into the ASL rules. The approach was northward, against the wind as the glider rules require. The river bridge force approached from the north, though, with the wind, a factor which contributed to their landing hundreds of meters short of their target. The need to deal with the river landings with the wind vanished when the banks of the Orne River did.

For a glider to have a chance to land near the LZ in the dark, its tug must safely pull it to its planned release point. The performance of transport aircraft in the early hours of D-Day

was extremely erratic. Howard was fortunate that only one of his gliders, carrying his second-in-command Captain Priday and a platoon of men, was forcibly released "blind" due to AA fire near the coast and landed 5 miles to the east of their objective. There was a rule in my original design to account for landings like that of Priday's—on an original DR of 12 a glider and its contents would land offboard with an indeterminate mapboard entry. But it was wisely scrapped during development since an offboard landing by even one of the canal gliders could have a catastrophic and completely arbitrary impact on the game.

A glider in the river?

Shortly after the bridge has been captured in the film, one of Howard's subordinates reports that there are no reports from the third glider. This verbal report is quickly followed by the appearance of the commander of the this glider wearing a sling on his arm. He reports they had landed in the river and though he had broken his arm on the landing, he and his boys will be OK to fight. While the attack on the bridge proceeds, one of the gliders can be seen in the background, nose to the ground, tail in the air.

In as much as the Pegasus assault force "stands in" dramatically for the glider force as a whole, this bit of license was certainly justified. Seventy-one of the 196 glider pilots who landed east of the Orne became casualties on D-Day. In reality, none of Howard's force landed in the river or canal. Priday's men, though, were unaccounted for until early on June 7th. The second glider did break in half as its pilot attempted to turn to avoid the first glider (it came to rest only 25 yards away). The third glider landed in a particularly marshy section of the field 10 yards from the second. Half a dozen men were trapped inside for a time and one man was found to have drowned in the nearby swampy pond. Lt. Sandy Smith of C Platoon badly injured his knee on landing and his mobility was greatly reduced.

Major Howard requested that a doctor accompany his assault force as it might be the only way to assure timely and professional medical attention for the wounded. With no knowledge of the duties involved, Dr. John Vaughan from the divisional medical team volunteered for the assignment. An experienced paratrooper-physician, he was uneasy with gliders. Sure enough, riding near the cockpit in the third glider, upon landing he was thrown

from his seat and knocked unconscious for half an hour. In the film, toward the end of the firefight at the bridge, the "Doc" is shown coming east over the bridge, from the decidedly "unfriendly" side, muttering "Sir, anybody can make a mistake." In fact, Dr. Vaughan landed on the east side of the Caen Canal (as did all of Howard's men) but was indeed confused after coming to. Twice he began to wander off to the west side of the bridge only to be urgently called back.

Shot on Location

For the movie, sandbag emplacements replaced some of the trenches, gun emplacements, and underground bunkers prepared by the Germans. Given the surprise the British achieved, there was no need to simulate an extensive underground war. Standard ASL trenches, wire, and a pillbox were deemed sufficient to represent these features.

In the movie, sappers can be seen going hand over hand on the underside of the bridge, pulling wires and charges off as they go. The movie's producer insisted that the bridge be wired with demolition charges, although historically the actual explosives for the bridge were stored in a nearby building due to fears of sabotage by the Resistance. Like Zanuck, I would have liked to offer the Germans the chance to blow the bridge. Both D Coy and 7th Para landed with canvas assault boats to cross a waterway if the bridge were destroyed. The consequences of bridge destruction are so disruptive and dramatic in game terms (and likely die-roll driven and arbitrary) that balance would have become well-nigh impossible. Accordingly, I reluctantly decided to forego adding such a rule.

Hold until relieved?

Just as the Rhine Bridge at Arnhem will always be thought of as the "Bridge Too Far", Pegasus Bridge will forever be associated with the phrase "Hold until relieved." The phrase is spoken and repeated for emphasis in a King's-English voice-over three times in the film: while Howard mulls over his orders on the glider before the attack, immediately after the bridge has been taken, and again when Lovat's men pass over the bridge.

The 5th Para brigade commander's orders to Howard do include the gist of the immortal phrase but the relief that is mentioned is that by 7th Para, not the commandos of 1st Special Service Brigade. In actuality, 7th Para took over the lion's share of the defense of the bridge, though Howard's men defended the east bank of the Caen Canal and platoons from D Company were detailed to assist in the defense of the western bank throughout D-Day.

In another irony of the battle and its film depiction, the actor who played Major Howard, Richard Todd, was a captain in B Company of 7th Para. Todd spent much of D-Day on the wooded slope near the village of Le Port. It is very odd how his contribution to the



actual defense of the bridge seems to come through in his acting. There are some fine little touches like his battle-cry "Up the Ox and Bucks!" that, given the obscurity and near-inaudibility of the reference, must surely reflect Todd and Howard's influence on the scene.

In the film, Lovat's commandos appear to come to the rescue of D Company. Lord Lovat, whose full name was Baron Simon Christopher Joseph Fraser Lovat, was a veteran of Dieppe. As in the movie, he did stride up to the bridge in a white sweater with his piper, Bill Millin—but held only a walking stick, not a rifle. While the commandos did relieve a good deal of pressure from the area northwest of the bridge, their main goal was to cross the Orne and swing north to the coast, extending the Airborne bridgehead north and eastward. In the movie, Lovat's men move out to the south (a score or so dash off south along the canal embankment) and east across the bridge, rushing up to meet a German attack which seems to be coming from the southeast.

All the substantial ground attacks against the bridge actually came from west of the canal (a detail of the battle that might have confused a movie audience). The position of the Germans forming up east of the bridge is essential though for the simplified narrative of the battle that holds that Howard "held until relieved" by Lovat. All of Lovat's brigade had crossed the bridge and was east of the Orne by 1530 on D-Day. This important reinforcement role could only be fulfilled if 7th Para and D Company maintained an adequate grip on the bridges. The price of their sacrifice was additional casualties and uncertainty as the weary troopers fought off attempts to recapture the bridge that afternoon. Ultimately, it was the men of the British 3rd Division that relieved 7th Para (and D Company) some time that evening.

The strategic importance of Pegasus Bridge

It was fortunate for the units at Benouville that the significance of seizing the Caen Canal and Orne River bridges was not fully realized by the Germans on D-Day. Isolated from other events, though, one can imagine the bridge destroyed, held, or recaptured by the Germans, with few adverse consequences for Overlord. Reinforcements and supplies would have gotten to 6th Airborne somehow. The Allies would have thrown new bridges over the canal/river, improvised personnel or even vehicular ferries, and if necessary even sustained the Airborne bridgehead with aerial supply.

Ambrose points to the experience of 1st Airborne at Arnhem as an indication of what can happen when a lightly armed, isolated airborne force confronts a determined foe equipped with tanks and heavy weapons (a fair description of the likely adversaries, 12th SS and 21st Panzer Divisions). Something like an "Arnhem experience" was an improbable scenario, though. Unlike Arnhem, at H-Hour on D-Day help for the 6th Airborne was only a few miles away—not the 60 miles that separated XXX

Corps from 1st Airborne at the commencement of Market-Garden. If the situation got desperate, the divisional and corps artillery (from 3rd Division and I Corps) would have soon been made available to 6th Airborne, along with prodigious naval gunfire. Similarly, the weather in the days after the landings permitted Allied airpower to operate over the battlefield, a factor lacking for much of 1st Airborne's struggle at Arnhem. Ambrose acknowledges that even if 6th Airborne had been decimated it would hardly have proven decisive to the Allies' Normandy campaign.

Oddly, even with the bridge taken and held, it was the vulnerable position of the Airborne that may have ruined the Allies' chances to take Caen on D-Day. Just after midday, the 9th Brigade had landed at Sword and was prepared to set off for their D-Day objectives: Carpiquet and the west edge of Caen. The British I Corps commander, Lt. Gen. John Crocker, insisted they drop their original mission and proceed to secure the area west of Pegasus Bridge. Crocker's logic was that because of 6th Airborne's vulnerability, Pegasus and the Orne River bridges were absolutely essential, especially for transit of 6th Airlanding Brigade scheduled to land the evening of D-Day west of the canal. Though intended as a shield to the forces landing at Sword, concern for the airborne forces actually distracted 3rd Division from its primary objective, the town of Caen. Although Caen had been established as a D-Day objective one month prior, that had been without intelligence of the presence of 21st Panzer in its vicinity. The British failure to take Caen on D-Day would have bitter consequences for the Allies. Caen was acknowledged by both sides to be the potential gateway to Paris. The town was not entered until July 7th during Operation Charnwood and not cleared of Germans until July 18th during Operation Goodwood.

Of course these assessments of the strategic importance of Pegasus Bridge are all made in hindsight, reflecting knowledge of the outcome of the many battles that followed its seizure on D-Day. It is hard to contest the fact

that the Germans' loss of Pegasus Bridge was one of many events on the 6th of June that doomed them to defeat in Normandy. If the bridge had been available for use on D-Day by an energized 21st Panzer Division and if the panzer reserve had been released for movement to Normandy early on D-Day and if the landings at Omaha had failed, one can imagine events rapidly spiraling out of control for the Allies. A mighty battle would have swirled around Sword Beach upon which the fate of the Allied landings might have hinged. Had 21st Panzer held Pegasus Bridge thereby isolating 6th Airborne, with the timely assistance of 12th SS Panzer they could conceivably have driven the 3rd Division off of the beaches with dire consequences for the remainder of the British forces.

This scenario assumes a lively, cohesive German response to the Normandy landings. The planners of Overlord would have been foolish to assume anything less than that. Therefore they rightly recognized that taking and holding Pegasus Bridge was important in getting the Allied invasion off to a good start. Most of those involved were resolved to contributing to that good start even if it cost their lives.

The men of D Company, of 7th Para, and of the other units were undeniably brave (yet human), and my respect for their deeds and sacrifices is very great. Perhaps that's why their names grace most of the scenarios I had a hand in designing. In the end, it mattered little to them if the battle they fought actually "saved the Allies" or "won the war." All of their training and dedication rested on the brave premise that if they acted as if it might, they might achieve heroic things.

I have long dreamed of turning the interesting and important D-Day battle at Pegasus Bridge into an ASL experience. My experience first with the film *The Longest Day* and later with Ambrose's book convinced me it would make for great ASL. It is my belief that through the extensive development given it by Multi-Man Publishing, this dream has come to pass.

Pegasus Bridge Today

The original "Pegasus" bridge was replaced, amid much controversy, just a few months shy of the 50th Anniversary of D-Day with a replica which could better handle both the road and canal traffic. The original bridge was placed in a field within eyesight of its original location.

That bridge is scheduled to be the centerpiece of a new airborne museum located just to the northeast of its original location. The museum's planned opening is June 4th, 2000.



by Brian Youse

behind the scenes:

PEGASUS BRIDGE DEVELOPER'S NOTES

Several years ago, when Multi-Man Publishing (MMP) was still putting out a small-circulation ASL fanzine called *Backblast*, Tim Van Sant brought us a hand-drawn map, one page of rules, one typed-out scenario, and three more scenario concepts. All on the Ox and Bucks attacking a bridge in a night glider assault and then defending the bridge the following day. Relatively small forces were involved (not much more than a reinforced battalion for the British and possibly two battalions for the Germans), all the action was in a small area (it could fit on one HASL-sized mapsheet), and there was a clear goal for the battle (always important when you need to establish Victory Conditions). We were already familiar with G11 "Pegasus Bridge," a scenario that never seemed to click. (Besides some balance problems, the terrain on the geomorphic maps was too built up.) We were interested in the project as an insert for our third issue, and quickly tasked Tim to finish his remaining three scenarios. Several months later, we heard from Tim again. He had the scenarios on paper and was ready to turn the project over to us for development. During those months, however, we had taken over developing ASL for Avalon Hill. With the work already in the project, we figured we could expand this series of historical scenarios into a full fledged historical module, complete with campaign game. *PEGASUS BRIDGE* would become MMP's first module for AH.

Looking back at the first draft is like looking at a different game. Both the Orne river and the Caen Canal were on the mapsheet, with the river basically running along the bottom of the mapsheet leaving one hex of land on the far east side. The Germans had only PzKpfw IVs, something like twenty of them, although we had read about some bastardized self-propelled guns (converted from French vehicles) being employed by the Germans. Hedgerows were everywhere (this was Normandy after all). There were many issues to resolve; some sub-

tle, some not. Did the Ox and Bucks have airborne mortars or the standard British 2" mortar? (They had the airborne variety.) What happens if the British roll badly during the glider landings? How do you represent a battle where one side begins the attack with total surprise? Is the game replayable and does it offer many options to both sides? All these, and many, many more.

We threw ourselves into the research of this battle. Tracking down information on the German and British order of battles, pouring over maps and aerial photos, nailing down the terrain, weather, and the historical flow of the battle. Major Neil Stevens arranged for us to use the archives at the Imperial War Museum in London for some valuable hours. We took the ferry from Portsmouth to Quistreham and tooled around France in an English car—on the right side of the road but with the steering wheel on the wrong side of the car. We walked the battlefield with the playtest map in hand, checking lines of sight, terrain features (walking through irrigation ditches), building placement, and even architectural detail.

We knew we couldn't rely on the movie *The Longest Day*—Tim's inspiration for this effort—as a source, and we soon found that Steve Ambrose's book wasn't completely reliable either. Some of the most useful information we received came in letters from Major John Howard (ret.)—commander of the glider assault—and Colonel John M.A. Tillet (ret.)—Battalion Adjutant at the time of the battle and now curator of the Regimental Museum of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. It was the aid provided by these two that finally convinced us to break with the ASL tradition and use the historical names for the British single man counters in the game (along with playtesters and helpers like Ken Dunn and Neil Stevens). Despite the conventional belief that the Germans counterattacked with PzKpfw IVs during their initial attacks, Major Howard confirmed to us that the vehicles were actually captured French AFVs. You can imagine how quickly the complexion of "Howard's Men" (PB2) changed with the relatively ineffective French tanks instead of the fine German Mark IV. These personal correspondences, while clearing up many issues, also introduced some problems as well (see Curt Schilling's "Can You Ever Be Sure?").

And yet for every gold nugget we uncovered, a piece of fool's gold was also found. Take our discussions with Mme. Gondree, for example. Her parents owned the Gondree Café (hex X18), and she was present during the battle as a child. She insisted that British troops parachuted into Le Port on the evening of June 6th. We were quite excited about the prospects of a paradrop onto the mapsheet while the battle was in full swing. We spent hours looking for any verification of this fact but could find

absolutely none. We had to write this tale off as a failed memory. (As an aside, Mme. Gondree has been involved in an unfortunate struggle over who would control the museum on her property next to the café. Last we heard, a new museum was being built near the bridge site which was to be opened in 2000.)

Enough reminiscing over our research. What follows is a brief explanation of our reasoning concerning some of the most frequently asked questions about our first venture into the world of HASL—*PEGASUS BRIDGE*.

Where is the Bocage?

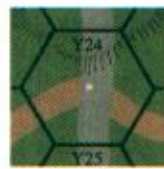
Contrary to popular belief, not all of Normandy is covered with the thick, field-separating hedgerows called bocage. The British sector of the campaign was evenly divided between bocage and standard fields. Bocage doesn't begin until several miles to the east of Benouville and LePort. The hedges in the area were still tougher than a standard hedge, however, so we assigned a bog penalty to vehicles crossing the hedges to reflect their additional growth.

New Terrain Types



Because the water tower (hex C9) looked like a great place for snipers, observers, or even a machine gun nest, the British shot it up with the captured gun at the bridge. Because of this information, we spent more time working on the Water Tower and its line of sight to the bridge than it really deserved. During play of the game, however, the water tower is rarely used.

The Irrigation Ditch rules (Q1.) worked out very well. They are a good simulation of the actual terrain while also being easy to play, and they add significantly to tactical flexibility. Plus they look nice on the map!



Whether or not to incorporate the Slope rules (Q3.) from Kampfgruppe Peiper was a close call. They add much to help recreate the actual terrain but at a price of some added complexity. They weren't the necessity here that they were in KGP, but overall we think they are worth the

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

A hexside forming part of a Wire Location cannot be Bypassed, neither in the hex with the Wire nor in the hex that shares a hexside with the Wire Location (A4.3).



effort. The Partial Orchard rules (Q2.) were also a close call. While they do a good job of simulating the tow-path road, we wish they played a little cleaner than they do. Not quite the "bang for the buck" we were hoping for.



Light Infantry



I almost got the rest of MMP to go along with using a new 5-5-8 counter for the Ox and Bucks glider troops instead of the mix of standard 6-4-8s and 4-5-8s that we ended up with. Howard's men had more submachine-guns than regular infantry and more rifles than paratroopers. There was a lot of internal debate about the utility of creating a whole new squad type for just a handful of men, and I lost out. It should have been!

Why Don't the British Get To Purchase Their OB?

Quite a few people have expressed their displeasure with this aspect of the refit phase. We made the British reinforcements fixed for one simple reason—there was not enough variety in the units available to make the British purchase interesting. Most often, the British would have simply purchased Paratroop platoons. The data available on the British units was fairly consistent from source to source. We are quite confident that the troops represented in the reinforcement table are a very close representation (in ASL terms, anyway) of what the British historically had available.

Where is all the Off-board artillery?

The Germans used quite a bit of indirect fire during the battle, but most of it wasn't very concentrated (which was our assumption during research with terms like "scattered", "ineffective", and "harrassing" often used to describe the fire.) We elected to represent this with self-propelled guns which the German player can purchase. This allowed the German player to utilize some of the neat, rare German vehicles which fought during this battle. We felt that the average ASLer would prefer getting some cool new toys as opposed to playing with yet another 100+mm OBA module. Also, from a game play point of view, giving the Germans too much OBA would ruin the Campaign Game. One could just continually hammer the bridge with FFE after FFE and prevent the British from moving troops across the bridge—which just didn't happen during the battle. Historically, the German fire was more sporadic and widespread than an ASL FFE, although it was indeed "indirect" fire. The coolest new toy in the box, the mSPW S307(f)—the SOMUA mortar launcher—actually represents this quite well. Getting this one vehicle to work properly within the system took almost as much time as all the other new vehicles combined.

Where Are the Patrol Boats?

The Germans sent patrol boats to attack the bridge after they realized that the British had captured it. Initially, two boats from Ouistreham were beating a hasty retreat from the invasion up the canal and one was badly damaged by a PIAT shot—in fact the British captured the vessel when it ran aground. The second patrol boat turned tail and ran back down the canal—perhaps liking its chances against the Allied armada better! Later, in Caen, a patrol boat was loaded with a reinforced platoon of Germans intent on performing their own coup de main. The British were able to drive this boat off with small arms fire before it could get too close. There is little doubt that the company of Ox and Bucks, concentrated around the bridge in sort of "reserve" status, would have wiped this German platoon out had they been able to land. We experimented with some patrol boat rules but couldn't get them working to our satisfaction in time for the module. We hope to issue these rules and patrol boat counters in a future issue of the ASL Journal. The scenarios using these boats are already roughed out and we're just waiting for the right time to finish them up.

CG Victory Conditions

We figured this would be easy. The British win by controlling the bridge at the end of the day. But wouldn't the Germans have been pleased if they could have recaptured it just for a while during the day? So the Germans win by controlling the bridge at the end of any non-night scenario. And would the Germans care who controlled the bridge as long as the British couldn't pass over it? So we required the British to clear the road at the end of the day. Then we had to have some mechanism to make Lord Lovat's commandos cross over the bridge and move on to Ranville. They were too important to leave out and too powerful to keep around. So—besides having the commandos (non-Airborne 6-4-8s) recalled at the end of the scenario—the Germans win if they can inflict significant damage on the commandos or keep most of them from crossing the

bridge to Ranville. It took quite a while to get there, but the victory conditions work well.

Several people have inquired why we didn't use the Piper counter described in the 1989 ASL Annual. I thought everyone knew that the "special" counters described in the Annual were meant to be a joke, a little inside dig at the rules we all struggle with. We never seriously considered adding a "piper" to the game. There is some controversy over whether or not Lovat's reinforcing commandos were actually piped across the bridge. The ever present German sniper fire would certainly have led them to cross the bridge as quickly as possible, without the parade glamour of being piped across.

Help! My gliders all crashed!

If the British roll badly during the initial glider landing, all is not lost. Sure, the row is tougher to hoe for the paratroopers that enter, but they still have sufficient force to clear the garrison from the bridge area with a little luck. During playtesting, I personally killed Major Howard several times during landings. Damaging, yes, but the initial disparity of force is so great that the British can overcome some initial bad luck. Also, due to the small size of the first scenario, it is quite easy for players to just "play a mulligan" and redo the landing if they believe that one side no longer has a chance.

Conclusion

Orders of battle. New AFVs. New terrain types coordinated with historical terrain. Design decisions all over the place. While working with Tim Van Sant was always a breeze, developing Pegasus Bridge was no easy task. It sure was fun, although, as always, there are a few little things we wish had happened differently. Overall, we at MMP are very happy with how it all turned out. Give it a shot and you will be, too. My one personal regret is that Perry Cocke didn't get a credit for development after all his hard work on this module. Just another unsung hero.

Tips from the Trenches

Don't let your opponent get too close to his White Phosphorous FFE without taking the required MC. Unlike other WP (ordnance or Infantry Smoke Grenades), which only causes a MC when it is placed, OBA WP causes a MC whenever a vulnerable unit enters (or becomes more vulnerable within) a hex of the Blast Area of a WP FFE:1/FFE:2/FFE:C—just as if it were an HE attack (C1.51). Thus, OBA WP can be a double-edged sword when trying to press the attack. At least the Dispersed WP left behind when a WP FFE moves does not cause an attack; nor of course does Drifting WP.



SCOBIE PRESERVES



ASL SCENARIO J21

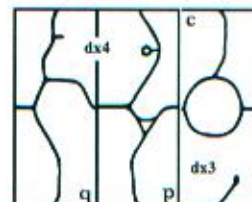
Scenario Design: Pete Shelling



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Partisans win at game end by amassing more VP than the Indians. Each side receives VP (calculated as Exit VP, but excluding prisoners) for unbroken Infantry and/or mobile AFV with any functioning MA/MG on/adjacent-to the dA3-F3-H2-O3 road.

PIRAEUS, GREECE, 6 December 1944: As the Germans pulled out of Greece in the fall of 1944, every Greek fringe group and partisan organization saw the opportunity to secure its own agenda. The Soviet-backed communists, Ethnikos Laikos Apeleftherotikos Stratos (ELAS), translated as "Greek People's Liberation Army," was the first group to exert their influence by force. Not ready to see Greece become a Russian satellite, Churchill immediately ordered General Scobie to treat Athens "like a conquered city". What would follow would later be considered by some as the first battle of the upcoming Cold War.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

- Add one 2-4-7 HS to the Indian OB.
- Add one 7-0 leader to the Partisan OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

● INDIAN Sets Up First [104]	1	2	3	4	5	END
■ PARTISAN Moves First [96]						



Elements of the 4th Indian Division [ELR:3] set up on board d (see SSR 5): {SAN: 3}



 4-5-7	 2-4-7	 8-1	 8-0	 7-0	 4-12	 2-7	 2-11	 13 75 2/4	 33 37LL 2/4
10					2				



Elements of the ELAS Partisan Division "Roumeli" [ELR: 5] set up on boards c and/or b in hexes numbered ≤ 4: {SAN: 5}



 3-3-7	 8-1	 8-0	 7-0	 2-9	 Roadblock
16				3	3

(see SSR 5)

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
- Place overlays as follows: dx4 on dN1-bN5, dx3 on cL5.
- Partisans suffer from Ammunition Shortage (A19.131) and may neither Deploy [EXC: A20.5] nor form multi-Location firegroups. The Partisans have MOL Capability (A22.6) and use Russian LMG without captured weapon penalties.
- The Partisans have special CC attack capability in the form of "Scobie Preserves". Usage is limited to CC attacks versus Infantry or Riders. The availability and mechanics of use (including penalties) is governed by the ATMM rules (C13.7) as if the Infantry target(s) were a vehicle. The CC DRM of a "Scobie Preserve" is -2.
- Prior to all setup, the Partisan player may place up to three roadblocks in the

playing area (HIP is NA). The Indian infantry must set up in buildings with ≤ one MMC per building. The Indian AFVs may not set up within three hexes of one another.

- Surrender may not be refused (i.e., a surrendering unit may not be eliminated thereby invoking No Quarter (A20.3) [EXC: Berserkers still refuse Surrender]).

AFTERMATH: With General Scobie besieged in the center of Athens, the Fourth Indian Division was brought over from Italy along with part of an armored brigade. However, Roosevelt wanted nothing to do with "Churchill's little problem" and the American press loudly denounced the entire endeavour. Stalin was taking a wait-and-see attitude. And the ELAS were improvising—they put together homemade bombs nicknamed "Scobie Preserves" because they were made from empty tomato cans filled with dynamite and broken glass, nails, etc. Regardless of these improvisations, the military situation would stabilize after about two weeks; the political situation would remain fluid. Greece would not see the end of civil war until 1948.

OH JOY!

ASL SCENARIO J22

Scenario Design: Brian Youse



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win at game end if they amass ≥ 20 VP provided they amass ≥ 10 CVP more than the Germans and control ≥ 1 Location containing a trench. In addition to earning CVP normally, the Russians also earn 3 VP for each Location containing a trench which they Control.

