ASL journal

Issue Six

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, design, and historical background of the *ASL* series of games. The *ASL Journal* is published by Multi-Man Publishing, LLC (**403 Headquarters Drive, Suite 7, Millersville, MD 21108, USA**) solely for the edification of the serious ASL afficionado in the hopes of improving the player's proficiency and broadening his enjoyment of the game.

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DEBRIEFING

We include here some errata for the *ASL Rulebook* 2nd Edition (including Chapter K) to join what we previously published in Journals 3, 4, & 5. Also included is some errata for Chapter H, some miscellaneous scenario errata, and errata for some pieces in Journal 5. (Thanks to Bruce Probst and Ole Bøe for their help in compiling this, and special thanks to Scott Jackson for the same and for his help with the Q&A.)

Errata for ASLRB 2nd Edition, Chapter H, Scenarios, and Journal 5

A4.12: replace entire section with "Any Good Order MMC which begins the MPh/APh and ends its MPh/APh stacked with a leader of the same nationality in the same Location, at the same level (2.8), and with the same Wire/entrenchment/panji/paddy status is eligible for a two MF bonus during that MPh/APh, provided it expends all its MF while moving in a combined stack with that leader, and does not expend any of its MF to mount, ride, or dismount any form of conveyance."

A7.3: second sentence lines 5-6, replace "due to the effect of terrain, Hindrances, target characteristics, and/or leadership" with "as listed on the IFT DRM chart or in the appropriate rules section". After the second sentence add: "Each applicable entry on the IFT DRM chart is cumulative (A.17) and is applied only once per attack, unless indicated otherwise."

A7.52: second sentence line 3, delete "(/Cowering/CX penalty)". After the second sentence add: "Should any member of the FG incur a detrimental DRM, it applies to the entire FG (cumulative as per A7.3)."

A8.3: add at the end "If a unit, or any SW/Gun it possesses, uses Subsequent First Fire (or Intensive Fire) then that unit and all its SW/Guns are marked with a Final Fire counter."

A8.41 EX: second paragraph, lines 23-25 replace "...the 4-6-7 would then be marked with a First Fire counter while the LMG's First Fire counter would be flipped to its Final Fire side." with "the 4-6-7 and LMG would then both be marked with a Final Fire counter."

A9.52: replace the second sentence with "Spraying Fire can be used against a moving unit and against a Location without a moving unit (halved again for Area Fire), although its only effect in the second Location would be to leave Residual FP."

A11.51: line 5, replace "unbroken/unpinned, armed" with "unbroken, unpinned, and armed". Lines 7-8 delete "in a halftrack".

D4.2 line 7: replace "claim a" with "claim an in-hex" before "Case Q TH DRM".

E9.12: at the end of the first sentence, add "and the hexgrain direction they will all share."

Index: In the definition of "Armed" in line 2 after "(A20.54)", add "not possessing a functioning Gun/SW".

Index: In the definition of "Unarmed" in line 2 after "Gun/SW", add "or inherent crew".

Chapter K, page K22: column 2, item number "2", line 1, add "armed" between "Known" and "enemy" and in line 6 delete "/unarmed".

Chapter K, page K25: column 1, paragraph beginning "I rally, but you don't..." lines 7-8, replace "instead being subject to the result of yours as if I were broken, except that" with "instead my life being subject to the result of your NMC—plus".

Chapter K, page K44: column 1, paragraph beginning "No matter what...", replace that first sentence with "No matter what, though, if you Hook Up a Gun both towing vehicle and Gun crew (Gun crew only if Unhooking) are marked with a TI counter for the rest of the Player Turn."

ASOP (rev.): Pre-Game Sequence, 11th primary bullet after "Record the Drop Point of each paratrooper Wing (E9.12)" add "and the single hexgrain direction that will apply to all Wings."

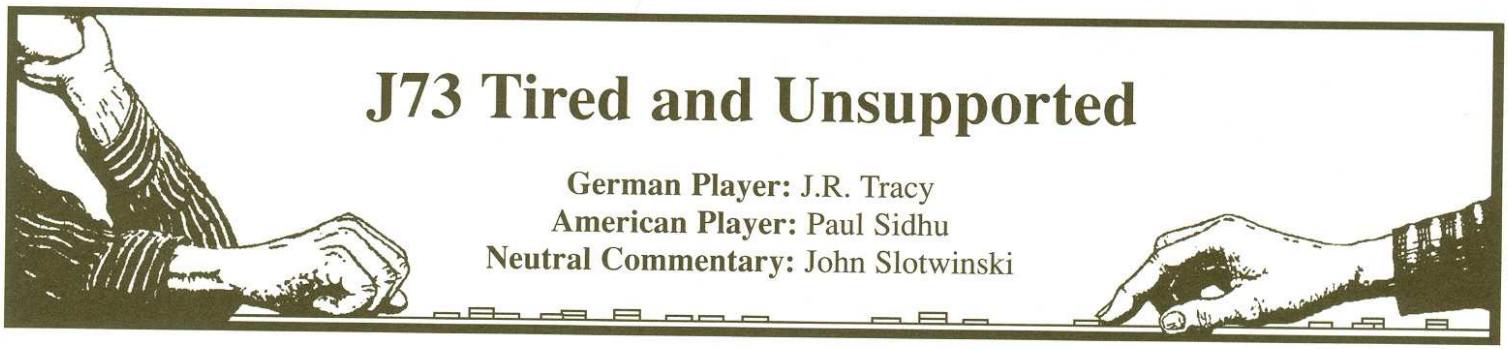
British Vehicle Note 51 (Humber IV AC): The Vehicle Listing indicates that this vehicle has truck-type movement, but the counters indicate AC-type movement. The counters are correct. (This applies to both *West of Alamein* and *For King and Country*.)

Scenario J81 (Twisted Knickers): replace the 3 onboard *Stuart III*s with 3 *Stuart I*s (5 DVP each).

SASL Mission 15 (Pursuit): bullet two of the "S? Placement/Exit" instructions, replace "or" with "of", so that it reads: "one in each road hex west of the Road Network bridge or, if the bridge is part of a predominantly east-west road (i.e., a non-Road Network road), on the EBE side **of** the non-Road Network side".

Journal 5: page 4 "A Line In The Sand," first column, LitS SR 1, add at the end "The inherent HS of each *SPW 250/sMG* or *SPW 251/sMG* is a 2-4-8."

Journal 5: page 4 "A Line In The Sand," "Operational Force Pool Tables" British Table A, Draw #2, replace "19 DVP" with "14 DVP"; British Table A, Draw #5, replace "4x Stuart II" with "4x Stuart I"; German Table A, Draw #1, replace "20 DVP" with "24 DVP".



J73 Tired and Unsupported

German Player: J.R. Tracy
American Player: Paul Sidhu
Neutral Commentary: John Slotwinski

[We welcome J.R. and Paul to the Journal. Their names are already well known on the tourney scene. Slot has graced these pages before, in addition to being a co-designer of Operation Veritable Historical Study—Eds.]

Opening Comments

German Comments

I've known Paul for 20 years now, ever since we were roommates at MIT in the fall of '82. We've faced off over the ASL battlefield several times, including some truly memorable tournament games with a title on the line. Paul's style is a rare mix of careful planning and relentless aggression. Paul is a determined opponent, focused on what it takes for the win, but he doesn't let that get in the way of having a good time. I look forward to another fun match.

The purpose of this Series Replay is to illustrate the ASL Rulebook 2nd Edition Wall Advantage mechanics as well as the ins and outs of Bocage. This scenario is well chosen, as Bocage dominates my thinking as I plan my defense. I believe Bocage offers the attacker as many advantages as the defender, making it much easier to gain Concealment, restricting fields of fire, and carving up the battlefield allowing concentrated assaults. All of this is in my mind as I consider the very short distance the Americans have to travel to engage the victory area, and how I have to slow that advance while conserving my force for what will undoubtedly be a dicey endgame.

I have two SSR-driven choices to make—at start I have to select my leader group, and at the end of Turn 1 I must decide whether to bring on my reinforcements later in the game. I think the leadership choice is pretty clear-cut—as tempting at that 9-2 is, I'm opting for the 9-1/8-1/8-0 force. This way each of my heavies will have a negative DRM leader, and overall my morale is higher, an important consideration given the VC. The reinforcement decision will be made based on the state of the game at the time. It's an intriguing twist—is the group really worth adding two full turns to the game? But, looking at the overall situation, do I have a prayer without those extra warm bodies? They will more than double my initial force in MMC terms, and if I can hang on to my generous allotment of hardware, I will have a **lot** of firepower at my command for the endgame...an endgame that will be just a little bit further away.

Looking at the map, it's clear I have to concede the entrance edge and most of the first move. Paul will have 13 MMCs at his disposal after full deployment, so anyone within three or four hexes of the edge will likely be overwhelmed and out of the game after his player turn. I will set up roughly in the center of the board, concentrating my troops. I have pretty fair ROF-adjusted firepower but my actual body count is meager—six half squads. My rough game plan is to hang on to the BB5 and DD4 hedgerow 'fields' as long as possible, allowing the reinforcements a relatively unimpeded entrance through the BB2 hedge field and the EE2 Orchard mass. Hmm, sounds like I've already made my reinforcement decision. Well, it's better to plan with them in mind as I won't know much more than I do now come the end of Turn 1 when I must make my decision.

By putting most of my forces on the left half of the board, in what I feel is the most defensible terrain, I will be able to make the most of my –1 leaders and will leverage my ROF weapons with mutually supporting positions. I still have to cover my flanks—The 8-0 and MMG in Y5 can reach out to the right while covering the Y hexrow approach. Note these fellows also have sneaky boresighted LOS to BB8. I toyed with placing this stack in W4, with fire lane potential out to R6, but that felt too isolated. The R5 dummies have to be respected by Paul on T1, though he's too good for the farce to last very long. Similarly, the EE7 dummies should slow movement a touch on that side, with the DD6 HS helping out for real. Paul can certainly drive up my left flank if he chooses but I welcome that path of attack—I can easily shift to meet it and it leaves him with some very firelane-friendly open ground to cross.

In the left center I've married up my heavies in adjacent hexes—I want to punish any Ami thrust through the AA-DD hexrows as that would directly disrupt my game plan. From BB5 my 8-1 can direct fire out to R6 and S6, helping out a bit on that flank. I've shunned the seemingly obvious AA5, filling it with dummies. If troops in AA5 claim Wall Advantage (WA), they'll enjoy no TEM from fire coming in through the Z5/AA5 hexside. Should Paul make it to X6, anyone in AA5 will have to claim the building TEM rather than the hedgerow, rendering them useless for the fight to the front. Better in my opinion to handle X6 from BB5 and Y5 than suffer such a constraint. The 9-1 led heavy in CC6 backs up the DD6 halfsquad and covers the field just in front of it, and reaches out to CC10 for extra measure.

Finally, I have an MMG/HS combo in EE4, sporting a couple dummies on top to imply a little leadership. This unit and the PSK/HS next door should contain any frisky ventures up the left flank.

As I scan Paul's order of battle I'm still a little uneasy. He has a lot of time and can make the approach relatively unobserved. If he deals with my forward HS in DD6 and overcomes the HMG in CC6, he may well have a hefty force poised along the CC8 hedge field, concealed and ready to duke it out for the dash across the road. A flanking force on my right will not be a problem early but will gradually become a headache and cramp my style in the end game. I just don't have enough guys to contend with such a threat without diluting my meager force. As it is, the boys in Y5 look awfully lonely. Another headache is the lack of rally terrain in my chosen setup area—two buildings, both easily taken under fire. My final fear: Close Combat. If Paul can get an unpinned HS next to one of my stacks, he'll get an even-odds attack against even one of my leader-led halfsquads. I don't even want to think about what a full Ami squad will do to me in CC....

Ideally, Paul will look at the card, the Victory Conditions, and the force ratio and decide he has plenty of time, and ease up on the gas on Turn 1. I think I'm unlikely to suffer much Advancing Fire on the first player turn and a lot of skulking should keep me out of harm's way in the bottom half. Then I just have to sweat three turns of skulking mixed with some falling back before the cavalry arrives, such as it is. If I can preserve my initial force, inflict some casualties (oh dear God of ROF, I beseech thee!), and hook up with the Turn 4 reinforcements, Paul will hopefully have a real handful digging my eight morale troops out of my endgame position.

American Comments

I bought the original Squad Leader series back in the 1970's, but was too busy to play between 1983 and 1992. I starting playing regularly again in 1996 in St. Louis and have been to 3 or 4 tournaments a year since. J.R. and I have been good friends since our fraternity days. We've gotten to play ASL eight times and have split our games. Most of these have been in the finals or late rounds of

major tournaments. As far as I'm concerned, J.R.'s one of the best players around. It is both a pleasure and honor to play with him in an 'official' series replay.

Just glancing at the scenario card this one looks tough on the bad guys. I didn't have the hedge overlays when first asked to do this, so I suggested J.R. play the Germans and we play at his place. Since then I got to try it out at the 2002 NJ Fall Classic (where the 'ASL Championship of the World' is decided). I played a good player who folded as the Germans after just two turns. We'll see how this one goes.

The Germans have several advantages including: Victory Conditions (VC), a 9-2 + 4 MGs, Bocage, Quality, Fog of War, and Reinforcements. The Germans just need 1 GO unit at game end, so they can pull out a win even a in desperate looking situation. With the obvious (to me) choice of the 9-2 leader with four MGs with boresighted hexes, there's a real possibility of an ROF tear gutting the US attack in one fire phase. The bocage permits some nasty now-you-see-them, now-you-don't tricks when dropping Wall Advantage (WA) in +1 TEM. In addition, the bocage slows movement considerably. German eight morale is a big plus since over the half of the GIs have a six morale. The Americans will need to account for 16 dummy counters, including 6 in the reinforcements. Finally the reinforcements have the flexibility to hit the American attack in either flank (but not the strength to hit both).

The American advantages include: Manpower, Leaders, SW, Time, VC, and Bocage. The GIs have a stunning 11 to 3 initial squad advantage for four turns. Using only squad assault fire, they have a firepower advantage of 44 to 28. They have plenty of leaders, support weapons, and time. The GIs also have the last player turn, so they can react to any last turn German heroics. The bocage provides the assaulting GIs with +2 TEM and no loss of concealment when non-assault moving. Bocage also blocks potentially pesky LOS down hexspines and provides free concealment at end of the friendly player turn.

I expect J.R. to put leader + MG stacks in both central buildings with the two 238s as flankers. Using any half-nuts up front will just lose them for little gain. Spreading out the MGs will reduce German vulnerability but also dramatically weaken their firepower when shooting at concealed US units in +2 terrain. I will plan on J.R. calling for the reinforcements to come on and expect lots of skulking and cheap concealment tricks (like skulking a real unit an a dummy stack together and then advancing the two stacks into two separate hexes to make me guess who's who).

I plan a straightforward attack on both sides of the main East/West road. I hope to win the firefight by concentrating the fire of a big green amoeba on the German 9-2 position. Then I'll cross the North/South using infantry SMOKE, mop up using maneuver, and use the German MGs to put a hurt on the reinforcements. Sounds good in theory if I can avoid a 9-2/MG ROF streak.

Some of the more arcane bocage rules I'll try to keep in mind:

1. If in +1 TEM, I'll generally want to grab WA in Rally since I can't do it in the enemy MPh
2. There's no loss of concealment due to any rally phase activities when behind bocage
3. Unit claiming wall advantage in a building hex are still subject to Desperation penalties
4. Dummies can never claim WA—and all units claiming WA are 'momentarily revealed' which is good for some battlefield intelligence.

Neutral Comments

It is a pleasure to be given the opportunity to provide the neutral commentary for this match between J.R. Tracy and Paul Sidhu. In addition to being two of the game's truest gentlemen, in recent years they have also been two of the hottest players on the ASL tournament scene. In 2002 Paul successfully defended his 2001 World Boardgamers Championship (a.k.a. "DonCon") with another victory against one of the toughest fields of players seen annually. J.R. has won the annual Winter Offensive tournament, one of the largest ASL tournaments on the east coast, in both 1999 and 2000, and more recently a DonCon crown of his own in 2003. Both guys regularly place in the top ten at both DonCon and ASLOK. Their level of play is excellent, but more impressive is the excellent sportsmanship that I have seen from both of them over the years. As further incentive for this replay, Paul defeated J.R. as his final victim in claiming the crown at the 2002 World Boardgaming Championship. So this replay will offer J.R. his chance for the best kind of revenge: in-print-revenge.

"My final fear: Close Combat . . . I don't even want to think about what a full Ami squad will do to me in CC"

Although I've met him, I've never had the pleasure of playing Paul. I did manage to pull out a close victory against J.R. in our one and only playing way back in 1998. Of course I had the favored side in an un-balanced scenario, but when you are a marginal player like myself you have to take what you can get when playing outstanding players like Paul and J.R. With my own level of play below J.R.'s and Paul's, I'll try to impress the reading audience with my solid grasp of the rules and some witty prose.

Speaking of rules, this scenario is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the new (ASL Rulebook 2nd Edition) wall advantage rules. The old wall advantage rules were ambiguous at best, and were made worse by confusing and seemingly conflicting Q&A. Because of this, many players often misplayed the relatively simple cases involving walls and hedges and completely avoided playing the more complicated bocage scenarios altogether. The new wall advantage rules are an excellent modification to the rules because they are very specific and clear about when a unit may gain or lose wall advantage.

