

Hit The Beach!

The Southern California ASL Club Newsletter



August 2004 Volume 9 Number 2

The President's Corner

by Jim Aikens

It was good to see everyone at our "Semper Fi" Summer One-Day tournament. It looks like our new location in Yorba Linda is a real winner. On behalf of the Club, I want to thank Sean Geraghty and his wife, Cecily, for the use of her dance studio. I also want to congratulate Matt Cicero for winning the tournament.

In previous years, we've held a Fall One-Day event in San Diego county, most recently at my office in Escondido. This year, our fall schedule is going to be a little different. I have asked each of our Regional Directors to organize two "Playtest Days" at locations within their Districts during the Fall. The primary purpose is to begin playtesting new scenarios for Melee Pack III. But there is a very important secondary purpose for this as well. I want our Club to provide some smaller-scale, localized events for our members, especially our newer members, to get to know one another better. We have added a lot of new members in the last couple of years, and I want to make sure that they are able to make the personal connections that have sustained our veteran players through the years. Speaking for myself, I can honestly say that meeting and catching up with my friends at Club events is as important as actually playing the game. Playing ASL is great, but playing ASL with a friend across the table is the best possible gaming experience you can have. It is those personal connections that make us such a great Club, and keep our members coming back year after year. Otherwise, we could all just stay at home and play VASL.



If you're a new player, don't think you can't playtest. We need to make sure all of our scenarios are played by all skill levels. Be sure to keep an eye out on our e-groups list for these upcoming Fall events.

President@socalasl.com

Marching Orders

by Matt Cicero

Welcome, welcome to another exciting issue of *HTB*! This issue has a little bit of everything. Jim Aikens and the Thursday Night Crew have been playing campaign games since before I was born (almost). They have pulled together some interesting notes about how these CGs stack up in "Rating the Campaign Games". Meanwhile, Eric Visnowski has managed to stop shooting craps long enough to give us ten of his favorite scenarios, including some funny anecdotes, in "Damn Fine Scenarios!".

This Issue...

| | |
|--|------------|
| <i>President's Corner</i> | Page 1 |
| <i>Marching Orders</i> | Page 1 |
| <i>Semper Fi! Tourney AAR</i> | Page 2 |
| <i>SWEET!...OUCH!</i> | Page 2 |
| <i>Words of Wisdom</i> | Page 2 |
| <i>Roll Call! ...Brian Abela</i> | Page 3 |
| <i>Rating the Campaign Games</i> | Page 4-5 |
| <i>Words That Echo...</i> | Page 5 |
| <i>Book Review: Rangers in World War II</i> | Page 6 |
| <i>Storage and Tactics</i> | Page 7 |
| <i>Legions of WWII: U.S. 5th Infantry Division</i> | Page 8-9 |
| <i>Damn Fine Scenarios!</i> | Page 10-12 |
| <i>Vehicle Notes: Nashorn</i> | Page 13 |

Filling in on *Roll Call!* duty this month is Brian Abela. Brian has been sighted here and there about the southland with such infrequency, that many began to believe he might be just a figment...a Pen Name used on scenario cards and in the credits for numerous ASL products. In fact, I have definite proof he is very real, alive and happy to chatter a bit with us this issue.

Hot off the presses is Chris Chapman's "Storage and Tactics" treatise. Chris has spent hours studying his fellow ASLers. What he has discovered will change the way you approach your games of ASL forever.

We round out this issue with a look at the 5th Infantry Division, Robert Black's *Rangers in World War II* novel, the scarily effective *Nashorn*, and another *SWEET! - OUCH!*

One last bit of news. MELEE PACK II is ready for sale! Man it took a while, but we are done and it is terrific with some rockin' new scenarios. If you didn't get a copy at ASLOK, order one through our website. And as if that isn't enough, the next issue of *HTB*! will contain the MP II Design Notes. Look sharp around the end of October for that free download. I think you'll enjoy reading about the SoCal "creative process".



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Semper Fi! Summer Tourney AAR

by Jim Aikens

First, I want to extend my congratulations to Matt Cicero for winning our Semper Fi! Tournament. We had a somewhat light turnout, about a dozen members, but the event was a ton of fun for everyone who attended. On behalf of the Club I want to again thank Sean and his wife for hosting our event at Cecily's dance studio in Yorba Linda. Also, thanks to Matt C. for taking care of bringing "big blue" loaded with beer and soda.

One of the advantages of the light turnout was that we were able to hold the entire event in the air conditioned studio offices. Even if we had needed to use the studio's dance room, it certainly would have been comfortable enough, though. The location is perfect, very central and well lighted. Hopefully we can impose on Sean and Cecily's generosity and hold an event there again next year.

The popular scenario choice for play in the first round was "Didn't Have to Be There" (BRT7) from Blood Reef Tarawa. If you haven't played it, I recom-

mend it. It's a fun, reasonably short slug-fest with some good replayability.

"Closing the Net" (AP10), from Action Pack I, was the choice for both final-round games. This is a nine-turn, two-board monster with about 2 companies of infantry on each side fighting across the entire two boards. (This would make a great four-player scenario, BTW.) There's plenty of movement across the boards and interesting strategic options for both sides. If you're looking for a balanced, exciting PTO slug-fest with Marines and Japanese that will fill a whole day of gaming, I highly recommend this scenario.

Finally, I want to thank our members who came and played. Especially Karl and Bryant, two of our newest members. It was great to see you all.



SWEET!...

...OUCH!

*...some guys just blatantly
defy the bell-curve...*

Bryan Earll is a canny ASLer who enjoys a good game of email-VASL like the rest of us. In a recent playtest effort against Eric Johnson, I happened to be watching over Bryan's shoulder. On Bryan's turn, he decided to toss an 81mm MTR shell over at one of Eric's AVREs. Funny...a 2...Crit! Ah...but not a flaming wreck...and so the Crew Survival roll (needs an 8!). 10! But wait, that's not all, because Eric has another AVRE! MTR fires...BOOM! HIT again on a 3. The turret is dinged...and the IFT roll is a 4! Just what he needed to Shock the Brute. But of course you know the ending of the story...the AVRE recovers from its UK...

-Matt Cicero

Words of Wisdom by Angry Dan Diedelmeyer

I caught up with Dan after the Semper Fi! Tourney to gather his thoughts about ASL and Tourney play. Here's what he said. —ed.

Don't start a game 15 minutes before Happy Hour....idiot.

No, I don't want a FRIKKIN' breath mint so stop asking!

If you have shaky hands, let the OTHER guy deploy the FRIKKIN' info counters.

Always use a flat-bottomed, clear-sided dice cup so your opponent stops getting up after EVERY FRIKKIN' ROLL "just to make sure".

Always make sure it's your DICE CUP you are about to shake AND NOT MY FRIKKIN' DRINK!

Laminate your overlays and use artist tape to hold them down...NOT THAT FRIKKIN' OILY STIKKUM CLAY CRAP THAT LEAVES RANDOM "TERRAIN" ON MY MAPBOARDS.

Remember to return EVERYTHING you borrow from other players...LIKE THAT RUSSIAN SHERMAN COUNTER I'VE BEEN MISSING FOR THREE FRIKKIN' YEARS, JIMMY-BOY!

Remember to bring your rulebook to every game so you don't have to borrow your opponent's rules since he doesn't GET IT that spiral binding would let him DUMP THOSE 500 LB, PAGE PROTECTOR-FILLED, FRIKKIN' UGLY-ASS WHITE THREE-RING BINDERS THAT BUST MY HUMP EVERY FRIKKIN' TIME I HAFTA PICK THE FRIKKIN' THINGS UP!

Uh...thanks, Dan.

Roll Call! ...Brian Abela !

HTBI: Where are you from? Any military experience?

BA: I spent most of my life in the central valley of California, Visalia to be specific. That would be between Bakersfield and Fresno. The problem is there is almost no one that plays ASL out here. No military background, just an interest in military history and wargames. I do belong to the SCA, a medieval group that recreates the middle ages and does real battles.