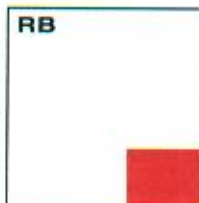
STALINGRAD, RUSSIAN, 28 October 1942: The Russians in Stalingrad were stretched to the limit, their forces so thin that shifting units from anywhere along the line would mean leaving a gap. Although desperate to buy time to allow the 45th Division to be ferried across the Volga at night, the Russians had no more reserves. During the 27th, the shattered 118th Rifle Regiment had a bit of luck. To their surprise, they recovered three tanks from the front lines, one with a functioning flamethrower. Anxious to buy time and spread their newfound joy, the Russians threw together these tanks, thirty men just released from the field hospital, and a dozen members of the 62nd Army's staff, and sent this hastily-formed armored reserve to counterattack.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✚ SSR 4 is NA.

★ Exchange the Russian 9-1 for a 9-2.



(Only hexes on/east of hexrow W and numbered ≥ 38 are playable)

TURN RECORD CHART

✚ GERMAN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
★ RUSSIAN Moves First							

Elements of Infantry Division 79 [ELR: 3] set up on/west-of hexrow BB: {SAN: 3}

3	5				3			8	12	1

50	75	37L	3

Remnants of 118th Rifle Regiment [ELR: 3] set up on/east-of hexrow CC: {SAN: 4}

3				6

Scratch force, 62nd Army Staff and 118th Rifle Regiment Headquarters set up on/east-of hexrow GG:

2							2			2	2

SPECIAL RULES:

- See RB SSR (found on the reverse of scenario RB5). A +1 LV Hindrance (E3.1) applies due to pre-dawn conditions. Campaign Game SSR CG15 (O11.4) is in effect.
- After setup but prior to the start of play, each German Infantry unit must take a NMC; TEM vs. OBA is applied as a negative DRM to this NMC. All markers placed as a result of the NMC remain in play for the start of the first Player Turn and are removed normally as dictated by the Sequence of Play.
- The OB-given Russian 5-2-7 and 4-4-7s are considered Walking Wounded (WW). A WW MMC has a 3MF allotment which is never increased for any reason, even while routing or berserk [EXC: while being carried by any form of conveyance], its IPC is reduced to 2, and it receives a +1 DRM for all CC attacks it makes, while all CC attacks against it receive a -1 DRM. Two WW HS may recombine into a WW squad as per

A1.32. If a non-WW HS and a WW HS recombine, the resulting squad is considered WW.

4. Exchanging A-P minefield factors for A-T mines (B28.5) is NA.

AFTERMATH: Supported by artillery and katyusha batteries, the Russians launched their attack in the pre-dawn twilight. Such a small force was unable to advance far, but by using the light tanks to overrun Germans in their forward trenches and the flame-throwing tank to hunt German armor, the Russians did manage to capture a few trenches and destroy three German tanks. The impact of this attack was far more than recapturing a few yards of Stalingrad—the German radios lit up with tales of the unexpected Russian armored counterattack and the exhausted German troops used this as an excuse to stop and reorganize. The ad-hoc counterattack had bought the Russians in Stalingrad another day to continue ferrying the 45th Division across the Volga.

KAMPFGRUPPE AT KARACHEV

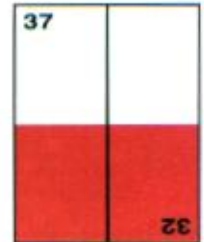
ASL SCENARIO J23

Scenario Design: Vic Provost



KUSMENKOVO, RUSSIA, 28 July 1943: After Hitler had called off Operation Zitadelle, new orders from OKH saw Panzergrenadier Division Grossdeutschland shifted from the southern region of the Kursk salient to the region northwest of Orel. This was in response to the increasing pressure of the Soviet offensive to take Karachev and sever the rail link between Bryansk and Orel, thus cutting off large segments of Model's 9th Army. In order to foil the Soviet plans, the division was split into several Kampfgruppen and sent into the villages in the forest to the northeast of Karachev.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexes R-GG on board 37 and A-P on board 32 are playable)

BALANCE:

- ✚ In the VC, change "≥ 32" to "≥ 34."
- ★ In the VC, change "≥ 32" to "≥ 30."

VICTORY CONDITIONS: Provided the Germans do not amass ≥ 38 CVP, the Russians win immediately by amassing ≥ 25 CVP or by exiting ≥ 32 Exit VP off the south edge on/between 37GG3-32A6, or at game end if they Control all buildings in the German setup area.

TURN RECORD CHART

✚ GERMAN Sets Up First [0]	★	1	2	3	4 ⁺	5	6	7	END
★ RUSSIAN Moves First [134]									



Elements of Bataillon II, Panzergrenadier Regiment Grossdeutschland, Panzer Grenadier Division Grossdeutschland [ELR: 4] set up on/south-of (alternate) Hex Grain 37X10-32J5-L6-K8-K9-J10: [SAN: 4]

5-4-8	4-6-8	2-4-8	2-2-8	2-4-8	2-4-8	2-4-8	7-10	5-12	3-8	50* (2-10)	?
2	5	2							2		6



2 AT	75L
Mines	AT M B

(see SSR 5)

Elements of Assault Pioneer Bataillon Grossdeutschland and Sturmgeschütz Abteilung Grossdeutschland enter on Turn 4 along the south edge:

8-3-8	2-4-8	3-8	30-1	75L
2			2	13



Elements of the 31st Guards Infantry Division [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 along the north edge on/between 32P3-32P6 with all AFV having expended 8 MP: [SAN: 3]

6-2-8	4-5-8	9-2	8-2	7-10	2-6	30-1	?	75L	9-1
2	10	2		3	2	4	4		



SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Wet, with no wind at start. Kindling (B25.11) is NA.
- All buildings are wooden and Single Story. Cellars (B23.41) are NA. Roads on board 37 do not exist; treat all board 37 woods-roads as paths (B13.6) with no Open Ground in the woods-road portion of the hex.
- German 8-3-8s/3-3-8s and Russian 6-2-8s/3-2-8s are Assault Engineers (H1.22) and are Fanatic (A10.8) while possessing (or placing (A23.3)) DC. They receive a -1 DRM to DC Placement vs AFV DR (C7.346).
- Assault Engineers and German 5-4-8s/2-3-8s may use ATMM (C13.7) [EXC: a dr ≤ 2 is need for usage and the CC vs AFV DRM is -2].
- The German AT mines are two Daisy Chains (B28.531) of 2 AT factors each and may only be possessed by 5-4-8s/2-3-8s at start. During German

setup, the German player may secretly record which units possess the Daisy Chains. The presence of these Daisy Chains must be revealed when the possessing unit is no longer in Good Order, or if it performs any of the following actions in LOS and within 16 hexes of an unbroken enemy unit: places the Daisy Chain, transfers the Daisy Chain, or drops possession of the Daisy Chain. Once revealed, Daisy Chains may not regain hidden status.

6. Both sides are Elite (C8.2).

AFTERMATH: July 28th saw the initial test of the newly established German positions. The Soviets, with the aid of heavy artillery support, managed to take Alisovo, but ran into stiff resistance from elements of Grossdeutschland at Kusmenkovo. The Soviets pressed ahead with tanks in support and the village was contested for an entire morning. It was not until the local reserve of pioneers arrived that the situation was stabilized. With the stiffening of the line at Karachev, the Soviets called off the attack to regroup for the next round of probes to the west at Krasaskiye and Novogorodskiye.

SMASHING THE 3RD

ASL SCENARIO J24

Scenario Design: Chas Smith



South of WOLOMIN, POLAND, 3 August 1944: The success of Operation Bagration allowed a number of Russian units, including the Soviet 3rd Tank Corps, to make deep penetrations through the German lines. On 31 July, the German 9th Army believed it was in position to cut off and destroy the Soviet 3rd Tank Corps near Wolomin. The Hermann Göring Division, en route from Italy, would play a significant role in the counter-offensive. The counterattack began as elements of the division were sent south to fight in the Warka-Magnuszew area. Meanwhile, on 2 August, the main body of Hermann Göring comprised of the 1st and 2nd Parachute-Panzer-grenadier Regiments, Bn I Parachute-Panzer Regiment, Bn III Parachute-Panzer Artillery Regiment, Armored Recon Bn, Parachute-Panzer Assault Bn, Parachute-Panzer Pioneer Bn, and assorted flak elements set out from the Warsaw-Wolomin rail line to the western outskirts of Wolomin. Their task was to break through and join with the 4th Panzer division to complete the encirclement.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

- ★ In the Victory Conditions, change "≥ 100" to "≥ 107."
- ✚ In the Victory Conditions, change "≥ 100" to "≥ 93."



17
44

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win immediately upon amassing ≥ 100 VP. The Germans receive Exit VP for units exited along the east edge and CVP [EXC: Prisoners are worth 0 CVP]. In addition, the Germans receive VP at game end for building Control. Each building Controlled is worth a number of VP equal to the number of hexes it occupies (i.e., a total of 23 building VP are possible).

TURN RECORD CHART

★ RUSSIAN Sets Up First [83]	+	1	2	3	4★	5	6	7	END
✚ GERMAN Moves First [180]									

Elements of Soviet 3rd Tank Corps [ELR: 3] set up on/east of hexrow X: {SAN: 3}



11

2

3

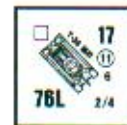


5

5

2

Enter on Turn 4 along the east edge:



5

Elements of Hermann Göring Division [ELR: 2] enter on Turn 1 along the west edge: {SAN: 3}



5

5

5

2

2

4

10

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. Contrary to D1.84, no PzIVH is equipped with an AAMG.

AFTERMATH: The Hermann Göring Division pressed the attack south of Wolomin throughout the day and into the next. By the end of 3 August, the division had succeeded in smashing through the 3rd Tank Corps' lines and, in conjunction with the 4th Panzer Division, encircled and destroyed a large number of enemy armored vehicles—76 Soviet tanks were reported destroyed. The remainder of the 3rd Tank Corps was cut off and systematically eliminated. In the end, the Soviets had suffered heavily—losing 192 tanks and 45 guns by 6 August. Subsequently, the 3rd Tank Corps was withdrawn from combat and reformed in October as the 9th Guards Tank Corps.

THE WEIGH IN

ASL SCENARIO J25

Scenario Design: Curt Schilling



VICTORY CONDITIONS: Provided the Polish have not amassed ≥ 50 CVP, the Germans win at game end if they Control all buildings on board 44 east of hexrow Q.

PIOTRKOW, POLAND, 5 September 1939: With Armies Modlin and Pomorze in full retreat, September 5th found the Polish High Command focusing on the tactical situation in the Piotrkow sector, roughly 150km southwest of Warsaw. Officials in Warsaw feared the German 1st and 4th Panzer Divisions would overrun Piotrkow unless someone, or something, could slow down the German blitzkrieg, so ordered a local counterattack for late on the 5th. As these forces were taking preliminary actions to mount an attack, the Germans appeared. The 1st Panzer Division, believing both the road and city to be wide open, expected little resistance. Two Battalions of the Polish 19th Infantry Division were tasked with defending the approaches to the city and were the first to engage the German assault force.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

■ Add one 7TP/jw to the Polish OB.

⚡ Increase game length by 1/2 turn (from 8 to 8.5 turns).



33	
44	X14 X18 X11 X15

TURN RECORD CHART

■ POLISH Sets Up First [135]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
⚡ GERMAN Moves First [215]									



Elements of the 19th Infantry Division, Army Prusy [ELR: 2] set up on board 44 on/east-of hexrow L: {SAN: 4}

4-5-7	4-3-7	2-2-8	1-1	7-0	6-12	4-11	1-12	7 morale	81* (3-7)	75
8	6	5	2		2	10				2
37L	5	15	5							
2	5	5								

Supporting armor from the 2nd Light Tank Battalion enter on Turn 3 along the south edge of board 44:

14	37L
2	2



Elements of Panzer Regiment 2, Panzer Division 1 [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 along the north edge: {SAN: 2}

5-4-8	4-1-7	9-2	8-1	7-0	3-8	3-8	1-12	2	2	24-1	30-1
5	15		2	2	4	2	2				3
14	15	15	23	34	16	9-1					
2	4	4	2	2	2						

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Moderate, with a Mild Breeze from the northwest at start.
- Place overlays as follows: X11 on 44X5/X6, X15 on 44V7/W7, X14 on 44R3/S3, and X18 on 44U5/V5.
- The German 5-4-8s/2-3-8s are considered Assault Engineers (H1.22).
- Polish Elite and 1st Line squads have Assault Fire (A7.36) capability.
- Vehicular crews may not voluntarily abandon (D5.4) their vehicles.
- Interrogation (E2.; not E2.4 Civilian Interrogation) is in effect.

AFTERMATH: The infantry and guns of the 19th Infantry Division repulsed the initial German advance while suffering relatively light casualties. A second advance by the Germans was also repulsed, this time with the aid of 7TPjws of the 2nd Light Tank Battalion. Fighting continued throughout the day as the Bofors anti-tank guns of the 19th kept the tanks of the 1st Panzer Division at bay. In the late afternoon, German scouts managed to find a gap in the Polish defense line. The Germans immediately exploited this gap and eventually encircled the units defending the city. This preliminary action foreshadowed the outcome of the further rounds of fighting still to come in the Polish campaign.

ROUND TWO

ASL SCENARIO J26

Scenario Design: Vic Provost



VICTORY CONDITIONS: Provided the Polish have not amassed ≥ 50 CVP, the Germans win immediately upon amassing ≥ 100 VP. CVP and Exit VP (for German units exited off the west edge)[EXC: prisoners do not count double] are awarded normally. VP are also awarded at game end for Control of multi-hex buildings within the Polish setup area. Each non-Factory multi-hex building is worth VP equal to the number of at-start building Locations it contains and Factory oBB8 is worth 15 VP.

TURN RECORD CHART

POLISH Sets Up First [137]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
GERMAN Moves First [233]									

SOCHACZEW, POLAND, 14 September 1939: As the drive on Warsaw continued, the 4th Panzer Division, with the SS Leibstandarte Adolph Hitler Regiment attached, was given orders to attack through the Warsaw suburbs of the Bzura sector in the bend of the Vistula River. The Germans hoped to seal off the western approaches that the desperate Polish High Command was trying to keep open for reinforcements fighting through to the east. Occasionally the Polish defense crystallized in localized hedgehogs that slowed, and sometimes stopped, the increasing momentum of the German blitzkrieg. One such formed in Sochaczew when elements of the Polish 17th Infantry Division decided that the German onslaught must be stopped.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



X17	46
X21	
X16 O2	

BALANCE:

- In the Polish OB, replace the 10-2 with a 10-3.
- Add one 5-4-8 and one DC to the German OB.

Elements of the 17th Infantry Division [ELR: 3] set up on/west of hexrow R: {SAN: 5}

4'-5-8	4-5-7	4-3-7	2-4-8	2-2-8	10-2	8-1	8-8	7-7	HMG 3 6-12	HMG 2 4-11	ATR 1-12
4	6	4	2						2	2	2

MTR 46 13-28	Phone 11	? 7 morale	AT M12 37L	Roadblock
2		16		2

Elements of Bataillon 1, SS Regiment (mot.) Leibstandarte Adolph Hitler and Panzer Regiment 36, Panzer Division 4 [ELR: 3] set up on/east of hexrow P: {SAN: 3}

5'-4-8	4'-6-8	2-4-8	9-2	8-1	8-1	8-8	7-7	HMG 3 7-16	HMG 2 5-12	LMG 3 3-8	ATR 1-12
3	13	2						2	2	4	2

MTR 50 12-13	DC 30-1	Radio 8	9-1	13 1 1 75*	12 1 1 37L	15 1 1 20L(4) -/5	15 1 1 20L(4) -/5	33 1 1 20L(4) -/5*
2	3					2	2	

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. Kindling (B25.11) is NA.
- Place overlays as follows: X16 on CC2/CC1, X17 on BB8/CC9, X21 on V3/W3 and O2 on W1/X1. Buildings oDD1, CC7, and EF4 contain RB Cellars (O6). Building oBB8 is a 2 1/2 level Factory (B23.74) with a vehicular entrance and rooftop access point in oCC9. Rooftops are in play only for building oBB8 and are considered Concealment terrain for all purposes.
- The Poles may fortify (B23.9) $\leq$ five ground-level building Locations (tunnels are NA).
- Vehicular crews may not voluntarily abandon (D5.4) their vehicles.
- Polish Elite and 1st Line squads have Assault Fire (A7.36) and MOL (A22.6) capability. All Polish MMC in the same Location as the Polish 10-2 leader are Fanatic (A10.8) as long as the current morale level of the leader is "10".
- The first Polish MMC to pass a MC unpinning and in Good Order Battle Hardens and creates a Hero (A15.2).
- The Poles may use HIP for $\leq$ two squad-equivalents and any SMC/SW set up with them. The Polish SMC initially possessing the field phone may set up HIP. The Poles receive one module of 70+mm OBA (HE only) with Plentiful Ammunition.

8. The Germans receive one module of 150+mm OBA (HE & Smoke) with Plentiful Ammunition and one Pre-Registered hex. Radio Contact and Battery Access are automatic at the start of Turn 1 Prep Fire Phase (remove one Black Chit). The first fire mission must take place on Turn 1 Prep Fire Phase with either a Smoke FFE or Smoke Barrage (E12) in the Pre-Registered hex; Accuracy is determined normally (C1.73). The German leader initially possessing the radio may set up HIP.

9. The German 5-4-8/2-3-8s are Assault Engineers (H1.22), must possess the DCs at start, and are the only German MMC qualified to use the DCs without a +1 DRM IFT penalty for non-qualified use, are considered to have an underlined Morale Number, and are considered SS for all other purposes.

10. The Germans receive Random Air Support in the form of one Stuka DB with Bombs [EXC: contrary to E7.2, it enters play on a ≤ 2 less than the current turn number and is automatically Recalled at the end of the first Player Turn in which it passes a Sighting TC].

AFTERMATH: The fighting raged on until noon on the 14th as the town changed hands three times. The Germans ran head long into a heavily defended urban battlefield held by determined, and in some cases, fanatic troops. The Polish matrix of roadblocks and fortified strongholds forced the SS to fight for every block of the town. Eventually, the combined weight of the regimental artillery and attached panzer support forced the Poles from Sochaczew. Later that night, the Germans themselves had to abandon the town under heavy artillery shelling. The shattered remnants of Sochaczew were retaken the next day and the drive on Warsaw resumed.

HIGH TIDE AT HEILIGENBEIL

ASL SCENARIO J27

Scenario Design: Chas Smith



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win at game end if they Control building J3.

HEILIGENBEIL, EAST PRUSSIA, 24 March 1945: In February, seven Soviet Armies encircled the German 4th Army, which included the Hermann Göring Parachute-Panzer Corps, in the Heiligenbeil Pocket. The pocket contained 120,000 combat and 30,000 support troops, which could now only be supplied by sea. Ground activity decreased at the beginning of March, but Russian aircraft still attacked soldiers and civilians alike. The HG Parachute-Panzer Corps contained the HG 2nd Parachute-Panzer Grenadier, the Grossdeutschland Panzer Grenadier, and the 562nd Volksgrenadier Divisions. The Corps was responsible for the defense of the northern sector of the line where, beginning on 13 March, the Soviets launched a series of heavy assaults. The HG 2nd Parachute-Panzer Grenadier Division was the focal point of several of these attacks. As the strong Soviet offensive continued, the men of HG put up a determined defense, but were forced to give up ground. A particularly determined Soviet attack began on 24 March.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✚ Delete a 5-2-7 from the Russian OB.

★ Delete a 2-4-7 from the German OB.



TURN RECORD CHART

✚ GERMAN Sets Up First	1	2	★ 3	4	5	6	7	END
★ RUSSIAN Moves First [98]								



Elements of 2nd Hermann Göring Parachute-Panzer Grenadier Division [ELR: 2] set up west of hexrow S [SAN: 4]:



 4'-6-7	 2-4-7	 2-2-8			 7-10	 5-12	 3-8	 7 moves	 75L -/-/2x	 37L (B)	 75"
7	2	2			2	2	8				



Elements of Soviet 28th Army, 3rd Belorussian Front [ELR: 4] set up east of hexrow S [SAN: 3]:



 4-4-7	 5-2-7			 4-10	 2-6	 1-12	 76L
10	4			2	3	2	4

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are wet, with no wind at start. Kindling (B25.11) is NA.
2. The Russians receive air support (E7.) which automatically arrives on Turn 3 in the form of two 1944 FB with bombs.
3. No German ordnance may fire HEAT or Smoke ammunition.

AFTERMATH: A powerful Soviet force broke through the defenses and into the city. Bloody street fighting reminiscent of Stalingrad erupted. Driving forward, the Soviet juggernaut fought to control the area surrounding the Gneisenau Barracks. Stiffening resistance slowed the assault, but the supporting fire from a number of 76mm assault guns finally drove the defenders back. By nightfall, the Germans had been forced out of the city, and held only the Balga Peninsula, a small area of about 50 square miles. On the night of 30 March, the shattered remnants boarded ships and put out to sea. Of an initial force of nearly 24,000 men, the Hermann Göring Parachute-Panzer Corps took only 6,000 home to Germany.

Scenario Designer: Chas Smith



HUMAINE, BELGIUM, 27 December 1944: Throughout the night of 26 December and on the morning of 27 December, American artillery pounded the village of Humaine. Combat Command "Romeo" was assigned the task of capturing the town and launched its attack immediately following the artillery preparation. Careful planning enabled them to successfully surround the town. The defenders fought hard but, encircled and having had more than enough fighting, most were forced to surrender. However, a chateau on the northeastern side of the village was defended by a group of Germans who resolutely refused to surrender, even after numerous attacks.

▲
N



✚ Add one 2-4-8 to the German OB.

☆ Add one 7-4-7 to the American OB.

GERMAN Sets Up First		1	2	3	4		5	6		7	END
AMERICAN Moves First [140]											



Elements of 9th Panzer Division [ELR: 3] set up anywhere (see SSR 3); {SAN: 4}



Elements of Combat Command "Romeo" [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 along the north edge: {SAN: 3}



Enter on Turn 1 along
the east edge:



Enter on Turn 5 along
the north edge:



1. EC are Wet, with no wind at start. Kindling (B25.11) is NA. All buildings are wooden [EXC: building P6 is stone and all of its ground level Locations are Fortified; B23.9].

2. Prior to setup, the Germans must place a wooden rubble counter in each of 4 building hexes [EXC: no rubble counters may be placed in any hex of building P6]. Falling Rubble (B24.12) is NA.

3. The German player may set up no more than 6 *counters* in Locations not in building P6. All German units *in* building P6 are Fanatic (A10.8) [EXC: beginning with the American Turn 6 Prep Fire Phase and lasting until the end of the game, this benefit is NA and all German units have their ELR lowered by 3 (to a minimum of 0)].

4. For purposes of special ammunition availability and inherent SW use, the scenario is considered to take place in 1945.

5. The Germans may use HIP for $\leq$ one MMC and any SMC/SW set up with it.

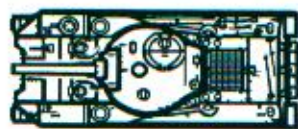
6. Vehicular crews may not voluntarily abandon their vehicles. The CS# (D5.6) of the British Crocodiles is considered to be 0. Any crew forced to abandon a Crocodile is automatically broken. British crews treat American leaders as Allied (A10.7).

AFTERMATH: The U.S. infantry continued to assault the chateau, but its thick walls afforded the defenders too much protection. In a display of joint cooperation, CCR requested the assistance of some nearby British flamethrowing tanks. Two Crocodiles arrived to support the attack. A fiery display of their power encouraged the defenders to quietly put down their arms and surrender.



CAN YOU EVER BE SURE?

Historical Research and ASL
by Curt Schilling



Military history is a fascinating thing. For most ASL players, interest in it accompanies our love for the game. For me it has become a passion. Armed with a good imagination and a well written book, I can transport myself to the desert landscape of El Alamein, the stone rubble of Stalingrad, or the crater-infested coral of Tarawa. Having an opponent and a good scenario can turn the same trick; in some cases a historically accurate scenario can leave impressions and views of battle that a book would have trouble conveying.

A scenario that accurately represents the terrain, the orders of battle, and the action can present a bird's-eye view of tactical situations that no text could convey. It is here that ASL truly shines. These counters represent individual men and vehicles. You must use the smallest element of an army—the individual squad, soldier, and tank—to win a battle. There is enough historical material out there, and the system is flexible enough, to create an ASL scenario that includes almost any of the major components of almost any W.W.II engagement. That is one of ASL's attractions. Detail! If we didn't love detail, we'd still be playing Axis and Allies. To my mind, attention to detail extends to every aspect of the ASL system, from single man counters to wind direction to orders of battle. Each of us finds interest in some or all of these parts. I love everything this system has to offer. The game's ability to leave one exhilarated after a last turn, final dice roll win is extraordinary. But if I were to pick one thing that keeps my attention on ASL, it would be history. The ability to extract details from an engagement and use them in a scenario is unmatched by any other game.

Like most of wargaming, there exist certain cliques in ASL. One of these consists of players who *play* ASL. Period. They want balanced scenarios, as many as you can give them, no matter that they couldn't finish half of them in their lifetime, they're going to try. Another group includes those who dabble in the design of an occasional ASL scenario. These guys have enough interest in both the playing of and the history of scenarios that they will, at times, put pen to paper and come up with a scenario or two from a book they've recently read. Then there's the history freak. He not only plays the game but makes reading the intro and aftermath of every scenario a prerequisite, to try to ascertain a feel for the action being portrayed.