In the most basic case, a good order infantry unit can only take wall advantage at five times (B9.322):

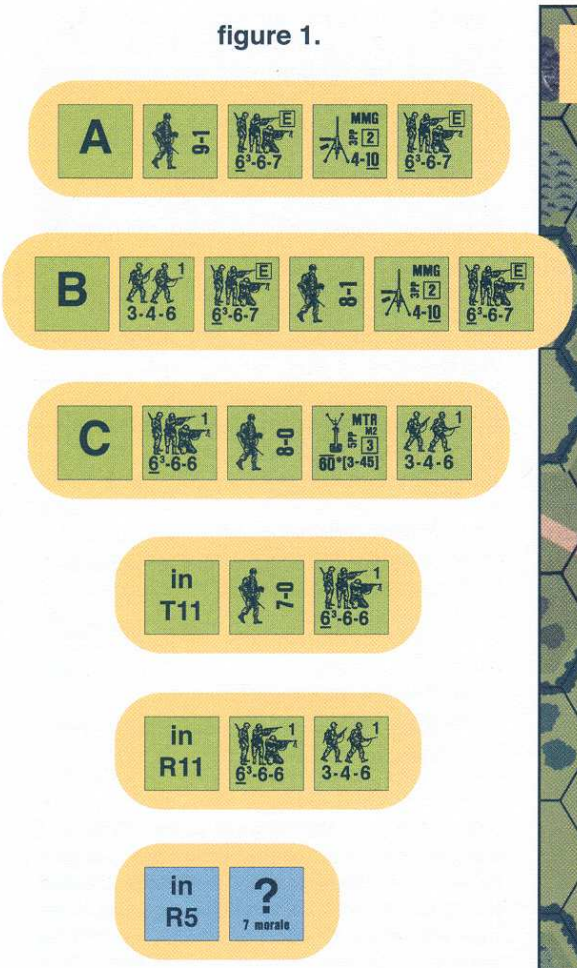
- During setup
- At the end the end of the Rally phase (attacker first)
- During its Movement and Advance phases
- When dropping HIP
- When all adjacent enemy units give up wall advantage

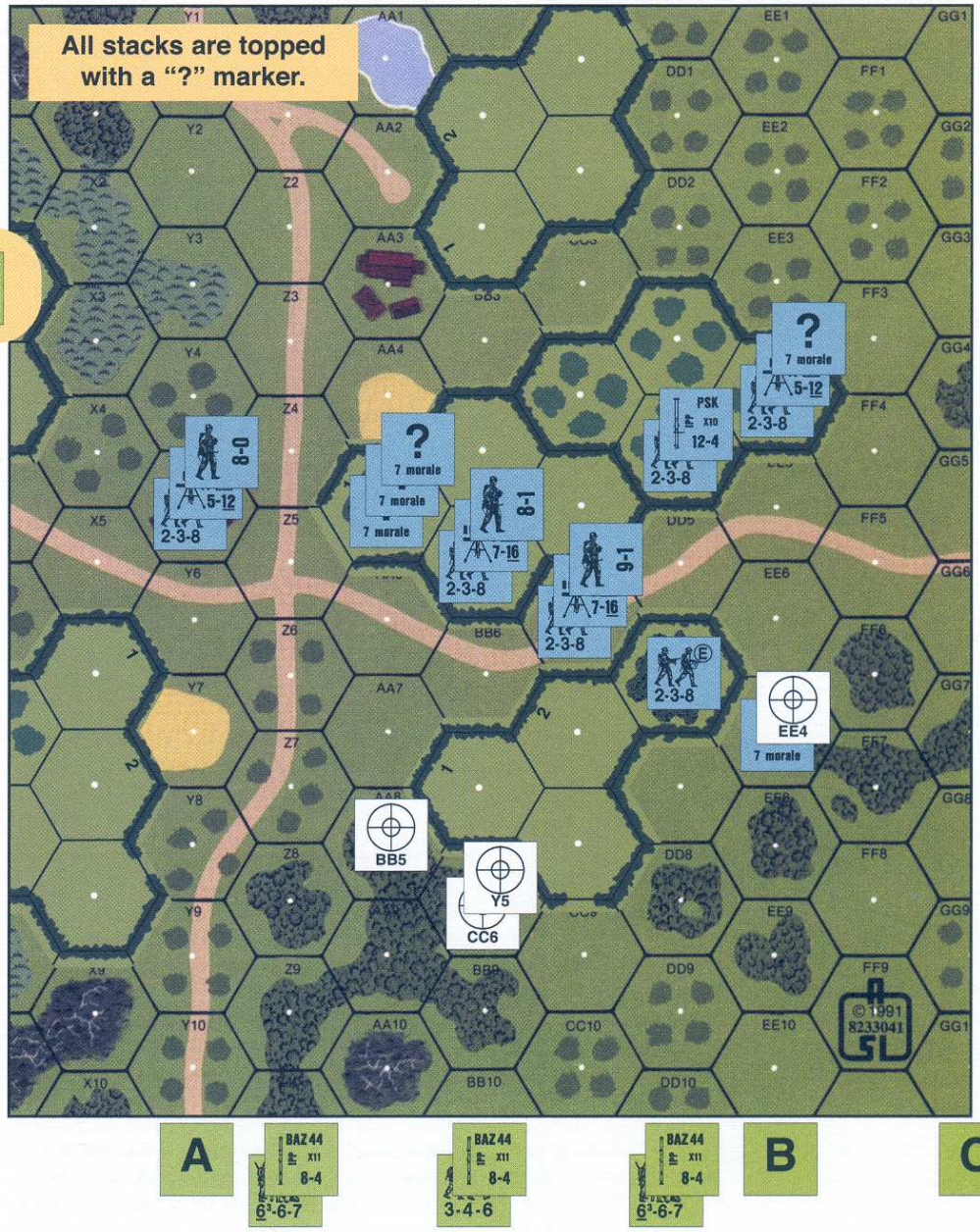
Provided that there is some in-hex TEM ≥ 1, a good order unpinned infantry unit can give up wall advantage at any time (B9.322 and B9.323). An infantry unit will also give up wall advantage to adjacent enemy units if an enemy unit enters its location (B9.32).

There are several aspects of bocage terrain that distinguishes it from walls and hedges. Like walls, bocage offers +2 TEM versus direct fire. Units in bocage with WA can gain concealment during their CC phase, even while in the LOS of enemy units. Units moving, or performing other activities (EXC: firing) behind bocage also do not lose concealment to enemy units that must trace LOS through the bocage hexside (B9.55). Since units with WA in a bocage hex with other TEM can give WA up freely, they have the additional advantage of being able to prep fire and then give up WA to hide in the in-hex TEM, thus protecting them from fire from non-adjacent enemy units who trace their LOS through the bocage hexside(s). This, coupled with the ability to easily grow concealment, is a powerful advantage for both the attacker and defender. On this board there are few bocage hexes with any in-hex TEM. This will greatly simplify things since most of the time units will automatically have WA if they are the first ones there. Finally, since bocage is generally treated like a wall (B9.5) in the second edition, I used to think that the shape charged weapons featured in this scenario could be fired at infantry units behind bocage. However, errata in the J5 Debriefing has dismissed that silly notion.

Bocage also provides blind hexes to units at higher elevations and hull down safety to vehicles, which also might bog if crossing bocage. However, none of these features of bocage will be demonstrated in this replay

figure 1.





GERMAN SETUP

1	EE7	?.Z(?.NN)
2	EE4	?.HH(?W/MMG.M/gEO)
3	DD6	?.Q(gEN)
4	DD4	?.DD(PSK.L/gER)
5	CC6	?.M(HMG.A/gEI/9-1)
6	BB5	?.b(HMG.D/gEK/8-1)
7	AA5	?.t(?.Y/?.u/?.SS)
8	Y5	?.NN(MMG.F/gEE/8-0)
9	R5	?.z(?.EE)
10	Z4	Sniper
11	CC6	boresight BB8
12	BB5	boresight AA8
13	Y5	boresight BB8
14	EE4	boresight EE7

US SETUP

15	GG11	?NN(666N, 8-0 McCorry,
16		346s w/Mtr)
17	EE11	?Y (346q, 667U, 8-1 Conner,
18		667T w/MMGB)
19	DD11	?HH (667L w/BazP)
20	BB11	?JJ (346j w/BazG)
21	Z11	?AA (667F w/BazL)
22	Y11	?EE (9-1 Jackson, 667E,
23		667U w/MMGE)
24	T11	?T (7-0 Eddy, 666M)
25	R11	?C (666P, 346t)
26	Z4	Sniper

since there are neither upper level locations nor vehicles in this scenario.

In developing a plan of action for your side it's always a good idea to first examine your force's strengths and weaknesses. Maximizing your strengths while minimizing your weaknesses can go a long way in securing victory. I've never played it before, but on paper this is an extremely scary looking scenario for the Germans. The at-start Germans are outnumbered almost four-to-one in squad equivalents! As such those outnumbered Germans must make the most of their advantages if they are going to have any chance at winning. These advantages include some centrifuge using the OB-given concealment counters, the benefits of the bocage terrain mentioned above, and their higher MMC morale. The Germans are also given two MMGs and two HMGs in their order of battle. These must be utilized to the fullest if the Germans are to have a reasonable chance in this scenario, but unfortunately this requires ROF, which requires relying on some good dice.

The scenario also offers the Germans two interesting choices: The first is which leader group to select and setup with the on-board forces. This is a no-brainer in my opinion. Each group features three leaders and a net leadership modifier of –2, but the first group has an uber 9-2 that I would choose every time. The 9-2, coupled with the German MGs, offer the best chance for inflicting casualties on the Americans. He also may cause the Americans to reconsider any possible advance into CC versus German MMC that he is stacked with. If they can get adjacent, CC is a good way for the lower morale American squads, with their higher CC value, to take out the German MMCs, especially in the beginning of the game where each American squad will simply overwhelm the German half-squads with 3:1 odds. Stacking Mr. 9-2 with a half-squad will give a –2 on any ambush dr,

lower the base CC odds to 2:1, AND provide his –2 on the CC DR.

The second choice for the Germans occurs at the end of Game Turn 1, where he must secretly designate whether or not he will receive his reinforcement group on Turn 4. This is a tough choice to make after only one turn of play, since at that point the scenario is probably just beginning to take shape. The additional 3.5 squads of infantry will help by providing some much needed manpower. However, the penalty for taking these reinforcements is adding two full turns to the game.

The Germans don't have enough infantry to defend everywhere. The Germans almost don't have enough infantry to defend anywhere! Any unsupported lone German MMCs will eventually be overwhelmed and consumed by the American onslaught. The Germans can't sit back and defend from the VC area either as the American entry must be contested; otherwise after one turn of movement the Americans will be able to move halfway across the board with all of their force intact and concealed.

The American OOB facing the Germans is a force to be reckoned with. Usually ASL American infantry are blessed with high firepower and cursed with low morale. In this scenario neither one of these is entirely correct. Over half of the US squads have a morale of '7,' although the remainder have the lower, first-line morale of '6.' The Americans still have the high inherent firepower but the Germans have some pretty impressive firepower of their own in the form of two MMGs and two HMGs for their initial forces. If the German 9-2 and a MMG/HMG combo gets hot it could be a short scenario for the Americans.

The Americans still have advantages in a larger number of squad-equivalents (as mentioned previously,) more leaders, and a long time to travel a short distance to the VC area. Played correctly the Americans can benefit from the same bocage terrain advantages mentioned above that the Germans can use to their advantage. And as if they need it, the Americans have another advantage in the VCs, since it is easy to remove the "good order" nature of enemy units simply by tying them up in melee.

J.R.'s defense is a little different from what I might try, but it is both well thought out, and carefully considered. I only have two small nits to pick, and both of these may be just a matter of personal player style. First of all, I would put a real 238 hs in the R5 woods. This guy will eventually be overcome by the Americans, but he'll cause some delay and maybe a casualty or tow when the Americans cross the open ground in front of him. Without this the Americans have easy access to the German rear flank. J.R.'s remarks hint that this approach can be covered by his machine guns, but these shots will likely be hindered by the V5 orchard mass. The other thing that I would do differently is in the choice of boresight hexes. Specifically, I wouldn't put two BSs into the same hex like J.R. has done in BB8. I would rather choose four different hexes to maximize the likelihood that the Americans will move through boresighted hexes. But again, these are just personal preferences.

Note that dummies in AA5 could claim WA provided that no GO unit is adjacent to it (B9.324) and the initial American sniper placement is illegal since it must be placed in an unoccupied hex (A14.2).

As the scenario begins Paul's overwhelming force steps cautiously through the French countryside, wary of the hidden Germans hiding in the bocage...

TURN 1

T1 Ami RPh

27	WCDR	3,3	NE
28	DD6 claim WA		
29	AA5 claim WA		

T1 Ami MPh

30	EE11 ?.EE(1) declare CX to EE8		
31	D6 gEN reveals self to strip ?, CX/a1Q loses ?		
32	EE8 CX/a1Q to EE7, remove ?Z(?NN)		
33	DD6 gEN D1F at a1Q, 4(0)		
		2,2	Cower,1MC, place 1RFP, mark gEN FF
34	a1Q 1MC	3,1	Pass, Ger SAN
35	German SAN dr	4	NE
36	GG11 ?NN(4) to GG9		
37	DD6 gEN attempts to strip ?,LOS blocked by EE7		
38	GG9 ?NN(4) to FF7		
39	DD4 gER momentarily revealed to strip ?NN from 8-0/MTR/a1S/A1N		
40	DD4 gEN D1F vs FF7, 1(0)		
		3,6	NE
41	DD11 BAZP/AEL to DD7		
42	DD6 gEN FPF vs DD7 2(-2)		
		5,4	NE, breaks gEN, place 1RFP
43	BAZP/AEL claims WA		
44	EE11 ?Y(4) to EE8		
45	Y11 ?JJ(4) to Y9, Y5 gEE momentarily drops ? to strip ?JJ from 9-1/MMGE/AEE/AEU		
46	Y5 8-0/MMGF/gEE D1F vs Y9 4(+1)		
		2,1	1MC, ROF
47	9-1 1MC	4,6	breaks
48	AEE 1MC	5,6	breaks, ELR DM A1D
49	AEU 1MC	3,2	passes
50	AEU 1LLTC	5,3	pinned
51	BB5 8-1/HMGD/gEK D1F vs Y9 6(-1) & 6(0)	1,3	K/2 & 2MC, ROF,
52	Y9 RS DR for K	5,1	Leader wounded
53	Y9 Wound Severity	4	wounded
54	Y9 A1D 2MC	2,1	passes
55	Y9 Pin/AEU 2MC	4,6	breaks, ELR DM A1Y
56	R11 ?C(1) declares CX, to R6		
57	R6 CX/a1T loses ?C to Y5		
58	R6 CX/a1T to S6		
59	R11 A1P declares CX, to T6		
60	T11 7-0/A1M declare CX, to U5		
61	BB11 ?KK(2) to BB8, BAZG/a1J lose ?KK to Y5		
62	Y5 8-0/MMGF/gEE D1F vs BB8 4(-1)		
		3,3	1MC, lose ROF, place 1RFP
63	BB8 a1J 1MC	1,6	breaks
64	Z11 ?AA(2) to Z9		

T1 Ami DFPh

65	BB5 8-1/HMGD/gEK DFF vs Y9 6(0)		
		6,6	NE, malf HMG
66	CC6 9-1/HMGA/gEI DFF vs DD7 6(+1)		
		1,4	1MC, ROF
67	DD7 AEL 1MC	4,5	breaks
68	CC6 9-1/HMGA/gEI DFF vs DD7 6(+1)		
		3,6	NE, ROF
69	CC6 9-1/HMGA/gEI DFF vs DD7 6(+1)		
		3,2	1MC, ROF
70	DD7 DM/AEL 1MC 2,5 NE		
71	CC6 9-1/HMGA/gEI DFF vs DD7 6(+1)		
		2,4	NMC, ROF
72	DD7 DM/AEL NMC 5,2 NE		
73	CC6 9-1/HMGA/gEI DFF vs DD7 6(+1)		
		5,4	NE, lose ROF
74	EE4 MMGE/gEO DFF vs EE7 4(+1)		
		3,4	NE

T1 Ami AFPh

75	FF7 8-0/A1N vs DD4 4(+2)		
		4,1	PTC
76	DD4 gER PTC	2,1	passes
77	EE7 CX/a1Q vs DD6 2(+2)		
		1,2	NMC
78	DD6 DM/gEN NMC	4,3	passes
79	AA5 drops WA		

T1 Ami RtPh

80	Y9 DM/wd9-1/A1D/A1Y to Z9
81	DD7 DM/BAZP/AEL to GG7
82	BB8 DM/a1J to BB9
83	DD6 DM/gEN to AA8 (yikes closest in MF)

T1 Ami APh

84	Z9 ?AA(2) to AA9
85	EE7 CX/a1Q to EE6
86	FF7 8-0/MTR/a1S to GG7
87	FF7 A1N to FF6
88	EE8 ?Y(4) to EE7
89	U5 CX/7-0/A1M to U4
90	S6 CX/a1T to R5, removes ?z(?EE)
91	T6 CX/A1P to T5

T1 Ami CCPh

92	U4 CX/7-0/A1M gain ?T

GERMAN TURN 1

T1 German RPh

93	Wind Change DR	1,1	possible change
94	Wind effect dr	1	Mild Breeze
95	Wind Direction dr	4	
96	AA8 MMC self rally attempt DM/gEN		
	5,5		fails, removes DM
97	Z9 DM/wd9-1 attempts self rally		
		3,6	fails, remove DM
98	Remove DM from BB9		
99	GG7 DM/AEL	4,2	fails, remove DM
100	BB5 gEK attempts to repair HMGD		
		4	fails

T1 German MPh

101	BB5 8-1/malfHMGD/gEK to DD3
102	EE4 MMGE/gEO/?HH(?W) AM to DD3
103	DD4 PSKL/gER to BB4
104	CC6 9-1/HMGA/gEI AM to BB5
105	AA5 ?z(?SS) AM to AA4
106	AA5 ?EE(?u) AM to BB4
107	AA5 ?t(?Y) AM to BB5
108	Y5 8-0/MMGF/gEE Dash to AA5

T1 German DFPh

109	GG7 MTR to EE4 TH	3,1	-1 Acq, Ger SAN
110	German SAN dr	4	NE
111	GG7 MTR to EE4 TH	4,6	-2 Acq

MMC LEGEND

MMC are identified in the replay play-by-play with a 3-character code:

- The first letter shows nationality (A/a or G/g) and size (Captial letter = squad, lower case = HS)
- The second character shows squad type (E = elite, 1 = 1st class, etc.)
- The third character is the MMC's identifier.

T1 German APh

112	AA4 ?z(?SS) to AA3		
113	DD3 8-1/MMGE/gEO to DD4		
114	DD3 malfHMGD/dEK to EE4		
115	BB5 9-1/HMGA/gEI to CC5		
116	BB4 PSKL/gER to BB5		
117	BB4 ?EE(?u) to CC4		
118	BB5 ?t(?Y) to BB4		

T1 German CCPh

119	EE4 gains ?Z		
120	DD4 gains ?NN		
121	CC5 gains ?DD		
122	BB5 gains ?b		
123	AA5 gains ?Q		
124	German secretly records he will take the T4 reinforcements		

TURN 2

T2 Ami RPh

125	Wind Change DR	3,4	NE
126	Z9 wd9-1 self rally attempt	6,2	rallies
127	BB9 a1J MMC self rally attempt	6,1	rallies
128	Z9 A1Y	1,6	rallies
129	Z9 A1D	1,3	rallies
130	GG7 AEL	3,6	rallies
131	U4 A1M attempts deployment	3,5	fails
132	AA5 claims WA		
133	EE4 attempt repair of HMGD	2	succeeds

T2 Ami PFPh

134	GG7 MTR/a1S vs EE4 TH 7(0)	6,4	NE, loses ROF
135	GG7 AEL fires BAZP vs EE4 TH 4(+4)	4,6	NE
136	GG7 AEL FF6 A1N vs EE4 6(+2)	4,2	PTC
137	EE4 gEK PTC	5,4	Pinned
138	EE7 8-1/AEU/MMG/AET vs EE4 16(+1)	3,3	2MC, loses ROF
139	EE4 gEK 2MC	5,3	breaks

T2 Ami MPh

140	AA9 ?AA(2) to BB7		
141	CC5 9-1/HMGA/gEI D1F vs BB7 2(0)	5,5	NE, loses ROF
142	BB5 gER fires PSKL vs BB7 8(+3)	5,1	misses
143	Z9 wd9-1 to AA9		DMs AA8 gEN
144	Z9 A1Y to Z7		
145	BB5 gER SFF vs Z7 1(-1)	1,5	PTC
146	Z7 A1Y PTC	3,6	pins
147	T5 CX/A1P to X4 remove CX		
148	R5 CX/a1T to V4 remove CX		
149	BB9 a1J declares CX to BB6		
150	BB5 PSKL/gER claims WA		
151	BB5 gER FPF vs BB6 2(-2)	3,4	NMC, place 1RFP
152	BB6 CX/a1J NMC	2,1	passes
153	BB5 gER FPF vs BB6 2(-2)	2,3	1MC
154	BB6 CX/a1J 1MC	5,2	breaks
155	U4 CX/7-0/A1M to Y5		remove CX
156	GG7 8-0 declares CX to GG6		
157	DD4 8-1/MMGE/gEO vs GG6 4(-3)	4,2	2MC, loses ROF
158	GG6 CX/8-0 2MC	3,1	passes, Ger SAN
159	German SAN dr	3	NE
160	GG6 CX/8-0 to EE3, claims WA		
161	EE6 CX/a1Q to DD6, claims WA, loses CX		
162	Z9 MMGE/A1D to X7		

T2 Ami DFPh

163	AA5 8-0/MMGF/gEE vs Z7 4(+1)	3,6	NE, loses ROF

T2 Ami AFPh

164	BB7 AEF fires BAZL vs BB5 TH 8(+4)	3,5	miss
165	BB7 AEF vs CC5 4(+2)		

TURN 1

AMERICAN COMMENTS

J.R. used a good and conventional defense. In this turn he made a nice delaying action, although he's likely to lose one 238. The wounding of my 9-1 hurts as it keeps that group from taking position behind the central hedgerow to threaten the stone building (the 'Alamo') with a 0 TEM shot if it's using WA. I was lucky though not to lose more men, good thing the GIs are so tough when broken. J.R. takes the two -1 leaders since the average leader morale is higher, but I still prefer the 9-2. I think I've accounted for all the dummies, but I will go out of my way to eliminate them to avoid 'cheap concealment tricks' in the final turns. Despite a relatively good turn for J.R., I still think it's an easy decision for him to take the reinforcements.