HTBI: What got you started with ASL? When?

BA: A friend introduced me to SL, and I migrated into ASL after Cross of Iron, GI and Crescendo of Doom.

HTBI: How did you learn the game?

BA: Reading rules and playing the game. I wasn't one of those that just played until I learned the rules; I actually try to read them. I have to admit, reading the artillery rules makes me shake my head and pity the concept behind that abortion of a rules section.

HTBI: Why do you like ASL over other leisure activities?

BA: History, detail, variability and WWII theme!

HTBI: How do you like to play ASL? FtF, Tournaments, VASL...

BA: I prefer FTF with friends. Tournaments are great as well. I have played solitaire, tried VASL once but didn't take to either of those.

HTBI: Do you like to play Fast? Slow? Medium?

BA: Medium.

HTBI: How often do you get to play?

BA: With my work schedule, I am down to a couple of times a year. I just don't have a local opponent.

HTBI: Let's talk about some of your favorites in ASL...

Favorite vehicle?

BA: Anything with flamethrowers!

Favorite nationality?

BA: Italian (very challenging to play, you have to be really careful).

Favorite troop type?

BA: The German 4-6-8 has got to be one of the best all around units. Although British troops, with their immunity to cowering, have a really powerful advantage.

Favorite theater of war?

BA: European.

Favorite tactical situation? Why?

BA: City fights can be a blast!

Favorite scenarios? Ok, list your Dogs, too...

BA: There is a scenario in the Italian module, Bridge to Nowhere, that is great, includes the rare Italian/Russian encounter with unusual Russian armor! Great scenario with a

great mix of units and overall size. Scenarios I don't like include anything with convoys in it. They all end up as stupid turkey shoots!

Favorite product produced to date? Why?

BA: I have to say that some of the French scenarios in Croix De Guerre are really good, making for an interesting variety of scenarios, with great maps and interesting historical settings. I also like the Italian module because it has some interesting historical settings and unusual vehicles.

HTBI: What do you think about DYO? Ever tried it?

BA: The real interesting part about ASL is historically balanced scenarios. The problem with DYO is you won't achieve either of those with random selection of parameters. I don't have anything against it, but I like historically based scenarios. That is why I have never played DYO.

HTBI: CG versus one-shot games...preference?

BA: I really enjoy campaign games over "one-shot" games. However, let's be realistic, the amount of time it takes for campaign games is usually not reasonable. The other problem that can be encountered in campaign games is the lopsided game that ends in early capitulation. I have yet to play KGP; that is something I want to play through. I do like the annual/journal attempts at short series type scenarios that attempt to create the campaign atmosphere. I think these are mostly successful.

HTBI: Best ASL experience...

BA: Placing into the semifinals at March Madness in Kansas City. I managed to beat Steve Pleva in a scenario.

HTBI: Worst ASL experience...

BA: I was playing Rodney Kinney at a West Coast Melee and was really sick, lost my voice, developed a fever and couldn't focus on the game. Rodney was a great sport about it.

HTBI: Weren't you one of the Old Guard that made up Kinetic Energy and Front Line Productions?

BA: Yes, I was part of KE. Yes it was a third party. The three original guys were Mark Neukom, John Knowles and Chris Castellana. Three great guys. I was heavily involved in playtesting. I also did some design work. You can review the scenarios and should find my name on a few, such as "Thunderbolts" and "Balkan Barbecue". I did a lot of work on the British and German rare vehicles packs. Scenario CH44 was also mine, it was "Operation Nordwind". I was also involved in the playtesting for "Dogs of War", so I know it is a good scenario. I did some playtesting with Cloyde and others on that gem of a scenario. Nadir El Farra and I worked on BdF (*Baraque de Fraiture put out by Front Line Productions - ed*). I did the historical and scenario development, Nadir did

(Continued on page 12)



Rating the Campaign Games *by Jim Aikens and the Thursday Night Crew*

As most of you know, I run an ASL game-night each Thursday at my office in Escondido. Because we have a fairly sizable number of players (typically 6), and have a room where we can leave our games set up from week to week, we generally play campaign games. Over the last nine years, we have played a truly staggering variety of CGs. These include seemingly countless campaigns of Red Barricades, as well as Blood Reef Tarawa (playtest and MMP versions), Valor of the Guards (several playtest versions), Objective Schmidt (HOB playtest), Operation Veritable, Edson's Ridge, A Bridge Too Far (playtest and MMP versions), and most recently, Onslaught to Orsha. With all this experience, I thought it would be interesting to ask the members of our Thursday night "crew" to compare and rate the various CGs based on a questionnaire that I provided for them. I decided to restrict the discussion to published CGs, and only those that we have played. Players rated various aspects of the CG based on a scale of 1 (terrible/low) to 10 (excellent/high). I have taken their responses and comments and compiled them into what I hope might be a useful compendium for players who are considering making the plunge into the exiting and rewarding world of ASL CGs.

Red Barricades

Balance: 7

Complexity: 6

Excitement: 9

Recommended Number of Players: 2-4

Overall Fun Factor: 10

In the world of CGs, Red Barricades is the gold standard. It was the first CG produced for ASL, and is considered by most (and by all of our crew) to still be the best. Others have come close, but all suffer in various aspects when measured against this, the mother of all CGs. That's not to say that RB is flawless, far from it. Some players complain that the Russian tactic of burning terrain is unhistorical and detracts from its overall enjoyment. The length of the CG also presents a problem. Rarely (if ever) is this CG played to completion. Generally, it is played until one side or the other comes to the conclusion that they cannot win. More often than not, that point comes within a half dozen CG dates. For this reason, there is no real consensus about balance. Eric Morton feels that it's somewhat pro-German. Fred Timm thinks it's a bit pro-Russian. Don Petros and I think that on any given day, either side can win. This CG has great strengths however. It has an interesting and varied Order of Battle, great replay value, and unlike some CGs, is fun to play as either the attacker or defender. The crew concurred that it is not particularly complex as CGs go and is not difficult to grasp, either from a rules aspect or game strategy. Charlie Kibler's beautiful map truly captures the unique feel of this battle.

A Bridge Too Far

Balance: 6

Complexity: 9

Excitement: 9

Recommended Number of Players: 2-4

Overall Fun Factor: 9

Of all the CGs our crew has played, this game went on the longest, nearly to the last CG date. We spent 18 months on this, and you've got to like a CG that can hold your interest for that long. The consensus is that it is hard on the British if the German player is competent, but the block control rules prevent this from ever being a blow-out. The block control rules are this CG's greatest strength and also its greatest weakness. They make ABtF a rather complex CG to grasp, both in mechanics and strategy. But it is also the same mechanism that keeps each individual CG date exciting. Wrecks, rubble and flames create a landscape that changes with each CG date and creates new challenges both for the attacker and defender. Everyone liked the fact that both sides get to attack and defend at various points. Although the mechanics of the CG are a little counter-intuitive, they work well and keep the game interesting and fun. We all liked this CG.

Blood Reef Tarawa

Balance: 6

Complexity: 10

Excitement: *see below*

Recommended Number of Players: 4-6

Overall Fun Factor: 10

I have said many times that our playings of this CG, perhaps because of the mix of players or the CG itself, will forever remain in my memory as one of my greatest ASL experiences of all time. We laughed, we cursed, we yelled "You die Marine!" and "Burn, you *&% Jap Bastards!", we drank toasts with Japanese beer and exchanged taunting e-mails in Haiku verse. BRT will do that to you, like no other CG. Eric Morton astutely observed that BRT creates a sense of ownership of the individual Marine battalions that is unique in CG play. The strength of this CG is its nature; a beach landing. You get to use all of chapter G. A lot. The Japanese player gets a huge amount of choices in his set-up. He can tailor the defense exactly to his style of play. The weakness of this CG is that all those obscure rules sections make this the most complex CG of all. It is also somewhat predictable. Eric Morton called it "Jonestown on the Pacific Rim". All the Japanese will die. The issue is if they will take enough Marines with them to bring victory. The consensus in this regard is that the Marine CVP cap is too high against a competent

(Continued on page 5)

U.S.M.C. player. For this reason, this is rated the poorest balanced of the CGs. Additionally, the excitement level is very high at the beginning of the CG, but tends to diminish steadily as the game progresses. But even with these short-comings, BRT was rated by our crew as the most fun of all the CGs (save RB), and everyone would happily play it again, as either side. In sheer ASL fun, this CG can't be topped.