I fall into this latter category. Of immense importance to me (and that puts me in the minority) is a need be convinced that the action portrayed by a scenario is done in a historically accurate manner. I want to know the reasons for including the elements of the order of battle. For actions I'm familiar with it's not tough to peruse a scenario card and figure out how

accurate it is. For those that I'm not familiar with, I will delve into my library and pull out books that pertain to the action and get a general feeling about the scenario and whether or not it was thoroughly researched. Obviously I don't play as frequently as I'd like because I spend a majority of my time with my nose buried in a book. But this is one of the big reasons I love the system. Also, with three kids and a job that takes me away from home for 6-7 months a year, time is a very precious thing. (I'm sure many of you can relate.) I don't want to spend hours of gaming time playing a scenario with little historical foundation. Again, this is most certainly my choice. I know of many players who play DYO exclusively and swear by it. Others only care about balance. And still others play for the camaraderie of getting together with buddies and gaming. (Truth be told, this is a big reason I actually play the game.)

Competitor. Simulator. Historian. Socializer. Many of you may have seen wargaming broken down like this before. Had I not gotten involved with Multi-Man Publishing and headed up its research department, this article would be over without saying anything new. However, the work I have been involved with over the last few years has had a profound impact on my view of history as it pertains to ASL.

One of the first MMP meetings I attended focused on our (then upcoming) Pegasus Bridge project. The ink had not dried on the contract, and we were doling out responsibilities for specific areas. I was very vocal in my desire to head up the research end of things, as this was a chance to finally combine my two favorite pastimes (outside of family and baseball). It was the off-season, so I certainly had the time (which is a primary need for anyone aiming to do good research). I most assuredly had the interest, and I had a pretty decent library that was continuing to grow. There were no objections to my volunteering for the task—which may have been because everyone else in the group had "real" jobs and some semblance of sanity.

While others busied themselves with development and playtesting, I was combing through each of the scenarios, checking dates, unit designations, weather, ordnance, etc. I came across quite a bit of material pertaining to actions late on D-Day. The British 13/18th Hussars had reached the area of the Orne River bridge and reinforced the beleaguered and exhausted 6th Airborne units that had been holding on by a hair to the villages of Benouville and Le Port all afternoon.

I hesitantly indicated that I would like to design a scenario covering this action that could be the "monster" of the module. Pegasus Bridge was intended from day one to be a very

playable campaign game, one that two guys could actually set up and play a CG date in one evening. In that vein, the existing scenarios were tournament-sized, and we agreed that the module could use a big scenario. I had my marching orders! On my 2-hour drive home I sorted out the preliminary work that had to be done. First I would need to confirm the units present on both sides. Since the German and British forces engaged at the bridge were already spelled out, the main focus would be on the British units that arrived late in the day. I began to read everything I could pertaining to the British forces that were assigned to Sword beach, since they were the units that made the run to the Orne River bridge on D-Day. I quickly came across material that discussed which units from Sword beach had been assigned the task of reaching the 6th Airborne by midday. While it wasn't a specific list, it did give me enough information to begin looking at the TO&E of the 13/18 Hussars of the 27th Armoured Brigade, as well as some of the infantry units that were there also. I then cross referenced about a dozen sources including personal correspondence between MMP's developers and Major John Howard himself—the guy who was actually there! Could there be a better source than a man on the scene?

After compiling notes for a few days, I assembled a list of the vehicles of the 13/18th Hussars as they would be represented in the scenario PB6 "It's About Time." The British had standing orders to advance inland as quickly as possible once the German beach defense had been breached, and the forces on Sword filtered inland to the bridge in a very disorganized fashion—in squad, platoon, and company-sized groups throughout the day. There was no magic rendezvous point. They landed, fought, and moved inland as soon as they could, leaving me with a hodgepodge collection of tanks, vehicles, and men from various sub-units of the Sword Beach invasion force. I saw this as a boon, allowing me to include various armored elements belonging to the 13/18th Hussars without limiting me to a specific tank or vehicle type. Following thorough research of this unit, I decided on a mix of Churchill VIIIs and Stuart Vs. This seemed a legitimate force composition to represent the 13/18 Hussars and their actions of June 6, 1944 at the Orne River bridge. The scenario got submitted, playtested, and became one of the final pieces to the Pegasus Bridge puzzle. Upon receiving my copy of the module I immediately opened to this scenario and looked it over. I admit to feeling pretty good about seeing something becoming an official part of the ASL system to which I had committed quite a bit of time.

I wish the story ended here, with my good feelings. What's the saying? All good things must come to an end? Well, those good feel-

ings plummeted to an end. Shortly after the release of Pegasus Bridge, while I was in the midst of researching armor for the allied minor countries, I received an e-mail from Shaun Carter of England, a gentleman who looks at ASL very much the same way I do. His appetite for historical accuracy rivals his desire to actually play the game, and he was questioning the historical accuracy of my scenario. I was a bit stunned to say the least. There was no way that his sources could be correct. I was sure I had exhausted all resources for this scenario. Eventually, though, I began to have reservations. As our correspondence continued my reservations grew and turned into full-fledged doubt. He did in fact have material that I had failed to obtain, which included the war diaries of the units involved, as well as Cabinet papers, that clearly contradicted my "facts" on the British 13/18th Hussars. The Churchill VII tanks in "It's About Time" were part of the 27th Armored Brigade, but those tanks did not land on D-Day.

This was an error that demanded correction. Maybe 99% of ASLers scoff at errata for a scenario based solely on historical inaccuracy, but that is as big a deal to me as victory conditions or mapboards being misprinted. Reflecting on this issue for a while led me to write this piece. I felt that an article discussing the problems in researching "It's About Time" might assist others interested in scenario design. During my correspondence with Shaun and others, I learned many valuable lessons pertaining to historical research. Using two recent books written by W.W.II combatants as a springboard, I think there are some useful observations to be made.

1) Do not take personal accounts at face value. The first book that hammered this home to me was *Armoured Odyssey: 8th Royal Tank Regiment in the Western Desert 1941-1942, Palestine, Syria, Egypt 1943-1944, Italy 1944-1945*, written by Stuart Hamilton, MC, and published by Tom Donovan Publishing. Mr. Hamilton writes in the introduction that "[a]s these notes are being typed 50 years late with the aid of only sketchy diaries and old maps it is possible that some dates and place names may be slightly inaccurate and out of chronological order." This caveat does not detract from the work presented; the book is an excellent read for anyone interested in military history and even more appealing to those with a love of desert warfare. I highly recommend it. But the caveat does detract from its use for designing scenarios. You could not take any action solely from this book and write it up as a scenario with anything close to a guarantee that it is historically accurate. There are parts of this book I found utterly astounding. "My diary shows sketchy

entries, such as June 14th: 'terrific tank battle at point 208 this morning (14)' and then 'destroyed Mk. III' followed by the entry 'another heavy ruddy scrap this evening (15)' and for the life of me I cannot remember the exact details of how we knocked-out that Panzer III but certainly I would not have put it in my diary if we hadn't done so. I seem to remember having caught it from the rear and in the flank."

The remarkable thing about this to me was that this guy had been embroiled in a major tank battle with death right around the corner, and he can't remember. I found it hard to believe that situations like these could ever be forgotten. Reading farther into this book, however, it all became crystal clear. These tankers fought in major battles, not just one or two, but on most days for months or years on end. It became easy to see where they could forget particulars of any battle, even entire engagements. They fought tank battles the same way we go to work everyday. Can you remember every bad day you've ever had? Can you remember the particulars of who was where and what time things happened?

I play professional baseball. Thousands of people attend these games, and all are on TV somewhere in the country everyday, 162 games in 181 days every year. People watch these games and things happen that they'll never forget. I, on the other hand, see these games everyday. Things become blurry and then forgotten as the season goes on. They all seem to run together at some point and the only way I could be sure I was right about something happening during the season would be to go back and watch a tape of the game. I certainly couldn't remember the date or any special circumstances surrounding 95% of the 'special' things that happen during the season. The other 5% are occurrences that are so extraordinary that they stick with you for a lifetime. Now I in no way am comparing the two lifestyles—there is no similarity. What I am saying is that his book really made me realize that it was entirely possible, and very likely, that most firsthand accounts, while certainly valid, are not solid foundations for scenario designs. I now use them as starting points that require reinforcement in the historical accuracy area.

One more quote from another book and maybe the point will become more appar-

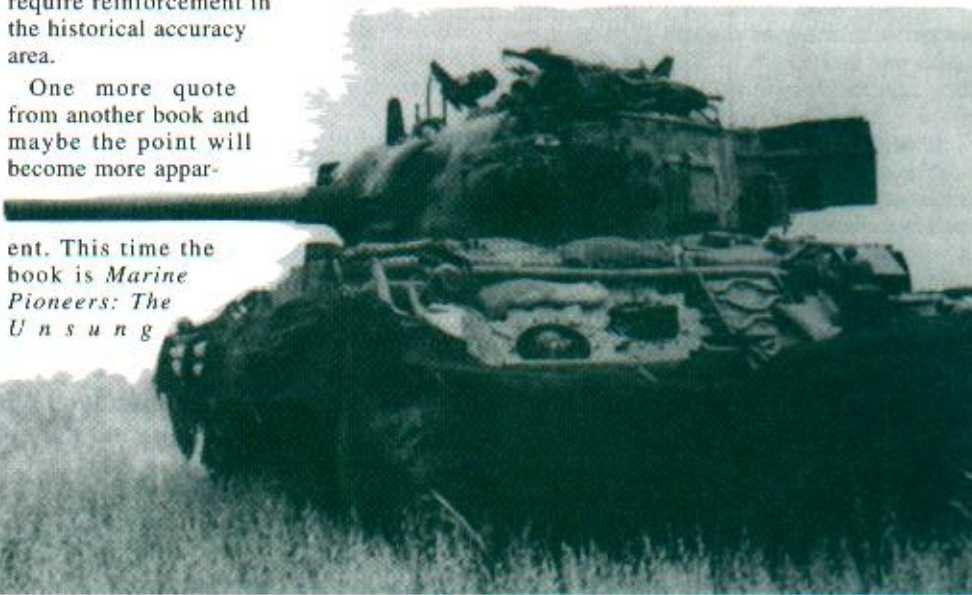
ent. This time the book is *Marine Pioneers: The Unsung*

Heroes of W.W.II by Lt. Col. Kerry Lane USMC (Ret.), and published by Schiffer Military History. Once again the author goes out of his way in the introduction to downplay the book's historical accuracy. "This book is largely a Marine's memoir, not a balanced history of the campaigns. Those who want an official version of these battles should look elsewhere. My recollections are not strictly chronological. Attempts to impose structure upon the chaos of war and personal history, in the hopes of attracting readers and holding their interest, often involve some stretches." Once again this does not take away from an otherwise terrific read. But to ASL scenario designers everywhere these words should signal a warning. This book cannot be counted on as a sole-source for scenario design. Both of these books contain quite a few descriptions of actions that either are scenarios already or will be someday. They provide firsthand accounts of engagements that will draw the attention of those designing ASL scenarios. I know I walked away with a couple of rough drafts from each. Just be sure to confirm the information first.

2) Do not base a scenario around a photograph. This is an absolute no-no. Photos taken from W.W.II have, for the most part, been attached to a variety of texts over the last 50-some years. I don't have to go any farther than Hamilton's book on the 8th RTR which has a section of pictures from his own private collection. Imagine my surprise when I saw the caption "30. Alamein, October 1942. German Mark IV dug-in near Raham Track" under a photo showing an Italian Semoventi! The only similarities between the two are treads and a gun—one doesn't even possess a rotating turret! Mistakes of this magnitude are rare in books of this quality, and I tend to believe that the publisher is at fault more so than the writer. But mistakes of some kind are common; there are few publishers out there who comb the pictures of their books for historical accuracy.

I can tell you with some assurance that the editors at J.J. Fedorowicz are very adamant about historical accuracy in their products. I

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IT'S ABOUT TIME

ASL SCENARIO PB6a (Historical Variant)

Scenario Design: Curt Schilling



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The British win at game end if there are no Good Order German MMC in building hexes west of the Canal. The Germans win immediately if they Control Pegasus Bridge (see SSR PB 4).

BÉNOUVILLE AND LE PORT, FRANCE, 6 June 1944: D-Day was drawing to a close at the canal-side towns of Le Port and Bénouville. Elements of the British 7th Battalion had been holding onto the fringes of both of these small villas for almost twelve hours. House to house fighting was furious as the 7th desperately tried to hold and wait for reinforcements. Wounded men stayed on the front lines in both these areas. About 1830 hours, the leading elements of the 2nd Warwickshires arrived on the scene from Sword Beach with a variety of armored support. They immediately went to the aid of the beleaguered 7th.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



PB

BALANCE:

- ✦ Add one *PzKpfw IVH* to either German set up area.
- ✧ Add one *Sherman III DD(a)* entering on Turn 1 on/adjacent-to TT16 to the British OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

GERMAN Sets Up First [194]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	END
BRITISH Moves First [236]													



Elements of Panzerpionier Kompanie 1, Infanterie Division 716, and Panzergrenadier Regiment 125, Panzer Division 21 [ELR: See SSR PB12] set up on/south-of hexrow K, west of the canal: {SAN:3}

4-6-8	4-6-7	4-4-7	8-1	8-1	8-0	7-0	7-16	5-12	3-8	50-12-10	7 morale
3	5	5					2	4	2	12	



Elements of Panzerpionier Kompanie 2, Infanterie Division 716, and Panzergrenadier Regiment 125, Panzer Division 21 set up north of hexrow EE, ≥ 5 hexes from FF14, in/adjacent-to building hexes:

4-6-7	4-4-7	4-3-6	8-1	7-0	5-12	3-8	7 morale
5	5				2	12	

Elements of Panzergrenadier Regiment 125, Panzer Division 21 set up in any German setup area(s), with ≤ 5 AFV in each area:

13	13	10	11	9-1
3	2			



Elements of the 7th Battalion, 5th Parachute Brigade, 6th Airborne Division [ELR:5] set up as follows: {SAN:3}

Set up in any building hex, ≤ 4 hexes from FF14:

8-2-8-8	8-1	8-0	2-7	8-3
6	2	2		

Set up in hexes numbered ≥ 11, west of the canal, on/between hexrows L and W. All units must set up in buildings or entrenched (see SSR 2):

8-4-8	9-2	8-0	2-7	8-3	51 [2-4]	5-15
6	2	2				

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, Ox and Bucks [ELR: 5] set up ≤ 3 hexes from X21 (see SSR PB14):

5-4-8	4-5-8	9-2	8-1	5-12	2-7	8-3	51 [2-4]
3	2						

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Warwickshires, and the 79th Assault Squadron Royal Engineers [ELR: See SSR PB12] enter on Turn 1 on/adjacent-to TT12:

4-5-8	4-5-7	8-1	8-0	2-7	8-3	200
4	6			2	2	3

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Warwickshires, and the 13/18th Hussars 27th Armored Division [ELR: See SSR PB12] enter on Turn 1 on/adjacent-to TT16:

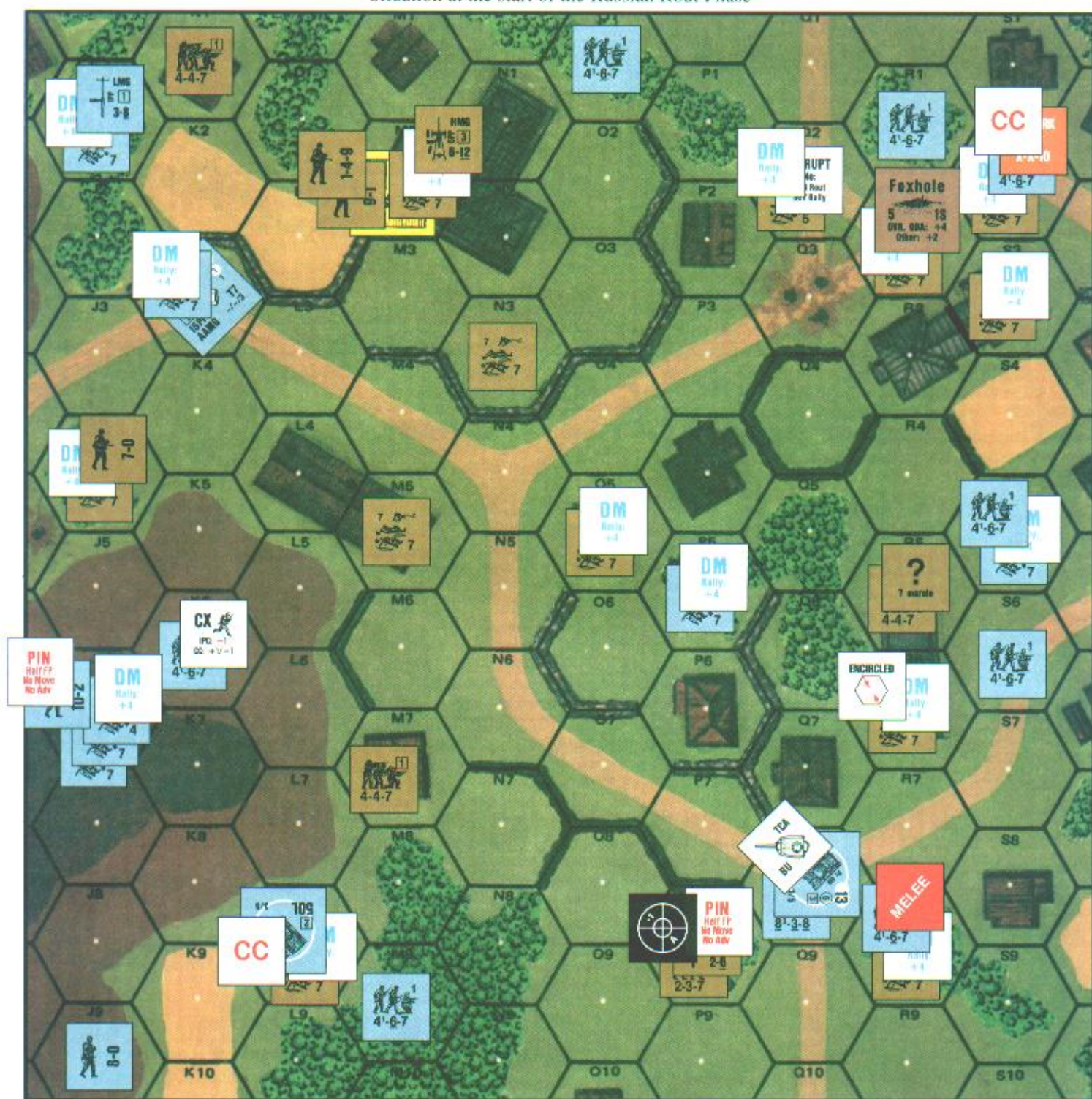
4-5-8	4-5-7	2-2-8	9-1	7-0	5-12	5-12	2-7	8-3
4	6				2	2	2	2
14	16	16	16	57L				
7	3							

SPECIAL RULES:

- See PB SSR. A dusk +1 LV Hindrance (E3.1) applies to all non-CC attacks during Game Turns 9-12.
- The British 9-2 which sets up between hexrows L and W begins the scenario wounded (A17). Three British 6-4-8 squad-equivalents which set up between hexrows L and W begin the game as Walking Wounded MMC (CG SSR 17).

AFTERMATH: Upon arrival, the 2nd Warwickshires wasted no time entering the fray. Their first task was to relieve the Le Port garrison thus allowing them to evacuate the wounded. This done, they moved into Bénouville to face the remnants of the German units who were weakened from their day-long struggle with the 7th. The influx of fresh British forces spelled the end of this last battle around Pegasus Bridge. The remaining German armor in Bénouville tried to provide support for the *grenadiers* and *panzerpioniers*, but the crack tankers from the 27th Armoured Brigade, supported by the "Warks", would win this day, and the struggle for the Pegasus Bridge would come to a close.

Situation at the start of the Russian Rout Phase



Routing is hard, one of the most difficult parts of the game to get right, and an odious task to boot. Some players seem to think they can rout almost anywhere at will. Other players mentally write off their broken units as lost

your opponent's units around a little less long.
Keep hope alive!

It is the start of the Rout Phase in the Russian Player Turn; therefore, the Russian player routs first. Only that part of board 3 pictured above is playable. Note the addition of a rowhouse bar in R3/S3. Grainfields are in season. No Quarter is not in effect for either side, nor are Night or Desert rules. KEU = Known Enemy Unit. Rules references are given in [square brackets].

RUSSIAN ROUTS

The Russian must declare which if any of his units will Voluntarily Break [A10.41] before any of his units rout [ASOP 6.11]. The only Russian unit which will do so is the Pinned half-squad in P8, which is unable to advance away from Q8 and doubts its chances to survive the upcoming German player turn in its current Location.

The Disrupted squad in Q2 has a legal rout path to P2, but must instead Surrender to the 4-6-7 in R1 because it is Disrupted [A19.12]. This occurs before the routs of the non-Disrupted units [ASOP 6.12]. The Surrender is accepted, and Q2 is replaced by an Unarmed squad-sized MMC which is possessed by the 4-6-7 in R1. If this Surrender were rejected, the Disrupted squad would be eliminated and No Quarter would be invoked for the German side only [A20.3].

The broken 4-4-7 on Level 2 of M2 does not have to rout; if it elects to, it could rout to any Location in its building or it could ignore its building entirely [A10.51] and rout to M1. Routing to L1 or L0 is illegal because that would entail moving closer to the KEU in J1. If it routed to the ground level of N1, it could not stay there because of the ADJACENT unbroken KEU in O1 and it could not continue on to N2, M1 or M2 because that would be moving closer to the KEUs it remembers seeing in J6, K3, and J1, and so would be eliminated for Failure to Rout. It therefore decides to rout downstairs to the ground level of M2, dropping the HMG in M2 Level 2 because its IPC of 3 is not enough to carry the 5 PP weapon. As per A4.44, either SMC in the Location where the HMG was dropped can attempt to Recover it; the Hero does so with a dr of 5. The 9-1 leader could rout with the squad [A10.711], but he elects to stay with the Hero to man the HMG.

The broken 4-4-7 in J4 does not have to rout, but it chooses to rout to K5 and L4 for 4 MF. Routing to K5 does not bring it closer to either of the KEUs in J6 or K3, and K6 was not Known to J4 at the time it entered K5. It cannot stay there because of the ADJACENT unbroken KEU in K6, but it cannot be Interdicted there because the 4-6-7 is CX [A10.532] and K5 has a +1 Height Advantage TEM relative to K3, nullifying its Open Ground relative to K3 [A10.531]. Even if the German leader in J6 was not Pinned, it could not Interdict by itself because it has no SW, let alone one capable of being fired at full effect by a lone SMC [A10.532]. The 7-0 elects to accompany the broken squad throughout its rout using Voluntary Rout [A10.711], there being no risk because the routing MMC cannot be Interdicted. The routing units do not have to stay in L4 since that hex is no farther from the KEU in K3 as their original hex, but their only rout options at this point are to move upstairs to Level 1 or continue routing to M5 (which hex cannot be ignored as a rout destination). Hoping to deny the rout of the German unit in J1, they elect to move upstairs to L4 Level 1 for their 5th MF and end their rout there.

The broken squad in L8 must rout since it is in the same hex as an unbroken KEU and not in

Melee. It can ignore every building/woods Location on the map as being equidistant from the KEU in its own hex [A10.51]. The first hex it enters while routing cannot be L9 or M8 since that would be moving ADJACENT to the unbroken KEU in M9. It cannot enter K9 from L8 since that would be moving closer to the KEU in J9. Therefore, the first hex it routs through must be K8 or L7. Unfortunately, the broken unit cannot Low Crawl when leaving an enemy-occupied Location [A10.52] and the squad in M9 as well as the AFV MGs in L8 can Interdict the rout to either K8 or L7 because the +1 Height Advantage TEM does not apply when the LOS crosses the Crest Line traversed by the moving unit [B10.31]. Therefore, the broken unit cannot rout without being subject to Interdiction and since No Quarter is not in effect, it will Surrender instead of routing [A20.21]; the squad in M9 accepts the Surrender rather than invoking No Quarter for its side.

The broken 4-4-7 in M5 cannot rout because it is not DM [A10.62].

Since it started the RtPh in Open Ground, LOS, and Normal Range of the KEU in O1, the broken 4-4-7 in N3 becomes DM and must rout. However, it cannot rout toward any of the KEUs in O1, K3, or P5, so it dies for Failure to Rout [A10.5].

The broken squad in building O5 does not have to rout since it is not ADJACENT to an unbroken KEU, which is fortunate, since it cannot legally rout toward any of the KEUs it sees in R1, K3, or J6.

The broken squad in R6 must rout because of the ADJACENT unbroken KEU in S6. It has valid rout paths upstairs to R6 Level 1 or to Q6, but since it is Encircled, it must instead Surrender to the 4-6-7 in S6 [A20.21]. The Surrender is accepted.

The HS in P8 (which Voluntarily Broke at the start of the RtPh) must rout since it is ADJACENT to the unbroken KEUs in Q8. It must choose N8 as its destination and routs there via O9. It cannot stay in N8 because of the KEU in M9. It has enough MF remaining to reach M7, so it must attempt to do so since it is not Low Crawling, routing there via N7 (since entering M8 would be moving ADJACENT to M9). The German tank's Infantry Target Type Acquisition marker remains in P8 since LOS to the routing unit is lost at that point. The broken unit must continue to possess the Russian LMG since it is not too heavy (≤ 3 PP) for the MMC to carry with its inherent PP capacity.