GERMAN COMMENTS

I can't complain—losing the heavy sucks, of course, but winging the 9-1 and breaking his buddies is a nice start, and the Amis seem to have a problem maintaining their Elite morale. I was surprised and somewhat dismayed to find my brokie routing forward to a nest of vipers—I'm sure the concealed boys in AA9 will make short work of him. I am a little concerned about the pending threat on my right—those guys are past me and will soon be in my backfield.

In my half of the turn I didn't get the heavy back, sadly, but have consolidated along my line of defense. Hmm, what's going to stop those guys on the right? I'm so fixated in setting up my festung I neglected to pay them much mind. The 8-0 and MMG could have AM'd to X4, then Advanced to W4. That would've given Paul's 7-0 and his follow-ups something to think about. Best not to dwell on it—failing the self-rally in AA8 means I'm good as down a halfsquad already so I can't afford to spread myself out. As expected, I decide to take the reinforcements.

NEUTRAL COMMENTS

Paul's Americans storm on board, sending two-and-a-half squads up the American left and everyone else up the middle and right. J.R.'s Germans get some nice results, breaking 2.5 squads, including ELRing two elite squads down to first-line status, and wounding the best American leader, Mr. 9-1. Paul took a real chance moving two squads and his 9-1 as a great big honking stack and they paid the price, although there were no permanent casualties other than wounding the American 9-1. This might have been even more embarrassing if that was a –2 German leader directing those shots, especially if J.R. got a little more ROF. These (now) first-line American tend to rally quickly with their 8-morale backside so they should be back in the action before long. We'll have to see if losing the 9-1's –1 modifier hurts Paul in the long run. Paul may have thought that the Y5 dudes were dummies or maybe he was goading J.R. to take a shot just to see who was real under those German concealment counters, or perhaps to allow his flankers get across the board freely. A safer route would have been through the woods up the Z hexrow. Once this stack broke J.R. immediately does the right thing and takes a follow-up shot from BB5, even though that shot had a very close LOS. But the shot was good and the result even better. If the LOS was blocked J.R. wouldn't have had any ill effect since there were no GO Germans in LOS to strip his concealment and he kept ROF anyway. Paul was lucky not to suffer any more casualties on the 6(0) and 6(-1). It remains to be seen if breaking the German HMG has any lasting impact.

I was a little surprised that J.R. didn't fire the EE4 MMG into its boresighted location when the American HS entered it during the American Movement Phase. The resulting 4(-2) against the wimpy 6-morale unit would have caused a morale check on a DR of 8 or better and casualties on a DR of 4 or better. J.R. must have felt that keeping up the concealment charade was worth more than shooting at a measly half-squad. I also wonder a little bit about the wisdom of the other HMG's ROF tear that was continually directed at the broken American HS in DD7. That was a lot of shooting for just a HS. Sure the HS may be eliminated, but there is also a chance that continual firing will break the one remaining HMG, something the Germans can't afford to happen at this point.

J.R. laments his HS's forward rout from DD6 to AA8, but unfortunately this was illegal. Once the HS moved into CC7 it has LOS to the known Americans in U5, and hence would be routing closer to them if he continued into BB7. At this point the broken HS could have changed direction and continued routing east across the road. One other minor rules gaff: The German dummies in R5 that were removed in the advance phase should have remained on-board until the CC phase and be removed then.

In his half of the turn, as expected, J.R. pulls his guys out of harm's way and does some adjusting of his troops. Note the nice tactic he employs to break up the large dummy stack in AA5 into several smaller dummy stacks. The Germans failed to clear the jammed HMG during the rally phase but he still has two MMGs active, a functioning HMG in the front lines, and another 50% chance to fix the broken HMG in the upcoming rally phase.

I was a little surprised that J.R. didn't send the Y5 guys to intercept the American flankers. He must be worried about getting his guys cut off. I think I may have moved them to X3, with a possible advance to W3. This may have forced the Americans to either engage these Germans, or take a longer route to the VC area. Either way would have bought the Germans another turn of time. As it is the Americans have already turned the flank and are looking to purchase some cheap real estate in the German backfield.

As we head into turn two J.R.'s troops are sitting concealed in good TEM and mutually supporting positions. But Paul has a lot of potential firepower upfront and some guys lurking around the German right flank. Let's see how Paul makes his next move.

TURN 2

AMERICAN COMMENTS

A good turn for me with the elimination of two 238s. I personally dislike declaring No Quarter. However prisoners are a liability, especially to McCorry, who is hoping to acquire and destroy the HMG. I ran McCorry out to draw fire away from my troops in the woods. I figured he would probably break, but I hoped he wouldn't get KIA'd and hoped also to use up the MMG's rate. I got lucky and passed the 2MC and that cost J.R. a 238. After his great performance, I reward McCorry by first sending over a friendly-fire mortar CH and then drawing the sniper to him. I thought I'd break him at worst. I've also been lucky not to lose other leaders to J.R.'s sleeping sniper.

GERMAN COMMENTS

Wow, these 8 Morale broken Amis just come storming back! At least I sorted out my heavy—only to see Paul smack down the manning HS. Great turn for Paul as he neatly eliminates two of my half squads and puts one of my HMGs out of the game, at least temporarily. I'm getting squeezed already and it's only turn two. I think he's being a little cautious on my right—I thought one of those squads would be camping out in W3 or so awaiting my reinforcements. Hey, who am I to critique Paul's game, the way things are going! It doesn't look too bad just glancing at the board...except half my stacks are dummies!

Hey, check me out, firing out of AA5 in Prep and then slickly dropping WA to get the +3 versus X6. We're using **all** the rules, baby. The Advance Phase is the most underrated part of the game and here's a classic example. What the heck do I do with my MMG in DD3? EE4 seems a good choice except for that big fat acq sitting there. Hopping back to DD2 covers the corner but concedes the hedge along DD4/DD5. Also, I have to protect my broken 8-1 who held tight rather than move toward GG4 as he would've had to if he'd routed. I have a few too many eggs in my AA5 basket, but the BB5 PSK halfsquad would've faced a 6(-1) from BB6 trying to AM to BB4 on the way to BB3. I'm staring at a lot of firepower across the board and sure am looking forward to some extra bodies. As for Paul's 8-0, at least his medal will be posthumous—the guy even ate a hot sniper for heavens' sake. Note he was able to destroy the HMG in Final Fire, despite having First Fired it—since I had a unit adjacent it could still Sustain in Final Fire, allowing the 8-0 to destroy it according to A9.3.

NEUTRAL COMMENTS

As expected, in his turn Paul's broken Americans rally and the Germans manage to fix the HMG. Paul preps with a few units and then in his movement phase continues closing with the enemy. Note that the American prep fire with the bazooka against units behind bocage is illegal, but perfectly understandable given the old wording of B9.5. I won't continue dwelling on this if it comes up again. This BAZ squad fired its inherent FP after firing the BAZ. If the order was flip-flopped the inherent firepower may have stripped concealment on the Germans first, resulting in a possibly easier to hit roll for the BAZ, at the risk of cowering and not being able to fire the SW at all.

I guess that Paul doesn't feel that he has enough units to bother J.R with as evidenced by his 8-0 who instructs his squad to stay behind as he scouts out the bocage. At first I thought that this was an overly aggressive move, especially given that the American 9-1 is already wounded, but *especially* when the 4(-3) shot against him generated a 2MC. But the 8-0 shrugs it off, gets behind the German brokies, and eliminates them for failure to rout, so the move was pure genius. In the advance phase he goes into Z4 to try and grab the German HMG. Also in the advance phase Paul continues his aggressive SMC tricks when his 7-0 advances into Z4 to try and get a foothold into the bocage. I think Paul is hoping that he'll get WA here when the Germans in AA5 slink back into the higher TEM of the stone building.

In his turn J.R preps his guys in the AA5 stone building and adjusts the positions of everyone else. During the defensive fire phase the 8-0 sustains his recently acquired German HMG to destroy it. Paul tries to dissuade J.R. from subsequently moving/advancing in Z4 by firing his SW MTR for some –2 acquisition. Unfortunately the American 8-0 in Z4 doesn't get the memo and he calls fair catch when he mistakes the incoming mortar shell for a football. The resulting critical hit results in his both wounding and ELRing. The cries of embarrassment from the now wounded 7-0 are heard by the German sniper who comes along to try to put him out of his misery. In the end this 8-0 was exchanged for the German 238 HS. I'm not sure that's a good trade since Paul now only has 2 fully functioning leaders and his wounded 9-1.

Some interesting bocage play during this turn is worth mentioning: After prep firing the Germans in AA5 give up their bocage WA and sneak back into the stone building's TEM. This allows the American 7-0 to immediately claim WA, which gives Paul the foothold he was looking for over here. During the movement phase note that moving concealed units don't lose their concealment for solely moving behind a bocage hexside in LOS of the enemy (e.g., event 123, per B9.55.) Also note that in event 133 the German HS must claim WA when the American become adjacent since he has no in-hex TEM to utilize (mandatory wall advantage.) Finally, the American X7 advancing fire shot against AA5 incurs

		6,1	NE
166	X7 A1D vs AA5 4(+2)		
		6,5	NE
167	Y5 7-0/A1M vs AA5 4(0)		
		2,6	NE

T2 Ami RtPh

168	BB6 BAZG/a1J Low Crawls to CC7		
169	Ami declares NQ		
170	EE4 DM/gEK eliminated for failure to rout		
171	AA8 DM/gEN eliminated for failure to rout		

T2 Ami Aph

172	X7 MMGE/A1D X6		
173	Y5 7-0 Z4		
174	X4 A1P Y4		
175	V4 a1T W5		
176	EE3 CX/8-0 EE4		
177	BB7 BAZL/AEF BB6		
178	AA9 wd9-1 AA8		
179	GG7 MTR/a1S GG6 remove Acq from EE4		
180	DD6 a1Q CC7		
181	EE7 8-1/MMG/AET/AEU DD6, going CX		
182	FF6 A1N FF5		
183	GG7 BAZP/AEL FF6		

T2 Ami CC

184	DD6 gains ?B		
185	CC7 gains ?CC7		
186	W5 gains ?Y		
187	X6 gains ?V		

GERMAN TURN 2

T2 German RPh

188	Wind Change DR	1,4	NE
189	EE4 CX/8-0 attempts to recover gHMGD		
		3	succeeds
190	CC7 remove DM		
191	DD6 claims WA		

T2 German PFPh

192	AA5 8-0/MMGF/gEE vs Y4 4(0)		
		5,4	NE

T2 German MPh

193	DD3 ?HH(?W) AM DD2		
194	DD4 8-1/MMGE/gEO AM DD3		
195	EE4 CX/8-0/gHMGD vs DD3 6(+1)		
		4,2	NMC
196	DD3 8-1 NMC	6,4	breaks
197	DD3 gEO NMC	3,2	passes
198	CC5 9-1/HMGA/gEI AM CC4		
199	CC4 ?EE(?u) AM DD4		
200	BB4 ?t(?Y) AM AA4		
201	AA3 AM BB2		
202	BB5 PSKL/gER AM AA5		
203	BB6 claims WA		
204	AA5 drops WA, Z4 7-0 claims WA		

T2 German DFPh

205	EE4 CX/8-0 destroys gHMG		
206	GG6 a16 fires MTR at EE4 TH 7(0)		
		1,1	CH, ROF, -1 Acq
207	EE4 IFT 16(-1)	2,5	2MC
208	EE4 CX/8-0 2MC	6,6	breaks, ELRs to 7-0, wounds
209	EE4 DM/7-0 wound DR		
		3	just a flesh wound
210	GG6 a16 fires MTR at EE4 TH 7(-1)		
		1,3	hit, Ger SAN, -2 Acq
211	EE4 IFT 4(+1)	5,1	NE
212	German SAN dr	1	
213	German Sniper Direction and Distance		
		1,5	CC1
214	German Sniper goes to EE4, kills DM/wd7-0		
215	BB6 AEF fires BAZL vs CC4 7(+2)		
		5,4	miss
216	BB6 AEF vs CC4 6(+2)	4,5	NE
217	X6 MMGE/A1D vs AA5 8(+3)		
		4,3	NE, no ROF
218	Y4 A1P Y5 A1M vs AA4 6(0)		
		6,3	NE
219	DD6 CX/8-1/MMG/AET/AEU vs DD4 8(+2)		
		4,3	PTC, remove ?EE(?u)

T2 German AFPh

220	AA5 gER fires PSKL vs X6, stepping outside		
	TH 7(+4)	6,5	miss, elim PSK
221	CC4 9-1/gEI vs BB6 1(+1)		
		4,1	NE

T2 German APh

222	DD3 MMGE/gEO DD4
223	AA4 ?t(Y) AA3
224	DD2 ?HH(?W) CC2

T2 German CCPh

225	DD4 gains ?b
226	CC4 gains ?u

TURN 3

T3 Ami RPh

227	Wind Change DR	4,2	
228	CC7 a1J MMC self rally attempt		
		4,6	fails
229	DD3 DM/8-1 attempts self rally		
		5,2	fails, remove DM
230	AA5 gEE and gER combine into GEJ		

T3 Ami PFPh

231	GG6 a1S fires MTR vs DD4 TH 7(+2)		
		6,1	miss, no ROF, –1 Acq
232	X6 MMGE/A1D vs AA5 8(+3)		
		5,2	NE, no ROF

T3 Ami MPh

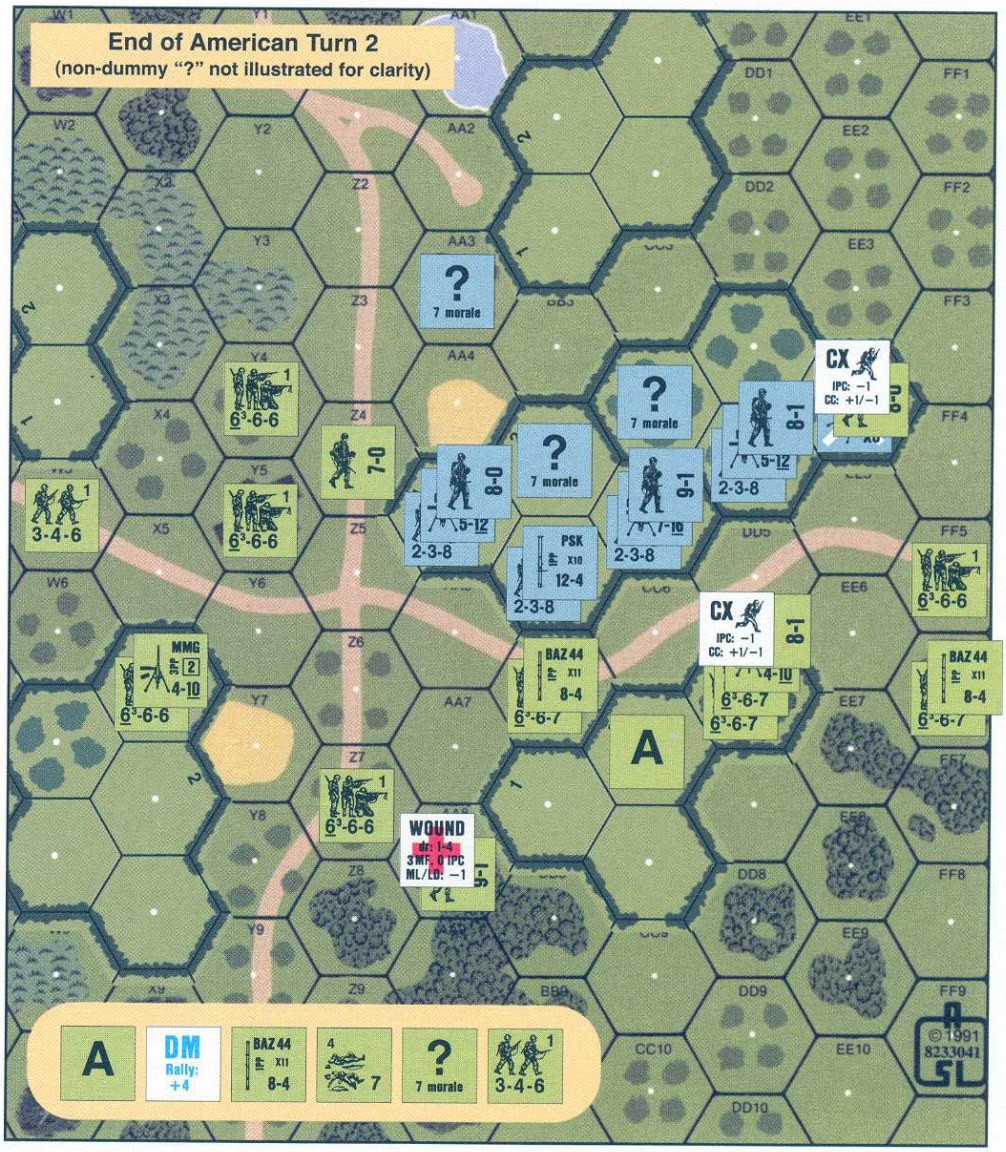
233	W5 ?Y(1) to Z4		
234	AA5 8-0/MMGF vs Z4 4(+1)		
		2,1	1MC, a1T loses ?Y, ROF, MG CA Z3
235	Z4 a1T 1MC	3,1	pass, Ger SAN
236	German SAN dr	2	
237	Sniper D & D	1,1	EE3 goes to FF5, pinning A1N
238	Y5 A1M AM to Z4		
239	Z4 A1M attempts to place Smoke, Smoke placement	1	succeeds place Smoke in AA4
240	Z4 7-0 declares CX to AA3 Remove ?t(?Y)		
241	AA3 CX/7-0 to BB2 Remove ?z(?SS)		
242	BB2 CX/7-0 to CC2 Remove ?HH(?W)		
243	Z7 A1Y to AA6		
244	CC4 9-1/HMGA/gEI D1F vs AA6 6(0)		
		2,4	1MC, ROF
245	AA6 A1Y 1MC	5,6	fails, ELRs to A2A
246	CC7 ?Z(1) to AA6		
247	CC4 9-1/HMGA/gEI D1F vs AA6 2(0)		
		5,4	NE, loses ROF
248	BB6 BAZL/AEF AM to CC6		
249	CC6 AEF attempts to place Smoke, Smoke placement dr	6	fails
250	DD6 ?B(8-1/MMG/AET/AEU) remove CX, declare AM, both Squads attempt to place Smoke, Smoke placement dr	1,5	one succeeds, Smoke in DD5
251	DD6 ?B(8-1/MMG/AET/AEU) AM to CC6		
252	AA8 wd9-1 BB7		
253	FF6 AEL to DD5		
254	DD4 MMGE/gEO D1F vs DD5 8(+1)		
		5,5	NE, Cower
255	Y4 A1P to AA3		
256	CC4 9-1/HMGA/gEI Sustain SFF vs AA3 2(0)		
		4,5	NE, place 1RFP

T3 Ami DFPh

257	AA5 8-0/MMGF/GEJ vs Z4 20(+2)		
		6,1	1MC
258	Z4 A1M 1MC	5,3	breaks
259	Z4 a1T 1MC	3,2	pins

T3 Ami AFPh

260	AA3 A1P CC4 4(+2)	1,5	NE
261	CC6 8-1/MMG/AET/AEU/AEF vs AA5 12(+2)		
		4,4	PTC
262	AA5 8-0 PTC	1,4	passes
263	AA5 GEJ PTC	4,6	pins
264	CC6 AEF fires BAZL vs CC4 TH 8(+4)		
		4,6	misses
265	DD5 AEL fires BAZP vs DD4 9(+4)		
		2,2	hit, Ger SAN



only a +2 DRM [+1 grain and +1 orchard hindrances] and no bocage TEM since the target units have WA but the firing LOS does not cross the bocage hexside. J.R. could have given up this WA freely at any time [EXC: not immediately after a shot against these units has been declared] but waits until after they have fired during their prep fire phase.