O.V.H.S.

Balance: 9

Complexity: 5

Excitement: 7

Recommended Number of Players: 2-4

Overall Fun Factor: 6

I'll come clean here: of all the CGs I've played, this was the least fun for me. Of course, that's just my opinion, and among the rest of the crew it fared better. Overall this CG is fairly balanced. It is also perhaps the easiest CG to understand. Not a lot of special units or rules. Both sides get to attack and defend, which keeps the game interesting longer. Another strength is that it isn't just another urban battlefield. The historical battle occurred in a wet, soggy environment, and the designer accurately captures the feel of this. On the negative side, the terrain is not particularly interesting and requires the placement of lots of fox-holes to establish perimeters. Additionally, the Canadian force choices are somewhat limited. Overall, this CG is almost an exact inverse of BRT; it is balanced and easy to play, but overall is not as much fun compared to most of the other CGs. We all felt that because it is easy to play, fairly balanced, and can be played by only 2 players, it is a good, small, introductory CG experience.

Edson's Ridge

Balance: 7 (see below)

Complexity: 7 (see below)

Excitement: 8

Recommended Number of Players: 2-4

Overall Fun Factor: 8

This CG has several strengths and really only one weakness. If you want a CG with Japanese in the jungle, this is it. It is fairly easy, rules-wise, as long as you have a handle on night rules. If not for the night rules, this would be a fairly simple CG. In fact, if you like playing night, this is a good choice for you. It uses some fairly interesting special rules for OBA that nicely capture the tactics used without adding a lot of complexity. Both sides get some interesting force choices. The fighting, as you can expect with Marines and Japanese in the jungle, is often tense and exciting. Although the Marines are on the defense, there are often opportunities for limited counter-attacks. The only downside comes from the Japanese side of the table. The

CG rules are structured so that the Japanese player must do certain things at certain times. Otherwise, he will miss some important opportunities. If not for that, this CG would rate higher in balance. Overall, if you like Japanese, at night, in the jungle, this is an exciting, interesting CG.

Conclusion

All of these CGs have some strengths and weaknesses. Choosing which one is right for you is really a matter of what you find important. For sheer ASL fun, BRT cannot be beaten. If you want something that's fairly simple but fun, Red Barricades is an excellent choice. If simplicity and balance is important, try O.V.H.S. If Japanese banzai-ing through the night gets your ASL juices flowing, ER is well worth the effort. If you want a CG that really captures the feel of the historical battle, ABtF can be an exciting and rewarding experience.

CGs in general give the ASL player an experience that is truly different from scenario play. Most CGs give you the opportunity to formulate a grand strategy, and then choose the forces that you think will best accomplish your goals. You will find yourself making decisions based on a larger picture and not on immediate circumstances. Also, you will view success and failure with an entirely different and interesting perspective. Whatever CG you choose, you're sure to have an exciting experience.

Special thanks to Eric Morton, Don Petros and Fred Timm of the Thursday Night Crew for their assistance and support in the development of this article.

Words That Echo...

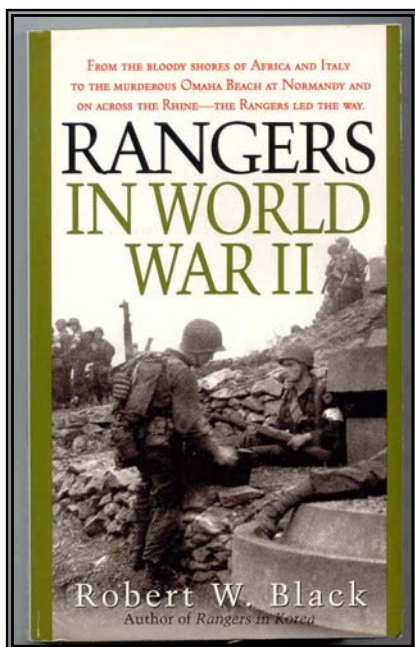
**Darby: "What are you shaking for?
Are you scared?"**

**Contrera: "No, sir. I'm just shaking
with patriotism."**

*Carlo Contrera, driver for Lt Col. Darby, during
fierce automatic weapon fire aimed at the Ranger
HQ, Gela, Sicily, July 10, 1943*

Book Review: Rangers In World War II

by Matt Cicero



ISBN: 0-8041-0565-0

Ever been interested in the elite formations that fought in World War II? Well, if the Rangers are on your list, then you'll want to grab a copy of Robert Black's Rangers in World War II. Building off the model he established in his book, Rangers in Korea, Black successfully unfolds the story of the birth and development of the six Ranger Battalions that fought in World War II. More than just a regurgitation of battles and events, Black's work touches upon some of the deep-rooted concerns and issues that confronted the Rangers during those early years. The book does reveal a subtle bias in its appreciation of the Rangers but then, Black is a Ranger...a retired Army Colonel, in fact...who served in Korea and Vietnam, no less.

Rangers delivers its message chronologically. It is easy to follow along as each battalion is formed, sent into battle, pulled back for refit, etc. We learn of the events and pressures leading up to then-Colonel Lucian Truscott's decision to form an American unit similar to the British Commandos in 1942. We get intimate details about the training of the 1st Ranger Battalion, men drawn from the 34th Infantry Division and the 1st Armored Division stationed in Northern Ireland. Black covers in significant detail the terrible bloodletting during the Dieppe Raid. He then goes on to present the many actions in which the Rangers participated during the war. From the baptism of the 1st Rangers at Arzew, North Africa to the assault on Sicily. From the soft landing at Salerno to the catastrophe at Anzio. From the heroic scaling of Pointe Du Hoc to the fortress-busting assaults in the siege of Brest. From the horrific fighting in the Huertgen to the stalwart stand atop Hill 400. The 6th Ranger Battalion's story unfolds in the Pacific where we learn of its formation from a 75mm Pack Howitzer unit, its support of

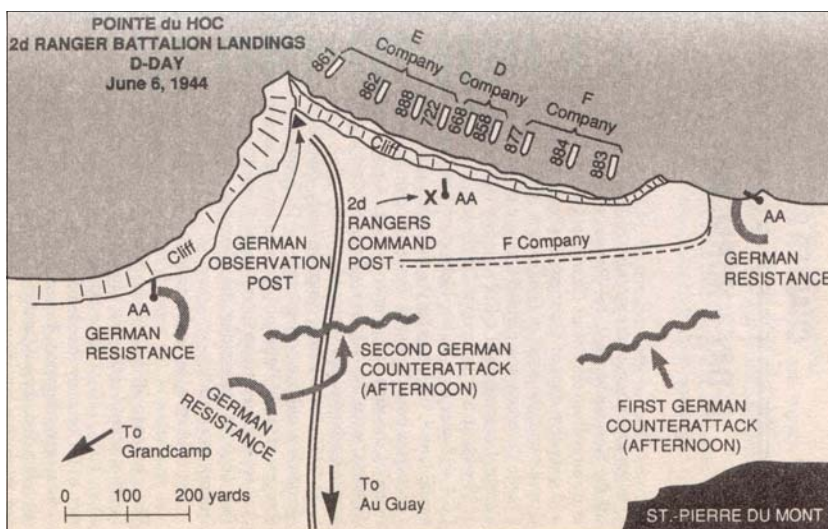
the assault on the Philippines, where, among other brave actions, it liberates 511 survivors of the Bataan Death March from a Japanese concentration camp.

Black's story of the Rangers is filled with interesting information. The story of the ill-fated 29th Rangers. The formation of Cannon Company and its halftrack-mounted 75s. The difficulties imposed by the Provisional status of the Ranger Battalions. The life-saving speed marches of Ranger training. The leadership of William Orlando Darby.