The broken squad in S3 must rout because of the ADJACENT unbroken KEU in S2. It can ignore S3 Level 1 as a rout destination because it can ignore Locations of the building it starts in (recall that individual Rowhouse hexes are considered separate buildings for rout purposes [B23.71]). It can also ignore R3 and P2 as being equidistant from the KEU in R1. Able to ignore all rout destinations within 6 MF, the broken unit is free to rout anywhere it can legally reach on the board [F.1C]. It elects to rout to R3, expending 3 MF via rowhouse bypass at the S3/R3/S4 vertex. It cannot be Interdicted at that vertex because the S4 Grainfield Hindrance negates Open Ground relative to the German units in S5. Once in R3, the routing unit must

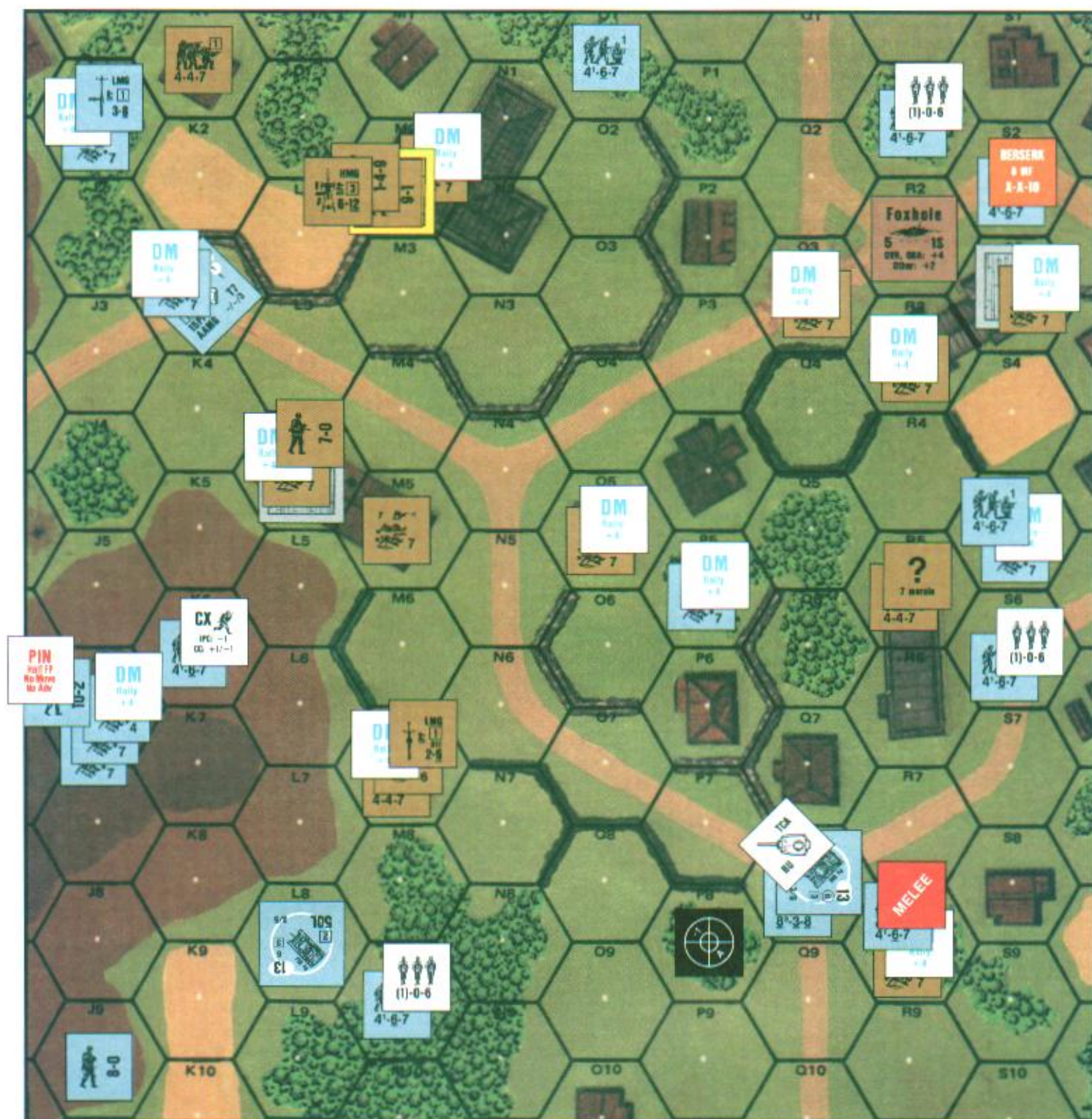
decide between the importance of reaching P2 vs the risk of being Interdicted in Q3; it could spend 2 MF to enter the Shellholes in Q3 and avoid Interdiction from R1 but not have enough MF left to reach P2, or it could enter Q3 outside the Shellholes for 1 MF, risking Interdiction without the Shellhole TEM, but able to reach P2 with its last two Movement Factors should it survive the Interdiction Morale Check unpinned. It decides to enter the Shellholes for 2 MF, ending its RtPh there (there is no penalty for not reaching the rout destination in one Rout Phase.) Routing from R3 to Q3 does not entail moving closer to the enemy units in J6 because P4 casts two Blind Hexes from J6, which means that the enemy units in J6 are not Known to the broken unit in R3. Even if Grainfields did not exist and the 4-6-7 was in Good Order by itself in S2, the squad could still rout to R3 via the S3/R3/S4 vertex without fear of Surrender because it has the option of routing to the first level of S3.

The broken squad in the R2 Foxhole must rout since it is ADJACENT to the unbroken KEUs in R1 and S2. Its rout options are restricted by not moving closer to the KEUs in J6 and not moving ADJACENT to the KEU in S2; its only rout option is to enter R3 for 3 MF (1 MF to exit the Foxhole plus 2 MF to enter R3). It could move upstairs to Level 1 but declines. It cannot be Interdicted as it exits the foxhole because it combined that MF expenditure with the cost of entering R3, which is not Open Ground [B27.41]. It could conceivably ignore R3 as a rout destination because that hex is equidistant from the KEUs in J6, but once it enters R3, it gains LOS to the KEUs in S5 and cannot continue its rout toward R5. It also cannot continue its rout into Q4 because that would entail moving closer to the enemy units it remembers seeing in J6, even though J6 is not in its current LOS.

The broken squad in S2 must rout because of the unbroken KEU in its own Location. Its only option is to enter S3 and move upstairs to Level 1 since it cannot remain ADJACENT to the unbroken KEU in S2 (whose CC counter is removed once the broken unit leaves its Location). It cannot use Rowhouse Bypass to enter R3 because that would entail moving closer to the KEUs it remembers seeing in J6.

The broken squad in R8 cannot rout because broken units cannot rout out of Melee; it must attempt to Withdraw from Melee in the upcoming CCPh [A11.16].

If No Quarter were in effect for the Germans, the broken squad in R6 would not Surrender and would rout to either Q6 or upstairs to R6 Level 1. The broken squad in L8 would rout to L7 and suffer Interdiction there; any broken survivors would be unable to rout further without moving closer to the KEUs in K6 and Q8. Unable to rout away from the ADJACENT unbroken KEU in L8, the broken unit would die for Failure to Rout. The Disrupted squad in Q2 could rout to P1 (where it would then die for Failure to Rout) or to P2 and then stop upon seeing the KEUs in J6. The other Russian routs would be unaffected.



GERMAN ROUTS

No German unit elects to use Voluntary Break.

The broken squad in J1 must rout because of the ADJACENT, unbroken KEU in K1, but cannot rout to J2 because that would be moving closer to the KEUs which routed to the upper level of L4; it therefore surrenders to K1, dropping its LMG in J1 before doing so. The Guarding squad may immediately Deploy [A20.5] and does so as a special exception to

the general restriction against Russian MMC Deploying [A25.2].

The broken passenger in K3 does not have to rout (even if its vehicle were ADJACENT to a KEU); if it were to rout, it would be placed underneath the vehicle and end the R1Ph there [D5.311].

The broken units in J6 must rout because they are in Open Ground, LOS, and Normal Range of the two SMCs manning the HMG in M2 Level 2. Even just one SMC manning the HMG would force this rout but would not be

able to Interdict because the HMG FP would halved [A10.532]. The unbroken leader may not rout with the broken units because he is Pinned [A10.711]; he would have had to use Voluntary Break in order to do so [A10.41] but declined this option. The routing units' only valid rout destinations are L9 and M9; they choose M9. They could Low Crawl to J7 on their way to M9 and end their routs there without being Interdicted by the Russian HMG, or they could attempt to reach M9 by risking Interdiction in J7. They must rout one at a time

[A10.5]. The first broken squad decides to risk Interdiction in J7, rolling a 3,4 on the Interdiction MC; it is Pinned in J7 and ends its rout there. The second squad also risks Interdiction in J7; it rolls a 6,5 on the Interdiction MC and is Casualty Reduced to a 247 HS (Unit Substitution caused by failing ELR does not apply to broken units, [A19.11]). This HS continues its rout to K8, L8 (no Interdiction from the squad in M7 because the +1 AFV TEM negates Open Ground) and finally M9. Doubting its ability to pass an Interdiction MC with a broken-side Morale Level of 4, the broken HS Low Crawls to J7 and ends its RtPh there without Interdiction [A10.52].

The broken squad in P5 is not required to rout since it is not ADJACENT to an unbroken KEU. If it routs, it must choose Q5 or P6 as its destination since those hexes only cost 2 MF as opposed to 3 MF for Q6; once in Q5 it could continue on to Q6 or Q7 if so desired, or from P6 it could go to Q6. It could even attempt to enter R5 and strip the concealment of the Russ-

ian unit there but would then be forced to end its rout in the last hex occupied before R5, where it would be eliminated for ending the RtPh ADJACENT to an unbroken KEU [A10.533]. Sensing these consequences for itself and the broken unit in S5, the squad routs to P6 and stops. If there were a Good Order KEU in Q6, the squad would Surrender to it.

The broken squad in S5 is DM, but it is not required to rout since it is not ADJACENT to an unbroken KEU. If it wanted to rout, it could not rout closer to the KEUs it sees in R3 and R8. If the 4-4-7 in R5 were to voluntarily drop its concealment or have it stripped by the squad routing from P5, the squad in S5 would then have no rout options and would be forced to Surrender to the 4-4-7 in R5.

If No Quarter were in effect for the Russians, the squad in J1 (and the one in S5, were the 4-4-7 in R5 to lose concealment) would be eliminated for Failure to Rout, and the other German routs would be unaffected.

continued from page 42

can't remember the last time that I saw a picture of theirs that raised any doubts as to its accuracy. Some other authors and publishers that merit my special confidence in their renditions of W.W.II history include (just to name a few off the top of my head) Ian Hogg; Thomas Jentz; George Bradford (whose AFV News seems tailored for the ASL enthusiast); anything Charles Klimment has done on Czechoslovakian AFVs; Stephen Zaloga; and Victor Madej. Use those names at the various bookstores that offer their products online (Stone and Stone, IBS Bookshops, and Warbooks, to name a few) and you won't even have to leave the house to obtain hard to find information on a particular unit or action from any phase of the war.

For those of you that are online I also highly recommend joining the ASL mailing list (see Carl Fago's piece elsewhere in these pages). Ask the list for help with research and I can almost guarantee you will get a response, maybe even from me during the off-season. One more recommendation would be the AFV News website. I posted a question concerning the Polish wz.35 anti-tank rifle and received 11 replies within 24 hours. Not bad for five minutes of work. I also found just exactly the additional information I needed to write up chapter H notes for an early-war German 12-ton half-track mounting the 88 anti-aircraft gun we hope to include in *ARMIES OF OBLIVION*—the soon to be released Axis Minors module. My final point is that you can rarely exhaust *every* resource (although sometimes what is missing won't add much to the picture). Even now new material regularly becomes available. Pedro Ramis, Philippe Leonard, Charles Markuss, Robert Martensson, Andy and Ian Daglish were of special assistance in researching *DOOMED BATTALIONS*.

There you have it. Cast your net wide and scour your resources, but remember—you can never be sure. I'm sure of it! I hope this article has given you some insight into ASL scenario design, whether military history is your thing or not. If all you really care about is playing fun, balanced, historically based scenarios, stick with the published version of PB6, "It's About Time." ASLers seem to be happy with how it plays, a tribute more to its playtesters than its designer, and it is as accurate as scenarios get in most respects. If history is your cup of tea, however, consider the accompanying historical variant, PB6a. (Thanks especially to Shaun Carter and Charles Markuss.)

TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

Date	Tournament	Location	Contact Information
January 22-23	On To Richmond	Richmond, VA	Ryan Schultz ryanlois@aol.com 757-426-0515
February 4-6	West Coast Melec	Los Angeles, CA	Rodney Kinney kinney@atmos.ucla.edu 310-475-7062
February 4-6	Winter War	Champaign, IL	Pete Belford pete@otterspace.com
February 25-27	Scandinavian Open	Copenhagen, Denmark	Michael Hastrup-Leth hastруп@image.dk 48 22 14 81
March 3-5	Toronto ASL Open	Toronto, Canada	Dave Croome dcroome@cgocable.net 905-336-8079
March 10-12	March Madness	Overland Park, KS	Michael Reed mreed@sky.net
March 24-26	Nor'Easter	Marlborough, MA	Bob Walden walden@mediaone.net 508-561-6384
April 1-2	Montreal ASL Fest	Montreal, Canada	Michael Rodgers diane-mike@sympatico.ca
April 7-9	Berserk!	Blackpool, UK	Trevor Edwards trev@cableinet.co.uk
April 22-25	ANZACon	Melbourne, Aus	Dave Bardi bprobst@ibm.net
April 28-30	ASL Open	Chicago, IL	Meryl Rutz mrutz@niu.edu 708-453-1978
May 20-21	Mountain Wars II	Vernon, NJ	Dan Dolan phlegm@warwick.net
June 10-12	SAGA	Sydney, Aus	David Longworth nutrageous@bigpond.com
June 10-11	ASL Ring	Villeneuve d'Ascq, Fr	Philippe Briaux philippe.briaux@sema.fr 33 1 43 20 21 95
August 1-6	DonCon (World Boardgaming Championships)	Hunt Valley, MD	Don Greenwood www.boardgamers.org
August 25-27	Wild West Fest	Denver, CO	Tim Wilson twilson@wyoming.com 307-332-9266
October 3-8	ASL Oktoberfest	Cleveland, OH	Rick Troha aslok@nwsup.com
October 7-8	OCTOBear	Sydney, Aus	David Bishop boxcars@ozemail.com.au

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CHESTNUTS OF IRON

The Capture of Balta

by Jim Stahler

"The Capture of Balta" (originally scenario 13 from *Cross of Iron*) is another classic from the original system that should become a classic ASL scenario as well. ("The Defense of Luga," another of the longer COI scenarios, was featured in the very last issue of *The General*, Vol.32, No.3.) The Germans and their Rumanian allies are on the attack in "The Capture of Balta". They must penetrate the town of Balta and seize a couple of bridge sites represented by road intersections near the edge of the board. They are opposed by a slightly larger Russian force supported by tanks, ordinance, and off-board artillery. However the German force includes elite assault engineers armed with flamethrowers and demo charges, and it has its own armor support in the form of a single assault gun.

THE CAPTURE OF BALTA UPDATE

There are a number of important changes from *CROSS OF IRON* that affect this scenario. Infantry smoke is very different in ASL. Guns can set up HIP. Foxholes are handled differently. ELR can be a major factor. OBA

is more effective. Nevertheless, converted to ASL, this scenario retains its essence from COI. It is an epic battle between forces of equal size but of very different composition. The Russians have inferior infantry but have more armor and artillery support. The Germans have the weak Rumanian troops, but their own infantry is superior to the Russians, and they are well supported by assault engineers bearing smoke grenades, flamethrowers, and demo charges.

I made one change to the Russian setup restrictions: The foxholes may not be set up east of hexrow L on board 4. Otherwise, Russians in the foxholes could put fire lanes through the grain on board 3 that the Germans must cross. This would slow down the Germans on the crucial first turn or two. It is not in the spirit of the scenario and I added the restriction on the foxholes to prevent it.

I allow the Russian guns and their crews to set up outside buildings. This makes their HIP capability more significant, because they can now set up in grain or woods. Certainly in the case of the mortar, it makes little sense to restrict its setup to a building from which it may not fire. This change gives the Russians

more chances to surprise the Germans, which makes the scenario more interesting.

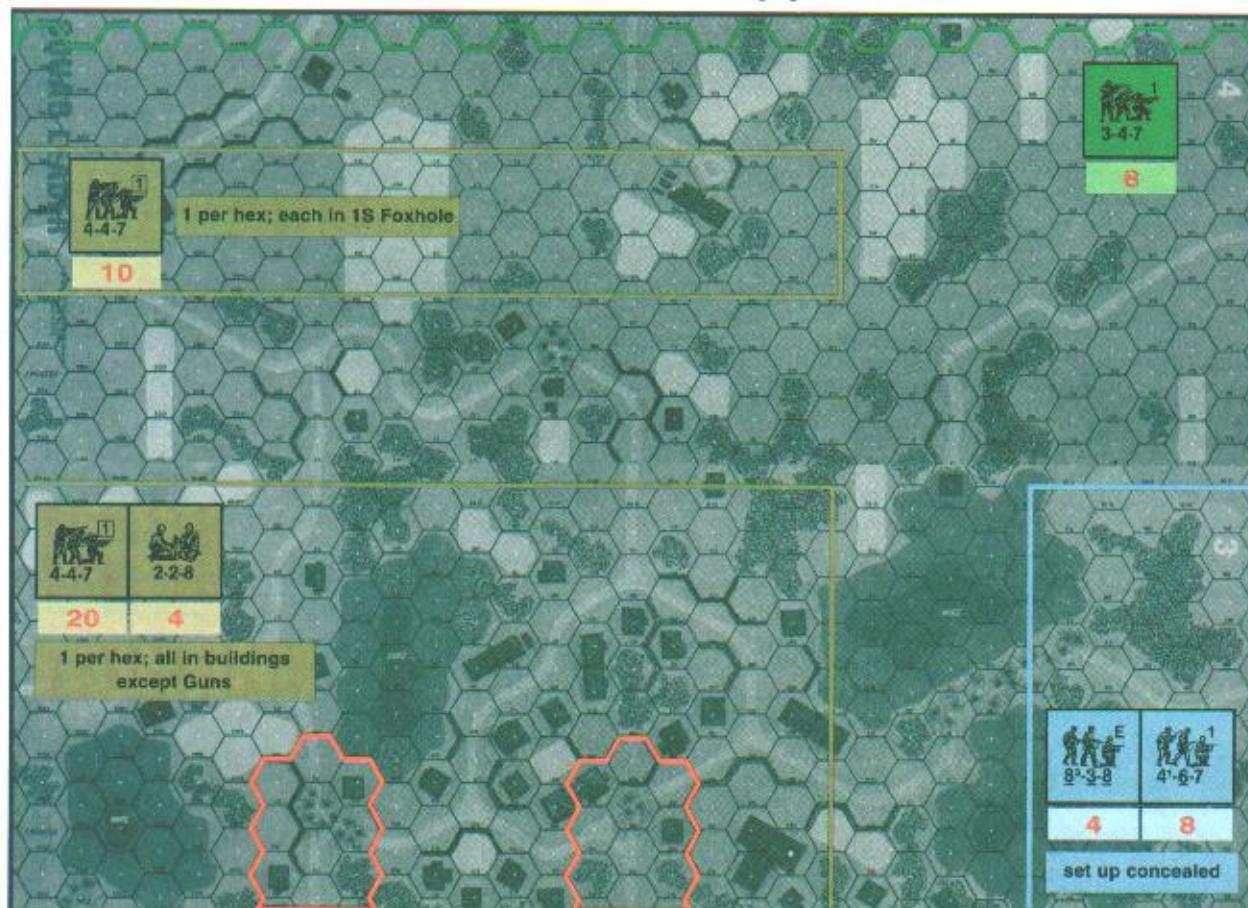
The Russian units are almost the same as in the original scenario. Between *BEYOND VALOR* and *RED BARRICADES* there are now enough squads in the ASL counter mix to supply the 30 4-4-7 squads required in this scenario. Before *Red Barricades*, I would have used 24 4-4-7 and 6 5-2-7 squads, but now we can use all 30 4-4-7 squads, as in the original scenario.

At first I wanted to reduce the number of crews to two, one for each crewed weapon, but at the urging of Bryan Kropf, my valuable playtester, I increased them to four to give the Russians some spare crews for the guns. The crews can also be used as elite units to man the MMG and HMG if the Russian player chooses. The leaders are unchanged from the original scenario, but the Russians can replace an 8-0 leader with a 9-0 commissar, since this action takes place early in the war when commissars are permitted.

I used the "newer" T-26S M37 to represent the original T-26S, as opposed to the older, but more common, T-26 M33. The T-26S is slightly slower but has slightly better armor. Otherwise, these two tanks are identical. The T-26S comes with several optional configuration of machine guns. To make the scenario standard, I include an SSR that restricts the tanks from having any optional armament. The other Russian weapons, the machine guns, AT guns, and mortar, are identical to the original scenario. The entrenchments, which, in

Squad Leader, could hold up to three squads, are replaced by the one-squad foxholes of ASL. The roadblock is still included in the scenario, still blocking the road.

The German order of battle went through many changes, but eventually ended up identical to the original scenario. At first I reduced the number of LMG to six in each force, because their firepower is greater in ASL than in Squad Leader. That still leaves each force with 18 LMG factors as compared with 16 in the original scenario. However, the Germans were getting the worst of it in our games. I added two LMG to each group, restoring them to their original number. This seems to work well; the Germans need



CAPTURE OF BALTA OVERVIEW—The Russians set up roughly in a perimeter, on/west of L on both boards with the restriction on board 4 of having to set up in hexes on/between 4 and 7. The Rumanians set up in any hex 10 on board 4. The German set up on/east of G on board 3, the remainder entering on board 4 on/west of hexrow I. The hexes bordered in red are the victory hexes. There can be no unbroken Russians in these areas at game end for the German player to win.

that extra bit of firepower to make this a balanced contest.

As with "The Defense of Luga", I used the standard ELR for each side. The Germans, with their ELR of 4, have a significant advantage over the 2 ELR Russians. The Russian player can expect to see many of his 1st line squads reduced to conscripts. The German player can expect some of his allied Rumanians to become conscripts since their ELR is also 2. The 8-3-8s have their morale factor underlined, indicating an ELR of 5. They should very rarely suffer ELR replacement, and if they do, they merely split into two HS, which can then recombine once they rally to form a full squad once again.

The Russians have a sniper number of 4, since they are on the defense. It is the Germans with the minimal sniper number of 2.

As play balances, to help the Germans, remove two of the Russian crews, so that they have just enough to man their AT gun and mortar. To help the Russians, remove two LMG from each German force, which is what I originally experimented with.

I made a small change to the Victory Conditions. In the original scenario, the Russians need to have one squad, broken or not, on or adjacent to the victory hexes. Instead of a squad, I allow the Russians to have any unbroken armed MMC. This includes squads, half squads, and crews, but they must be infantry. For a vehicle crew to win the game it must abandon its tank. Leaders and tanks do not count.

The special scenario rules begin with the standard moderate environmental conditions and no wind. I retained the terrain modification of the original scenario. I remember when playtesting this scenario 20 years ago that I argued against turning hills into flat ground, grainfields, and marsh, but I lost. However, with the update, I retain the woods and building on the flattened out hills because that is easier to visualize, and I think that this extra terrain makes the scenario more interesting.

Unlike in the original scenario, the radio cannot direct the mortar; there are no ASL rules for this. Instead, the mortar can use spotted fire directed by any adjacent unit. Of course the radio can be used to call down 100mm artillery fire beginning on turn 5, if the dice permit.

The German 8-3-8 squads are all Assault Engineers, which increases their inherent smoke number from 3 to 5. This is almost as good as the unlimited smoke in the original scenario, except that it is the short-lived infantry smoke of ASL, not the more persistent smoke counters of Squad Leader. The German units on board 3 begin concealed. This concealment is no longer automatically removed after the Russian turn; but it shouldn't last very long since the Germans must fire effectively and move quickly to have a chance of winning.

I increased the AP depletion number of the StuG IIIB from 7 to 10. Since the StuG IIIB is the only real defense the Germans have against the four Russian tanks, I made it effective for a longer period of time. The Germans really need the help of these extra AP shots.

THE SOLDIERS OF BALTA

(25% of the Axis squads are inferior to even the poor Soviet squads)



7

17

8



30

As in the original scenario, the Russians move first, but they can only move their two tanks to kick off the scenario. The Germans can only defensive fire, and only at these two tanks. Historically the Germans were attacked by these two tanks acting on their own. In the game, this might not happen. It is up to the Russian player.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

This is a big scenario. It has 62 squads total, plus 4 crews and 5 AFV, as well as plenty of leaders and support weapons. It also has off-board artillery and field fortifications. Since the Germans come from two directions, it has a lot of action spread out all over the landscape. There are very few ASL scenarios that use as much of their boards as this one does.

The Germans are on the attack. What is unusual is that the defending Russians have slightly larger forces. The Axis have two more squads, but the Russians have four crews, two pieces of ordnance, more AFV, and the possibility of artillery support. Additionally, a substantial part of the German forces have their arrival delayed until turn 3. The Germans must cross either open ground or grain to reach the Russians, and then they must battle through a town, cross a road, and clear two areas of Russians. Even an unbroken Russian crew or half squad in one of 24 hexes can prevent a German victory.