A couple of minor errors: In the American CC phase the dudes in W5 should not have gained concealment since they are in LOS of the German dummies in AA3, which are considered unbroken per the index. What's with the zero DRM shot in event 150? I think the DRM should be +2 for the shot against the bocage vertex. Finally, the Americans in DD6 should not have lost concealment when they caused the PTC against the dummies in DD4 since there were no good order German units in LOS when they fired.

I really like the FPFing by J.R. this turn during the American movement phase. With a morale-8 firer, -2 shot, and the chance to leave residual it should have been an easy choice. One tough decision for J.R. this turn came during the German advance phase. Advancing HS O and his MMG into EE4 might prevent American N from turning the flank. Unfortunately a –2 acquisition from Paul's MTR SW is sitting in EE4. J.R. needs to keep his remaining MMCs in GO as long as possible, especially since he's lost a squad equivalent this turn, so he advances them to DD4 instead. ASL is full of tough decisions and this is one of them. Give your opponent enough tough decisions and eventually he might make a mistake that you can take advantage of.

Heading into turn 3 J.R. has a nice looking second line of defense backstopping his main defensive line. Unfortunately they're all dummies. Surely Paul must know that?

TURN 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS

Another good turn. The key to most American attacks is to keep recycling broken units into the action (and of course smoke). The breeze is blowing my way generally, but it still prevents me from putting smoke grenades where I'd like it this turn. Instead I end up covering Eddy's 'run through the dummies'. I kept my halfsquad's concealment

and didn't attack in close combat as I figure I have the advantage now. I gave up my low odds attack to try to avoid a ROF tear in J.R.'s prep (although I'll have to drop concealment to restrict his fire). I have to look up if firing into J.R.'s own hex defines his MG CA or not. I know that's true if firing up or down a stairwell. [The firer can choose which CA to use for in Location attacks.]

GERMAN COMMENTS

Yeesh, my poor wee MMG halfsquad in DD4 is the latest to bite the dust. My 9-1 stack is looking awfully lonely, with nothing but a mewling 8-1 to keep them company. AA5 was a bit of a drag—I wish I could've squished that pesky half squad but the combination of a Pin and the retained concealment made it tough, and now my fire will be constrained to within the hex if Paul drops ? next turn. I will be lucky to still have troops on the map when the reinforcements arrive. Paul knows he has plenty of time and is taking no chances. A lesser player would be right up in my 9-1's face but Paul is hanging back behind the hedge, knowing there's no need to take any chances. My troops are going nowhere with the squad in BB2 behind me and every other available hex zeroed in by a lot of firepower.

Now my 9-1 took one in the shoulder—I hope I get **one** of those guys back. AA5 is holding out but will soon be Encircled as well. I decided to stay rather than fall back to AA4—I'll be taking a lot of fire no matter where I am but here at least I enjoy +3 terrain. Recombining now doesn't look like such a great idea. A spare HS would at least allow me to slide a guy over to BB4 and maybe pull some shots away from AA5.

NEUTRAL COMMENTS

My previous question is answered during the American movement phase when Paul removes **all** the dummies with a CXing 7-0. Sweet move! The only other time I saw that move I was on the receiving end and Brian Youse was dishing it out. Attention Germans: Enemy units in the backfield!

In his movement phase Paul uses some nice smoke placement with his initial moves to screen subsequent moves. He also employs a combination of assault moving and smoke placement. Two more illegal bazooka shots this turn, but truth be told if I hadn't heard the Perry-sez I'd be firing those SCW at the bocage as well. Obviously a lot of people are playing this wrong if players the caliber of J.R. and Paul are playing it this way. I'm sorry, I know that I said I wouldn't metion it again but I feel the need to do so since they actually got a hit and affect this time. No more, I promise.

The Germans lose another HS and at the end of the American turn 3 they are down to 1.5 squads, and 1 of those squads is about to be frozen when the American drops concealment. That was another subtle but powerful move that newbies should take note of. Even though he advanced into an enemy-occupied hex Paul opted to not attack and kept concealment, resulting in the German CC attack having no affect. Paul then dropped concealment in the German half of the turn so that J.R.'s units could fire out of the hex. This is the lesser-employed infantry version of the AFV "sleaze-freeze." Paul has made some nice moves to conserve his MMCs as demonstrated by first using SMCs aggressively and now by employing one American HS to freeze the last remaining full German squad that is onboard. This leaves only one German MMC, a HS, free to move in the German half of the turn.

One rules error this turn: In the German rally phase the wounded 9-1 American leader should have lost concealment when he was rallying his troops since the Germans in CC in AA5 are still good order (no melee yet) despite having enemy units in their location.

As we head into turn 4 J.R. is running out of troops fast. Where's the cavalry?

TURN 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS

The heart of ASL's decision process shows this turn. It's a tough decision whether to try some low-odds shots and break/encircle enemy units or to make use of the many advantages of maneuver (SMOKE, advance fire, denying rout paths and killing in CC). Contrary to my usual form I lean more heavily on prep fire this turn, but it works out well for me. The wind prevented me from trying infantry smoke into AA5 again this turn. Still I'm rolling pretty hot and J.R.'s stone cold. The last at-start Germans are gone in CC. J.R. brings his reinforcements on in a group in the U-X hexrows. The sturmbahnfuhrer's radio calls to his komrades are answered in a strange NJ accent, "Fahgedabot yous friends, dey're kaput".

GERMAN COMMENTS

Not a German soul left on the board—looks like I'll be assaulting my way back into the VC area. Paul neatly dissected my remaining positions—CC4 looked pretty hopeless but I was hoping AA5 would stand up a bit longer. I think I needed to throw some more fire out. It's a shame the Bocage just eats up the residual firepower. He's well positioned to meet my fresh troops, but hey, I have 8 morale, anything can happen!

I'm trying the right flank—it's a long shot but if I can get into and control W4, maybe I can hang on. My alternative is to try to crack the BB2 field but I feel Paul can cover that threat much more easily and keep me pinned in the corner. Here I'm already next to my objective hex, and have a good chance of grabbing it. But holding it? Four more turns is an awfully long time.

266	DD4 IFT 8(0)	2,4	1MC
267	DD4 gEO 1MC	3,6	breaks, loses WA, DD5 gains WA
268	German Sniper dr	4	NE
269	DD5 AEL vs DD4 6(0)	1,5	1MC
270	DD4 gEO 1MC	4,6	fails, eliminated

T3 Ami RtPh

271 Z4 DM/A1M Y5
272 AA6 DM/A2A AA8

T3 Ami APh

273 CC2 CX/7-0 DD2 DMs bk8-0 in DD3
274 AA3 A1P BB2
275 AA6 ?Z(1) AA5, becomes CX
276 BB7 wd9-1 AA8, becomes CX
277 GG6 MTR/a1S GG5, remove Acq
278 DD5 BAZP/AEL EE5
279 CC6 8-1 CC7
280 CC6 BAZL/AEF BB6
281 CC6 AEU DD5
282 X6 MMGE/A1D Y6

T3 Ami CCPh

283 AA5 Ami Ambush dr (-1) 6
284 AA5 German Ambush dr (+1) 6 no ambush
285 AA5 American declines to attack
286 AA5 German attacks 1:2(-1) 6,1 NE, ?Z(1) retains concealment
287 BB2 gains ?V
288 DD2 gains ?L
289 Z4 gains ?EE
290 BB6 gains ?GG
291 CC6 gains ?VV
292 DD5 gains ?Y
293 EE5 gains ?TT
294 CC7 gains ?B
295 AA8 gains ?NN
296 FF5 A1N attempts to gain ? 5 fails
297 GG5 MTR/a1S attempts to gain ? 2 succeeds

GERMAN TURN 3

T3 German RPh

300 Wind Change DR 3,1
301 DD4 DM/8-1 self rally attempt 6,3 fails, lose DM
302 AA5 CX/a1Q drops ? place CC marker
303 AA8 ?NN(Wd/9-1) attempts to rally A2A 6,2 fails, lose DM
304 Y5 A1M lose DM
305 CC7 8-1 attempts to rally broken a1J 6,6 CR, remove a1J

T3 German PFPh

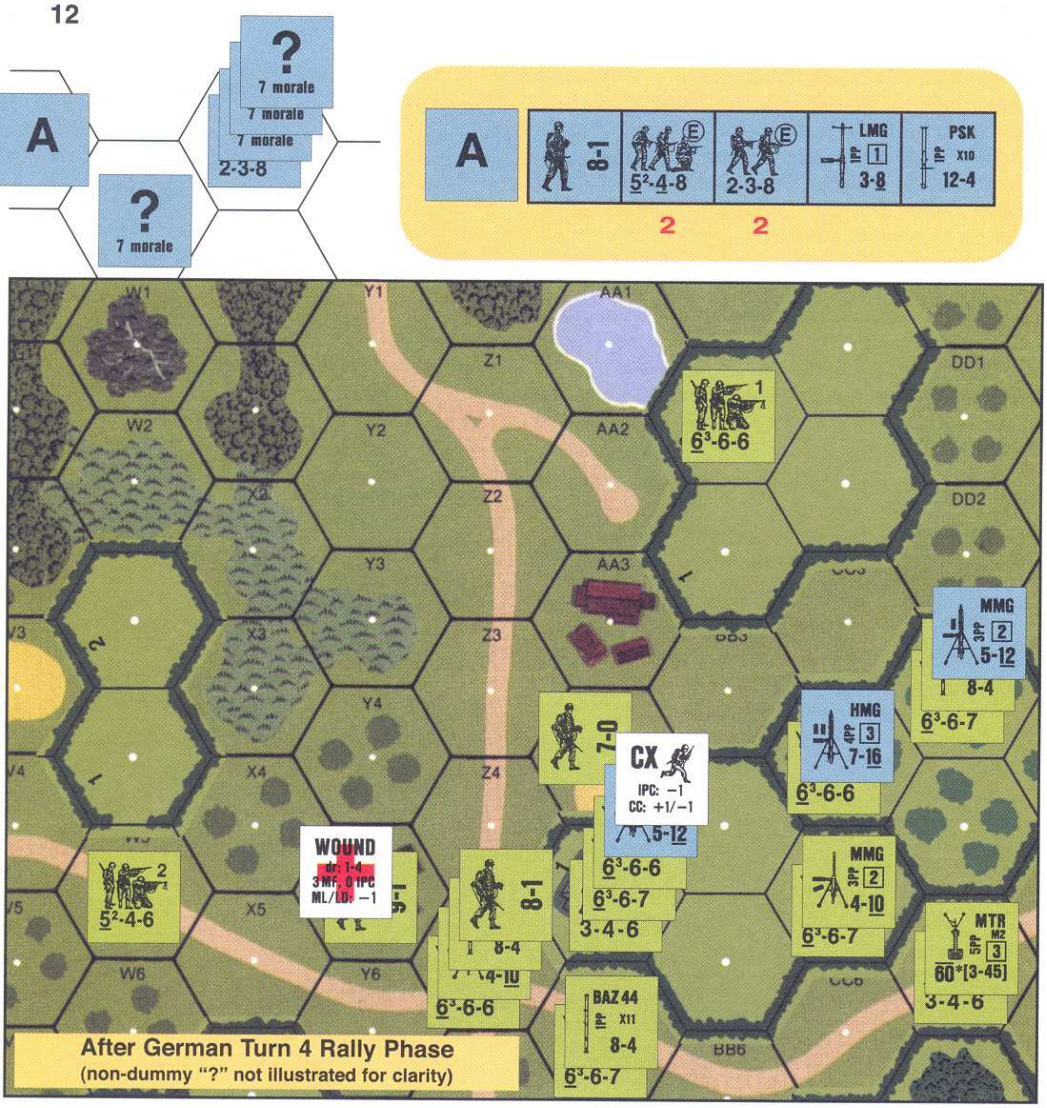
306 AA5 8-0/MMG/GEJ TPBF vs a1Q 30(+3) 6,3 1MC
307 AA5 a1Q 1MC 4,4 breaks, DM
308 CC4 9-1/HMG/gEI vs BB2 2(+1) 4,5 NE

T3 German MPh

309 None

T3 German DFPh

310 Y6 MMG/A1D vs AA5 8(+3) 1,6 NE, ROF
311 Y6 MMG vs AA5 4(+3) 5,1 NE
312 BB2 A1P vs CC4 6(+2) 1,2 1MC
313 CC4 9-1 1MC 5,4 breaks, DM
314 CC4 gEI 1MC 1,3 passes
315 CC4 gEI LLTC(+1) 3,5 pinned
316 CC6 MMG(only) vs CC4 4(+2) 2,2 cowers, PTC (NE)
317 EE5 AEL vs CC4 6(+1) 2,1 2MC, encircled
318 CC4 DM/9-1 2MC 3,6 wounds
319 CC4 DM/Wd/9-1 Wound Check dr 4, just a flesh wound



NEUTRAL COMMENTS

With surgical precision Paul removes the remaining at-start Germans from the board and starts to position his troops to engage the German reinforcements when they enter the board. At the end of the American portion of the turn there are no Germans left on board; good thing the victory conditions specify "game end." Paul has also satisfied the building control portion of the victory conditions since all building locations have been solely controlled by good order American MMCs at one point or another.

In the German half J.R.'s troop come on board against the relatively weak looking American left flank. With the W4-W5 bocage blocking many LOSs it should be relatively easy for Paul to adjust his forces. It looks like J.R. is making a move for hex W5, which will satisfy the German portion of the victory conditions. The question is, assuming he gains control of it in German turn 5, will he be able to maintain control until the end of turn 8?

TURN 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS

Didn't realize my officers are really commissars, they shoot their second US halfsquad. Time to go slow and steady and not take much risk, except with Cpl Eddy (aka 'the rocket').

GERMAN COMMENTS

In retrospect I should've kept concealment in U4 and taken that crack in Prep—but Paul couldn't get into position to hurt me there. The suicide 7-0 effectively clogs my X0 halfsquad—not that he had much chance of progress versus the mass of greenies up the hexrow. I think a halfsquad could've been spared for the left flank just to keep the Americans honest. Paul is now nicely deployed along the X hexrow and getting to W5 in tact looks like a real chore.

Tricky here, lucky to get my HS into the marsh only Pinned. Dinging the 2nd liner down to a greenie halfsquad is a small victory, but I'll take it. I low-crawled to V3 because my 8-1 there can direct rally attempts without loss of concealment, another nifty Bocage feature. I foresee a grinding GI assault coming up—lots of bodies hedgehopping their way toward my position.

NEUTRAL COMMENTS

More aggressive leader tricks by Paul! Paul is really taking MMC conservation to a whole new level. After seeing where the Americans came on board Paul is wasting no time and counter attacks immediately. By the end of the turn the Americans have some serious firepower in the form of 4.5 squads positioned on one side of the W3-W4 bocage while the Germans have two GO squad equivalents and a stack of brokies on the other. I think it is going to take some seriously outstanding play to pull this one out by the Germans, but J.R. is exactly the right player to make it happen.

One minor rules error this turn: The subsequent first fire shot against the pinned German half squad in the marsh (event 427) should have had a –1 DRM and not –2 since FFNAM no longer applies once the unit pinned.

TURN 6

AMERICAN COMMENTS

Managing to break most of my MGs. Still things are on track.

GERMAN COMMENTS

Hey, I think I may have finally killed as many Americans as Paul has! Now I'm really getting squeezed into a corner. I need to blow back that big stack in W4 to have a chance here, and then weather the monster return shot from X3. Oh yeah, there's a squad in V4 to consider as well. Paul has really made the most of his numerical advantage, leaving me no easy options. Hmm, good thing I took the reinforcements—otherwise it's game over at this point.

Oh, stupid little mistakes. I dropped WA in V2 to give my V3 LMG/squad a chance to fall back—the woods would keep it out of LOS from the X3 killstack. Instead I somehow forgot my plan by the time I was moving and made the ill-advised move to U3. The swell shooting by my V1 halfsquad is for naught. I don't have many chances here and I can't afford that sort of error.

NEUTRAL COMMENTS

Paul continues his assault but the Germans are in position to repulse it. Unfortunately J.R.'s dice go stone cold at the worst possible time, while defensive firing during the American movement phase. This cold streak continues right through the defensive fire phase. J.R.'s one good shot is the snake eyes during his prep fire phase. This of course activates the American sniper but at least all it did was knock down the German sniper a notch. It's not like J.R. was getting much recent action from his sniper anyway. To rub salt in the wound Paul throws in another critical hit from his mortar. At least J.R. took down an American HS in the American CC phase.