From an ASL viewpoint, the book is very good. A lot of small-unit actions are described in enough detail to warm a scenario designer's heart. Descriptions of the guns, MG-nests and troops confronted are commonplace. Terrain, weather and supporting units are usually included. Maps provided are fine overviews but other sources will be required for greater accuracy. Quite a few of these actions have already found their way into our scenario binders. Quite a few more could be created with a minimum of effort.

Rangers concludes with a series of 5 appendices, a strong bibliography and an index to help navigate its 300+ pages. The appendices include: 1) a 1944 Table of Organization and Equipment which breaks down the men and material to be found in a Ranger Battalion; 2) a summary of the lineage, Campaigns and battle honors of the six Ranger Battalions; 3) a short history on Ranger insignia; 4) a brief description of each of the weapons commonly employed and deployed with the Rangers; and 5) a listing of every Ranger, by battalion, believed by the author to have served in World War II.

I think Rangers in World War II is a terrific book. A snappy read with a great deal of detail captured from first-hand sources uncovered by the author. Wanna know about the Rangers? Read this book first.



Storage and Tactics *by Chris Chapman*

A scenario can often be decided before the first wind check is ever rolled. Loaded dice, a few extra drinks for your opponent, choice of a scenario you've played before and he hasn't...are all excellent methods to achieve an edge over your opponent. While these methods do work, I put my faith in a much more reliable, and subtle, method for tipping the balance in my favor. Namely, I look over how he stores his counters.

If we are to better understand our opponent and his tactics through his storage techniques we need to look at the wider audience of ASL players and make some general observations. The first thing to note is the type of storage container he uses. There are three basic categories: Plano, traditional war game counter trays, and "miscellaneous" containment. Plano boxes seem to be the most popular in the U.S. and the 3701 model is a sleek box with many compartmental possibilities. The traditional counter tray has been around longer in gaming circles, has fewer compartments than the 3701 Plano and can be less effective than Plano in avoiding spillage catastrophes. The "miscellaneous" category can be anything outside of the former two and runs the gamut from zip lock baggies, paper envelopes and 35mm film canisters to a single large grab bag. Each container category, however, reveals a sordid tale of its owner and his nefarious ASL ways.

The Plano user typically is an organized player who will play the game with cutting edge tactics and techniques that push the envelope of the rules system. The counter tray player is more of a traditional grognard who uses tried and true "respectable" tactics, looking to maintain a historical accuracy in his play, rather than gimmicky, slimy, sleazy rules twists. The "miscellaneous" storage players are wildcards, with playing styles that range from the player with a dozen "house" rules to "fix" ASL to the ASOP stickler who insists on using battlefield integrity. The storage container is just the tip of the tactical iceberg, however. In order to really get into your opponent's head...we need to delve even deeper into...counter sorting!

Typically, one will find more similarities than differences in players' various counter sorting techniques. However, it is those few differences that reveal the true insights into our opponent and his ASL ways. Let us consider the following observations.

The basic information counter sorting usually will not reveal much since there is little room for bias in such practical organization of Prep Fire, Pin, DM and other similar counters into their own bins. Occasionally, you may catch wind of things to come if certain counters get their own bin. For example, encirclement counters at the ready usually indicate a player that loves to swarm around his opponents in order to degrade their performance through cut rout paths and encircling fire. Similarly, a high degree of organization for vehicle basic info and effect counters is a solid indicator of some fancy footwork when it comes to grinding treads and maximizing the effectiveness of vehicles. He'll have turret counters at the ready and will be able to get to not only those MA Disabled counters (for his opponents' vehicles, of course) but will flick out an Abandoned counter before you realize what he just Removed from that halftrack.

What method does he use to sort his acquisition counters? The

opponent who sorts acquisition counters by letter (A's with A's in a single counter well, B's with B's in another) rather than by color or by Area Acq vs. Infantry Acq. tells us something more. This player is about ordnance and armor and will manage those assets wisely, so expect a challenge if the scenario's OB contains a number of 5/8" counters.

How many counters indicating fire does he have? The player who has not only ASL Flame/Blaze counters but also a large pile of the older SL "burning house" counters in his tray has issues. Either avoid scenarios where kindling is allowed or be prepared to battle through an inferno.

Where are his heroes? If heroes have their own bin, expect an aggressive player whether he is defender or attacker in the scenario. Anticipate bold moves that will try to win every time in a heroic fashion rather than by running out the clock or bean counting every CVP.

Take note of SW storage. Are FTs and DCs grouped separately from other SW? Are PSK/BAZ/PIAT and ATRs separated from other SW? This player knows his toys and won't have to look to see what the TH is on those LATWs or look up the rules for a Set DC.

Machine gun storage typically says "Firepower" or "Fire Power". When all types of MGs are in one bin, your opponent is someone whose first thought about MGs is "how can I combine these with squads to maximize Firepower on the IFT. Conversely, when LMGs, MMGs and HMGs are stowed separately, expect a wicked use of interlocking Fire Lanes, spray firing and mutually supporting Fire Power...each MG will have its own purpose.

Take a look at the MMC sorting. The player with separate bins for HS and Squads of each type from elite to conscript will deploy like a madman if he can. The player who co-mingles his squad counters and/or stows HS with Squads will rarely deploy/combine, almost never uses smoke grenades and waits for you to tell him that he just got substituted for ELR failure.

If you notice old COD "scout" SMCs floating around the leaders bin, beware sudden inspired rules creation during play that inevitably turns out to be an old SL concept long since buried.

Snipers can be particularly telling. If stored with SMCs, this guy is a risk-taker; someone who defies the dice-gods. Expect every long-odds, risky, tricky play in the book from thrown DCs to "Danger Close" OBA missions.

Finally, there is the vehicle/Gun storage to consider. Vehicles sorted by movement type (full-track, half-track, AC, etc.) is a good indication of either a man bent on maneuver or a man not quite ready for an all-armor scenario. The player who sorts AFVs and Guns by caliber (20mm, 50L, 76, etc.) is a "Muzzlehead". These guys love Big Guns that make things go BOOM and they often squander their low-caliber assets. "Muzzleheads" love the late war armor bashes and shy away from early war "Weenie Tanks" and infantry-only scenarios. Additionally, the "Muzzlehead" enjoys using Overruns and Intensive

(Continued on page 14)

LEGIONS OF WWII: The U.S 5th Infantry Division *by Matt Cicero*

Division Name

United States 5th Infantry Division

Division Nicknames

Red Diamond Division. The Red Devils.

Division Slogan

"We will."

Division Insignia

A red diamond.

Nationality/ Date Created

American / On December 11, 1917, to meet the growing need for troops in World War I.

Commanding Officers

Brig. Gen. Campbell B. Hodges (October 1937-September 1940), Maj. Gen. Joseph M. Cummins (September 1940-July 1941), Maj. Gen. Charles H. Bonesteel (July 1941-August 1941), Maj. Gen. Cortlandt Parker (August 1941-June 1943), Maj. Gen. Stafford L. Irwin (June 1943-April 1945), Maj. Gen. Albert E. Brown (April 1945-June 1946), Brig. Gen. Harry B. Sherman (June 1946-July 1946), Maj. Gen. Jens A. Doe (August 1946 to inactivation).

Campaigns

Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, Central Europe.

WWII Deployments in the ETO

22 October 1943: Attached to First Army. *24 December 1948:* XV Corps. *13 July 1944:* V Corps, First Army. *1 August 1944:* Third Army, 12th Army Group, but attached to First Army. *4 August 1944:* XX Corps, Third Army, 12th Army Group. *21 December 1944:* XII Corps. *28 March 1945:* XX Corps. *7 April 1945:* Third Army, 12th Army Group, but attached to First Army for operations. *22 April 1945:* Third Army, 12th Army Group, but attached to the XVI Corps of Ninth Army. *25 April 1945:* III Corps, Third Army, 12th Army Group, but attached to First Army. *21 April 1945:* XII Corps, Third Army, 12th Army Group, but attached to First Army. *Returned to U. S.:* 19 July 1945. *Inactivated:* 20 September 1946.