With numbers against them and with challenging victory conditions, how can the Germans possibly win? Do they have some advantages in quality? Indeed they do. Seven of their squads are the elite 8-3-8 Assault Engineers. They carry with them five demo charges and two dreaded flamethrowers. The first line German squads have a significant range advantage over the corresponding Russian squads, and their ELR of 4 is far better than the Russian ELR of 2. If a German squad suffers ELR reduction it becomes a second line squad, which is the equivalent of a Russian first line squad. A Russian squad becomes an inferior conscript.



The Germans have a big leadership advantage as well. The Russians have four leaders, and only one has a negative leadership modifier, for a total of -1. The Germans have 9 leaders, including two 9-2's, plus the two Rumanian leaders, with a total modifier of -10. The Germans have 16 LMG, with a total of 48 firepower factors. This is far more than the 14 factors of the Russian machine guns. The two Rumanian MMG add another 8 factors to the Axis total.

RUSSIAN ANALYSIS

Let us examine the Russian tanks and artillery. The tanks have no radio, so they must either move together in platoon or risk not being able to move for the turn. Their movement factors are red, so they must risk immobilization every time they start up. Their armor is very weak, but they don't face very hefty anti-tank weapons. Their guns are not very powerful, requiring very good luck to penetrate the front of the StuG IIIB. They have restricted slow turrets, so they must be buttoned up to fire, which is not too bad an idea considering all the German infantry firepower around.

The main role of the Russian tanks in this scenario is to combat infantry. They have just one four FP machine gun, and their MA also attacks infantry with four FP if it get a hit. This is not decisive but it can pin or break the occasional squad, especially if the squad is moving in the open. The main strength of the Russian tanks is their invulnerability to infantry fire. They can't be chased away by bullets.

Their opposition, the StuG IIIB, also has some major weaknesses. It has no turret, which puts it at a disadvantage in many situations. It has good armor for this period, but its gun is not effective against enemy armor. Its To Kill number is only 10 with AP ammo. Since it has an AP depletion number of AP10 (increased from AP7 by SSR), it will often be forced to use HE against the Russian tanks. Its HE To Kill number is only 7. When the Russian 45L MA fires against the front of the StuG IIIB, it has a modified To Kill number of 4. When the StuG IIIB fires back, it has a modified To Kill number of 7 until it runs out of AP. With HE it has a modified To Kill number of only 4. The StuG IIIB also has to worry about the 57LL AT gun hidden somewhere on the board. This gun is much more powerful than the tank guns. It has a To Kill number of 15, which is a likely kill against the front of the StuG IIIB, with a Final To Kill number of 9, and a near certain kill against the flank, with a Final To Kill number of 12.

The Russian tanks, while not likely to instill terror in the German player, can be handy against infantry, and working in groups they can neutralize the German armor. However, the Russian artillery is not likely to have any effect in the game. The Russians cannot attempt radio contact until turn 5. Since the contact number is only 6 in 1941, it will take a while before they put together enough turns of radio contact to land an FFE. By this time the German forces should be close enough to the Russians that artillery fire has as much chance

of hitting friendly forces as the enemy. And this is assuming that the leader with the radio is still alive and in good order at this stage of the game. However, if this 100mm artillery fire does land at the right time and in the right place it can be devastating, and could turn the game around by itself. So many things have to work out just right that the Russian player must not count on it to save the day.

The Germans have two advantages from the structure of the game. Since the Russians move first, the Germans have the last move. The Russians cannot steal a victory by advancing one last unit adjacent to a victory hex in the last player turn. Also, the Russians begin the game widely separated. One third of their force must start on board 4 in foxholes. The remainder must begin spread out, with only one squad or crew per building (not building hex). Thus the initial German assault force, Co. C, must face just a few Russians on the first turn.

As in most scenarios that use board 3, building 3M2 is the key to the game. From level 2 of this building, the Russians can fire on the grainfield that the main German force must cross without any hindrance from the grain. Also, they can fire on the road in 3N5 and N6 with no hindrance. This road must be crossed to gain the town. In addition, building 3M2 has observation to numerous locations that the Germans will occupy in the course of the game. The second level of 3M2 is a very good place to start a squad, the HMG, and the 9-1 leader. With such a prize, this building is sure to be attacked. It will be anyway, even without a prize awaiting, since it offers excellent observation to the Germans too. It behooves the Russians to defend it as best that they can.

Beside the Russians in 3M2, the only defenders that can oppose the German thrust through the grainfield are those that set up in buildings 3L4 and 3M7. That isn't much. They total a maximum of two squads. They cannot stop the Germans but they can possibly slow them down and cause some casualties along the way. The squad in building 3L4 can be set up upstairs, which allows it to fire at the enemy moving through the grain without any hindrance. However it can be fired on by all the Germans without getting the benefit of the grain either. Another strategy is to set it up at ground level with a LMG, which can then place a fire lane through the grain. For example, if it starts in the ground level of 3L4, it can place a fire lane in 3I9. Similarly, the squad in 3M7 can have a LMG with a fire lane running either to 3G4, 3G7, or 3G10. Of course, to place the fire lanes, the squads must not cower nor break their weapons. Also, the fire lanes will only attack on the 1 column with a -1 modifier for FFNAM. This is not a deadly attack but it should serve to break or pin a unit or two, and maybe discourage the German from moving as fast as he should.

One important decision the Russian player must make during his setup is the placement of the roadblock. Since the roadblock cannot be moved, the Russian must live with this decision the entire game. The roadblock has three effects in this scenario. It blocks vehicular movement, which may harm the Russians

more than the Germans since they have more vehicles. It is a stone wall giving the Russians a handy hull down position, and infantry a +2 TEM. The roadblock counter location also is a legal starting position for a Russian squad, allowing one more squad to quickly get into the action.

Three interesting positions are 3N4/N5, 3N6/O7, and 3N4/O4 (see Figure 1). 3N4/N5 blocks north/south movement on the road and allows a squad to begin adjacent to the building 3M5, but it doesn't face the right way to protect the Russians. 3N6/O7 allows the Russians to move their tanks to 3O6 and 3O7, where they can both be hull down and make it very difficult for the Germans to cross the crucial 3N4 - N6 road. 3N4/O4 allows the Russians to maneuver their tanks into 3N3 and O4, where they can protect building 3M2 and also bring under fire the 3N4 - N6 road. They are all interesting possibilities; the Russian player may choose only one.

The initial setup of the ordnance pieces is also very important. They should use HIP to lay a trap for the Germans. They should not set up in buildings because that would prevent a squad from setting up there, and the empty hex would be a giveaway of the gun's position. That leaves grain and woods hexes if they are to use HIP.

One good location for the AT gun is 3R8, where it can fire down the road to 3L5, provided that it isn't blocked by the roadblock or hindered by tanks. I prefer the grain hex 3L2, where it can help defend 3M2 and really surprise the Germans. If 3M2 isn't threatened, it can fire on building 3L4 and defend against a southern advance.

The mortar is more mobile than the AT gun since it can be dismantled and carried. It can be set up in a location such as 3S4, 3Q5, or 3O1, with a spotter in an adjacent building hex. It can also set up un-hidden in 3O2 so that the spotter can be in 3N2. I don't like the loss of ROF and the +2 To Hit DRM of spotted fire. I

prefer to set up the mortar in the woods farther west, where it can directly contest the advance of the German reinforcements. Hexes 3FF9 and 3DD9 are good positions. Any likely target will be moving in the open or in woods, making them vulnerable to the mortar. If the Germans don't come that way, the crew can pack up the mortar and haul it to where it can go some good. If necessary, the crew can abandon it and move to the action much faster.

The Russians get a total of four AFV to the Germans' one. However, two don't arrive until turn 5, and all must either use platoon movement or risk failure to move at all. As has been discussed, they are inferior to the StuG IIIB in a shootout. Their best use is as somewhat mobile machine gun platforms. They should pick out a good position, in the company of lots of friendly infantry, and help hold the fort. Used in conjunction with the roadblock, they have good positions to the north, in 3O6 and O7, or to the south in 3O4 and 3N3. Splitting up the tanks allows them more likelihood of a flank shot on the StuG IIIB, but risks failure of the task check, leaving one or both tanks where they do no good, or worse, where they can be easily destroyed.

Unless the Germans are mostly broken, it doesn't pay to have the tanks go on the offensive. They are vulnerable to demo charges, flamethrowers, and the assault engineers, not to mention the StuG IIIB. They should remain in the front line along with the infantry. Their bonus first turn should be used to take up good positions.

However, if you like the bizarre, you might try moving the tanks into the grainfield on turn 1. Put them in 3K6 and K7. They are not likely to live very long, but they will delay the Germans for a turn (unless the StuG IIIB gets lucky) and that time may be enough to move a lot more squads to the front to halt the German offensive.

The reinforcing tanks can move to help defend the town if they enter on 3Q1. They can also enter on 3Y1 and move to board 4 to help slow the German reinforcements. There is a lot of open ground on board 4 that the reinforcements must cross, and that type of terrain gives the tanks an advantage over infantry. There may also be overrun possibilities on board 4, but don't count on them. In any case, the deployment of these reinforcements will depend on the situation at the time.

Speaking of board 4, a third of the Russian force must set up there in foxholes. This force must be in position to halt, or at least slow down, the German reinforcements. Oh yes, they must also contain the Rumanians. There is no rule keeping the Russians in their foxholes. They can use turns 2 and 3 to leave the foxholes and take up better positions. Good places for squads, especially with machine guns, are the upper levels of building 4P6, buildings 4P8, 4X8, and 4Y9. A pretty good defense can be made with a couple of strong-points around buildings 4X8 and Y9 and the hedge; and buildings 4P6 and P8 and the stone wall. A few units in foxholes in the gaps, such as 4M6, 4R7, 4T7, and 4DD7, present a thin but solid defense against the German reinforcements.



Figure 1: Possible roadblock hexes

Once the Russians have set up and the tanks have moved into position, you can expect the main German assault through the grainfield to 3M7 and M9, and a secondary thrust from the marsh to 3M2, with the Rumanians trying to justify their existence by shooting at some Russians in a foxhole. The Rumanians shouldn't get anywhere, but the Germans can be expected to gain 3M7 and M9 very quickly. The real battle will be over the road, especially from 3N4 to N6. The main Russian positions will include the buildings and stone walls in 3P4/O5/O6/P6/Q7. There should be a "rally central" with the Commissar, and maybe some reserves growing concealment, in or adjacent to 3Q5.

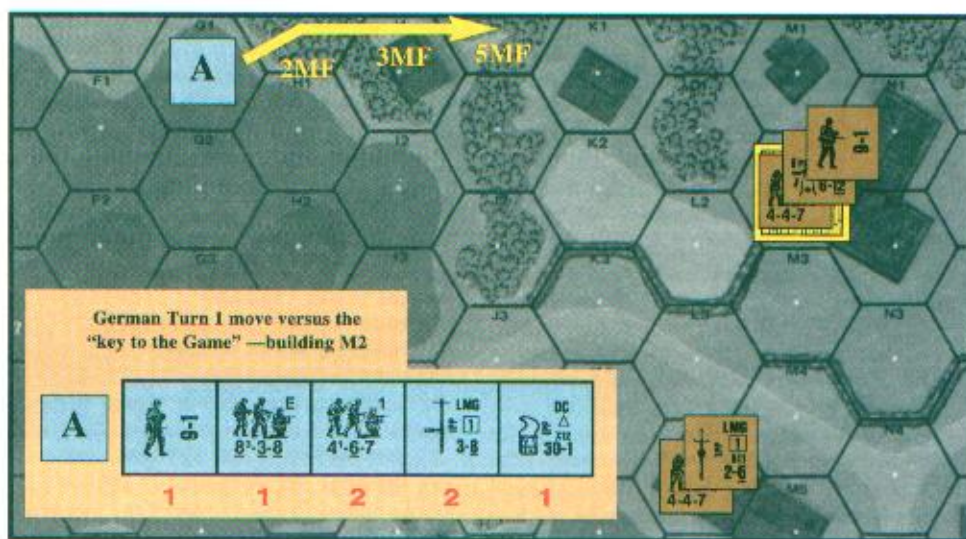
This main position is supported by the tanks, and by the HMG firing from building 3M2. There are also good opportunities for a fire lane for the MMG from either 3T1 to 3N4, or from 3R8 to 3L5, wherever the roadblock isn't. The MMG can also be placed in 3O5 to give more firepower up front, but it is likely to be suppressed there due to concentrated German fire. An interesting location for the MMG, or at least for a squad, is the upper level of 3R3. From there the Russians can see over the hedges and walls to some important hexes - 3N4, M3, K4, and J3.

A capability of the Russians that is often overlooked is their ability to entrench. Woods are good locations for foxholes since units in woods can gain concealment automatically if out of LOS. If the Russians have a squad not immediately needed to defend the front line, there are lots of good spots to dig. Hexes 3X1, W4, and U7 are often important in defending against the German reinforcements. Hex 3R8 is a good position for a machine gun laying down a fire lane, and hexes 3R1 and P1 can be important backstop positions at the game's end. Don't forget those fine Soviet shovels.

GERMAN ANALYSIS

The German force, even though outnumbered, is on the offense. It must virtually destroy the Russians to win. It is not an easy task. The German player must be both aggressive and patient. He must be aggressive because he has a long way to go to win, and he can't stop to allow the Russians to rally their broken units and conceal their Good Order ones. On the other hand, he must realize that his initial forces are not strong enough to win and need the help of the reinforcements, which don't enter the board until turn 3 and won't arrive at the board 3 town until much later than that, usually around turn 6 or 7.

The main German assault will be through the grainfield to buildings 3M5 and M7. There is no alternative to this. The good news is that the grain gives significant protection and that on turn 1 this attack will be opposed only by the squads in the two objective buildings, perhaps the HMG in 3M2, and perhaps the tanks. If the Russians are bold with their tanks, they should lose one to the StuG IIIB on turn 1, and the attack can flow around the other tank, destroying it in close combat. Otherwise, the Germans can suppress fire from 3M2 with



smoke from the StuG IIIB, or use it to fire at Russians upstairs in 3L4 or M5. They can also have it accompany a platoon using armored assault.

Squads can move singly to minimize damage from enemy fire, or they can move as a group with a leader to get the benefit of that leader's DRM and movement bonus. However they do it, they must move to hexrow K on the first turn, so that they can advance adjacent to hexrow L and force the Russians out of buildings 3M5 and M7. If they delay, the Russians can pack those buildings and the Germans will never get them. Even detaching three squads

“The German player must be both aggressive and patient.”

for a thrust against 3M2, the Germans still have nine squads with excellent leaders and some armor attacking only two Russian squads; they are not likely to have this much local superiority again in the scenario. They must make use of this superiority to make good progress on turn 1 even if they must risk some early casualties.

Once again, the key terrain in this scenario is building 3M2. It should be attacked by a platoon starting in the marsh in hex 3G1. I like to have a 9-1 leader with two 4-6-7s and an 8-3-8 with a demo charge and perhaps a LMG or two. This is a force to be reckoned with. If it doesn't take the building early, at least it forces the Russians to divert a lot of strength to its defense, making the way easier for the grainfield attack. Once the Germans occupy building 3M5, they can apply much more pressure on 3M2, with a good chance of taking it. If the Germans get a toehold in hex 3M2, the Russians in the upper building levels become automatically encircled, making them less effective, lowering their morale, and making them subject to surrender if they break.

On the first turn this force can move from 3G1 to H0, bypass I1, and enter J0, keeping concealment. They then advance to 3K1, and the Russians face a real threat. Alternatively, they can double-time to 3K1 and advance two squads to 3L0 and L1, but this is very risky. It may be worth the risk if the Russians are in hex 3N2, but not if they are in M2 or N1. Either way, they must put pressure on the Russians early, and take the building if they get the opportunity, but they also must not allow themselves to be eliminated. There are not many places to rout to; this is something to take into consideration to temper the aggressiveness of this force.

Way on the other side of the board are the Rumanians. They are too weak to do much by themselves. Their role is to support the turn 3 reinforcements. They can do this in two ways. They can use their firepower to break a couple of Russian squads and create a hole for the Germans. Alternatively, if they draw some additional Russian forces to them, they weaken the remainder of the line and make easier for the reinforcements to make their own breakthrough elsewhere.

The Rumanians have a total of 32 firepower factors, enough to make one or two good attacks. They should start where the Russians are weak; after a squad or two breaks, the Russians will be even weaker there. Good places to start are in the woods around 4L10, at the extreme flank of the Russian line; in or near 4T10, to get the protection of the woods; and near 4Y10, to seize building 4Y9 and X8 before the Russians can grab them. Wherever they start, try to start them in the woods, and remember that they get the first shot on turn 1. Try to make that shot count.

The German reinforcements are a powerful force. With 12 squads, including three engineers, a 9-2 leader, three other leaders, a demo charge, and a LMG for nearly everyone, this force has a lot of punch and speed. It must get safely on board, cross board 4, and then enter the battle on board 3. It should aim for either the road junction around 3Y3, or the village, attacking it from the north or northwest. By the time the reinforcements reach board 3, the initial assaulting force should be fighting in the

center of town, but it may still be stuck east of the 3N4-N6 road.

It is generally a good idea to keep the reinforcements together, and to join the Rumanians if they have been holding their own. If they have forced the Russians to weaken the rest of their foxhole line, the reinforcements should take advantage of this.

There are four likely entrance areas. The westernmost is near the parallel hedges, from hexrow AA to GG. This should be farthest from the bulk of the Russians, and they will be protected from Russian fire by the hedges and the grain around 4W6. This is especially promising if the defenders are inside foxholes behind the hedges, where they cannot fire beyond the hedge nor get wall advantage. The key terrain is building 4CC6. Once the Germans have it, they then proceed to 3Y3 to secure that victory objective, and then turn east to help their comrades in the village.

The next entrance is around 4W10. Hexes 4X8 and Y9 must be taken early. The 4W6 grainfield will provide protection for the advance, which then takes building 4X1. From here the troops can either hit the village from the northwest or aim for the 3Y3 intersection.

Farther east, the grain, woods, buildings, and stone wall around 4O9 gives a lot of protection to the attackers. If this area is lightly defended, it can be a promising avenue to reach the village from the north.

The easternmost entrance is around 4K10, just beyond the edge of the Russian foxholes. This is also far from the bulk of the Russians. A protected route is through the grain around 4K7, to the 4J4 woods, and then to the 4M1 woods. This tends to reinforce the main German thrust from the grainfield, and extend the line. It is still a very long way to 3Y3. For this reason I would recommend that the reinforcements do not enter this far east unless the Russians are strong everywhere else, or the Rumanian operations have been very successful on the eastern flank.



The Germans have a number of special weapons that must contribute for them to win. The StuG IIIB is their only armor. Since it has no MG, it is very vulnerable to the Russian infantry. It should always be in the presence of friendly troops and at least a couple of hexes away from the enemy. It has three roles in the German attack. Its first job is to engage the Russian tanks, and keep them away from the German infantry. Its small size and superior armor gives it an advantage in a firefight, until it runs out of AP ammo. Secondly, its gun is very effective against enemy in buildings. Once it gets a hit, it attacks on the 12 column with no modifiers. Finally, it can place smoke in two ways. The gun has a smoke depletion number of s9, which should be able to place two or three smoke counters during the course of the game to blind key Russian positions and protect the German assault troops. Also, it has a smoke dispenser. This can help it to get out of a dangerous spot, or it can be used to dump smoke to protect nearby troops from Russian fire. Unlike smoke rounds for the gun, a smoke dispenser

never runs out of smoke. Its placement is far from guaranteed; a Final DR of 7 or less is required. There is a +1 DRM if the crew is buttoned up, which it usually will be in this scenario. Negating the DRM is not worth exposing the crew to small arms fire.



Another important source of smoke is the seven 8-3-8 Assault Engineer squads. Their printed smoke exponent is 3, and being promoted to Assault Engineers raises this to 5. This makes a smoke placement successfully 5 out of 6 times, and it should be a regular part of the German tactics. Smoke placed in the road makes it much safer to get across. Instead of a -2 DRM for FFMO and FFNAM, a unit moving through smoke has a +1 DRM (+2 for smoke and -1 for FFNAM). If the unit halts in the road, the defenders can wait until final fire, when the infantry smoke is gone, and fire with no DRM. However, if the moving unit is placing a demo charge, defensive fire must break or pin the unit during the movement phase or the demo charge is placed. In fact a squad with a leader can do both; it can place smoke in an adjacent road hex (2 MF), move into the smoke (4 MF) and place a demo charge in an adjacent hex across the road (6 MF) in one movement phase.



The demo charges are very tricky weapons to employ. It is not unusual for an entire game to go by without these being used. Try to say that about machine guns! The difficulty is that a demo charge can only be used in an adjacent hex, and when enemies get that close the issue is likely to be resolved by point blank fire or close combat. However, a lone leader, hero, or half squad lugging a demo charge is a real threat. Remember that they can be used by SMC with no penalty, since all SMC are elite. They can also be used by non-elite squads and half squads as well. The penalty is a reduction in the X# by 2, but this is only reduced from X12 to X10; 5/6 of the time the demo charge will go off successfully. That means that a 1st line half squad carrying a demo charge is much more likely to draw fire than it would without one.

A demo charge is also effective against the Russian tanks. It has a To Kill number of 16. The armor of the tanks is so thin that it doesn't matter if the normal armor factor or the aerial armor factor is used; the tank is gone with successful placement. The normal case will be placement through the vehicle's front. In that case a DR of 7 or less is needed, and the tank is history. It is even better if the tank is immobilized or placement is through the tank's side or rear. It is worse if the tank is moving or if the demo charge is thrown or if the tank's crew is exposed. In this last case a poorly positioned demo charge attacks the exposed crew, which will usually knock out the tank for a while.



This brings us to the last exotic weapon in the German arsenal, the dreaded flamethrowers. The Germans have two of these with their initial assaulting force. I like to deploy an engineer squad and give one flamethrower to each half squad. Since it is so powerful and it

increases the vulnerability of the possessing unit, it is sure to draw plenty of fire, and it is better that a half squad be at risk than a full squad.

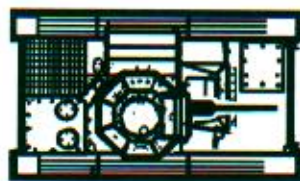
Since flamethrowers fire in the advancing fire phase at full strength, an effective tactic is to keep these weapons in the rear while the rest of the force makes an attack. Make these the last to move. If the Russians hold back fire to deal with the flamethrowers, there is that much less fire for the assault troops to face. If everything is thrown at the assault troops, the flamethrowers can move to firing positions with impunity. Since flamethrowers ignore the TEM of the target location, Russians in buildings are the prime targets, the more the merrier. Their firepower is still 12 at a range of two hexes, which makes them ideal for firing across a street, preparing the way for the assault squads. For example, one flamethrower in 3M7 fires at the Russians in 3O6, while the other flamethrower in 3M5 fires at 3O5. That could make it easy to cross the road in 3N5 and occupy 3O5 and O6.

Because these weapons are so fragile, with a removal number of X10, it only pays to use them against juicy targets. Look for at least a couple of squads or a unit with a strong support weapon, or that pesky squad in a stone building that just won't break any other way. Don't fire the flamethrowers too early or too often or they won't be around when they are needed the most.

Flamethrowers are effective against tanks as well as infantry, but only when adjacent. At a range of two hexes, the To Kill number is reduced from 8 to 4; the flamethrower is about as likely to be destroyed as the target. However, the To Kill number is 8 against an adjacent tank, and it ignores the armor factor of the tank. This situation is not too likely unless the tanks are getting aggressive and attack the Germans. The flamethrowers should serve to keep the tanks away, so the German infantry can play.

And play is what ASL gamers should do with this scenario. Both sides have an excellent chance of winning, and the typical game is likely to come down to the wire. With widely spread out action, interesting weapons on both sides, lots of infantry with armor and artillery thrown in for spice, this scenario was a classic once, and in its ASL incarnation, it will be again.

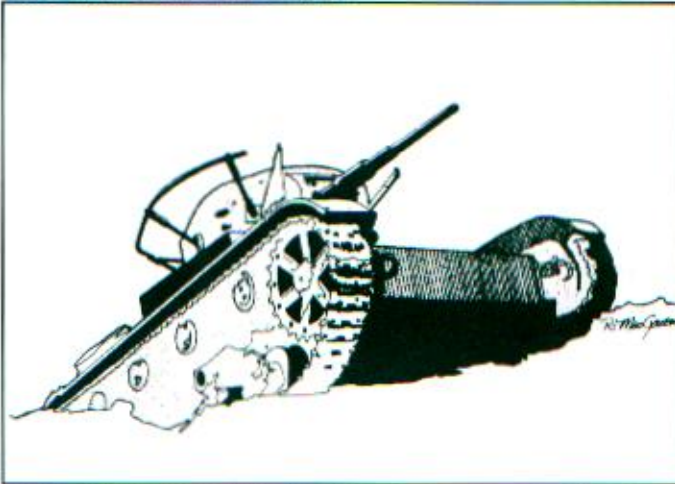
[We tweaked the scenario a bit after we got it from Jim, and retrofitted the article to be consistent. If you liked the scenario—as we all do—you can thank Jim. If you have any problems with the play balance, you can blame us.—Eds.]