I think the key moment for this turn, and maybe a key moment of the game, came when J.R. had to decide what to do with the German 548/lmg in V3. He probably does the right thing by forgoing the 8(+2) against the large American stack in W4. Even if he manages to

320 CC4 gEI 2MC 1,2 passes
321 DD2 7-0 drops ? DMs broken 8-0 in DD3

T3 German RtPh
322 DD3 DM/8-0 to CC4
323 AA5 DM/a1Q to Y5

TURN 4

T4 Ami RPh
324 Wind Change DR 3,5 NE
325 Y5 broken A1M attempts self rally 6,2 rallies
326 Y5 remove DM from broken a1Q
327 AA8 ?NN(wd/9-1) attempts to rally broken A2A 2,4 rallies
328 CC7 ?B(8-1) attempts to recover BAZ 1 succeeds
329 CC4 DM/wd/9-1 attempts self rally 5,3 fails, remove DM
330 CC4 DM/8-1 attempts self rally 3,4 fails, remove DM

T4 Ami PFPh
331 Y6 MMG/A1D vs AA5 8(+3) 4,4 cowers, NE
332 CC6 MMG/AET vs CC4 8(+2) 4,3 PTC, DMs bkn units
333 CC4 gEI PTC 6,5 pinned
334 BB2 A1P vs CC4 6(+2) 1,4 NMC
335 CC4 DM/wd/9-1 NMC 6,5 wounds
336 CC4 DM/wd/9-1 Wound Check dr (+1) 1 another wound
337 CC4 DM/8-1 NMC 4,3 passes
338 CC4 Pinned/gEI NMC 5,4 breaks, loses WA

T4 Ami MPh
339 Y5 A1M to Z4
340 Z4 ?EE(a1T) Assault Moves to AA4 gains WA
341 BB6 ?GG(BAZ/AEF) Assault Moves to AA6, attempts to place WP loses ?, gains WA
342 AA6 AEF WP Placement dr 6 fails, ends move
343 DD2 7-0 to BB3
344 GG5 ?JJ(MTR/a1S) to EE6
345 FF5 A1N to DD3 (via FF3 to save MF)
346 EE5 BAZ/AEL to DD4, attempts to pick up gMMG
347 DD4 AEL Recovery dr 4 succeeds
348 AA8 wd/9-1 to Y6 loses ?
349 DD5 ?Y(AEU) to AA6
350 AA5 8-0/MMG vs ?Y(AEU) 4(+1) 5,6 NE, lose ROF
351 CC7 BAZ/8-1 drop ?, to Y6
352 AA8 A2A to X5

T4 Ami DFPh
353 AA5 GEJ vs Y6 4(0) 2,6 NE

T4 Ami AFPh
354 Y6 BAZ/8-1 and wd/9-1 combine to fire
355 BAZ vs AA5 8(+5) 2,6 miss
356 AA6 BAZ vs AA5 9(+5) 6,1 miss
357 AA6 AEF/AEU vs AA5 12(+3) 5,2 PTC
358 AA5 8-0 PTC 2,4 passes
359 AA5 GEJ PTC 2,4 passes
360 DD4 gMMG/AEL vs AA5 6(+3) 6,1 NE
361 Z4 A1M vs AA5 6(+3) 6,2 NE, encircles AA5

T4 Ami RtPh
362 CC4 DM/wd/9-1/8-1/gEI eliminated failure to rout

T4 Ami APh
363 Z4 A1M to AA5 CX
364 AA4 ?EE(a1T) to AA5 CX
365 AA6 AEU to AA5 CX
366 Y6 9-1 to Y5
367 X5 A2A to W5
368 BB2 A1P to BB1
369 BB3 7-0 AA4 assumes WA
370 DD3 A1N to CC4
371 DD4 BAZ/gMMG/AEL to DD3
372 EE6 ?JJ(MTR/a1S) to DD5
373 Y6 BAZ/8-1/MMG/A1D to Z5
374 CC6 MMG/AET to CC5

T4 Ami CCPh
375 AA5 Ami Ambush dr (-1) 5
376 AA5 German Ambush dr 5
377 AA5 Ami designates A1M and AEU at 2:1
378 AA5 German designates 8-0/GEJ vs A1M and AEU at 1:2
379 AA5 Ami 2:1(+1) 3,2 elim 8-0/GEJ
380 AA5 German 1:2(-1) 6,2 NE
381 AA5 gains ?EE
382 AA4 gains ?GG
383 AA6 gains ?L
384 Y5 gains ?HH
385 W5 gains ?NN
386 BB1 gains ?Y
387 CC4 gains ?V
388 CC5 gains ?VV
389 DD3 gains ?Z
390 Z5 BAZ/8-1 Concealment Gain dr 4 succeeds, gains ?TT
391 Z5 MMG/A1D Concealment Gain dr (-1) 5 fails

GERMAN TURN 4

T4 German RPh
392 U0 ?Z(8-1/LMG/GEK/PSK/GEO/gER/gEO)
393 X0 ?VV(3x?/gED)
394 W0 ?NN(?)
395 Wind Change DR 4,3 NE
396 Y5 wd/9-1 attempts to rally a1Q 6,6 eliminates a1Q
397 CC4 A1N attempts to recover gHMG 1 succeeds
398 Z5 8-1 transfers BAZ to A1D
399 AA5 A1M attempts to recover gMMG (+1) 4 succeeds
400 AA5 hex contents claim WA

T4 German PFPh
401 None

T4 German MPh
402 V-1 ?Z(8-1/LMG/GEK/PSK/GEO/gER/gEO) to V3
403 X-1 ?VV(?x2) Assault Moves to X0
404 AA5 AEU/a1T/gMMG/A1M vs X1 6(+2) 2,3 NMC, elim dummies
405 W0 ?NN(?) to V-1

T4 German DFPh
406 Z5 eliminate BAZ
407 AA6 eliminate BAZ
408 DD3 eliminate BAZ

T4 German AFPh
409 None

T4 German APh
410 X-1 ?DD(gED) to X0
411 V-1 ?NN(?) to V0
412 V3 ?u(gER) to U4
413 V3 ?W(gEO/PSK/GEO) to V2, claims WA

T4 German CCPh
414 None

TURN 5

T5 Ami RPh
415 Wind Change DR 4,2 NE

T5 Ami PFPh
416 W5 A2A vs U4 2(0) 5,5 cowers, NE

T5 Ami MPh
417 AA4 ?NN(7-0) to AA2
418 V2 German momentarily reveals 238 to strip ?
419 AA2 7-0 to X0, bounces off gED to Y1, gED loses ?
420 Z5 MMG/A1D/?T(8-1) to Y3
421 AA5 ?GG(gMMG/A1M) to Y4
422 AA5 ?EE(AEU/a1T) to Y4 replace ?GG w/?EE on entire stack
423 DD3 ?Z(gHMG/squad) to BB3
424 AA6 ?L(AEF) to X4
425 V3 8-1/LMG/GEK vs X4 4(0) 4,5 NE
426 DD5 ?JJ(MTR/a1S) to AA6
427 CC4 ?V(gHMG/A1N) to BB4
428 CC5 ?VV(MMG/AET) to Z5, loses ? to X0

T5 Ami DFPh
429 U4 gER vs W5 2(0) 2,4 PTC
430 W5 A2A PTC 5,2 Pins
431 X0 gED vs Y1 4(0) 2,2 cowers, 1MC
432 Y1 7-0 1MC 2,3 passes

T5 Ami AFPh
433 X4 AEF vs V3 4(+2) 4,5 NE
434 BB1 A1P vs X0 4(+1) 3,5 NE

T5 Ami RtPh
435 None

T5 Ami APh
436 V3 marked with WA
437 AA6 ?JJ(2) Z6
438 Y1 7-0 to X1
439 Y3 MMG/A1D/?TT(1) X2
440 Y4 ?EE(3) X3
441 Y4 ?Y(1) X4
442 Z5 MMG/AET Y6
443 BB4 ?V(2) AA5
444 BB3 ?Z(2) AA3

T5 Ami CCPh
445 BB1 gains ?D
446 X4 all under ?Y

T5 German RPh
447 Wind Change DR 2,4

T5 German PFPh
448 U4 gER vs W5 2(0) 6,5 NE

T5 German MPh
449 X0 to W1
450 X2 8-1/MMG/A1D 8(-2) vs W1 4,3 2MC, 4RFP
451 W1 gED 2MC 1,5 Pins
452 X2 8-1/MMG/A1D SFF vs W1, sustaining MMG 4(-1) 6,6 NE, elim MMG
453 V3 8-1/LMG/GEK Assault Move to U3
454 W5 A2A vs U3 4(+1) 5,4 NE, 1RFP
455 V2 ?W(3) AM to U2
456 dV0 ?NN(?) AM to U1

T5 German DFPh
457 Z6 MTR vs U4 TH 7(0) 3,2 Hit, ROF, -1 Acq
458 U4 4(0) 4,3 PTC
459 U4 gER PTC 2,6 passes
460 Z6 MTR vs U4 TH 7(-1) 1,6 Hit, ROF, -2 Acq
461 U4 4(0) 6,4 NE
462 Z6 MTR vs U4 TH 7(-2) 6,3 Hit, lose ROF
463 U4 4(0) 5,4 NE
464 Y6 MMG/AET vs U4 8(0) 1,6 1MC
465 U4 Pin/gER 1MC 5,5 fails, place DM
466 Y6 MMG vs U4 4(0) 4,1 1MC
467 U4 DM/gER 1MC 2,4 passes
468 X3 a1T/gMMG/A1M vs W1 12(+2) 4,6 NE, malf gMMG

T5 German AFPh
469 U3 8-1/GEK vs W5 4(0) 1,5 NMC
470 W5 A2A NMC 6,6 CR, ELR, replace with DM/aGR

T5 German RtPh
471 U4 DM/gER Low Crawl to V3
472 W5 DM/aGR to Y5

T5 German APh
473 U3 8-1/LMG/GEK V3
474 U2 ?W(PSK/GEO) to V2, claim WA
475 U2 ?Q(gEO) to V1
476 U1 ?NN(?) to U2

T5 German CCPh
477 V3 8-1/LMG/GEK gain ?HH
478 W1 Remove Pin

TURN 6

T6 Ami RPh
479 Wind Change DR 5,6
480 Y5 wd/9-1 attempts to rally DM/aGR 3,4 fails, remove DM
481 V3 8-1 attempts to rally DM/gER 3,5 fails, remove DM

T6 Ami PFPh
482 X2 8-1/A1D vs W1 6(-1) 3,2 2MC
483 W1 gED 2MC 3,5 breaks

T6 Ami MPh
484 X1 7-0 to V1, bounces off gEO back to W2, gEO loses ?
485 V1 gEO vs W2 4(-1) 3,6 NE, 2RFP
486 V1 gEO SFF vs W2 2(-1) 3,6 NE
487 Z6 MTR/a1S to X5
488 Y6 MMG/AET to W5, attempts to place Smoke 5 fails
489 X4 ?Y(2) to W5, two attempts to place Smoke 3,4 one succeeds
490 Place Infantry Smoke in W4
491 X3 a1T to W4
492 X3 A1M abandons malf gMMG, moves to X1
493 V2 GEO vs X1 4(+1) 3,6 NE, 1RFP
494 BB1 A1P to Z2
495 AA3 gMMG/GEL to X2
496 AA5 ?V(2) to X4
497 Y5 ?HH(wd/9-1) to X4, joins ?V

T6 Ami DFPh
498 V2 GEO FF vs W2 4(0) 5,3 NE
499 V3 8-1/LMG/GEK vs X2 8(+1) 5,5 NE

T6 Ami AFPh
500 X2 AEL vs W1 4(0) 2,5 NE
501 X1 A1M vs W1 6(0) 4,6 NE
502 X4 A1N W4 a1T vs V3 6(+2) 1,6 NE

T6 Ami RtPh
503 W1 DM/gED to U2
504 V3 8-1/DM/gER to U2

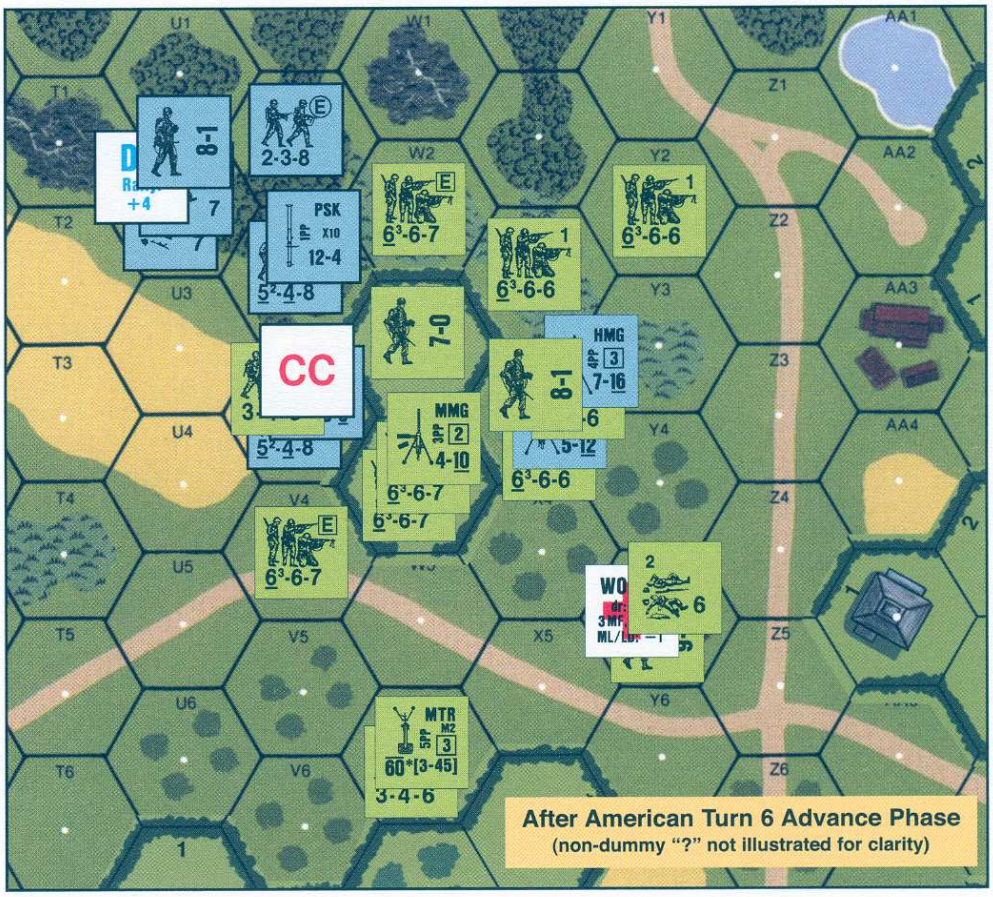
T6 Ami APh
505 W4 a1T V3 V3 loses WA
506 W5 AET transfers MMG to AEU
507 W5 ?Y(MMG/AEU/A) to W4, claims WA
508 W5 AET V4
509 X5 MTR/a1S W6
510 X4 wd/9-1 Y5
511 X4 gHMG/A1N X3
512 X2 AEL transfers gMMG to A1D
513 X2 8-1/gMMG/A1D X3
514 X2 AEL W2
515 W2 7-0 W3
516 X1 A1M X2
517 Z2 A1P Y2

T6 Ami CCPh
518 V3 a1T 1:2 vs GEK 1,5 miss
519 V3 GEK 3:2 vs a1T 1,5 eliminate a1T
520 X3 gains ?HH
521 Y5 gains ?TT

GERMAN TURN 6

T6 German RPh
522 Wind Change DR 5,6
523 U2 8-1 attempts to rally DM/gED 1,5 fails, remove DM
524 U2 8-1 attempts to rally DM/gER 2,3 rallies
525 Y5 wd/9-1 aGR attempts to rally 6,2 fails
526 V2 PSK/GEO drops WA, W3 7-0 gains WA

T6 German PFPh
527 V2 GEO vs W2 8(0) 1,6 1MC
528 W2 AEL 1MC 1,3 passes, Ger SAN
529 German Sniper dr 4 NE
530 V1 gEO vs W2 4(0) 1,1 K/1, Ami SAN



break the Americans in W4 he would still have to take a 12(+1) from the adjacent American 667. Unfortunately he assault moves the unit into U3, where it succumbs to a 16(+1) shot, instead of V2, where the worst it would have faced is a 6(+1) shot, since unlike walls and hedges LOS is blocked along bocage hexsides. Another previously mentioned feature of bocage occurs in the American advance phase when an American HS advances onto a German squad, causing the squad to lose wall advantage.

The American noose is now almost completely tightened as J.R.'s remaining few forces are crammed in the corner of the board, cut off from the victory area.

TURN 7

AMERICAN COMMENTS

The 'Rocket' makes a bold move to deny some rout paths and gets promoted to Colonel (actually ELR's to a 6+1). Still, even broken, he denies a rout path to the Germans in V2.

J.R.'s last turn charge is beaten down for the US win. A footnote that against the Germans in W2 I would have self broken my troops in X1 and X2 to deny J.R. the possibility of ambush (or a 2 by J.R. in CC, I would not attack to avoid rolling a 12) and infiltration into Y2 or Y3 victory hexes.

GERMAN COMMENTS

Somehow I didn't get waxed in the CC. However, the next player turn is my last crack at reaching paydirt so that Melee is as good as a kill anyway. I'm still facing a dangerous dash by my 8-1/LMG/548 through a gauntlet. Paul has this about wrapped up but I gotta give it a shot.

Ah well, that's all she wrote; no point in continuing so I must concede.

NEUTRAL COMMENTS

Paul's 7-0, even broken, prevents rout in his direction, causing another German to be eliminated for failure to rout. With his last ditch dash to reach the victory area stymied, J.R. concedes.

END OF GAME

AMERICAN COMMENTS

J.R. played well, but the Germans are very fragile, his ammo was short (ie few ROF shots), and his sniper was snoozing. This is a fun and fast scenario but is pro-US, in my opinion. I'd recommend using the US balance and/or adding a 548 to at-start Germans. It's also a good scenario for learning or teaching bocage. Hope you find this replay useful. Good gaming.

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GERMAN COMMENTS

I think my defense let Paul get too close—letting the American develop his attack is a path to failure, given his resources of both time and manpower. I feel the only chance the German has in this one is to try to meet the American at the board edge and pound him with ROF shots. However, I tried that in a warmup game and if the German doesn't get ROF, it's the same result only a lot sooner. The ability of the American to hold off some troops also takes the edge off the board edge defense. However, this scenario does do a good job of showing the uniqueness of Bocage. Paul ably demonstrated its usefulness on the attack—gaining concealment every friendly player turn and using non-assault movement in LOS without losing concealment are pretty nifty tools. Paul also took advantage of the heavily-carved-up battlefield to isolate my positions and kill a lot of my guys for failure to rout. The nature of the cool Bocage overlays allowed Paul to bide his time in a given field while he was pounding the crap out of me a couple hexes over.

In terms of gameplay I made a couple judgement errors—my Y5 force probably should've shifted to meet the threat from my right. Also, in the end game a reinforcing halfsquad on my left, plus a bunch of dummies, would have forced Paul to split his forces. My boneheaded failure to move from V3 to V2 after I set up the move was an act of dimwitted fatigue. At that point I was rearranging the deck chairs on my personal Titanic, but I still don't like to offer bad play even in a lost cause. I enjoyed playing Paul, more than the scenario itself, because I can count on Paul to teach me something new every time we play. I hope you picked up a pointer or two reading this as well.