WWII Distinctions/Medals

Distinguished Unit Citations: 2. *Awards:* MH-1; DSC-39; DSM-1; SS-784; LM-19; SM-14; BSM-2,643; AM-100.

A Moderately Brief History

On October 16, 1939 the 5th Infantry Division was reactivated with the 2nd, 10th, and 11th Infantry Regiments.

Following 2 years of training and maneuvers, the division assumed garrison duty in Iceland. These duties continued until August, 1943 when the 5th Division boarded troop transports for Tidworth Barracks England. In October, 1943, the 5th Division moved to Northern Ireland for advanced training in preparation for Operation Overlord, the invasion of Northern France. The 5th Division landed at Utah beach in the area of St. Mere Eglise on D+3, then relieved the 1st Infantry Division at Coumont. On July 26, the 5th Division launched its first attack of the war, liberating the town of Vidouville.

On August 3, the 5th Division was transferred to Patton's Third Army. After the breakthrough at St. Lo, the 5th Division was ordered to the Vivre River where it seized bridgeheads across the Loire and Maines Rivers and captured the city of Angeres, closing off the primary escape route

from the Brest peninsula. From Angeres, the 5th Division moved to the Northwest and captured St. Calais and Chartres by August 19. The 5th Division then moved against Etamps just south of Paris; Foutainbleau, 60 miles away on the Seine River; and Montereau, 72 miles. 3 days later, the 2nd Regiment captured Etamps. The 11th Regiment captured Foutainbleau. On August 25, the 10th Regiment assaulted and captured Montereau. With all 3 objectives now in Allied hands, Paris had been flanked and the 3rd Army had severed North and South France. The 5th Division continued their drive east, crossing the Marne River and capturing the city of Reims on August 29. Next, with the 11th

Regiment in the lead, the 5th Division assaulted and captured Verdun on September 1. In just under 4 weeks, the 5th Infantry Division had fought their way across 700 miles and stood ready to invade Germany.

After an essential rest and resupply, the 3rd Army continued east and encountered a strong defensive line at the Moselle river. The 11th Regiment made the first attempt at breaching the Moselle. They made a short advance and were subjected to 26 enemy counter attacks. Casualties were extreme and the 11th was forced to withdraw. Next, the 10th regiment attempted an assault south of where the 11th had been repelled. With 2 battalions of the 11th in support, the 10th Regiment pierced the German lines and established a beachhead. For the next 5 days, the Red Devils defeated numerous German attacks. During this time, the Red Devils engaged in some of the fiercest fighting of the war for them. Over 1,400 Red Devils were killed or wounded in the assault and the bridgehead was finally secured on September 15. The 5th Division now stood outside Metz.

(Continued on page 9)



On November 9, the 3rd Army began the assault on Metz. Some of the forts at Metz surrendered while others were bypassed. Soon the 3 regiments of the 5th Division converged on the city and forced it to surrender on November 21. After suffering heavy losses, the 5th Division had opened the road to the Saar River, the dreaded Siegfried Line and Germany itself. The planned attacks were called off when the Germans began their Ardennes Offensive. The 3rd Army received orders to attack the southern flank of the German assault forces. The 5th Division was ordered to march 100 miles, in the dead of winter, to Luxembourg City. The 5th Division arrived within 24 hours and relieved the 4th Infantry Division. The Red Devils immediately launched a counter-offensive against the southern flank of the Germans. In driving the Germans back across the Sauer River, the Red Devils eliminated 2 German Divisions, recaptured lost American equipment and secured the southern flank of the Bulge.

With the Ardennes Offensive repelled, the Red Devils again turned their attention east. As the lead Division for the XII Corps, the 5th Division crossed the Sauer River, breached the Siegfried Line, moved north to Bitburg and then east to the Rhine River. The Division regrouped at the Rhine River near Oppenheim. On the night of March 22, 1945 K Company, 11th Regiment crossed the Rhine without a shot being fired. By the next day, the entire 5th Division had crossed the Rhine and established a bridgehead 5 miles deep and 7 miles wide. Next the 5th Division moved towards Frankfurt. Expecting to make another river crossing, the 5th Division found a bridge that was still standing but was under heavy artillery fire from the retreating Germans who were trying to destroy it. Advancing under the heavy bombardment, the 5th Division crossed the bridge and entered Frankfurt. Over the next four days, the Red Devils fought house to house against tanks and snipers. On March 28, Frankfurt had been cleared of enemy forces and the 5th Division enjoyed a short break.

On April 7, the 5th Division was ordered to link up with the III Corps of the 1st Army to clean out the "Ruhr Pocket." The 5th Division assaulted the center of the pocket. For several days the Germans resisted but could not stop the advancing Red Devils. Three German Divisions were wiped out. On April 23, the 5th Division began a long advance to the town of Regan, 300 miles away on the German/Czech/Austrian border. The division arrived on April 30 and attacked east into southern Czechoslovakia and Northern Austria to mop up the remaining German resistance in the area. On May 7, the 2nd Regiment prepared to move out to continue an attack in the area of Volary, Czechoslovakia when they were ambushed by elements of the 11th Panzer Division. After 10 minutes of furious fighting, both sides received word to cease fire. The German surrender had been signed.

In just under a year, the Red Devils of the 5th Infantry Division had traveled 2,050 miles and had participated in all 5 of the European Theater's 5 major campaigns. Of the 5th Division, General Patton said "Nothing I can say can add to the glory which you have achieved. Throughout the whole advance across France you spearheaded the attack of your Corps. You crossed so many rivers that I am persuaded many of you have web feet and I know that all of you have dauntless spirit. To my mind history does not record incidents of greater valor than your crossing of the Sauer and Rhine." The 5th Division was deactivated on September 20, 1945 at Camp Campbell, KY. During World War II, 2,659 Red Devils were killed, 9,153 wounded, 1,050 missing, and 101 were captured. The Red Devils captured over 71,000 enemy soldiers.

Medal of Honor Recipient of the Red Diamond Division
GARMAN, HAROLD A.

Rank and organization: Private, U.S. Army, Company B, 5th Medical Battalion, 5th Infantry Division.

Place and Date: Near Montereau, France, 25 August 1944.

Entered Service At: Albion, Ill.

Born: 26 February 1918, Fairfield, Ill.

G.O. No.: 20, 29 March 1945.

Citation:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. On 25 August 1944, in the vicinity of Montereau, France, the enemy was sharply contesting any enlargement of the bridgehead which our forces had established on the northern bank of the Seine River in this sector. Casualties were being evacuated to the southern shore in assault boats paddled by litter bearers from a medical battalion. Pvt. Garman, also a litter bearer in this battalion, was working on the friendly shore carrying the wounded from the boats to waiting ambulances. As 1 boatload of wounded reached midstream, a German machinegun suddenly opened fire upon it from a commanding position on the northern bank 100 yards away. All of the men in the boat immediately took to the water except 1 man who was so badly wounded he could not rise from his litter. Two other patients who were unable to swim because of their wounds clung to the sides of the boat. Seeing the extreme danger of these patients, Pvt. Garman without a moment's hesitation plunged into the Seine. Swimming directly into a hail of machinegun bullets, he rapidly reached the assault boat and then while still under accurately aimed fire towed the boat with great effort to the southern shore. This soldier's moving heroism not only saved the lives of the three patients but so inspired his comrades that additional assault boats were immediately procured and the evacuation of the wounded resumed. Pvt. Garman's great courage and his heroic devotion to the highest tenets of the Medical Corps may be written with great pride in the annals of the corps."

Sorry, folks, but I couldn't find a single scenario that included the Red Devils. Seems like a crime, if you ask me. Maybe one of you can dig one up...if so, drop me a line!