THE CAPTURE OF BALTA

ASL SCENARIO J29

Scenario Adaptation: Jim Stahler



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Axis win at game end if there are no unbroken Russian MMC on/adjacent-to hexes 3Y1, 3Y2, 3Y3, 3Q1, 3Q2, and 3Q3.

TURN RECORD CHART

★ RUSSIAN Sets up and Moves First [234]	1	2	3	4	★ 5	6	7	8	9	10	END
✚ GERMAN [192]											

BALTA, UKRAINE, 3 August 1941: The 11th Army, advancing on the right side of Army Group South, skirted the Rumanian border with the Black Sea port of Odessa as its primary objective. The small town of Balta, located 120 miles northwest of Odessa, had changed hands several times during recent fighting, but was currently held by the Russians in battalion strength. As the German 239th Infantry Division attacked to the east of the town, and the Rumanian 6th Infantry Division attacked to the west, the 744th Engineer Regiment, less one company, was ordered to take Balta, preparatory to building a 24-ton highway bridge across the Kodyma River just south of the town. At the time, Company C, 744th Engineers under command of Lieutenant Ehrhart, was temporarily attached to the 239th, repairing vehicular bridges east of Balta. Upon learning that his parent unit was encountering difficulty reaching Balta, Lt. Ehrhart, on his own initiative, decided to take the town with a surprise attack from the east.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

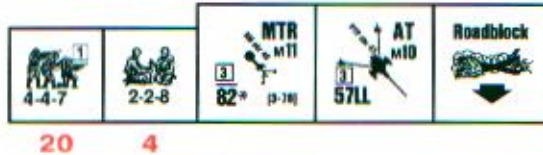
★ Remove two LMG from the onboard German OB.

✚ Remove two 2-2-8 crews from the Russian OB.



Balta Garrison [ELR: 2] set up as indicated: (SAN:4)

On board 3 on/west-of hexrow L with ≤ 1 non-HIP MMC per hex; all MMC [EXC: crews possessing an Emplaced Gun] must set up in buildings:



On boards 3/4 stacked with any MMC:



On board 4 on/west-of hexrow L in hexes numbered ≥ 4 and ≤ 7 with ≤ 1 MMC per hex; all MMC must set up in IS foxholes:



On board 3 on/west-of hexrow Q:



Enter on Turn 5 along the south edge on/west-of hexrow Q:



Kompanie C, Pioneer Regiment 744 [ELR: 4] set up concealed (regardless of terrain and LOS) on board 3 on/east-of hexrow G: (SAN: 2)



Enter on Turn 3 along the north edge on/west-of 4110:



Elements of the Rumanian 6th Infantry Division [ELR: 2] set up on board 4 in hexes numbered 10:



SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. No hills exist; other terrain in these hexes exist normally [EXC: cliffs] at level 0 except as follows. All terrain within the contour of hill 534 is considered level 0 grain [EXC: building 3110 still exists but all terrain outside the building depiction is grain], all terrain within the contour of hill 547 is considered level 0 marsh.
3. The Russians receive one module of 100+mm OBA (HE only); radio contact may not be attempted until Russian Player Turn 5.
4. During Russian Player Turn 1, the only units that may perform any actions

are the Russian AFV [EXC: Axis units may conduct defensive fire/CC attacks against those AFV; units of both sides may Rout normally, but may not use Voluntary Break (A10.41)]. No Russian AFV have optional armament (i.e., AAMG or Rear MG).

AFTERMATH: As C Company prepared for its assault, it was attacked by two Russian tanks. The company's engineers, with help from a commandeered assault gun, eliminated one of the tanks and chased off the other. The attack on the town was soon delivered, catching the bulk of the garrison by surprise. Three hours after the attack started, C Company held the entire southern half of the town, after destroying additional Russian tanks with demolition charges. Reinforced by elements of its own regiment attacking from the north, Company C proceeded on schedule with its assigned task of clearing the proposed bridge sites of mines.

NOCTURNAL ATTRITION

ASL SCENARIO J30

Scenario Design: Roger Best



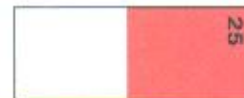
SIDI REZEG, LIBYA, 26 November 1941: On 21 November, four reduced-strength companies of British infantry had dashed across the Sidi Rezeg airfield to capture the key point of the Sidi Rezeg escarpment, which overlooked the whole vital area. But four more days of swirling tank and infantry battles in the area had left the Italian 9th Bersaglieri in possession of the section of the escarpment overlooking the airfield, with General Freyberg's 6th New Zealand Brigade precariously hanging on in the section to the east. The Bersaglieri were one of the few Axis units preventing Freyberg's men from linking up with the slow moving breakout from the textbook encirclement, and British plans for November 26th called for the link-up to be completed. Accordingly, units of 1st Essex and 32nd Tank Brigade took the Ed Duda feature just to the northwest during the day. Meanwhile, Freyberg held a brigade conference in the open desert, each officer flat on his stomach with maps spread in front of him to avoid the usual intense enemy fire upright movement attracted. Once again the plan was for a straightforward night attack, westward along the crest of Sidi Rezeg. Bayonets fixed, the 24th and 26th Battalions set out at 2300, weary, but glad to not be "spending the night shivering in shallow holes."

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

III In the New Zealand OB, replace two 4-5-8s with 4-5-7s.

⦿ Add one LMG to the New Zealand OB



(only hexrows A-P are playable)

VICTORY CONDITIONS: Provided the Italians have not amassed ≥ 15 CVP, the New Zealanders win immediately upon amassing ≥ 15 CVP, and/or at game end if they Control hexes L6 and P6. Prisoners do not count double for VC purposes.

TURN RECORD CHART

III ITALIAN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
⦿ NEW ZEALAND Moves First [115]							



Elements of 9th Bersaglieri Division [ELR: 2] set up on/west-of hexrow L: {SAN: 4}



3-4-7	2-2-7	9-2	8-1	7-0	2-1 4-10	1-1 2-5	45+ [2-13]	47	5 OVR. OBA: +4 Other: +2	15 on line OBA: +3+ Other: +1*
8	2					2		2	2	2



Elements of the 24th Battalion, 6th New Zealand Brigade [ELR: 3] set up on/east-of hexrow H: {SAN: 2}



4-5-8	4-5-7	9-1	8-1	8-0	2-7
5	5				3

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Wet, with a Mild Breeze from the northwest.
- Night Rules (E1.) are in effect. The initial Base NVR is 1 hex with Scattered Clouds and a Half Moon. The Base NVR may never be reduced below 1.
- The New Zealand player is the Scenario Attacker; the Italian player is the Scenario Defender. The Majority Squad Type of both sides is Normal.

AFTERMATH: The night was so dark that the Kiwi platoons were forced to travel in close formation to maintain contact. The defending Bersaglieri opened fire at close range, filling the air with tracers and flares. The tired attackers pushed on through heavy machine-gun, mortar and AT gun fire, heedless of frightful losses, to close on the Italian line. The Bersaglieri fought with skill and nerve, keeping their guns in action to the last, but were shown no mercy by the determined Kiwis, who cleared every position with grenades and bayonets. The end of the battle found the New Zealand battalions in complete control of the escarpment, and the Bersaglieri destroyed as a fighting unit. Still, the New Zealanders considered it the hardest, bloodiest and most deadly attack ever staged by their unit and—although successful—retaking the escarpment was even more costly than the fight for Point 175 only three days earlier.

LOVAT FIRST SIGHT

ASL SCENARIO J31

Scenario Concept: Tim Van Sant



BENOUVILLE AND LE PORT, FRANCE, 6 June 1944: Fighting continued in Benouville and LePort as the British 7th Battalion continued to hold the towns against repeated German assaults. The Ox and Bucks, on the other hand, had been placed near the canal bridge as a reserve to the British airborne in the event of the Germans breaking through. The first major use of the canal bridge was scheduled for approximately 1100 hours when Lord Lovat's commandos, coming up from Sword Beach, would cross the bridge to reinforce the remainder of the 6th Airborne east of the Orne River. In the confusion of D-Day, however, Lord Lovat's commandos were late.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



PB

BALANCE:

- ✦ In the Victory Conditions, replace "24 CVP" with "20 CVP".
- ⦿ If eliminated, the Sherman III DD does not count towards the CVP limit in the Victory Conditions.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The British win at the end of any player turn when they have ≥ 25 VP of Good Order Commando (see SSR4) infantry (calculated as Exit VP) east of the Canal provided the Germans have not amassed ≥ 24 CVP (prisoners count double immediately for this purpose).

TURN RECORD CHART

✦ GERMAN Sets Up First [212]

⦿ BRITISH Moves First [412]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
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Elements of Panzerpionier Kompanie 2, Infanterie Division 716, and Panzergrenadier Regiment 125, Panzer Division 21 [ELR: See SSR PB12] set up on/north of hexrow F, in hexes numbered ≤ 10 , in/adjacent-to building hexes: {SAN: 6}

4'-6-8	4'-6-7	4-4-7	2-3-7	8-0	8-0	5-12	3-8	7 morale
3	5	2				2	10	



Elements of Panzerpionier Kompanie 1, Infanterie Division 716, and Panzergrenadier Regiment 125, Panzer Division 21 [ELR: See SSR PB12] set up on/south-of hexrow M, west of the canal:

4'-6-8	4'-6-7	4-4-7	8-0	8-0	7-0	5-12	3-8	5-13	7 morale	9-1
2	6	6			2		4		15	



13	13	10	10	23	24
2	2	2	2	2	2



Elements of 7th Battalion, 5th Parachute Brigade, 6th Airborne Division [ELR: 5] set up as follows (see SSR2 & 3): {SAN: 3}

Set up on/north of hexrow EE in hexes numbered ≥ 9 , in/adjacent-to building hexes:

6'-4-8	9-1	8-0	2-7	8-3	7 morale
6			2	2	10

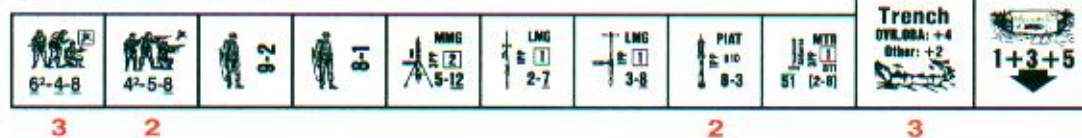


Set up on/between hexrows N and W, west of the canal:

6'-4-8	9-2	8-0	2-7	8-3	7 morale
6			2	2	10



Elements of Companies B and D, 2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry set up east of the canal and ≤ 3 hexes from X21 (See SSR PB14; SSR 3):



Anti-tank elements of the 6th Airborne Division set up east of the canal:



Elements of Lord Lovat's Commandos [ELR: 5] enter on Turn 1 on/adjacent to TT17 with the Infantry in Column (E11.5)(see SSR4 & 5):



SPECIAL RULES:

1. See PB SSR.
2. The British 9-2 which sets up on/between hexrows N and W begins the scenario Wounded (A17.). Four British squad equivalents which set up west of the canal begin the scenario as Walking Wounded MMC (CG SSR 17).
3. The pillbox sets up in Z21 (CA: Y22/Z22) and the three trench counters set up in W21, X21, and Z21. All Ox and Bucks MMC (and any SMC/SW stacked with them) may set up entrenched (B27.1) if in suitable terrain.
4. The British infantry entering on Turn 1 are Lord Lovat and his Commandos. These MMC are non-Airborne (SSR PB 13) and (contrary to H1.24) cannot Scale and are not Stealthy.

5. Contrary to E11.53, the Column is required to Disband due to having a LOS to a Known enemy unit only if such unit is within 16 hexes. The Column may not use Irrigation Ditch (Q1.) TEM.

AFTERMATH: At approximately 1300 hours, the beleaguered defenders heard a cheerful sound—bagpipes. Lord Lovat had arrived, marching his commandos in formation to the music of bagpipes—their prearranged signal with the airborne. Major Howard responded with a signal that the bridge was in their hands, but under fire. The commandos nonchalantly marched across the Pegasus Bridge, losing several men to sniper fire in the process, and continued on to reinforce the 6th Airborne.

JUMP TRAINING

A phase by phase guide to Air Drops in ASL

by Simon Spinetti

Ever played a scenario that involved an Air Drop? Ever seen one? No? That would not come as a surprise since, by its nature, this method of arriving on the battlefield meant that immediate contact with the enemy occurred very rarely, especially during WW2. Paratroopers are very vulnerable to fire from the ground so most drops were made at night and/or into areas where the enemy was not numerous or concentrated. These various aspects of air drops make them a rare event at the ASL Level. This fact is borne out by the small number of published scenarios available (6 by my count). A list of these appears later in the article.

This article aims to provide the ASL player with a sequenced version of the Chapter E rules on Air Drops. It also contains a few tables that summarize some of the information provided in that section and from other parts of the rules that relate to this topic. After reading this article you should feel confident about jumping out of the plane with your highly trained cardboard paratroopers!

Pre-game Preparation

Paratroops are very vulnerable in the Player turn during which they drop. They forfeit all capabilities (except for breaking and dying) until the CC phase. They basically sit in the Cloaking Box Display until the Advance Phase, and are represented until then by parachute counters. Therefore, carefully consider the next few steps to minimize the damage that Drift, Defensive fire and Landing can do to them as they descend.

Three things need to be done before the defender sets up. They are:

1. If no Wind direction is given for the scenario then one must be established (B25.64).
2. Prior to scenario setup, and barring any SSR to the contrary, a Drop Point is designated for each Wing, in the form of a whole hex somewhere on the designated board(s) (E9.12). Each Drop point must be at least 5 hexes from all other Drop points. No other limitations apply to where Drop points can be. The hexgrain direction that will apply to all Wings is also designated at this point.
3. Units are assigned to parachute counters using the Cloaking Display Box. The two types ($\frac{5}{8}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ "") are for different things;

$\frac{5}{8}$ " parachute counters accommodate Infantry, while $\frac{1}{2}$ " are for SW. Parachutes are sorted into Sticks which consist of one $\frac{5}{8}$ " chute and up to one $\frac{1}{2}$ " chute. Sticks are then grouped into Wings, which can contain no more than five Sticks. Any left over Sticks make a smaller Wing. Only one Wing per drop can have < 5 five Sticks (E9.11). A Stick can consist of a maximum of one squad equivalent, one SMC and one SW. All SW must be dm if possible and are assigned their own $\frac{1}{2}$ " chute with the same ID letter.

Now the DEFENDER sets up and then waits as the drone of transport engines is heard approaching the playing area. (ATTACKER may make the appropriate airplane noises at this point.)

Rally Phase

Do not forget the Wind Change DR since wind direction and strength affect Drift (E9.2) and the level of the Landing MC/TC (E9.42). After setup the ATTACKER makes a dr for each Wing to see if it is actually dropped at its pre-designated Drop point. On a dr of 1-3 the Wing uses that drop point. Otherwise, randomly determine which board of the playing area contains the new Drop point. The Drift placement procedure (E3.75) is then used to determine the final Drop point. That is to say, from the original pool of 32 Drift counters A-F, discard one to determine which hexrow the Drop point will drift from. Then, from hex 5 of that hex row, make a Random Location DR to determine where that Drop point will end up. Follow this procedure (using the newly-diminished pool of Drift counters) for each Wing.

With all Drop points finally determined, each Wing is then placed on its final Drop point with one Stick placed in each hex of the 5-hex long (or less if the Wing has fewer Sticks) hexgrain centered on that Drop point.

Prep Fire Phase

Parachutes can't shoot so there isn't any!

Movement Phase

All sticks are subject to Drift even if there is no wind. It is advisable to have extra boards on hand to butt against the playing area for those sticks that may drift offboard. Make a separate

Random Location DR for each parachute, including $\frac{1}{2}$ " chutes that are part of a stick. This DR is modified for certain nationalities. Each chute's drift is then adjusted according to the current wind strength and direction.

Defensive First Fire (E9.3)

The DEFENDER now warms up his dice and, as his units see the drifting and descending parachutes, he considers whether to fire at them. Only small arms and Light AA are eligible to fire at Aerial chutes. DFF and SFF are now resolved against any in-range chutes. Remember to use Aerial range (E.5) when calculating the range between firers and targets and that PBF/TPBF is NA. During the movement phase parachutes are subject to the Hazardous Movement DRM. It even applies to $\frac{1}{2}$ " chutes since any resultant KIA or K/# will eliminate or malfunction the weapon. There is no FFMO or FFNAM. Leadership, heroic and LV/SMOKE are the only other DRM that are applicable. Parachutes are never considered concealed.

DFF and SFF can only affect one Aerial chute in each hex unless there is a random selection tie, and each firer can only attack each hex once during the Movement Phase. Residual FP, TH DR, Fire Lane, Snipers, PTC, Pin and HOB are NA. Firers might not have LOS to a parachute for a number of reasons: blind hexes, insufficient NVR, six or more Hindrances, or due to being in a pillbox. The ATTACKER's own sniper cannot attack until the Game turn after he has infantry on board (usually Turn 2).

Each stick resolves any MC/K/# with one DR. Those results are applied to all Personnel contents as if they had a Morale of 7 (as stated on each parachute counter), regardless of the actual Morale or number of units in the stick. Broken sticks are represented by flipping the actual units in the Cloaking Display Box and marking them with a DM counter. Casualty reduction is resolved by random selection. LLMC/LLTC are NA while units are represented by parachute counters.

Movement phase (con't)

After all DFF/SFF is resolved versus Aerial chutes, those representing unbroken infantry units may move one hex in any direction [EXC: Germans]. All chutes then land at the

Base level of their current hex. Any chute that lands in a Blaze, non-frozen Water Obstacle or Deep/Flooded Stream has its contents eliminated and is removed. Half-inch chutes are then flipped over; the contents may not be inspected by either side until it is Recovered (A4.44). Chutes landing offboard are not removed unless their contents are eliminated. Use the reverse-terrain-order of E8.221 to determine what the terrain in the landing hex is (E9.42). These units have their movement severely restricted on subsequent turns. If they land too far from the actual playing area they may never get to enter the game. See E9.41 for details.

The contents of all $\frac{5}{8}$ " chutes must, on landing, take either a Landing TC or a Landing MC depending on the terrain they land in.

Failing a TC causes the component squad to automatically deploy into 2 HS (and reveals any SMC/crew), placing them on board with one of the HS landing one hex downwind. No extra TC/MC is taken but elimination can still occur if the HS lands in terrain that causes such. SMC/SW use Random Selection to determine which HS they are placed with. Your paratroopers are now on the ground but don't relax because the DEFENDER can now fire at them with Final Fire.

Defensive Fire Phase

After all Landing DR are resolved, paratroopers are then subject to Final Fire from any eligible DEFENDING units. Such fire is resolved using the normal Fire rules, LOS and range that apply to firing at ground units. DEFENDING units in the same location with paratroopers must use TPBF against them. Mark the location with a CC counter if any paratroopers survive.

AFPh/RtPh

Already revealed units may attack/rout, but those still represented by parachutes may not, are not eliminated for Failure to Rout, and do not surrender.

Advance Phase

The contents of each $\frac{5}{8}$ " chute are now placed on board unconcealed if not already revealed. Neither newly-revealed units nor those revealed in the MPH may Advance.

Close Combat Phase

CC is resolved. Eligible units can be concealed. Flip the turn marker.

Conclusion

So there you are! This is how an Air Drop is conducted. As mentioned in the introduction, scenarios with an Air Drop are a rare event. The result of such a scenario can be determined in the first player turn as Drift DR and Defensive fire combine with Landing DR to reduce and disperse the parachuting force. If all of this does take a heavy toll on the paratroopers it can often convince the player owning them to concede. I saw this happen in the scenario "Hunters from the Sky" when my extensive Defensive fire, along with a number of high MC DR by my opponent, left him with little on the ground to play the rest of the scenario.

So, be prepared to take some losses even before your opponent sees your forces on the ground. Even if your forces land relatively intact, they are likely to be deployed and dispersed over a wide area. Depending on nationality, SW could be few and far between as well. Often your pre-game plans will be nullified by casualties and dispersal of your forces, so be flexible and always keep the victory conditions in mind when deciding what to do with your landed forces.

The uncertainty of where, and in what state, the paratroopers will land is part of the attraction of Air Drop scenarios. It is very unlikely that any two games will ever be quite the same; and if things do not look too good for the paratroopers you can always stop the scenario and start again.

I hope this article has wetted your appetite for an Air Drop. Now that you know how, go jump out of a plane.

The Rest of the Story

Part of the fun of planning an Air Drop is figuring out where the wind might blow you and how to land close to the objective without landing too close (i.e., within Normal Range of the FlaK gun). Part of the fun of defending vs an Air Drop are the 2FP (-2) long range attacks vs parachutes. Both sides usually get some enjoyment out of seeing where the Drop points end up (50 percent chance of accuracy, but the procedure when inaccurate is a pain) and then where the parachutes (men and materials) scatter to (more scatter for the Russians, less for the Germans.) Then, after everyone is on the ground, part of the fun comes as the paratroopers run all around trying to pick up SW (or weapons at all, for pre-42 Germans). I can never remember which $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch chute represents which SW, although with the Americans I guess it doesn't matter much which Bazooka you recover.

Pre-42 Germans are even more fun, as they scurry around in Open Ground trying to arm themselves. In scenario G39, "A Desperate Affair," not only do the Germans units have to arm themselves, but they drop with a plane full of SW (and a dm 81* mortar) that they need to recover. The rules call for using a systems marker to distinguish the partially-armed paratroopers from those who have recovered their inherent arms, but we found it easier just to use a different squad-type for partially armed units and then replace it when they become fully armed. Now that I think about it, I have finally found some use for the black 5-4-8s, 2-3-8s, and 2-2-8s in A BRIDGE TOO FAR; they will ably fill in for partially-armed 5-4-8, 2-3-8, and 2-2-8 paratroopers. Just remember to lower the broken morale by one for the non-crew MMCs.

Half of the six existing Air Drop scenarios modify how Drop points are arrived at. I would have guessed it was more than that. For one thing, the Drift procedures are a pain. For another, some designs require more or less randomness than is built into the rules. That is the beauty of SSRs, you can make the broadly-applicable rules suit the narrow situation. Each of the three modifications approaches the issue differently, but all three accomplish their mission well. As far as Drift is concerned, I'm not sure I can find all 32 of my $\frac{5}{8}$ "-inch parachute counters. For others of you who can't, you can always kludge the Drift procedures with either a pack of cards or two decimal dice to arrive at a number from 01 through 32 (standing for the 'chutes A through FF). The first die determines the first digit (0-3), the second die determines the second digit, and be prepared for a lot of re-rolling. For the cards, ignore all face cards; suits determine the first digit (0-3), the face value of the card determines the second digit (1-0), and ignore 33 through 40.

AIR DROP SCENARIOS IN ASL

A Desperate Affair (G39)	German vs British	Crete	5/41	Pre-42 Germans, scattered but less random Drop points. A real wild one.
Airborne Samurai (A85)	Japanese vs Dutch	Dutch E Indies	1/42	Strict E9 entry into a Mild Breeze versus dug-in Dutch in the jungle.
Grab at Grivobo (G10)	Russian vs German	Russia	1/42	Night, Deep Snow, Extreme Winter. Nuff said.
Rachi Ridge (36)	German vs British	Leros Island	11/43	Initially unopposed drop (not counting high SAN and booby traps) into a Mild Breeze. Take the heights!
Night Drop (A76)	American vs German	Normandy	6/44	Night fades to day, with totally random Drop points. Germans must clear the road.
Hunters From the Sky (T12)	American vs German	Germany	3/45	One Drop point accurate, one not. Objective hexes are kept secret from Germans.



AND THE ART OF USING ARMOR

by Matt Shostak

[Matt's article first appeared in *Hell On Wheels*, a limited print run offering from Bounding Fire Productions, and represents our first attempt to bring you the best from the "desk-top publishing set." As Matt is the first to admit, there are already several excellent articles on the use of armor in ASL, including "Panzer Gegen Panzer" by Bruce Bakken, from the '93a Annual, "Stop and Go Traffic" by Ole Boe from the 1996 Annual, "What To Do If You Have a Tin Can" by David Olie in *Journal #1*; not to mention two from the long out-of-print *Backblast#2*, "Dance With The Tiger" by J. R. VanMechlen and "Panzer Gegen Sherman" by Rodney Kinney. We felt that Matt's article took a slightly different approach to the issue that was worthy of a broader audience. Eds.]

The effective use of armor in ASL scenarios seems to be a difficult skill to master. Many players ask me about armor tactics (not that I'm any kind of expert or anything). Indeed, there are already several excellent articles on the use of armor in ASL. Most such articles, however, seem to concentrate more on rules explanations and not so much on tactics. My article attempts to address the need for armor training in a tactical sense. Rather than focus on a limited application of armor, I try to lay a solid foundation for fully understanding armor capabilities from the ground up. First, we look at the tactical situation when there is no armor, and then compare that to unopposed armor. From there we move to more advanced topics, keeping in mind the overall goal of achieving (or preventing) armor supremacy. Throughout the article I often use the word tank interchangeably with AFV or armor, even though I know they have different meanings in ASL.