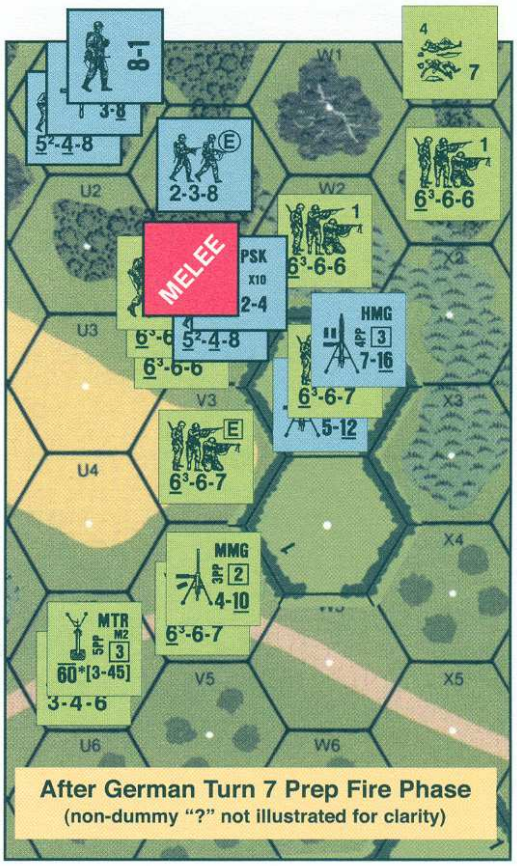
NEUTRAL COMMENTS

Throughout the match Paul used his leaders aggressively sending them to the front to draw fire and cut off rout paths while conserving his main MMC force. The big stack move on turn one could have ended much worse than it did, but there was really no permanent impact. The rest of his moves were more conservative, but each turn he positioned his forces well to both bring the Germans under fire from multiple locations and methodically eliminate them for failure to rout.

Also throughout the match I felt like J.R. was trying to win from tough positions. This was not because of any mistakes on his part; the two mistakes that J.R. mentioned above were significant, but not back-breakers by themselves. Rather, the German defeat was due to the overwhelming American force, the few available German MMCs, and Paul's relentless assault. A little more ROF from the German MGs would have helped tremendously.

Both players used the bocage rules to their advantage. Despite the lopsided match, this scenario replay does an excellent job of demonstrating the correct way to play the new WA rules (except for the SCW shots against the bocage). I hope the readers will set up the pieces and follow along to get the full gist of the new WA and bocage rules.

And since I'm harping on it, what about the scenario balance? Well, this just goes to show you that even the best scenario playtesting process, which I believe MMP has, can produce an unbalanced scenario once in a while. This is still an excellent learning scenario to try out the bocage rules for the first time. To balance it I would give the Germans the printed balance and perhaps add a 548 to the at-start forces. As the German player, don't be too proud to ask for this; as the American player don't hesitate to give it.



After German Turn 7 Prep Fire Phase
(non-dummy "?" not illustrated for clarity)

531 W2 AEL 1MC 5,6 fails, ELRs, replace with a1X
532 Ami Sniper dr 1 Biggie
533 Ami Sniper Location DR 3,5 EE7, selects Ger Sniper in FF5

T6 German MPh
534 V3 LMG/GEK Assault Moves to U3
535 W4 MMG/AEU/AEF vs U3 16(+1) 3,1 3MC, 4RFP
536 U3 GEK 3MC 6,1 breaks
537 U2 gER Assault Moves to V2

T6 German DFPh
538 Y2 A1P vs V2 6(+3) 4,5 NE
539 X2 A1M vs V1 6(+2) 3,1 1MC
540 V1 gEO 1MC 3,3 pass
541 W6 MTR/a1S vs U2 TH 7(+2)/7(+4) 2,2 Hit vs unconcealed, ROF, -1 Acq
542 U2 4(-1) 3,2 1MC, DMs broken gED
543 U2 8-1 1MC 4,1 passes
544 U2 DM/gED 6,6 eliminates gED
545 W6 MTR/a1S vs U2 TH 7(+1)/7(+3) 1,1 CH, ROF, -2 Acq
546 U2 Random Selection DR (leader/?) 1,6 ? selected
547 U2 4(-1)/16(-1) 3,5 PTC, eliminates ?
548 U2 8-1 PTC 2,6 passes
549 W6 MTR/a1S vs U2 TH 7(0) 5,2 Hit, no ROF
550 U2 4(-1) 4,6 NE
551 V4 AET vs V2 6(+2) 6,5 NE

T6 German AFPh
552 V2 gER vs W2 2(0) 4,4 cowers, NE

T6 German RtPh
553 U3 LMG/GEK U1
554 W2 a1X X1

T6 German APh
555 U2 8-1 U1
556 U1 gains ?SS

TURN 7

T7 Ami RPh
557 Wind Change DR 5,5 NE
558 X1 DM/a1X self rally attempt 5,1 fails, remove DM
559 Y5 wd/9-1 tries to rally aGR 4,5 fails
560 U1 8-1 tries to rally DM/GEK 1,5 succeeds

T7 Ami PFPh
561 V4 AET vs V2 6(+2) 6,5 NE
562 X2 A1M vs V1 6(+2) 6,5 NE

T7 Ami MPh
563 W4 AEU attempts to place Smoke 5 fails
564 W5 MMG/AEU to V5
565 X3 ?HH(8-1/gHMG/A1N) Assault Move to W3
566 X3 ?C(gMMG/A1D) Assault Move to W3, join ?HH
567 W3 7-0 declares CX, V3, U3, T3, S3
568 U1 8-1/LMG/GEK vs S3 8(0) 2,2 2MC, 1RFP
569 S3 7-0 2MC 6,3 breaks, ELRs to 6+1
570 W4 AEF to W3, attempts to place WP 2, succeeds, places in V2
571 V2 gER NMC(-1) 1,2 passes
572 V2 GEO NMC(-1) 1,2 passes
573 W3 AEF expends 4th MF back to W4
574 Y2 A1P to X0
575 W6 MTR/a1S to U5

T7 Ami DFPh
576 V2 gER/GEO vs W3 6(+2) 6,1 NE
577 V1 gEO vs X1 2(+1) 5,5 cowers, NE, DM

T7 Ami AFPh
578 W3 8-1/A1N/A1D vs V2 12(0) 2,2 3MC
579 V2 gER 3MC 3,3 fails, DM
580 V2 GEO 3MC 4,1 pins
581 V5 AEU vs V2 4(+2) 6,2 NE
582 X0 A1P vs V1 4(+2) 3,4 NE

T7 Ami RtPh
583 X1 DM/a1X X0
584 V2 gER eliminated for failure to rout

T7 Ami APh
585 X0 A1P X1
586 X2 A1M W2
587 W4 AEF W3
588 W3 A1N, A1D drop gMGs
589 W3 8-1/A1N/A1D V2, CX
590 V4 AET V3

591 V5 AEU V4

T7 Ami CCPh
592 V2 Ami Ambush dr 5
593 V2 German Ambush dr (+1) 6, no ambush
594 German announces 1:6 vs all
595 V2 Ami 2:1 vs pin/GEO 5,4 NE
596 V2 German 1:6 (-1) 1,6 NE, Melee
597 W3 ?NN

T7 German RPh
598 Wind Change DR 6,6 Gusts, BFD
599 Y5 wd/9-1 tries to rally aGR 6,1
600 S3 DM/6+1 attempts self rally 2,5 fails
601 W3 AEF attempts to recover gHMG 2 succeeds

T7 German PFPh
602 None

T7 German MPh
603 V1 gEO W1
604 X1 A1P vs W1 12(-1) 6,6 cowers, NE, 1RFP
605 X1 A1P FPF vs W1 6(-1) 3,6 PTC, breaks A1P
606 W1 gEO PTC 5,6 Pins
607 U1 8-1/LMG/GEK to U2, U3
608 V3 AET vs U3 12(-1) 6,2 1MC
609 U3 8-1 1MC 3,4 pins
610 U3 GEK 1MC 3,6 breaks
611 German concedes

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

Vulnerable PRC are treated as Personnel for Resolution purposes, and so are subject to PTC like Personnel (A7.305), contrary to what was said in the TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES on page 11 of Journal 5.

THE PERSISTENCE OF FIREPOWER

A Nearly Exhaustive Look at Residual Firepower and Fire Lanes in ASL

by David Olie

In real warfare, an attacking force sometimes has to make its attack against overwhelming odds. Military historians even have a term for this kind of situation: the "forlorn hope." In real warfare this kind of attack usually fails, and is no fun for the attacker. But ASL is not real warfare, and the idea is to have fun. So, in a typical ASL scenario, it's the Defender that has the numbers stacked against him. If the player with the defending side wants to win, he has to make the very most of the relatively smaller forces he has available.

Using high TEM defensive terrain is a good way to start. If you have fortifications, use them well. Concealment (including Dummies) and HIP, if available, will also help. There are many ways for a Defender to make the Attacker's work more difficult, including the fine art of keeping him guessing.

But the point will come where you simply have to drop concealment, or HIP, and fire at those guys coming at you. You will have limited firepower. You will have to make the most of it. Most of your OOB will be made up of squads and half squads (MMC). A MMC is basically a two-shot wonder; it can make a First Fire (FF) attack, and under the right conditions a Subsequent First Fire (SFF) attack. In dire circumstances it may be able to make a Final Protective Fire (FPF) attack, with the possible dire consequence of breaking. When you have a wave of Attackers coming at you, this is not so reassuring.

But there is hope. What if you were given a chance to fire with that MMC a potentially unlimited number of times in that Defensive Fire Phase? What if that firepower could continue to do damage to the Attacker even after your unfortunate MMC breaks due to a FPF shot, or has his Location entered by a Berserker? You'd go for that, wouldn't you?

Residual Firepower (A8.2) can do all of this for the Defender, and more. Residual Firepower (RFP), if used correctly, can make one squad seem like many. It can effectively close down avenues of attack, forcing the Attacker to make costly detours or face the consequences. It can be plain annoying as hell.

What does RFP do? Basically, RFP is "the gift that keeps on giving." Every moving unit that enters a Location containing RFP is subject to attack by it, at the strength given on the counter, followed by any Fire Lane attack, and then any additional "new" Defensive First Fire that might come its way. Once in place it remains in place for the duration of the MPh. The ATTACKER has the choice to go around it or go through it and take his lumps. Through effective use of RFP it's possible for a DEFENDER to create a kind of "wall of fire" as a screen between his forces and the ATTACKER.

And RFP has a kind of cousin, called the Fire Lane. The latter part of this article will go into the Fire Lane in some detail. For now, let's focus on RFP.

MAKING THE "WALL OF FIRE"

The basics of RFP are pretty simple. RFP is something that happens in the Movement Phase (MPh), as part of Defensive First Fire. RFP (and Fire Lane) counters are conveniently colored in green on white to remind you that they are removed from the map when the MPh is over.

RFP is intended (I think) to show that events that happen sequentially within the framework of the ASL system are "actually" occurring simultaneously. A turn in ASL is supposed to represent about 2 minutes of "real" time. If a squad of riflemen is shooting at a given area (a Location) during those 2 minutes, their shots should have a chance to affect everything that moves through that area during that time frame. An initial target presents itself in that Location. The defending unit shoots at it. Regardless of the effect on that initial target, those shots may still affect another unit moving through the same Location at much the same time. This is the essence of RFP.

Resolving a RFP attack is simple. Make a DR on the IFT column specified by the strength of the RFP counter. TEM for terrain *in* the Location will apply (even if bypassing), including SMOKE or the –1 DRM for moving in Open Ground. If the unit being attacked is not using Assault Movement, that's an extra –1 DRM. Walls and hedges are not considered as TEM *in* the Location; their effect is calculated when placing the RFP.

Let's ignore vehicles and Ordnance weapons for the moment and just look at the basics. Every time a DEFENDING Infantry unit fires in the MPh it can potentially place RFP. This can be as a result of FF, SFF, or FPF (although only Infantry Inherent Firepower, MG, and Infantry Firepower Equivalent (IFE) weapons may use SFF and FPF). If you use a MG or an IFE weapon as SFF or FPF, it's considered Sustained Fire (A9.3), with halved firepower

and the greater chance of malfunction or elimination that goes with it.

The mechanics are fairly simple. When a Defending unit fires at a moving unit in a Location it may leave RFP in that Location. That RFP will be no more than ? of the FP of the original attack against that moving unit. As examples, if the original attack was on the 8 column of the IFT, it will leave 4 FP RFP. If the original attack was on the 1 column of the IFT there will be no RFP, because there is no ? column on the IFT. 12 FP is the maximum RFP that can exist in a Location, and numerous factors can cause it to be less. Even if using the IIFT, only a single RFP counter can be placed, and only in the strengths given on the counters: 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12.

Of course any Location might be hit multiple times by Defensive Fire in a single MPh. Several shots might be directed at a single unit, or several different units might be fired on in turn. RFP doesn't accumulate, however. The RFP in that Location will be based on the strength of the largest attack on that Location to that point; any following shots of lower strength will not leave extra RFP. Obviously this is something to keep in mind when deciding in what order you will make your attacks.

The DEFENDER will sometimes have a tough choice to make with ROF weapons, like MG and IFE. If you want to place RFP with a weapon you will have to forfeit its ROF. If you're unlucky enough to malfunction your weapon, its FP is lost for calculating RFP. As well, a unit under Ammunition Shortage (A19.131) making an Inherent FP attack that manages to roll a "12" will not place any RFP.

Squads, MG, and other units that can use Spraying Fire (A9.5) can Defensive Fire at an occupied Location and an adjacent (even unoccupied) Location as a single Spraying Fire attack (see figure 1). The attack will be halved for Spraying Fire, and halved again as Area Fire against the unoccupied Location, and then the RFP placed will be only half of that again. This isn't an option that gets a lot of use, but if the targets are at point blank range, especially in Open Ground, it's something to consider. One possibility is versus a charging Berserk, Human Wave or Banzai unit, where the Spraying Fire attack is made as the unit enters Open Ground two hexes away, with the second hex being the hex one hex away (Point Blank) that the unit will have to enter next. In general, when facing the Human Wave, Banzai, or Berserk charge, you will want to try to place as much RFP as possible, and it can be particularly effective since these attacks will often be coming at you through Open Ground.

Cowering can be the DEFENDER's worst nightmare. Not only is a Cowering unit marked Final Fire, but also the strength of the attack is reduced to the next lowest column of the IFT (down two columns if Inexperienced), and the RFP (if any) placed will be based on half of that lower FP column.

Maybe the trickiest part of the RFP rules have to do with how the positive DRM on the attack that places the RFP will affect the final strength of the RFP placed. These rules make a distinction between those positive DRM that apply due to conditions *outside* the target Location, and those that apply due to conditions *inside* the Location. In general, for purposes of determining RFP strength, the latter can be ignored because they will apply as DRM to any attacks made later by that RFP anyway.

The *outside* conditions can be many and varied. They include LOS (but not LV or DLV) Hindrances such as SMOKE, grain and orchard; TEM for hedge or wall along a hexside of the target Location (assuming the LOS crosses that hexside); plus such conditions for the firer as CX status, CA changes for vehicular or Ordnance weapons, +1 or +2 for positive Leadership DRM, +1 for BU status of vehicles, a possible additional +1 if that vehicle has been Stunned, and so on. For every such +1 modifier to the shot, the value of the RFP is reduced by one column. Note that the DEFENDER does not get to apply any *negative* DRM to this calculation, most noticeably those for negative Leadership DRM.

In one circumstance the amount of RFP placed can be increased by one column after being halved from the original FP of the attack. This is when the DEFENDER fires a mortar at a woods Location. This causes Airburst. The original attack gets a –1 DRM, of course, and the RFP that is placed is one column higher than it would be otherwise. Another example of how nasty mortars can be.

The principle behind this seems fairly obvious. The difference between each column of the IFT is about the equivalent of a +1 DRM between them. In other words, the odds of an effective result at 6 FP + 1 DRM on the IFT are about the same as for a 4 FP + 0 attack. Therefore, if each effective DRM from outside the target hex serves to reduce the strength of the RFP by one column, it serves as a reasonable substitute for applying the same DRM to the RFP DR. In a sense, by using this method the DRM are "built in" to the RFP strength. The *outside* DRM might end up reducing the RFP to nothing. But even a single FP factor of RFP is going to cause problems for the ATTACKER, especially if it's in Open Ground. The advantage to the DEFENDER is that no matter what happens to the unit that places the RFP, the RFP will persist in that Location until the end of the MPh. The DEFENDING unit that placed that RFP might get Overrun, it might have its Location entered by a Berserker, or suffer other fates, but the RFP will remain, continuing to be a threat or obstacle to the ATTACKER.

OUT OF SIGHT, BUT NOT OUT OF AMMO

Essentially, RFP "has no memory". Once placed it "forgets" how it came to be there. This can have interesting consequences. For instance, RFP might be placed by a particular DEFENDING unit in a woods or building Location. Later an ATTACKING unit may try to use bypass movement in that Location, along a pair of hexsides that are completely

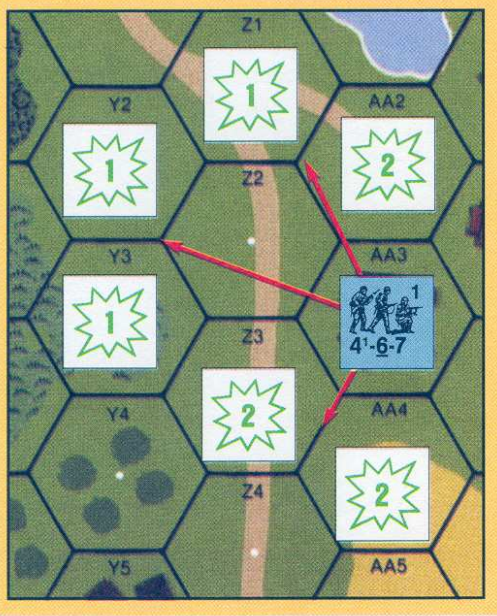


figure 1. What are you shooting at?

How do you beat that pesky Human Wave? Lay out plenty of residual firepower. One way to do that is to spray fire, even if one of the hexes is empty (note you have to be shooting at someone in the other hex!). This under-used tactic places a residual firepower marker in two hexes instead of one—a real problem for a charging attacker. You do have to pay the price for this tactic, the firepower applied to each hex attacked is half what it would normally be if you concentrated your fire (and halved again vs any empty hex). And that means the residual firepower is based upon that reduced amount of firepower you've used per hex. So try to keep this tactic for times of need—point blank (where the halving for spray fire is negated by the point blank fire modifier) or Open Ground shots (where the -2 FFMO/FFNAM modifier is as good as adding two columns onto your short on the IFT). In the example at left, assuming all indicated hexes contain a moving Human Wave unit, the Germans can spray fire at Z3/AA4 leaving 2 Residual Firepower in both hexes (5FP x2 for Point Blank Fire, x$^1/_2$ for Spray Fire resulting in a 4FP shot and 2FP residual fire.) Alternately, they could fire at Y3/Y2 and leave just 1FP residual in each hex (5 FP x$^1/_2$ for Spray Fire results in a 2FP shot and a 1FP residual fire.) And of course they may elect to seal the flank against the AA1 pond and fire at Z1/AA2 leaving both 1 and 2FP residual firepower markers. This should be a daunting amount of firepower to your opponent's following units, as running through those hexes gets you a PTC and NMC on just an average dice roll of seven.

out of LOS of the DEFENDING unit, blocked by the woods or building itself. Is the ATTACKING unit affected by the RFP? Yes, it is, but it does not suffer –2 DRM for FFNAM and FFMO if (as is usual) the hexsides being bypassed are Open Ground; it will get the TEM of the woods or building instead. Once placed the RFP is independent of the unit that placed it, including for LOS purposes. Once placed, RFP is never halved or otherwise reduced for any reason, including attacks against Dashing or concealed units, it doesn't cower if doubles are rolled, and it cannot malfunction.