Damn Fine Scenarios ! Eric's List of Ten

by Eric Visnowski

HTB! Is proud to present a new series of articles just for you, where we get real live ASL players to describe ten of their favorite scenarios. It's original, it's daring and it's, well, probably been done a million times before... Sigh. But fear not! OUR version of it is MUCH BETTER! Why? Cause we let our authors babble as much as they want and let fly cool ASL anecdotes that happened during the playing of these scenarios! Ha! Top that! So without further ado, I present to you our first refined and sophisticated Grogard, Mr. Visnowski -ed.

When I first read Matt's suggestion about writing this article two thoughts ran through my head:

What the hell? What happened to my "concealment"?

...and...

Maybe if I ignore him, HE'LL GO AWAY!!!

As you can see, the thought of Matt glaring and/or pouting at me at the next WCM was more than I could stand. I have had a lot of fun pushing counters with Rob Stai over the last few years. We have played many scenarios and have seen all kinds of "Haunted ASL" Manifestations. Some of these Manifestations have occurred during the following scenarios. So, in no particular order, these are some of my favorites.

(Manifestations? Read on, true believers, all will be made clear. -ed.)

Sunday of the Dead (G9)

Erwin Rommel once said, "In the desert there is nothing, only men and machines." SotD takes this maxim to heart. Other than Sangars and the blackened hulks of destroyed armor, there is no protection from enemy fire, not even the solace of smokescreens. SotD has NO terrain, no heat haze and no dust. The DAK boys have to slug their way across open terrain to destroy the Brits and exit the battlefield. What makes this scenario so much fun is the tension of fighting in this environment. With dueling OBA and plenty of weaponry on both sides the map is transformed into a true killing floor. If you feel a need to elevate your blood pressure, try Sunday of the Dead!

The Weigh In (J25)

Well matched forces and plenty of nifty blinds for the defender add up to a hell of an early war scenario! The Krauts have all the right toys for a text book assault and the Poles have what they need to counter it. This scenario included Rob's Haunted AT Gun. I was attempting to secure the left flank and had a small force of armor and infantry scouring the grain. I came upon a HIP 37 AT Gun which Rob proceeded to fire. I cackled with glee when Rob rolled a 12 and broke the gun. I then closed for CC with two half squads. Through demonic intervention, Rob won the CC and then repaired the gun and proceeded to eliminate 3 vehicles before I could eliminate the threat! The Weigh In is a classic: live it, love it, play it!

The Last of Their Strength (A83)

Originally from Tactiques, LoTS is a good example of hack and slash in ASL. Simple, straight forward VC lets you concentrate on eliminating the enemy without having to worry about dainty, girieman-like finesse tactics. The EC create a particularly evil place in which to wage war, with rain and mud possibly cramping your style. I endured my very first banzai attack in LoTS; I was frozen to the very marrow when Rob announced the attack: he was coming after me with teeny potted plants! I was able to gather my wits and fend off the banzai with very very carefully planned low rolls during Defensive Fire. If you are looking for an easy way to get into PTO, give LoTS a try.

The Tiger of Tougoo (Deluxe A10)

DELUXE ASL! With Japanese and Chinese! Tiger is a blast. The Japs have to grab what ever isn't burning! And with an FT, demos and kindling in play, there may not be much real estate left to worry about. The Chinese troops can really give the Japanese a run for their money. Tiger allows for all kinds of nasty maneuvering and position play and potentially enough CC for three scenarios. Tiger was the debut for my Haunted HMG. I decided to play well forward and conduct a slow (I hoped) withdrawal. I had placed the 10-2 leader with the HMG in a pillbox with a decent kill zone. Rob entered the board and all hell broke loose. I rolled something like NINE ROF shots in one phase! And all of them hurt. When the dust cleared there was something like 5 and a half dead Japanese squads littering the battlefield. Rob was determined to continue and went after a weaker flank. That's where the residual fire markers did their damage. There's nothing more satisfying than rolling snake eyes on a stack on a residual fire marker. For a city fight with a twist, wipe the dust off of your deluxe boards and play Tiger of Tougoo!

Signal Hill (TT12)

Warning: Signal Hill has errata! Crikey, mate! Looka this fella! A flame spitting Frog and a dozen or so Aussie squads play "Beat the Clock" on deluxe city boards (yeah, again) in this Heat of Battle gem. The Sons of Nippon have the standard toys (HMG, MMG and a lone 70mm INF Gun) with which to slow them down. The Japanese have their work cut out for them but SSRs give them some help by allowing for some extra HIP units. There is also a DC which, in this time frame, can make for a very, very nasty surprise for unwary Anzac units. This is a tight tournament-length scenario that is quite fluid, requiring a well managed defense and an attacker that can position himself to take advantage of any breakthroughs.

Signal Hill had a "Haunted ASL" Manifestation...with apologies to David Nicolas. Rob had regrouped after suffering a few early breaks and was going to rip open my left flank. I lit a few sticks of incense and implored Baby Buddha to intervene. BB put the ix-nay on the Frog making Rob roll an 11 and lose the MA! The next few minutes were classic BB ASL. Three of Rob's squads had penetrated deep into my flank and advanced into a building that held a lone 4-4-7 Japanese squad.

(Continued on page 11)

BB allowed me to ambush Rob’s evil-doers and blessed me with aces! After removing the dead Aussies, I withdrew with no casualties and was ready to fight for Hirohito for another turn. On my next movement phase, I created a DC hero that survived a storm of DF then entered a hex that contained Rob’s last operational AFV and a squad or two of pissed off Aussies. Baby Buddha...aces-aces! YEEHAW! I rolled the required snake eyes and killed the last AFV. Rob reacted calmly, saying something along the lines of “you bastard”. I still get a laugh every time I think of that game.

After the Tea Break (SP106)

This one is a hoot! Germans vs. Americans AND British! An 82nd Airborne company has to hold off a strong German force long enough for the British reinforcements (including Cromwells and Challengers for a change) to arrive and bolster the defense. Tea Break has quite a chess-like feel to it and both sides must plan and execute their moves with particular care. The defender, especially, must plan for retreat routes as any miscalculations will be severely punished. The attacker on the other hand must keep on the move but not let his armor outrun needed infantry support. The VP cap will keep the axis player on their toes for the entire game. This is a challenging combined-arms scenario from Schwerpunkt Volume 9. The remaining selections in this volume are excellent. If you buy just one of Schwerpunkts’ packs, this is the one to get.

Pesky Pachyderms (SP98)

Yet another combined-arms scenario with a fast running clock! Pachyderms is a classic Evan Sherry heavy metal bash. The Germans have a well led and strongly supported infantry force (Tigers plus more!) with which to neutralize a very toothy Soviet hedgehog. Among the Soviet toys are an FT, mines, trenches and wire. Add to this a pair of large mortars and a brace of Su152s that arrive in time to close the deal and you have the makings of a hell of a 6.5 turns! This is also a great scenario in which to practice your deliberate immobilization shots as the two AT guns provided aren’t much of a threat to the frontal armor of the hunting Tigers...which leads to this scenario’s Haunted ASL Manifestation. Ok, well not REALLY haunted, but son of a gun, I couldn’t get Rob to unveil his 57mm AT Gun for the longest time! I ran all kinds of tempting targets in front of him to smoke him out but he held his fire til two Panzer IIIs were in his sights...then let loose! It absolutely drove me nuts! Pesky Pachyderms seems to be incredibly well balanced and offers different avenues of attack and allows the defender to be as sneaky as they can be with a total of 4 guns setting up HIP. This is another selection from SP Volume 9! PLAY IT!

Piercing the Peel (ASL49)

Jeeze! Just kidding! Lighten up out there!