The Absence of Armor

You can't get a full understanding of the capabilities of AFVs without first taking some time to consider what it is like to fight without them. By studying the kinds of problems that arise in the absence of AFVs, it then becomes easier to understand just what they can do for you. So let's think about what it is like to fight without armor. There are many ASL scenarios involving infantry only, and chances are you have played some of them. What are the most

important weapons on such battlefields? In my opinion, machine guns rule these scenarios. A well-directed machine gun nest can dominate the playing area, making it very difficult for enemy infantry to move about as much as they would like. Such strong points are also very often quite difficult to suppress. One tactic for dealing with such a strong point is to create an equally or more powerful strong point and win a shoot-out, thereby enabling your other infantry to move toward their objectives free from that threat. However, this tactic can turn into a game of chicken with the first side to flinch being the loser. In other words, it is far from a guaranteed success. If the enemy machine gunners are not suppressed, they can shred your own strong point in return fire or otherwise do damage to the rest of your infantry.

One of the first lessons an ASL player learns, particularly in infantry-only scenarios, is that open ground can be deadly ground. The game system provides a nice -2 DRM for fire against infantry units non-assault moving in open ground, making small arms fire against them so much more powerful. Consequently, most players learn to avoid taking the fastest route across such open ground if it is covered by fire from the enemy. Instead they send their units through whatever cover is available, such as woods, buildings, and so on. Doing so slows down the attack but it often seems to be the only reasonable alternative to charging across the open willy-nilly.

Players also learn rather quickly that encirclement and interfering with the enemy's rout paths are some of the best ways to eliminate their troops. Of course, doing this is not as easy as it sounds.

Wouldn't it be great if your troops were bulletproof? If they were immune to small arms fire, they could take the shortest route, close with the enemy more easily, and therefore destroy him more easily, thus winning the fire-fight, the battle, and the war more quickly and with fewer casualties. It was precisely this desire that led to the development of the tank in the first place. With troops deadlocked in trench warfare on the western front in World War I, the machine gun and artillery reigned supreme, and casualties in each offensive were truly horrendous. Both sides were desperately searching for some way to attack through the hail of bullets and shrapnel. All of these points

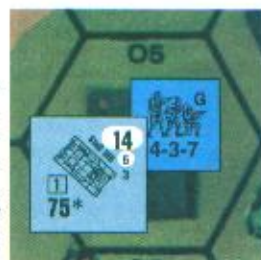
probably seem obvious to most ASL players, but knowing the obstacles your infantry faces without tanks adds perspective and leads to greater appreciation for what tanks can do.

Unopposed Armor

Now, consider the case of unopposed armor. By unopposed armor, I mean that you have AFVs but your opponent does not, nor does he have any antitank weapons. What can your AFVs do for you in such a situation? As you would expect, they can drastically change the tactical landscape. Let's cover each of their capabilities in turn.

VBM Freeze

The ASL rules give AFVs tremendous power in suppressing infantry by virtually sitting on top of them. If an AFV is in the same location as



enemy infantry, those infantry are prevented from firing at any target outside their own location. Because AFVs are often nearly impervious to small arms fire, this can be an especially powerful tactic for suppressing a pesky enemy strong point. Even infantry in woods or buildings are vulnerable to suppression by this move, because a vehicle in bypass qualifies for application of the rule. The ASL slang for this tactic is VBM Freeze, and the same principle applies in other terrain not involving bypass, such as open ground, brush, and so on. Some players don't like this maneuver, arguing that it is not realistic, but I hold that it makes perfect sense that troops with a tank in their face will be too concerned with matters right in front of them to be firing at someone else some distance away. Being this close to enemy infantry is not without risk, of course, and that is reflected in ASL by making the vehicle vulnerable to the various forms of Reaction Fire and possibly Street Fighting, in addition to Close Combat later in the turn. Done correctly, however, the risk can be minimized, and if casualty points are not an overriding concern for your side in the scenario, it can be very worthwhile. Even those wimpy,

thin-skinned, early war tanks can be very effective in suppressing enemy infantry by this method. Sometimes it is much more effective than using the firepower of the tank itself.

Just how risky is the VBM Freeze to your AFV? Like so many things in ASL, that depends on the situation. Let's consider a base case here, and you can do the math for other cases as an exercise. Suppose a squad is in a stone building, and is holding up your assault. It is not yet marked with a fire counter. Because you are running short on time, you decide to move a close-topped buttoned-up tank into VBM Freeze on the squad and remain in motion. To harm the AFV with CC Reaction Fire, the squad must first pass a PAATC (unless immune) and then attack the tank on the CC Table with a base Close Combat Value of 5, modified by a net +1 DRM (-1 for Street Fighting and +2 for Motion). Even such non-overrun situations are handled by the Overrun Flowchart in *ACTION PACK #2*. The odds of passing a PAATC and then rolling a 4 or less are pretty slim. In addition, if the squad fails its PAATC it becomes pinned, compounding its troubles. If a 9-2 leader is stacked with the squad, however, the situation gets much riskier for the tank because a roll of 7 or less harms it. Late-war Germans with their nearly ubiquitous panzerfausts and antitank magnetic mines (ATMMs) are obviously much more difficult to suppress with this method. Clearly, troops with better morale fare better on the PAATC, making them more dangerous foes for your AFVs. Many early war troops, particularly those of minor nations, are saddled with a +1 DRM to their PAATC, making them especially vulnerable to close assault by tanks. Although the risk is entirely situation-dependent, the basic premise that armor can suppress enemy infantry by moving on top of them holds true, and it is often worth it to send a tank into a very risky situation to exhaust the enemy's fire opportunities to gain some freedom of movement for your infantry.

Consider now what it is like to face a machine gun nest in a building that is slowing down your attack. If you have a tank available you can simply drive it up into bypass of the building, and unless the infantry inside can kill it with Reaction Fire, your infantry can then move without fear of fire from that position. Indeed, if you can manage to get a few squads close enough, they can then fire at the enemy infantry in Advancing Fire without any risk to the tank, and even move in for close combat, which would help protect the tank from harm and also possibly eliminate the enemy. It can be very effective to suppress an enemy machine gun with a tank in bypass, then bring up overwhelming strength for advancing fire and CC.



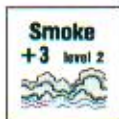
Interfering with Rout Paths and Encirclement

The mobility of armor is one of its greatest strengths. As mentioned earlier, interfering

with his rout paths is a great way to eliminate the enemy, but this is often very difficult for infantry alone to do. For one thing, units often do not have enough movement to get into position to do so. In addition, enemy fire often breaks infantry as they try to move forward into positions that would cause failure to rout. Unopposed armor, however, can have a field day against broken units. An AFV's speed combined with its near immunity to small arms fire allows it to gain positions behind broken enemy units and cause failure to rout much more easily than infantry alone can do. The same is true of encirclement; unopposed armor can attain positions to bring encircling fire on the enemy much more easily than infantry alone.

Fire Base Immune to Small Arms

We mentioned earlier that one way to destroy an enemy firebase was to create a strong firebase of your own and shoot it out with them. This method, however, doesn't always work. If the luck goes against you, you can find your own strong point the victim of a hail of lead from the enemy, stalling your attack. Armor, however, gives you a firebase that is nearly immune to enemy bullets. Although it is true that machine guns can kill some armor, the risk is usually not very great and is typically limited to early-war scenarios involving thin-skinned tanks. Many tanks are completely immune from machine guns. Sometimes the best way to deal with an enemy strong point is to simply park a tank nearby and blast it with fire-power. Better to use the tank than vulnerable infantry units.



Smoke

All AFVs have the ability to put Smoke on the board, because the chapter F rules gave AFVs the ability to use vehicular Smoke grenades. Many tanks have Smoke ammo available for their guns and many have smoke dispensers, adding a great deal of tactical flexibility to their side. Rather than counting on high explosive and machine guns alone to destroy an enemy strong point, which may take some time, a tank equipped with Smoke ammo can drop a smoke round on top of them instead. White Phosphorous (WP) can be used if available, allowing for the possibility of causing enemy casualties in addition to obscuring their vision. Even if the enemy is not destroyed, smoking them in can be nearly as good in rendering them ineffective, at least for a short period of time. Tanks can even put Smoke on the board while moving, by using their smoke dispensers or vehicular smoke grenades. So not only can you move a tank to a new position, but you can also drop some smoke while doing so to help cover the rest of your forces as they move.

Overruns

Armor can also use overrun against enemy infantry. "Dance with the Tiger" covered this topic in great detail, so I will not go into the finer points here. The main thing to keep in mind is that infantry in the open, or in poor cover such as brush or grain, can be very vulnerable to overrunning armor. Often just the presence of unopposed armor causes enemy infantry to stick to dense terrain such as woods or buildings, thus limiting their movement somewhat. As with VBM Freeze, the risk to overrunning armor depends on the situation. It is yet another tactical option that AFVs bring to the party. Again, consult the Overrun Flowchart to help understand your specific options within the rules.

Unopposed Armor Conclusion

Unopposed armor adds such a wealth of tactical options that the enemy will have a hard time anticipating what's coming next. When I have unopposed armor I feel that I am less dependent on the vagaries of the dice because there are many things that it can do with very little risk from the enemy. It is indeed a very powerful tool, and I expect scenarios that give one side unopposed armor to compensate for that power through the victory conditions or other aspects of the tactical situation.



Anti-Tank Opposition

Often, we do not have the luxury of unopposed armor on our side but must contend with the antitank assets of the enemy. These assets could be antitank weapons or enemy armor. Although they must be fought against somewhat differently, the important thing is that they are capable of killing your tanks. Whenever I have armor that is opposed by antitank elements, I look to see if there is any way that I can destroy those antitank weapons and achieve a position of having unopposed armor at my disposal. Like a good mathematician, I will have reduced the problem to one already solved. We have just seen how powerful tanks can be when allowed to run wild, so why not try to achieve that situation? Obviously, there are many cases where eliminating the antitank elements is not practical. Sometimes the scenario does not allow enough time to win the armor superiority battle, other times your units simply are not capable of doing so. Still, it is always worth considering because the payoff can be so large. The tactics that you need to win an armor supremacy battle have general applicability and are valuable, therefore, even when you are not trying to achieve (or are unable to achieve) unopposed armor for your side.

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PANZER GRAVEYARD



ASL SCENARIO J32

Scenario Design: Chas Smith



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win at game end if they Control ≥ 20 buildings within the British setup area (rowhouses are treated as one building for VC purposes).

MINTURNO, ITALY, 21 January 1944: On 13 Nov 1943, 1st Company Hermann Göring Parachute-Panzer Regiment had been sent to support the 94th Infantry Division, and worked with the 267th Grenadier Regiment guarding the coast. 7th Company HG Parachute-Panzer Regiment was supporting the 274th Grenadier Regiment, and was engaged near Minturno. 1st Company was given the mission of guarding the Santa-Infante-Minturno Road. 7th Company tanks were already in the area and its 1st platoon, under the command of Lieutenant Lentz, was ordered to move up in support of the infantry near the Minturno Cemetery. The PzKpfw III tanks of 1st Platoon and infantry of the Grenadiers successfully repulsed several attacks. Finally, the order came for the 1st and 7th Companies, along with the 200th Grenadier Regiment, to counterattack.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



		46
	X25 X11	X14
18	Hi5	

BALANCE:

- In the Victory Conditions, change " ≥ 20 " to " ≥ 22 ."
- ✚ Reduce the game length by 1/2 turn (from 6 to 5.5 turns).

TURN RECORD CHART

● BRITISH Sets Up First [122]	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
✚ GERMAN Moves First [90]							



Elements of British 5th Infantry Division [ELR: 4] set up north of the 46Q10-46Q7-46X3-46Y2-18I1-18A6 road: {SAN: 4}

4'-5-7	2-2-8	1-2-7	1-8	8-8	7-0	5-14	4-12	2-7	8-3	7 mortar
10	2							2	2	14



57L 2/4	75 2/4	57L 2/4
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Elements of 1st and 7th Companies, Hermann Göring Panzer Regiment, and 200th Grenadier Regiment, 94th Infantry Division [ELR: 2] set up south of the 46Q10-46Q7-46X3-46Y2-18I1-18A6 road: {SAN: 3}

4'-6-7	4-4-7	4-3-6	1-8	8-8	8-0	5-14	4-12	3-8	9-1	13 3/5
4	5	3						4		4



Set up on hill hexes within the German set up area:

13 3/5

4

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Wet, with no wind at start. Kindling (B25.11) is NA. To represent the gathering darkness, beginning on Turn 6, a +1 LV Hindrance (E3.1) applies to all non-CC attacks.
- Place overlays as follows: X14 on 46U3/T2; X11 on 46V1/W2; X25 46W3/V3; Hi5 on 18G5/H5.
- The PIATs in the British OB must begin the game possessed by 1-2-7 crews.
- All German MMC are Lax.
- Vehicular crews may not voluntarily abandon (D5.4) their vehicles.

AFTERMATH: In support of the operation, 1st Platoon was reinforced by four PzKpfw IV tanks. The MkIIIs would provide fire support from positions on the heights. The attack, intended to capture the hills surrounding the cemetery and to push further into the town, was launched at 1710 hours. Feldwebel Lubke wheeled his PzIV around the corner at the cemetery and came face to face with a Sherman, which he knocked out with the first shot. Meanwhile, Lt. Lentz engaged and destroyed an antitank gun and a Churchill tank. British antitank teams were present in the town, but the armor provided the shock necessary for the less experienced German infantry to press forward. As twilight settled in, the vehicles pulled back to the cemetery and the infantry consolidated the gains. The following day, the infantry would successfully storm the last British strongpoint, leaving the town in German hands. However, after being wounded, Lt. Lentz refused to leave the battlefield, and was subsequently killed by an artillery shell.

THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE

ASL SCENARIO J33

Scenario Design: Chas Smith



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win at game end if they Control buildings 20H3 and 22F4.

GRAUDENZ, WEST PRUSSIA, 22 February 1945: The bridgehead position at Graudenz was declared a fortress on 27 January 1945. The fortress defense was manned by the remaining elements of Division Hermann Göring, as well as various other Wehrmacht, Luftwaffe, Police, and Fortress units. The Russians relentlessly pressed the attack, inflicting staggering casualties on the defenders. By February 22nd, very few artillery and antitank guns remained functioning within the fortress. There were, however, still a large number of dangerous flak guns. In an attempt to remove these threats, the Russians resumed the attack the following morning reinforced by armor and supported by fire from nearly an entire artillery division.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



20	22
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BALANCE:

✚ Increase German ELR from 2 to 3 and delete SSR 4.

★ In the German OB, replace the 9-2 with a 9-1.

TURN RECORD CHART

✚ GERMAN Sets Up First [205]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
★ RUSSIAN Moves First [226]								



Reinforced Elements of 2nd Regiment, Hermann Göring Training and Replacement Brigade [ELR: 2] set up on/north of hexrow L: [SAN: 4]:

8-3-8	5-4-8	4-6-7	4-3-6	2-2-8	9-2	8-1	8-0	5 [3] 7-16	5 [2] 5-12	3-8	24-1	12-4
2	7	3	4	3	2			2	2	4		
7 mine	24	4	88L 45-2-3	20L (20)	4							



Reinforced Elements of 37th Guards Infantry Division [ELR: 4] set up on/south-of hexrow M: [SAN: 3]

6-2-8	4-5-8	10-2	8-1	8-0	7-0	5 [3] 6-12	5 [2] 4-10	3-8	30-1	24-1	6/7/8
6	14			2			2	4	2		
13 11 122L -1/2/4	16 11 85L 2/4										
3	3										

SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Snow (E3.7), with Ground Snow (E3.72) and no wind at start. The stream is dry. Kindling (B25.11) is NA.
- Buildings 20H3 and 22F4 are Factories (B23.74) and despite the square staircase symbols are only 1.5 Level LOS obstacles.
- Hand-to-Hand CC (J2.31) may be declared by both sides.
- All German units have an ELR of 2. The Morale Number of German 8-3-8s/3-3-8s is *not* considered underlined.
- The Germans have Level C Booby Trap capability (B28.9) which may not be increased. Exchanging A-P minefield factors for A-T mines (B28.5) is NA.

6. The Russians receive one module of 120-mm OBA (HE only) with Plentiful Ammunition (C1.211). The Russian leader initially possessing the radio may use HIP.

7. The Russians may exchange one eligible leader for a Commissar (A25.22) as if the scenario were set in 10/42.

AFTERMATH: The battle was an extremely hard-fought affair. Several Russian units were accompanied by political officers to "encourage" battlefield performance. Bitter fighting for control of the tobacco factory and slaughterhouse ensued with the slaughterhouse changing hands several times. The heroic efforts by the defenders could not stem the Russian onslaught and they pushed past the factories, eventually reaching the railway station in the heart of the city. The doomed fortress would continue to hold out until 5 March, but at an exorbitant cost in men and material.

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Antitank Guns

I use the term antitank gun to refer to any direct fire gun that can be used against armor, whether it is designated an antitank (AT) gun proper, an infantry (INF) gun, artillery (ART), or antiaircraft (AA). The antitank gun is a dangerous foe to your AFVs. It is most often hidden, striking from a position of ambush, shooting at your more vulnerable sides and rear whenever possible. Typically, the antitank gun has a higher rate of fire than your tank. It often can maintain concealment even when shooting, and in general it is much harder to hit than your tank. If an enemy gun has enough hitting power to have a reasonable chance to penetrate your armor it will most likely win a toe-to-toe encounter with your tank. The weakness of antitank guns is that they are not very mobile and, therefore, when they are finally revealed they can often be bypassed. Dealing with these adversaries requires patience, care, and sometimes a bit of bravado.

Fights with antitank guns are situations where your infantry can help your tanks. The first step in dealing with antitank guns is finding them, and infantry are great for this job. They can reveal the presence of antitank guns by attempting to move into their locations. This not only reveals the gun but also threatens the crew with imminent close combat. Once revealed, the gun can be bypassed under several conditions: there is a different route available for your tank; the crew can be broken by small arms fire from your infantry; the crew can be eliminated in close combat; ordnance smoke can be placed on top of them, and so on. The key is that if you have enough time, you can let your infantry clean up the antitank guns while keeping your AFVs away from harm.

Sometimes a little boldness is called for. If an antitank gun happens to be pointing the other way, it may be worthwhile to move your tank up outside its covered arc and overrun the crew, or simply end the movement phase in motion in their location to invoke VBM freeze on them, allowing your other tanks to get by and possibly also allowing your infantry to move up to eliminate the crew with fire or in CC. In desert warfare it can be very difficult to hide from antitank guns, and it can also be difficult to move infantry up close. In such cases, overrunning these guns is often your best tactic even if it means losing a few tanks on the way.

Enemy Armor

When your enemy also has armor, it must be dealt with somehow. Because the capabilities of AFVs vary widely over the course of the war, the character of each encounter can vary widely also. Sometimes one side has tanks that cannot be penetrated frontally (not counting critical hits, of course). Sometimes, typically

on the Eastern Front in 1944 and 1945, each side has tanks that will most likely kill anything they hit. Scenarios set in 1940 France and 1941 Russia often feature less powerful but radio-equipped German tanks against heavily armored but uncoordinated (radioless) adversaries. Regardless of the situation, it is worthwhile to consider whether you can destroy the enemy armor and achieve unopposed armor for yourself (while still satisfying the victory conditions). To that end, we now focus on several tactics that can help you win the armor battle.

Outside Their Covered Arc

This seems like such an incredible no-brainer, but you'd be surprised how often I've seen players move their tanks right into the guns of the enemy, even when it was possible to approach more obliquely. The advantage gained by coming from outside his covered arc is so large that it should be your first thought every time. Why do anything else if you don't have to?



The Bounding Fire Swarm

Using Bounding First Fire, that is, firing your tanks' weapons during your own Movement Phase, can be a very effective tactic and will often take your opponent by surprise. Sometimes it is your only reasonable option, like when you are confronted with the Sherman-Panther problem: your opponent has an AFV that you simply must knock out, but it is essentially impenetrable from the front, while it can easily kill your tanks. In "Panther Gegen Sherman," Rodney Kinney does an excellent job of discussing how to destroy a Panther with a swarm of several Shermans, and the options available to each side. I recommend that article highly if you can find it, but that is not the only time that using Bounding First Fire can be a good idea. It can pay great dividends in many different tank encounters because firing on the move gives you the jump on the enemy and increases the pressure on him.

Consider the implications of Bounding First Fire. If your infantry could do it, it would surely change the game, right? Perhaps it is best to look at a simple example to illustrate the point. Suppose you are able to move your tank outside your opponent's covered arc. You move up adjacent and stop. Should he fire at you? If he does, he'll have to change his TCA (say +2 for slow turret) and he'll have a +2 penalty because you moved, and say he's +1 for being buttoned up also. He'd get a -2 for point blank fire though, meaning he'll need to roll a 7 or less to hit. Not bad, but not a sure thing either. On the other hand, if he doesn't fire, you might fire at him. Your tank pays Bounding First Fire (BFF) penalties (say +4 for ST gun), and another +1 for being buttoned up. But you would also get the -2 DRM for point blank fire, meaning you'd hit him on a 7 or less also. Moreover, if you hit the shot will

be coming through his side aspect, greatly increasing your chances for a kill (in most cases). By making such a move, you have put your opponent in a quandary. It's kind of like a game of chicken, to see if you can get him to flinch. If we add to this example by supposing that this enemy tank is guarding an approach by 3 or 4 of your own tanks, you can see just how difficult this decision is for him. Even if he shoots and kills the first tank, you have others that could then move up and repeat the same attack, with similar odds of killing him.

If he doesn't shoot and instead takes his chances that you will miss, he may very well end up with a dead tank and nothing to show for it. Furthermore, if you kill his tank with your first tank using BFF, you have freed up your other tanks to move. Contrast this approach with simply moving all three or four of your tanks into firing positions against his tank, then stopping and waiting for Advancing Fire. During Defensive Fire your opponent can pick his best target to shoot at and very likely kill it. If your own tanks miss, he could then very possibly knock out another tank in his following Prep Fire. Obviously there are many other variables in this process. If your tanks or your opponent's tank has special ammo such as APCR, the chances of hitting might be increased. Either side might be CE to increase the odds of securing a hit. The tanks might have target size modifiers. I'll leave it up to you to calculate the To Hit numbers for the various situations you can dream up or which might occur in your games. The basic point is, BFF can be very effective and you should carefully consider using it in almost any tank vs tank encounter. The threat of BFF puts the pressure on your opponent to make a difficult decision. Proper use of BFF can gain you time and momentum, two very precious commodities in ASL.

There are even some basic rules of thumb about how to perform a swarming BFF attack with your tanks against an enemy tank. First, send your least valuable tank in first, outside of the enemy's covered arc. Move in close and put yourself in a position to take a good shot, forcing the defender to make a tough choice between firing on you and taking his chances that you will miss. If he does not fire, take your shot and hope for the best. You just might kill the beast. If you do not knock out the tank, continue the procedure with another tank. If he does fire, even if he knocks out your first tank, he has limited his firing opportunities unless he kept ROF, so you can more easily come against his exposed flanks and rear with your other vehicles. You have to stay flexible enough to react appropriately to what happens, rather than trying to stick to a rigid plan of attack.

Gyro Power and Gun Duels

Gyrostabilizers are not found in many ASL scenarios, but there are a few scenarios that showcase the gyro's abilities. Gyro-equipped tanks can make the bounding fire swarm described above even more impressive. When a tank has a gyro, not only is its Case C modi-

fier lower than normal (a mere +3 DRM), but it can fire while in Motion status (or in the Movement Phase without expending a stop MP) without paying the penalty of doubling the lower dr of the To Hit DR (although it does pay an additional +1). Moreover, a gyro-stabilized gun can gain and retain acquisition for Motion/BFF To Hit attempts (C6.55). Let's consider an example to see just how valuable gyros are. Consider a CE Sherman moving against a Panther and entering a location six hexes away, from which he has a side shot at the Panther, having spent four MP in the Panther's LOS. The Panther does not shoot or change covered arc, because the Sherman is still moving, and the Panther does not know that the Sherman has a gyro. The Sherman announces a BFF shot. It needs a 7 to hit the Panther (10 base, +4 for case C4, -1 large target). That's pretty good odds and represents a grave danger to the Panther because it is a side shot!

Another obscure rule involves tanks with a white background behind their ROF. Such a tank not only gets Multiple Hits (C3.8), but also has a big advantage in a gun duel, because its firer-based to hit DRM are halved (FRD) for gun duel purposes (only). See U.S. vehicle note R. Consider our Sherman-Panther example again, supposing that our gyro-equipped Sherman also has a white background ROF. If the Panther decided to shoot at the Sherman, the Sherman could declare a gun duel. Assuming that the Panther had to change TCA one hexspine to fire, his total firer-based to hit DRM would be +2 (if CE). But so would the Sherman's! The tie would mean whoever rolled lower would shoot first. Wow. If the Panther is BU, the Sherman wins the gun duel. A gyro-equipped Sherman with a white ROF is quite dangerous indeed.

For a scenario that has the right conditions for employing gyros and BFF swarm tactics, take a look at J19 "Merzenhausen Zoo" in this issue.

Swarm Defense

So how can you defend against swarm tactics? One of the best ways is to make sure your tanks mutually support each other. A single Panther can be overwhelmed by superior numbers, but a Panther with a StuG wingman guarding his flanks and rear is much more difficult to swarm. Perhaps this is an obvious point, but in ASL it is often tempting to separate one's tanks for each to pursue different objectives. Also, it can be difficult to get your tanks into good, mutually supporting positions due to various LOS obstacles. Still, it is always worth keeping in mind.