Generally a moving unit is only hit once by RFP in a Location, no matter how many MF/MP it spends there. For example, entering woods costs an Infantry unit 2MF, but only causes a single RFP attack. It is possible for a unit to suffer more than one attack in a Location from RFP, but only in unusual circumstances. First, the unit must be making non-simultaneous MF/MP expenditures, such as the extra MF necessary to pick up a weapon or attempt to place Smoke grenades. Second, the unit has to become "more vulnerable" between the non-simultaneous costs, either because the amount of RFP has increased from an attack on the initial MF/MP expended, or because the unit is now subject to "more-negative-DRM/less-positive-DRM". In practice these circumstances are rare, but they can happen. This is slightly different than being hit by DFF that then leaves RFP; that RFP can attack if additional MF are spent for some other reason without the need to become more vulnerable.

ORDNANCE

Mortars bring us to the matter of Ordnance fire leaving RFP. An Ordnance weapon must score a hit with HE in order to place RFP and, like MG/IFE weapons, it must give up any ROF it might be entitled to. Basically, an Ordnance weapon is only going to be able to place one RFP during a MPh, but that will "hit" every ATTACKING unit that enters the Location without any need for additional TH DR, etc. Again, the RFP "forgets" where it came from.

Intensive Fire leaves no RFP (although OVR Prevention does if using HE; see C5.64). AP-type ammo and PF/PFk never leave RFP either, but other SCW like Bazookas and PIATs do, using half their IFT equivalency and subject to reducing for *outside* conditions. In fact, these *outside* reductions apply to RFP placed by all Ordnance fire, based on the DRM on the To Hit DR. For example, if a BU tank manages a hit on a target location with HE, it will leave RFP, but after the FP of the original hit is halved, the RFP will be reduced one additional column for the +1 BU penalty. These types of penalties often reduce the RFP to nothing.

There are a few more esoteric rules related to RFP, and it's not a bad idea to have a read-through of A8.2 once in a while. The Comprehensive RFP/Fire Lane example at the end of this article will hopefully illustrate a few points that might not yet be clear.

The effective placement of RFP is an essential part of the game when defending in ASL. It is the equalizer; often it's the only effective way for the Defending player to overcome his usual inferiority in strength and firepower. And it's not simply a matter of trying to inflict casualties directly on the Attacking force. It's also about limiting his options, slowing him down, making him go around when he'd rather go straight through. Since most ASL scenarios set a limited number of turns for the Attacker to meet his Victory Conditions, the intimidation factor of well-placed RFP can help slow him down enough, or cause him enough casualties, that he can't get where he has to go before his time runs out. The flip side of this thinking process is that sometimes the ATTACKER has to just suck it up and move through the RFP. It may be a "free" attack, but it usually isn't a very big attack. And when you gotta go, you gotta go.

"But the point will come where you simply have to drop concealment, or HIP, and fire at those guys coming at you."

FIRE LANES

As mentioned above, RFP has a cousin, a related defensive option for MG. We now turn to the Fire Lane. If there is one weapon that made infantry combat in the 20th century different from all previous centuries, it is the machine gun. Machine gunners work in close-knit teams, and their weapon is usually securely mounted and equipped for extended action. The machine gun is indeed a machine, and with it, war in the 20th century became industrialized.

At first glance, MG in ASL may be seen as extra firepower, a few more factors to add to your squads and half squads. They might even be seen as "unwelcome" burdens, if your troops have to go humping them around on the attack (or worse, when retreating on the defense). But the ASL designers have given MG some special capabilities to help reflect the special nature of these weapons. Like certain other units and weapons, the MG can use Spraying Fire and may get ROF. In addition, MG have the unique ability to use Fire Lanes (FL).

Below we walk through the main rules for FL, A9.22—9.223, as well as the important extras in other rules. I hope to show that, in the right circumstances, the FL can be the most effective way to use your MG firepower, re-creating the kind of "killing fields" that occurred in both world wars. On the flip side, there will be times when you'll want to forget about FL, and concentrate on using your MG in other ways.

"BACK WHEN I WAS A LAD..."

In his designer notes for *SL*, John Hill included a number of diagrams of theoretical defensive positions based on "crossfire" from MG positions. In these diagrams the concept of the FL can be seen. Hill reflected this concept in the rules for MG "penetration fire." In practice, however, penetration fire was a concept that didn't really work and had little impact on the game. *SL* players tended to place their MG in the upper levels of buildings or on hills and snipe away at long range. In many cases this remains the best use of MG in *ASL* as well.

When *SL* was redesigned into *ASL*, the MG rules went back to the drawing board (to which the FL rules have since returned). MG were substantially changed from their *SL* counterparts. The increase in FP for the German MG was especially noticeable, as well as the change from B10 to B11 for the Russian LMG. But in addition the Spraying Fire option was added for all MG, Repair dr numbers were increased for MMG and HMG (except U.S. MMG, which were already R2), all MG got a ROF number, and dismantling became an option for all but the Russians. These changes alone made MG a far more potent part of any player's OOB.

Last, but far from least, there were the rules for FL. Here the initial promise of Hill's original idea was made an effective part of the game. Unlike penetration fire, the FL is strictly a Defensive First Fire option, a "unique form of Residual FP" (A9.22) that can effectively amplify the DEFENDER's ability to influence the movement of the ATTACKER, either by causing him to avoid the FL, or by causing him casualties if he does not. Given the right terrain, and a sufficient number of MG, you can make Hill's crossfire diagrams a reality, and put your opponent into the position of the British on the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

With any new concept, there are always a few bugs in the system. The rules concerning FL have seen some changes since the ASLRB was initially published in 1986. The 1992 errata pages A17 and A18 to the 1st Edition issued in *Croix de Guerre* made significant changes to the core FL rules (A9).

Today we have the 2nd Edition ASL Rulebook, which incorporates all the previous changes and makes a few more too (most notably canceling a FL when an armed vehicle enters its Location only if the vehicle ends its

MPh there). This article will assume that the reader has the 2nd Edition Rulebook.

THE MECHANICS OF THE FL

MG in ASL cannot always lay down FL. A9.22 sets out the criteria necessary for a MG to qualify for FL use.

The MG must be in Good Order. Note that the Index defines "Good Order" for SW as being fully manned by a Good Order Personnel unit, not malfunctioned, and not restricted by Ammunition Shortage. Since it requires a minimum of 2 SMC to "fully man" any MG, a MG being fired by 1 SMC (even a Hero) can't lay a FL. A Berserker with a MG is not in Good Order, so he can't lay a FL. And the Ammo Shortage business can be important in certain scenarios; for example, the Russian can't use FL in ASL1 "Fighting Withdrawal."

It must be a SW MG, manned by unpinned *Infantry*. Passengers and Riders are not Infantry, so they can't lay FL. Inherent vehicle Crews are also not Infantry, and vehicular MG are not SW MG, so for both reasons you can *never* lay a FL with a vehicular MG. (Unless you remove/scrounge it, in which case it becomes a SW MG, right?) And if the Infantry is Pinned, you're also out of luck. The 2nd Edition Rulebook resolves an issue that's been around since scenario ASL10 "The Citadel" was published in *Beyond Valor*. An Armored Cupola (D9.5) *can* lay a FL, assuming it is defined by SSR as having MG armament. A Dug-In AFV, on the other hand, cannot.

The MG can't already be marked with a First/Final Fire counter. Some players assume that laying the FL must be the MG's first (and effectively only) "shot" in the MPh/DFPh. But as long as a MG keeps ROF, it's not marked First/Final Fire (A9.2), so it could conceivably be fired any number of times as long as it keeps rate, and *then* be used to lay that FL. Feeling lucky? Of course, if that FL is essential to your defensive plans, you probably won't want to take the chance of losing rate and thereby losing your FL opportunity. And the MMG/HMG Field of Fire rule (A9.21) can also limit your options.

The MG must be firing within its Normal Range. It also cannot be using TPBF (A7.21). The use of TPBF will also cancel an existing FL; more on this below.

The MG must be firing at a target on the same level as itself, or along a Continuous Slope (B.5). As much fun as it might be, you can't declare a FL against landing Gliders or dropping Paratroops (because they're higher), or against units in rivers (normally a level lower). Keep in mind that intervening hexes between the target and the MG may be at lower levels without interrupting the FL; this may be important in hill/valley terrain. There are also a few special rules involving unusual terrain types (Slopes, Diers, Hillocks, Beaches, and Ocean) that I'll have a bit more to say about below.

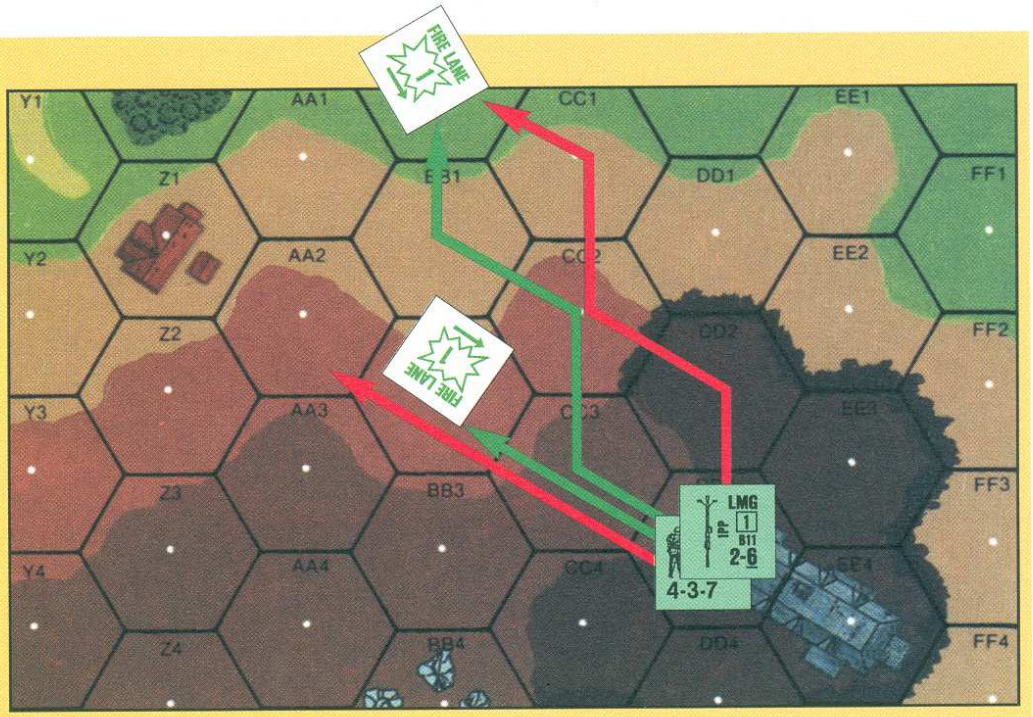


figure 2. The arrows show how Continuous Slope and terrain affects the placement of firelanes. When there is a Continuous Slope, the firelane can be successfully placed. Any deviation from this slope, whether the firing unit has LOS to the desired target hex or not, means the firelane cannot be placed.

You must declare you are using a FL, forfeiting all ROF, before you take the shot.

Being a clever lad, you've managed to meet all these criteria, and you're ready to make "rat-ta-tat-tat" noises to annoy your opponent. You have two varieties of FL to choose from, depending on the direction of your opponent's movement.

- The Hex Grain FL (HGFL). This is a no-brainer, as it runs down a straight row of hexes from the MG to the target (and possibly beyond).

- The Alternate Hex Grain FL (AHGFL; A9.221). This is the trickier one, running along hexsides, as well as through hexes on *one* side of the central hexside. *Croix de Guerre* and *Beyond Valor* 2nd Edition include some helpful AHGFL markers with arrows that help indicate which side of the grain actually contains the FL. While the HGFL is stopped by the first LOS obstacle it encounters, the AHGFL can sometimes go past an obstacle that blocks LOS to one hex in its AHG to attack other hexes/hexsides to which it still has LOS. It can also make a type of Snap Shot (not halved) vs units crossing the central hexside.

What you will have is a sort of zigzag pattern, with the zigs either to the left or the right. Each of these hexes get the full FP strength of the FL, but the FL must follow consistently either left or right for its entire length; you can't flip from one side to the other as targets offer themselves.

It's even possible to set up an AHGFL along a Continuous Slope. Have a look at the illustration, based on board 9. The squad with LMG in DD3 could lay an AHGFL into CC3 (2FP), CC2 (1FP), BB1 (1FP), and BB0 (1FP). You can't choose the other side of the alternate hex grain, because fire from DD3 to DD2 would negate the Continuous Slope. In fact, due to terrain, the situation will often arise where you can only lay a legitimate FL on one side or the other of the alternate hex grain (see figure 2.)

As another example, all you fans of A60 "Totsugeki!" might recognize the situation from board 37. Check out the possibilities for the Chinese MMG in FF6. Since Light Jungle is in effect, and Swamp is not Inherent Terrain, an AHGFL can be set up firing between DD4/EE4. Depending on which of these two you wish to affect, the AHGFL can hit the following hexes: EE6 or FF5 (4FP), EE5 (2FP), DD4 or EE4 (2FP), DD3 (2FP), CC2 (2FP, +1 DRM for Palm Trees in DD3) and even BB0 (2FP, also +1 DRM). Probably won't stop the Japanese, but hey, it's worth a try.

COLUMN AS YOU SEE 'EM

Unlike regular RFP or Spraying Fire, the FP of a MG is not halved in a FL attack. Instead, it is lowered to the next column of the IFT. For LMG and MMG this is a difference that makes little difference. Whether you drop the FP of these weapons one column or halve them, it ends up the same; an LMG FL is resolved on the 1 column, and an MMG FL is resolved on the 2 column (Point Blank Fire aside). However, an HMG FL is resolved on

the 4 column, and the deadly .50-cal. hits on the 6 column. Nasty.

But what if you've got German MG and you're using the IIFT? Sorry, it makes no difference. Column shifts on the IIFT are based on the "standard" IFT columns, so you have to lose the 1 extra FP of the German MG, and then shift down one "standard" column. Same result as above.

The FL attack of a MG can never be combined with any other FP (A9.222), not even another FL or other RFP. Therefore, FL attacks are *always* resolved at the strengths listed above, depending on the type of MG. No calculations are necessary. The only exception is for Point Blank Fire, in which case the FL FP is doubled (2FP for LMG, 4FP for MMG, 8FP for HMG, 12FP for .50-cal.).

Like regular RFP, FL attacks are never halved or reduced for any reason, including vs. Dashing or concealed targets (A8.224). A roll of doubles on a FL attack is also resolved at regular strength; Cowering penalties do not apply (A7.9).

However, Cowering can very definitely bugger up the initial placement of a FL. If the unit firing the MG is subject to Cowering penalties (i.e., no leader direction, not British elite or first line, not Finnish, etc.) and rolls doubles on the initial First Fire attack to place the FL, it is marked Final Fire and no FL is placed (A9.22). Since the chances of rolling doubles is 1 in 6, this must be borne in mind if you're basing part of your defense on FL; one bad roll (even "snakes" in this case) can leave a big hole. Another good reason for keeping your leaders stacked with your important MG, since even a leader with a -0 or +1 modifier prevents Cowering (and the resulting FL will be unaffected by the +1 DRM). Of course, if you roll "cars" you've broken the MG anyway, so Cowering is probably the least of your problems.

Oh, yes, that's another important point. Unlike regular RFP, every FL attack can cause your MG to malfunction, if you roll the B# or higher on that attack DR (A8.221). In fact, in certain rare situations, your opponent might deliberately risk your FL on the chance that your MG might malfunction. For instance, captured MG may be used to lay FL, but if the Partisan player tries it in ASL28 "Ambush" he has a 27% chance of malfunctioning (and 8% chance of eliminating) his MG every time the Bulgarian player risks the 1FP or 2FP FL attack. Probably not the best way to use those MG. Take it from me.

Another trick that an ATTACKER might try is to "drive up" a FL with an AFV in an attempt to make the MG malfunction. However, since RFP and FL have no effect on an AFV except Collaterally against any vulnerable PRC, the AFV will have to be CE to make this work; otherwise the FL simply does not attack.

It's quite possible for a regular RFP to be placed in a Location that is also affected by one or more FL. In this case, a moving unit will be attacked first by the RFP, then by each FL in turn. This situation can often arise when a squad First Fires both its inherent FP (placing RFP) and a MG at a moving enemy unit and declares a FL at the same time. Any additional enemy units entering the Location later will be hit by both.

"IS THAT A HARD HINDRANCE, OR ARE YOU JUST GLAD TO SEE ME?"

Line-of-sight obstacles (woods, buildings, etc.) block FL, of course, although FL FP can still attack a unit moving in, or even Bypassing on the "other side", of that obstacle (A8.21). Even if Bypassing through Open Ground hexsides, the target unit gets the TEM of the Location, without FFMO, just like regular RFP. LOS hindrances, on the other hand, play a major role in the use of FL. Since the FL must be along a single level or a Continuous Slope, you can't just fire over same-level Hindrances.

Where FL are concerned, Hindrances fall into two categories: "hard" and "soft" (see the Index). The "soft" hindrances (as outlined in A9.222) are SMOKE, brush, grain (and kunai), marsh, FFE, huts, LV, DLV, and Dust. All other hindrances (orchard and palm trees, bridge, crag, graveyard, debris, seawall, vehicle/wreck, etc.) are "hard." Think of it this way: a hindrance that would partly obstruct visibility but wouldn't do much to stop bullets is "soft," otherwise it's "hard." Oops, that's a reality argument; better just memorize the list above, or keep the Index handy.

In order to place your FL, what you need is a target somewhere along a valid Hex Grain or Alternate Hex Grain. The initial attack target (a moving enemy unit) must be in the firer's LOS, which means the total hindrances between the firer and the target can't be more than +5. If you have LOS, you can make that initial attack.

"Right," says you, "I'm gonna take a 2FP shot with +5 DRM just to lay down an LMG FL. Gimme a break."

Well, you might, as long as the +5 DRM is being caused by "soft" hindrances. Sure, you have no chance to damage the target of the initial attack. But once the FL is down, it hits any following targets with 1FP and *no* hindrance DRM. The hindrances do negate FFMO, but that's all; you can even get the -1 for FFNAM, if applicable. And the FL carries on through those "soft" hindrances, right out to the normal range of the MG, or until you hit a LOS obstacle. This is one of the few cases in the game where you can hit a target that is out of the firer's LOS. Think of this in a big field of grain or kunai, or when your opponent has laid down a lot of SMOKE. And think about the fact that a lot of attackers will lead with a screen of half squads. The initial attack against that HS may do it no damage, but that's O.K. It's the squads and leaders coming behind that you really want to hit.

Note also that your initial attack target can be a CT, BU AFV, a target that your MG has absolutely no chance to affect on the IFT; just make your DR to check for possible malfunction or cowering and carry on. You can even place a FL based on a TH attempt vs an AFV. This is handy if your opponent tends to lead with his armor.

The DRM for "hard" hindrances are still added to the resolution of FL attacks, if the FL passes through them (see the "Totsugeki!" example above). But you can get around part of this, too. Bridge and orchard road terrain does not hinder a FL as long as it is traced along the road depiction. A FL down the length of a bridge that your opponent has to cross is a very nice thing indeed.

Some of the more unusual terrain types add a few wrinkles to the FL rules. Many CG maps have Slopes. Slope hexsides don't change the base level of their hex(es) for FL purposes, but they can provide a +1 FL slope DRM for a target under certain circumstances; see P2.31 and 2.42.