Gift of Time (A112)

Desert Classic! Gift is a well paced, somewhat forgiving scenario that should appeal to even the most dice-a-phobic, “I-ain’t-playing-no-damned-desert-scenario” kook out there. As in other desert battles, Gift has VP-based victory conditions: the DAK must score 60 or more VP via exit or casualty points

to win. The Krauts start out with 6 Panzer IVs of 2 different types plus 9 elite squads AND, perhaps most importantly, OBA. They also get a helping hand from 4 Italian Assault Guns (assuming they survive, Ha!). The Allies (Brits with US armor reinforcements) have 8 squads hunkered down in a few entrenchments and Sangars. Initial forces also include a few Valentines and a pair of 75mm-toting half tracks. The fun starts when the Grants arrive! By God I love those oversized, under-armed sitting ducks! Every time I pull them out of the Flambeau box (screw Plano!), visions of Humphrey Bogart and Lulubelle in “Sahara” flash through my brain. Gift of Time starts out with a mad dash towards the protection of a wadi line mid-board. After reaching this “start” line, the Germans have to form up and begin their attack. What awaits them, in addition to the aforementioned defending force, is another wadi line and hillocks and an HIP 57L AT Gun that can destroy any of the axis armor. You’ll either have rain (possible per SSR) or abundant smoke from your vehicles to cover your attack. It all boils down to some furious action and a don’t-give-up attitude. If you haven’t played a desert scenario, try Gift of Time. It won’t disappoint you, though you better make sure and pay attention to SSR #5!

Battlin’ Buckeyes (J2)

This is a quirky scenario. Its one of the few where Japanese armor can actually square off against American tanks. A 47L may not sound too impressive, but against M18s and Priests it is more than equal to the task. Of course, when those 76Ls hit, its Chi Ha Flambe’. Battlin’ Buckeyes is fast and furious. The onus is on the Japanese player as he must reduce the defender and capture 22 building locations on Board 41 in just 6 and one half turns. They have a broad enough front on which to attack, but the threat of U.S. armor entering on their flank will be a determining factor on where they set up. What is interesting here are the Jap choices. They can challenge the U.S. armor directly, or play it safe and try to pressure the Americans with VBM freeze tactics and/or play hide and seek with US armor. The battlefield is very constricted and requires good handling and coordination of your forces...on both sides. The US player has superior firepower but is saddled with Morale 6 troops and a somewhat lengthy perimeter to defend, initially. Buckeyes is a lot of fun and is one of the most European-flavored PTO scenarios in the mix. Pay special attention to the SSRs and if you play the Japanese, ‘baby’ that lone knee mortar!

Swamp Cats (AP11)

This is one nasty contest! The Soviets arise out of the bog to put the hammer down on a scant defensive force of 10 German squads with very few SWs and a lone Panther. The Sovs, with 18 squads of elite infantry and 7 AFVs (including an FT tank) are looking to kick ass and take names as they battle for control of a bridge and building locations. Fortunately for the Germans, the cavalry, in the form of two Tiger I tanks with a 9-1 armor leader, enter the fray to try and balance things out. This is one of those scenarios where the defender just wants to skulk into a hole and hope for the attacker to go away. However, as we all know, in ASL stuff happens. Careful set up and well planned fallback positions will reap rewards as the Russian negotiates the tricky terrain.

(Continued on page 12)

This isn't a scenario with a lot of counter-attack possibilities for the defender. Which is exactly why you need to do so! Suck the Russian in then get that Panther into the mix and fire for all you're worth!! (Heh heh, I love that kinda talk).

This scenario had one of the luckiest Manifestations of "Haunted ASL" that I ever saw. Rob was pushing forward hard. His armor was up front and my so-called elite German squads had suffered a series of breaks on NMCs and 1MCs. Frikken elite infantry. My Panther was trying to avoid a swarm of commie tanks and was positioned to halt any breakthroughs in the rear area. All that crap in just two short turns. Luckily for me, the Tigers were coming. I entered one Tiger (with the AL) on the high road, while the other took the low. The leader-manned Tiger made for the elevated road on Board 13 and spotted, some distance away, a nice fat lend-lease Sherman. I figured...what the hell have I got to lose? I fired at the target some 15 or more hexes away and rolled an ace-deuce! HIT! RATE! KILL! Wow...a bounding fire shot that scored! Shifting back into gear the Tiger moved forward again gaining LOS to yet another Sherman. It fired...HIT! KILL! No rate this time, dammit. The Tiger stopped to await more targets the next turn. Meanwhile, the other Tiger happened on to an ISU-122 which had fired and missed. With all the movement and To Hit mods, I was hoping to hit the hulldown ISU, gain Acq, then fire intensive. HAH! I rolled snake eyes! Mwahaha...three shots, three kills! This pretty much took the steam out of the attack and Rob conceded to me saying something about "where the hell did you get those dice?"

Anyways...those were some of my favorite ASL scenarios. If you haven't played them, give them a try. I can't imagine being anything other than satisfied after playing any of them. If you have played them, I hope you enjoyed them as much as I did and were lucky enough to have had as gracious and fun an opponent as I had.



BB, putting the ix-ray on Rob...

the great map, scenario card layout (all the graphics) and marketing.

HTB!: Can you tell me about how you got involved with KE and what it was like to be part of that group?

BA: It seems so long ago now. I moved to Southern California in 1995 and would say the fun lasted about three years or so, not really sure how long it was...check the print date for TOT 3: German Rare Vehicles...that was the last thing Mark published. I have to say I really enjoyed working with Mark and Chris, it was a lot of fun. Mark had a lot of energy and creative ideas. Chris was really interested in play testing and history, as well as both of us having an interest in Italian scenarios with funky Italian vehicles. I didn't work with Mike Reid. I also remember playing John Knowles, it was he and Mark that actually started TOT. John was one funny guy. I guess if I had to summarize the ASL TOT experience, I would say that someone was always saying or doing something really funny and the rest of us enjoyed the laugh. It was a great time. We used to gather at the El Segundo cafeteria on Saturdays to play. I became close friends with Cloyde Angel at those events and at tournaments. I remember one of my first encounters with Cloyde, he had just beaten my ass, and I was teasing him about being grumpy or something like that, and he said to me, "you don't know who you're messing with". That was funny! We (Mark Neukom, Chris Castellana, Mike Reid and other playtesters) were in the middle of two Kinetic Energy projects, namely an Italian scenario pack and the Korea Module, when the rug was pulled from under us. Mark moved back east and I lost all interest in developing anything. Now

I just play the game!

HTB!: What would you like to try next?

BA: I am really interested in seeing the next module finally published and play some axis minor armor!

HTB!: How could the game be better?

BA: Change the artillery rules, they are just silly.

HTB!: Top 3 recommendations for playing ASL?

BA:

1. Definitely play with the IIFT, makes for a better game.
2. Tournaments are a great way to get into the game and learn the rules.
3. If you haven't played the scenario "Dogs of War", do it now. It is a great three player game! I believe it is also the only three player game. We were working on more before the crack down. I think it very unlikely that anymore of those will ever be produced. I hope I am wrong.

HTB!: Any final comments?

BA: I was disappointed with the shutdown of the 'third parties' by MMP. The creativity of the game has really been diminished along with the number of releases. To be sure, not all of the releases were good, but at least you had options! I just sent an email to Brian Youse and he gave me the courtesy of a reply to my question, "so when is the final module coming out, I have waited 20 years...?". He told me they are laying it out now. I believe it was supposed to be due out in January of 2004. Oh well.....

Thanks Brian!

Vehicle Notes: The Devastating Nashorn

by Matt Cicero

8.8cm PaK43/1 (L/71) auf Geschützwagen III und IV (Sf) (SdKfz 164)

Other Designations: Hornisse, Nashorn

Type: Self-propelled heavy anti-tank gun on tracked carriage

Manufacturer: Deutsche-Eisenwerke

Production: 494 produced from February 1943 to March 1945.