The Behemoths

It is not uncommon in ASL to find one side possessing tanks that simply cannot be pene-

trated through the front facing (barring a CH). Knowing how to use these monsters, and how to fight against them, is an important part of ASL armor training. When they are on your side, the rule of thumb is simple: keep the front facing the enemy, and stay away from deliberate immobilization range. In "Panther Gegen Sherman", Rodney Kinney does a good job of showing how to get the most out of your behemoth with regard to keeping the frontal armor facing the enemy. I won't go over that in detail again here. Suffice it to say that each weapon besides the AAMG on a tank allows it to change covered arc when it fires. Often behemoths are also equipped with guns that can hole any opposing tank with ease. The menagerie of the Elephant, Panther, and Tiger comes to mind. These tanks can help you win the armor superiority battle if you can put them in position to get good shots at the enemy.

Perhaps more interesting are tactics for combating enemy behemoths. There are several possibilities, depending on the tactical situation. If you have enough AFVs of your own, especially if some are gyro-stabilized, you can attempt a bounding fire swarm as described previously. You could also look for deliberate immobilization opportunities. Another tactic that can pay off is using HE against them. If the behemoth is CE, a HE hit could stun or kill the crew, especially if the caliber is reasonably large. Even BU, however, behemoths are vulnerable to HE shots using Area Target Type. The reason is that Area Target Type uses the IFT to determine the effects versus an armored target (C1.55). A final KIA destroys the AFV while a final DR that is a K/# or one greater than a K/# causes automatic shock (turret hit) or immobilization (hull hit). Even a lowly light mortar has a reasonable chance of knocking out a powerful tank such as a Panther.

Special Ammo

Remembering to use special ammo at the right times can also help you win the armor battle. The basic concept is simple. Trying for special ammo increases your chances of getting a hit, because if you roll higher than the ammo number, it is as if you have not taken the shot (unless a 12 was rolled) and therefore you are entitled to try again with a different kind of ammo (usually AP). It is not difficult to see that this boost is largest when the final roll you need To Hit is the same as the availability number of the special ammo (which essentially doubles your To Hit chances).

Smoke Dispensers

Many AFVs are equipped with some sort of smoke dispenser (D13.). Rule F.10 allows all AFVs to use vehicular smoke grenades as well. The mechanics for their use are the same as for smoke dispensers, only they are less effective because they only place 1/2" smoke on the board. These can be used to help your armor survive. Most players know that they can be used every Movement Phase and that they never break. But did you know that you can use a smoke dispenser during the enemy's Move-

ment Phase as well? This tactic can be especially effective when combined with a Motion Attempt.

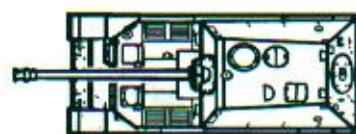
To see just how effective using Motion attempts and Smoke Dispensers can be, let's consider a hypothetical example. Suppose an enemy Panther begins the MPH out of LOS of your Sherman but moves into LOS during the turn, spending 6 MP in the Sherman's LOS, and finishing its move by stopping adjacent to your Sherman. It could hit the Sherman at this time with BFF on a DR of 8 or less (10 base, +4 case C, +1 BU, -1 large target, -2 point blank). Yikes! This is way too dangerous, you decide, but instead of shooting at the front of the Panther and hoping for a critical hit, maybe you should try a Motion status attempt. It is guaranteed to be successful because the Panther spent 6 MP in LOS. This alone makes the To Hit possibilities of the Panther considerably smaller, because it takes away the point blank bonus, and it tacks on a +2 Motion target penalty. Suddenly, the Panther is looking at needing a 4 to hit you.

Suppose you also remember to go for a smoke dispenser after the Motion attempt and succeed in putting +2 smoke in your own hex. Or perhaps *prior* to going in Motion (since you want to avoid the +2 moving/Motion DRM on your usage attempt), you are able to use your Smoke Mortar to put dispersed Smoke in *his* hex. Now the Panther needs a 2 (or 1) to hit you. You've turned almost certain death by Panther into almost certain survival. Moreover, the Motion attempt allowed you a free covered arc change, and you were smart enough to position your Sherman so that you can exit the Panther's covered arc, maybe even his LOS, with your very first movement point next turn!

Now, suppose your Sherman has a gyro-stabilizer. How is your German opponent going to feel as you turn the tables on him next turn and move your Sherman that he was so confident of destroying into his rear covered arc for a very dangerous rear shot with APCR? I hope this brief example turns you on to the various options available to you with AFV combat. It doesn't have to be as simple as moving into LOS of each other and then shooting until just one side is left.

Conclusion

Rather than possibly boring you with a whole lot of rules quotes, this article has concentrated on trying to achieve an understanding of armor from the ground up. Taking a Zen approach, we first considered what problems arise when no armor is available. Then we considered what unopposed armor can do for us. Lastly, we looked at various tactics that can help us win, or at least not lose, an armor superiority battle. I hope that it has helped you and maybe even excited you a bit about using some armor in your upcoming games. Drive on!



ARMORED TACTICAL EXAMPLES

by Captain Chas Smith, U.S. Army

Knowing the options available to you in the ASL rules can help you make better tactical decisions for handling armored fighting vehicles. This article expands on "Zen and the Art of Using Armor" by discussing some specific rules applications.



As a companion piece to "Zen and the Art of Using Armor," I want to review several tactical situations involving armor and look at how to use the ASL rules to your advantage in these situations. My examples pit powerful German AFVs with high TKs and thick front AFs vs your garden-variety M4A1 Sherman MT and M5A1 Stuart LT. Rather than determining the correct solution for a given situation, or trying to cover all possibilities, my goal is to present some available options. Knowing these options should help you make good decisions in similar situations. I focus on Bounding First Fire, Covered Arc changes in AFPh, Sherman tanks with gyrostabilizers, and the "Freeze."

Bounding First Fire

Let's start off by reviewing some Bounding First Fire situations. The Jagdpanther is a most formidable opponent, as are many of the German tank destroyers. Shermans usually don't stand much of a chance in a stand off engagement, but they do have BFF advantages.



Assume that at the beginning of the U.S. player turn on board 19, the units are situated as shown in Figure 1.

Sherman A moves to U3 using 12 MP. The Jagdpanther does not wait for the Sherman to stop and changes its CA to V3-U3 (see Figure 2). Assume that it passes the required Bog Check (C5.11). At this point, the Jagdpanther takes a shot needing an Original 2 To Hit: Modified TH# of 10 with DRMs of +6 (CA change x2), +1 (BU), +2 (target in motion), and -1 (large target).

Because the Jagdpanther is in woods, its CA is now fixed (C5.11), regardless of any ROF or Intensive Fire shot. Sherman A stops in U3, but does not take a BFF shot against the Jagdpanther's front armor. Sherman B moves to W3 (using 6 MP), goes CE, stops, and takes a BFF shot (see Figure 3).

The M4A1 needs an Original DR of 7 or less To Hit: Modified TH# of 10 with DRMs of +4 (case C), +1 (TEM), and -2 (case L). If the Sherman hits, it will be against the Jagdpanther's side AF of 6. With a Basic TK# of 14, +1 for range, a DR of 8 or less destroys the Jagdpanther and a 9 results in immobilization or shock.

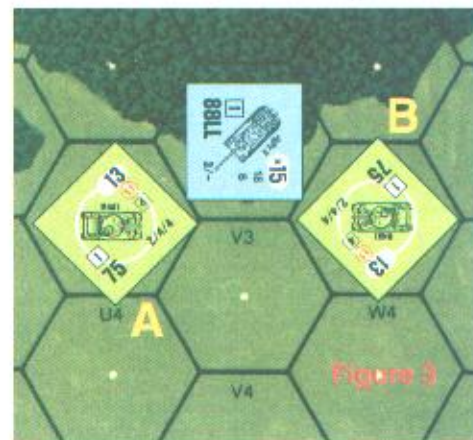
Lets go through the same scenario, but with the Jagdpanther starting in V3 (covered arc V4-W4), which is open ground. Sherman A moves to U4 and stops. The Jagdpanther declares a shot, and the M4A1 declares a gun duel (C2.2401), as shown in Figure 4. The Jagdpanther's firer-based DRMs total +4: +3 (CA change) and +1 (BU). The Sherman's total +5: +4 (case C), and +1 (BU). At first blush, it appears that the Jagdpanther will win the gun duel, but wait! The Sherman has a ROF with a white background as described in U.S. Multi-Applicable Vehicle Note R. For gun duel purposes, the white background halves all DRMs.

fractions rounded down. Therefore, the Sherman's firer-based gun duel modifiers are only +2 and it gets to take the first shot. It needs an Original 7 or less To Hit. Even if the Jagdpanther attempted to fire its MG instead of the MA, a gun duel is still applicable and it would lose. As above, if a hit is achieved, the Jagdpanther is eliminated on an Original TK DR of 8 or less, because winning the gun duel means the Sherman's shot occurs before the Jagdpanther's covered arc change.

Covered Arc

Here is another interesting rule. Assume a previous U.S. player turn ended with the situation shown in Figure 5.

It is now the German PFPh. The Jagdpanther can change its CA and fire, but it needs an Original 6 or less To Hit: Modified TH# of 10 with DRMs of +6 (CA change in woods x2), +1 (BU), -2 (PBF), and -1 (large target). The Jagdpanther can also choose not to shoot in the Prep Fire Phase and instead change its CA to



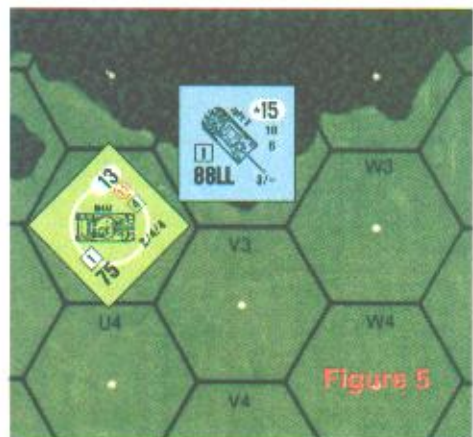


V3-U3 at the end of the phase (C3.22). The Sherman has a very low chance of damaging the Jagdpanser's front. By changing its CA at the end of PFPh, the Jagdpanser places its front to the Sherman before Defensive Fire, and can still take a shot during Advancing Fire. Although this may not seem intuitively correct, such a move greatly increases the Jagdpanser's To Hit chances. By waiting until the Advancing Fire Phase, the German AFV needs a DR of only 9 or less, almost certain death for the Sherman. The increase in the probability of hitting the Sherman results from the Jagdpanser not having to pay the penalty for a CA change. The applicable modifiers are: +3 (case B in woods), +1 (BU), -2 (PBF), and -1 (large target). What a difference!

Gyrostabilizers

Now, let's use a Panther in V3 (CA V4-W4) and a CE M4A1 equipped with a gyrostabilizer in T3. It is the U.S. movement phase and the Sherman is currently moving (see Figure 6).

The Panther declares a shot and the Sherman counters with a gun duel. The Panther's firer-based DRM total +4: +3 (TCA change) and +1 (BU). The Sherman's totals +4 also: +3 (case C), and -1 (stabilized gun in motion). This +4 is then halved to +2 because of the white background ROF. Once again the Sherman gets the first shot and hits on a DR of 7 or less: Modified TH# 10 with DRMs of +3 (case C), +1 (stabilized in Motion), and -1 (large target). Notice the huge advantage the gyro provides by decreasing Case C and merely adding +1 rather than doubling the lower dr for being in



Motion. The penalty is only an additional +1, on top of the already-lower case C. If the Sherman does miss, the Panther must roll a 5 or less to hit the Sherman during the movement phase: Modified TH# of 10 with DRMs of +3 (CA change), +1 (BU), +2 (target in motion), and -1 (large target).

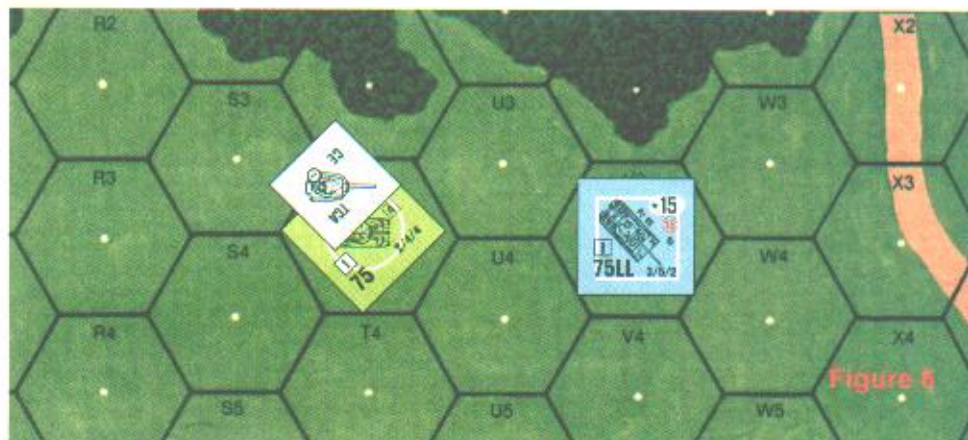
Freeze

Another way to combat the awesome German AFVs is to use the "Freeze" by parking an AFV in the enemy's hex, using Bypass if needed, since a unit cannot fire out if its Location is occupied by a Known, armed enemy unit. Even a M5A1 "Stuart" can prevent a Panther from firing out of its Location by entering through the side CA and staying in the Location. Since the Stuart could kill the Panther from the side with an Original 5 TK DR, it is allowed to stay in the Location with the Panther (D2.6). The M5A1 is a good choice for this mission, being a small target and more difficult to hit, with a greater likelihood of getting into the hex, surviving, and "freezing" the Panther. Another AFV, preferably a Sherman, can

then approach the Panther from the side or rear, get adjacent, and stop. The Panther has no options because it cannot shoot out of the hex, except to possibly go in motion if the Stuart/Sherman entered its LOS during this turn. Even so, the Panther's chance of survival is much lower than otherwise.

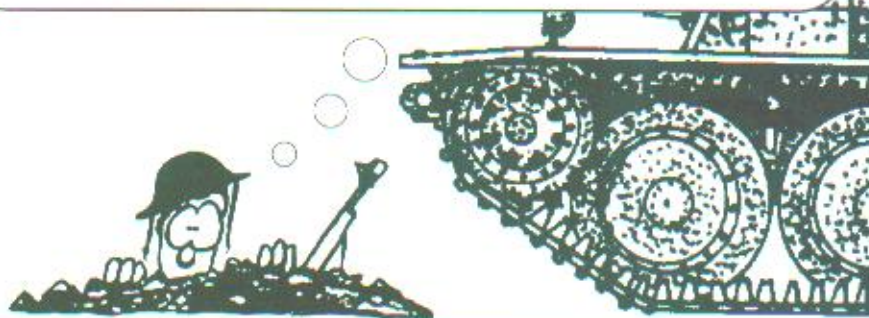
Conclusion

As you can see, the invulnerable German AFVs are not so unbeatable after all (especially the Jagdpanser in the woods), as long as you take advantage of all of your assets. Conversely, even when stuck in the woods, non-turreted AFVs with a healthy frontal AF are not without options. The tactical situations above are strictly isolated ones. Supporting infantry for either sides or "wingmen" for the German AFV, or any of a multitude of additional possibilities, all add complexity and an almost-infinite number of situations and outcomes to the game. Hopefully, this article, in conjunction with "Zen," will provide a basis for making decisions in many different situations.



Tips From The Trenches

Have you ever been faced with an AFV whose main threat to one of your units was that it would enter your unit's Location and prevent them from firing out, thus allowing enemy Infantry to run up unmolested prior to jumping into CC and killing off your unit? Say, for instance, when you have a lone HS with a HMG in good TEM facing a well-armored tank without much FP (maybe a French H-35) and two 4-5-7s with a 9-2 leader? The tank won't hurt you much but the Infantry is sure to eliminate you in CC. When the AFV becomes adjacent to you, consider firing your Small Arms at it. You won't do anything to the AFV (assuming it is not foolishly CE), but you can leave Residual FP that might persuade the enemy Infantry from entering the adjacent hex, thus delaying CC. For that matter, maybe you should use Spraying Fire (A7.34 & A9.35) to leave Residual FP in two adjacent hexes (so the Infantry can't dance around the one hex).



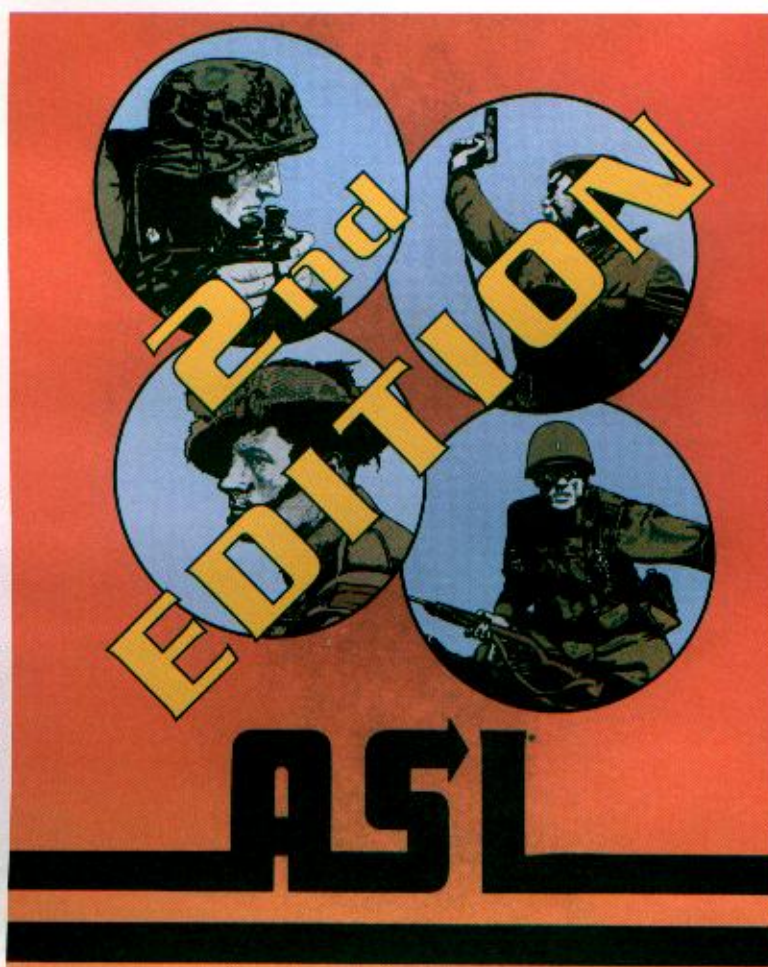
STILL PLAYING BY THOSE SAME OLD RULES?

You'd think that after over 15 years and untold scenarios, that it would be time for a change, time to move on and send the old clunker to the scrap heap. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Advanced Squad Leader rulebook has withstood the test of time better than any set of wargaming rules ever published. The rich history of ASL reinforces the fact that this gem was done right the first time. Thousands of players have contributed to an ever-growing compilation of Questions and Answers (Q&A) and Errata in an unending struggle for perfection. When MMP began its work on ASL under Avalon Hill, and then took the reigns completely under Hasbro, we made great efforts to maintain a consistent source of official Q&A and Errata. Since that time, the Errata and Q&A have been routinely updated and fresh, new products have been published to feed the appetites of ASL Fanatics everywhere. But, after nearly two decades, the call of ASL players for an updated ASLRB is unmistakable. Next spring, MMP will heed that call. In order to reinvigorate the hobby with new blood and maintain customer service to the existing ASL players, MMP will publish the 2nd Edition ASL Rulebook. The 2nd Edition ASL rulebook will incorporate the fifteen years of errata compiled as well as some other much-needed additions. These additions include: a completely revised and expanded index, a complete National Capabilities

Chart, the OBA flow-chart originally contained in Action Pack #1 (now out of print), the Overrun flow-chart which can be found in Action Pack #2, Chapters E and K (including additions

to the original), and new sections—located at the end of each rules chapter—containing all official Q&A. These final sections will be periodically updated through future publications such as the ASL Journal. Rules sections addressed by Q&A will be annotated for handy reference. A number of new examples of play will also be added with an eye toward easing new ASL players into the most detailed squad level, individual-vehicle combat system ever created. Time has shown that some rules sections are particularly problematic. These few sections, with the help solicited from hundreds of experienced ASL players, will be updated and corrected. MMP remains, above all else, a group of guys that play ASL, and we desire as much as the rest of the ASL public to keep the game consistent. The ASLRB 2ed will not change the game. Our own Perry Cocke, the successor to Bob McNamara in the ASL rules department, has shepherded the transition of Q&A and Errata into the 2nd edition. The "Perry Sez" has become a staple in ASL circles and "Perry Sez" that very few rules sections will change significantly. He has always made it clear that none of these changes will alter ASL, and that's nothing but good news! Stay tuned to www.advancedsquadleader.com for the latest news on this and many other MMP products!



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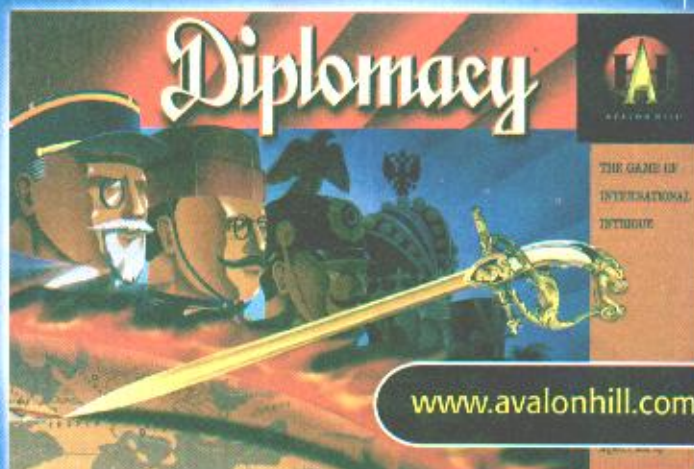
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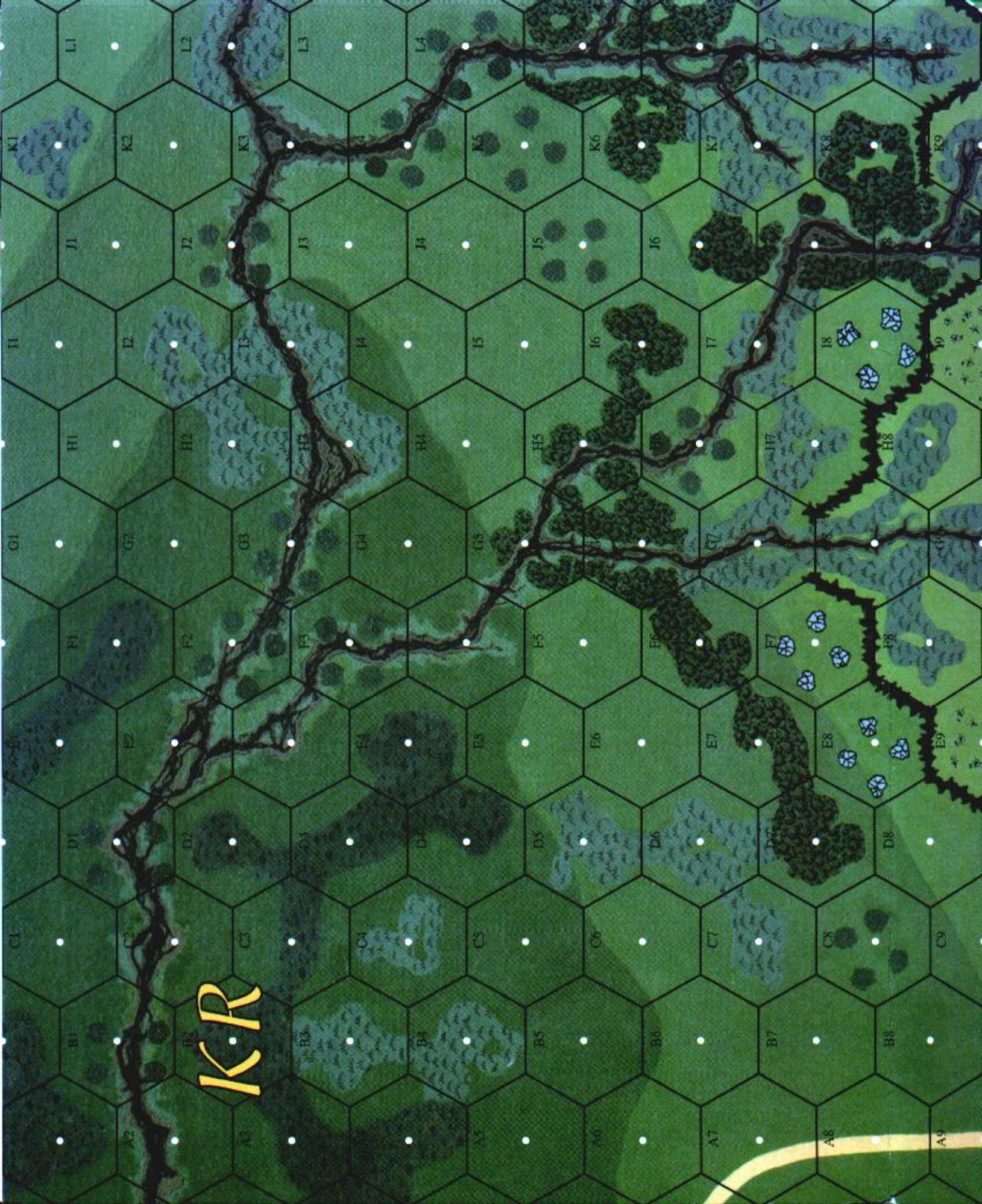
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