Crew: 4

Dimensions:

Weight: 24 metric tons

Length: 20 ft 4 1/8 in + gun overhang 7 ft 4 1/8 in

Width: 9 ft 8 1/8 in

Height: 9 ft 7 3/4 in

Performance:

Traverse: 15 degrees (hydraulic)

Speed: 25 mph max

Range: 160 miles

Trench Crossing: 9 ft

Gradient: 30 degrees

Fording: 2 ft 7 1/2 in

Armament:

One Main Armament 8.8cm PaK43/1 L/71

Ammunition:

(PaK43/1): 48 (APCBC, HE, HC, AP 40 Rounds)

Specific Features and Modifications:

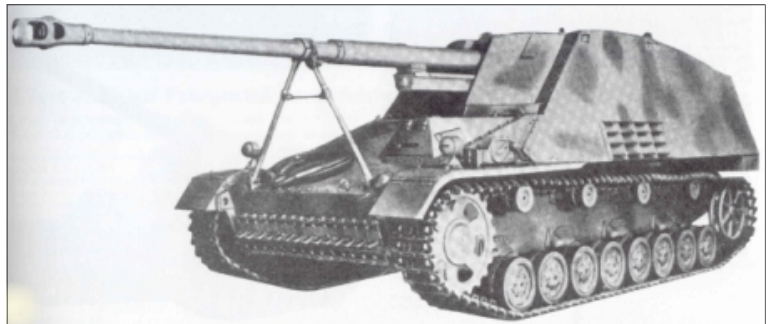
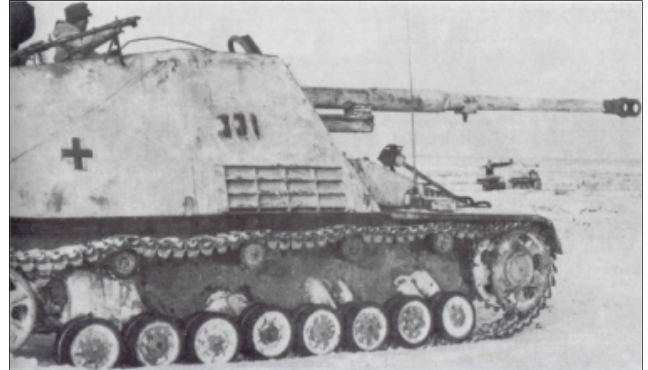
- Initially dubbed the Nashorn (Rhino), the vehicle was also known as the Hornisse (Hornet).
- The Nashorn's weakness was its very thin superstructure armor and its open-topped configuration which resulted in significantly reduced protection for its crew.
- The PaK43 fired APCBC, High Explosive (HE), Hollow Charge (HC) and Armor Piercing (AP 40) ammunition.
- The PaK43 had a muzzle velocity of 3,280 feet per second firing APCBC ammunition.
- The APCBC ammunition could penetrate 184mm or armor at 30 degrees at 500 yards and 169mm at 1,000 yards.
- The Nashorn's primary strength was its ability to engage and destroy enemy tanks at extreme ranges.
- No significant modifications were made to this vehicle during its production run.

Development Notes:

The Nashorn was designed in 1942 as a mobile platform for the 8.8cm PaK43. In October, 1942, the initial production run of 500 units was authorized with 100 to be completed by May 12, 1943 in time for the summer offensive. Of the initial order, 494 were completed. The Nashorn utilized the same lengthened PzKpfw III/IV chassis as the Hummel. The engine was moved forward to a more central position in this design, a modification that required significant time and technical skill. The open-topped fighting compartment's armor was canted and bolted to the hull. The glacis was extended and a small compartment fitted to one side for the driver. The gun was mounted centrally, over the engine which gave the vehicle the rather high silhouette common to many SPAs.

Combat Service:

Nashorns first entered service with the 655th Schwere Panzerjägerabteilung in the summer of 1943 on the Eastern Front. Five other heavy tank-hunter detachments were formed and served as independent units attached to Corps or Armies. They served their function well as highly effective, long ranged and mobile tank destroyers. Hornissen saw service in the East, in Italy and in the West.

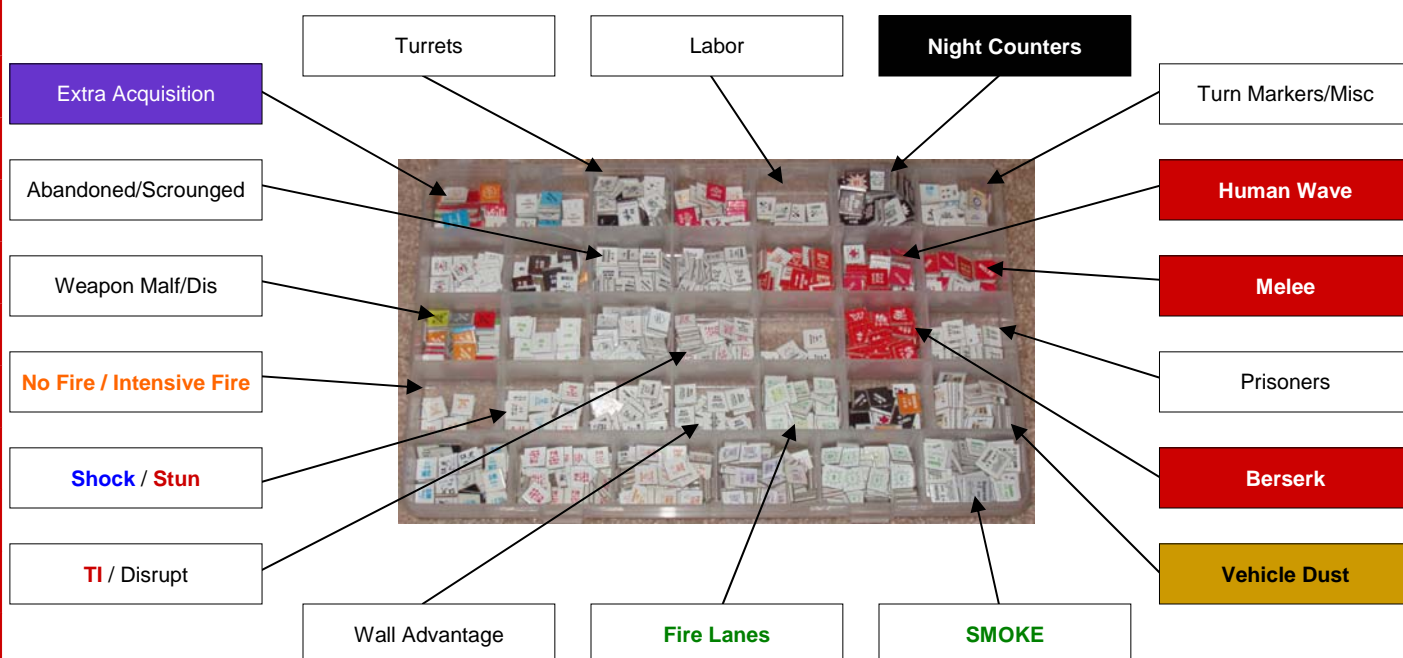


That's a PzJg III/IV in ASL-lingo. —ed.

Fire...anything to get "the kill" whenever possible. Of course, he also typically overlooks Chapter H notes and special ammo. The rarest vehicle/Gun sorting system is the "one weapon-one bin" sorter. If it has its own Vehicle/Ordnance Note in Chapter H, it gets its own bin. These guys are fanatics for details and often have an Eidetic Memory when it comes to any rule pertaining to the use of vehicles or Guns. These guys will have you diving for the rulebook every turn of the scenario with a smile on their lips, knowing you are about to learn yet another painful lesson.

In closing, let me reemphasize that it is important to note the way in which your opponent organizes and stores his counters. Through repeat playings with the same opponent, you will soon develop an intimate knowledge of his counter storage. This knowledge, like the many "tells" in poker, will soon allow you to stay one step ahead of your opponent, his tactics and his efforts to win. One last word to the wise...always remember that as you are probing into your opponents' storage systems, they are probing yours...learning your secrets. So do what I do to throw them off the scent...dump a huge multi-colored pile of counters out on the table and start sorting...chances are, you'll be using his bits to play in no time. Mission accomplished.

Ok, so lets see what secrets are revealed by this picture of my Basic Counter Tray.... —ed.



Upcoming Events...

10/31/04: *Hit The Beach!* V9N3
 TBD: Fall One-Day Event
 11/30/04: West Cost Melee VIII Pre-Reg Packs

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