Beaches can be very nasty places for using FL, but it depends on the Beach elevation and slope (G13.2). Let's assume that MG will be set up in Level 0 Hinterland Locations. If the Beach slope is slight, Beach (and OCEAN) Locations are treated as also being at Level 0, so FL can be placed from/through Hinterland and into Beach/OCEAN with no additional restriction. If the slope is steep, the Beach is treated as being at Level –1 and FL cannot be placed from Hinterland to Beach/OCEAN because of the 1 level difference in elevation. And if the slope is moderate (G13.22), FL can be placed from/though Hinterland, but all Beach/OCEAN Locations are treated as Level 0 Deir, with the Beach/Hinterland hexsides acting as the Deir's Lip.

Deir's Lip? Ah, yes, we have to have a look at the FL in the Desert as well. Nothing changes here except where Deir and Hillock terrain is concerned. Basically, a MG in a Deir can place a FL in a Deir and affect moving units also in the Deir normally. If the MG is in a Location outside the Deir (including hexes with Deir Lip hexsides or Beach/Hinterland hexsides where the Beach slope is moderate) and the FL counter is placed in another Location *outside* the Deir, the FL will have no effect on any units in the Deir (F4.52). If the FL counter is placed *inside* the Deir it will affect only those Infantry/Horse units moving in the Location containing the FL counter, plus any vehicle or Vulnerable PRC moving in other Locations along the FL. So the FL is of limited use.

Where Hillocks are concerned the situation is sort of a mirror image of the situation with Deirs. A unit on a Hillock (but not a Hillock summit) is a half-level higher than Level 0 terrain, and so a MG on a Hillock can essentially only place a FL that will affect moving units in other Hillock locations; units at Level 0 (or some other Level) will be immune to the FL (F6.53). The examples following F4.51 and F6.6 are crucial to fully grasping these rules.

As usual, the Night rules make the game rather different. Note that the FL can affect units beyond the firer's NVR. In addition, since most Night scenarios allow the

Defender to Bore Sight, you can set up special Bore Sighted FL with your MMG/HMG (E1.71). Once the initial Starshell has been fired by either side, the Defender can declare a FL out to his MG's Bore Sighted location, whether that MG has "seen" a target or not, right at the outset of the Attacker's MPh. The only restriction is that once a MG has taken this option, you must continue to lay that FL to the Bore Sighted location in every enemy MPh until the MG has "seen" an enemy unit. Once this occurs you have the option to switch targets. This can be a devastating way to disrupt the approach of those Cloaking counters, especially since the FL is not halved for Area Fire. This is "fire on fixed lines" with a vengeance, and it might be interesting to see this rule used in some particular daylight scenarios.

"TO LANE OR NOT TO LANE?"

The FL can be a useful tool in many situations for the Defender. In other situations it can be less useful, or even a kind of trap. The following tactical tips are offered as guidelines only. If they don't work for you, please spell my name right in the hate letters.

Fire Lane GOOD

Street Fighting. As John Hill pointed out so many years ago, city streets are made for FL, both on offense and on defense. On defense, set up flanking positions to lay fire down on the approaches to the buildings you're defending. Leave the actual building defenders without MG if need be. Those bad guys are going to have to step out into the street at some point, and even SMOKE isn't going to help them much against a FL. On attack, try to outflank those flankers, and move up your LMG to cut the streets behind the buildings to prevent reinforcement by the Defender in his MPh.

Woods Roads, Orchard Roads and Bridges. Unlike regular Residual FP, FL FP is always traced from its source. A unit that enters Residual FP in a Woods Road location gets +1 TEM (+2 Jungle) no matter where the FP came from, and whether he's using the Road movement rate or not. But he will be subject to FFMO if he's using the Road rate when he enters your FL, as long as you have a clear LOS down the road. Orchard Roads are not so great, because the moving unit will seldom insist on using the Road rate, but placing a FL down a multi-hex Bridge is real fun; even if you've only got an LMG, it's time to start with your Dirty Harry impression; "Feeling lucky, punk?"

Human Wave and Cavalry Wave. The Wave can be scary, but it's predictable. You know pretty well how the Horde is going to have to move, so you can plan the optimum target for your initial attack so the FL will be able to make the largest number of subsequent attacks possible. Note the revised rule A25.233; as a form of Residual FP, the FL affects not only the initial target, but also every unit in the Wave that entered any other hex of that FL in that Impulse. This is often much better than Spraying Fire. Note that this also applies to targets using other forms of Impulse movement, such as:

Convoys and Columns. FL work great here, especially when most or all of the Convoy vehicles are unarmored. Again, it's the predictability of the Attacker's movement that can make this so deadly. In general, a good FL attack doesn't just happen, it's planned in advance.

Grainfields at Night. Situations with Low Visibility (including Weather and Night), SMOKE concentrations, lots of grain or other Soft Hindrances are all ripe for FL. No need to belabor these, as we've already discussed them above.

Fire Lane BAD

Berserkers and Banzai. Depends on the exact situation, but these can present real problems. Large Banzais can be treated much like the Wave, but the small Banzai (or Dare Death attack by the Chinese) is more like the Berserk charge. The trouble is that a FL attacks one FP column lower than normal for your MG. Frankly, you need all the FP you can get against these guys because, unlike the Wave, these guys don't break—they suffer Casualty Reduction or flip and keep on coming. Often your opponent is trying to get them into your location, because once you're in a TPBF situation the FL is cancelled, leaving the way clear for following enemy units. (As mentioned before, regular RFP doesn't care if some Berserker enters your Location.) Unless a Berserker is charging down six hexes of a hexgrain to reach you, I'd personally be more inclined to use regular Defensive Fire, maybe look at Spraying Fire, and hope for ROF.

Short Lanes. There's not much point in placing a FL to cover just 2 hexes. Use Spraying Fire instead (A9.5). An MMG or better will usually get some Residual FP and there's a chance of getting ROF. It's better, of course, if you have a squad manning that MG that also has Spraying Fire capability.

Unreliable Weapons. I mentioned this above in reference to scenario ASL 28 "Ambush!" Also keep in mind the non-qualified use penalties that apply to Japanese MMG/HMG that are not manned by Crews. (G1.611)

High Ground. Sometimes MG are simply better employed firing at long range from hills and upper levels of buildings. An obvious example is the old classic ASL E "Hill 621". No question, there are great opportunities for the German player to lay FL on Board 4, and it will work for a turn. Or two. Then the vast masses of Russians will overrun your positions and those MG will be lost. Far better to start humping them up the hills immediately and picking away at all those lovely targets moving in the open at long range. As the Russians close, however, don't lose sight of the opportunities for FL on the hills themselves, either along the same level or down a Continuous Slope.

CONCLUSION

Even when faced with what looks like overwhelming enemy strength, placing Residual FP can be one of the most intimidating items in the defender's box of tactical tricks. The Fire Lane, that specialized form of Residual, is often more impressive still. It's the rare attacker who will lightly march his troops into those "free" attacks; he will often try anything to avoid it. If this helps throw a wrench in his plans, you're another step closer to victory.

On the other hand, the success of an attack can often hinge on splitting up the battlefield into manageable sectors, preventing the defender from laterally reinforcing the threatened area or pulling back to his next line of defense. Fire Lanes and Residual have their place in the attack as well.

As with football, so it is with *ASL*. Given decent luck, a good defense will always beat a good offense. Plan well, and aim for the knees.

FROM THE EDITORS

This issue of the **ASL Journal** is jam packed with goodies, despite having a short Table of Contents. (Good thing it's short, we needed room for the Debriefing.) Leading the list (although not on the TOC) is the **Primosole Bridge** mini-HASL, complete with historical map, three full-fledged Campaign Games, and three cool scenarios. Our thanks to Randy Yeates for all the hard work he and his crew put into this project. We think it really shows and hope you like it as much as we do.

Next issue, we have a few more scenarios for the PBr map, an excellent little linked scenario set (a la Mishcon's Market Garden which appeared in the **'91 Annual**) from our friends in France, and Steve Swann's Croatian Paratrooper vs Partisan scenarios.

Articles for **ASL Journal #7** include Oliver Giancola's *Got Milk!* analysis, a piece on good HIP play by Mark Pitcavage, and a new scenario analysis from our Master Tactician Matt Shostak. Not to mention the second half of Charles Markuss's update on his analysis of the British Army.

By **Journal #7**'s release you should be eagerly fondling **Armies of Oblivion**, a reprint of both the **ASL Rulebook** and **Beyond Valor** celebrating the 20th Anniversary of their debut, **Action Pack #3**, and certainly the continuation of our ASL Starter Kit line with the release of **ASL Starter Kit #2—Guns!**

—The Editors

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMPLE: RESIDUAL FIREPOWER and FIRE LANES

The following example may look familiar to some readers. It is based on the scenario J76 "Ultimate Treachery" published in Journal #4. However, readers are advised that significant changes have been made to help make the example as comprehensive as possible. PTO terrain is not in effect. EC are Clear, with no wind. The GG hexrow is the north edge.

It is the start of the Japanese MPh. Japanese squad "K" in X5, currently Berserk, must move before all other Japanese units (ASOP, step 3.21A). The closest known enemy unit to squad "K" is the French Cpl. Monnier and squad "C" with LMG in AA4, so they become its charge target. Squad "K" enters Y5, expending 1 MF.

The French units in AA4 have a few options. Squad "C" could use the LMG to place a Hex Grain Fire Lane (HGFL) into Z4, Y5 and X5. However, the French player realizes that there's a good chance that Japanese squad "K" will survive all Defensive Fire and enter AA4 with at least a half-squad. This would cancel the Fire Lane (A9.223). Therefore, the French player elects to fire the inherent FP of squad "C" plus the LMG into Y5, directed by Cpl. Monnier. Japanese squad "K" is attacked with 6 FP in Y5, with –1 for FFNAM and –1 for FFMO. The French DR is "7", and Japanese squad "K" passes the 1MC. 2 factors of Residual FP are placed in Y5 (1/2 of 6 FP rounded down to the nearest column). Even if Japanese squad "K" enters AA4, the Residual FP placed in Y5 will remain until the end of the MPh.

Squad "K" is still a threat to the French, however, as are the other Japanese units in Z5. The French player decides to fire with squad "A" and its HMG in CC5, and place an Alternate Hex Grain Fire Lane (AHGFL) to the west side of the hexspine center line from BB4 to V4; thus BB4, AA5, Z4, Y5, X4, W5, and V4. A 4 FP AHGFL counter is placed in V4. The French player also uses the inherent FP of squad "A" in this attack, with Lt. Lindeau directing. The initial attack on Japanese squad "K" is 10 FP, +1 for the Wreck in AA5, -1 FFNAM, -1 Leadership. The French DR is "3,3" ("6"), for a 2MC. There is no Cowering due to Lt. Lindeau's direction. Japanese squad "K" rolls "9" on its 2MC DR, and is casualty reduced to 2-3-7 half-squad "O". The usual 2 FP residual from French squad "A" is reduced to 1 FP due to the Wreck hindrance, and 2 FP Residual remains in Y5. Even though the cdr of "3" would be low enough to allow the French HMG to keep ROF, because the Fire Lane must be declared before making the shot, this is not an option.

Japanese half-squad "O" now must enter Z4 and is attacked by the Fire Lane from the HMG in CC5. This attack is on the 4 FP column, with –1 FFNAM and +1 for the "hard" hindrance of the Wreck in AA5. Note that Lt. Lindeau's leadership DRM does not apply to the Fire Lane attack, and FFMO is cancelled by the Wreck. The French DR is "6", and half-squad "O" passes the NMC.

The French units in AA4 now choose to Subsequent First Fire against half-squad "O". Using Sustained Fire for the LMG, and directed by Cpl. Monnier, this attack will be on the 6 FP column, again with –1 FFNAM and –1 FFMO. The DR is once again "7", and half-squad "O" again passes the resulting 1MC and 2 FP Residual is placed.

Half-squad "O" now completes its Berserk charge by entering AA4. The French units must make a FPF attack against the half-squad (A8.312) on the 9 FP column, using Sustained Fire with the LMG, with –1 for FFNAM and +2 for the wooden building. The French DR is "8", giving a PTC result which has no effect on the Berserk unit, and causing both Cpl. Monnier and squad "C" to break. However, 4 FP of Residual is placed in AA4, and the Residual FP placed earlier in Z4 and Y5 remain, despite the fact that the units that placed them are now broken.

Japanese squad "S" now enters CC10 from offboard, using Assault Movement. French squads "K" and "L" in CC8 (Level 2) make a FG attack with 8 FP. Because the elevation of the firers is not greater than the range to the target, squad "S" gets the full +2 wall TEM. The French DR is "5", causing a 1MC, which squad "S" fails with a DR of "7" and is step reduced. The French player can place 1 FP Residual in CC10 (8 FP halved to 4 and reduced to 1 because of the +2 wall TEM; see A8.26).

Now Japanese squad "T" also enters CC10 using Assault Movement, and is attacked by the Residual FP on the 1 column, with –1 DRM for FFMO, in spite of the fact that CC10 is not OG from the units that placed the Residual FP. The French player gets a DR of "8" for no effect.

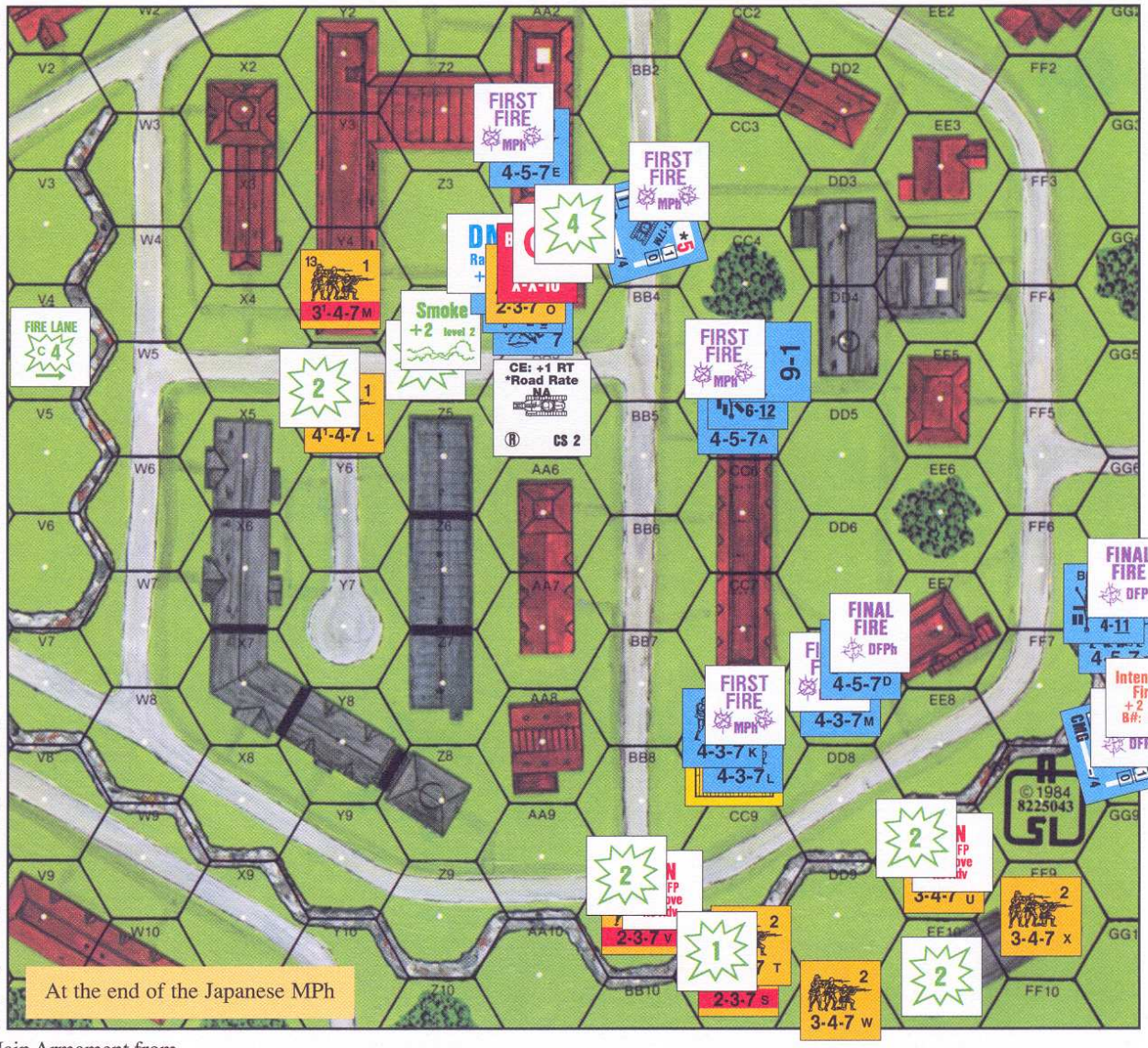
Japanese squad "U" now enters at EE10 using bypass movement, and French squads "D" and "M" in DD7 fire with 8 FP, -1 FFNAM and –1 FFMO at vertex EE9/DD9/EE10. The DR of "6" is doubles, however, and because squad "M" is Green, the attack Cowers two columns lower to the 4 column and only 2 FP Residual will be

placed. Squad "U" passes the 1MC and continues movement to EE9; Random Selection results in squad "D" being marked Final Fire (A7.9).

The French FT-17C now fires at squad "U" with its Main Armament. Using the Infantry Target Type (ITT), the base (and modified) TH number is "8", with +1 for Case I (Buttoned Up), -1 for Case J[3] (FFNAM), -1 for Case J[4] (FFMO), and –1 for Case L (Point Blank). The TH DR is "5", resulting in an ITT Critical Hit (Final TH DR is "3", which is less than half of the modified TH# of "8"). The attack is resolved on the 8 column, with -2 DRM, and the effects DR is "11" for a PTC, which squad "U" fails and is Pinned. Due to the CH, a 4 FP Residual counter would normally be placed (half of the doubled FP), however this is reduced by one column (to 2 FP) because the FT-17C is BU (A8.26).

The Japanese player now brings on squad "V" at BB10 using regular movement. There is no French fire, so the squad moves to BB9. The French player decides to fire with his FT-17M's MG Main Armament from BB3. Since this is a vehicular MG, there is no option to place a Fire Lane (A9.22). The attack is on the 4 column with –1 for FFNAM and –1 for FFMO. The DR is "7", with cdr of "1", resulting in a 1MC, which squad "V" fails, and is step reduced. The French player must now decide to either place 2 FP Residual in BB9 or to keep ROF for further shots; he chooses the latter and no Residual is placed. He now fires again at squad "V" because the squad had to use 2 MF to enter BB9. This shot results in squad "V" Pinning, and no ROF for the FT-17M, so 2 FP Residual is placed. Note that the Residual FP is not reduced due to the FT-17M being BU, because BU is a modifier only to Ordnance TH attempts.

French squad "B" in GG7 also fires at Japanese squad "V" as it enters BB9, and declares a HGFL with its MMG from FF7 to AA10. The attack is on the 8 column, but without FFNAM or FFMO because Japanese squad "V" is now Pinned. The DR is "3,3 (6)", which results in Cowering and lowers the attack to the 6 column, resulting in a 1MC which squad "V" passes. Due to the Cower result, no Fire Lane is placed and squad "B" and the MMG are marked Final Fire. The attack is eligible for 2 FP Residual, but as this is no greater than the Residual FP already placed by the FT-17M, the 2 FP Residual already placed in BB9 remains unchanged.



At the end of the Japanese MPh

The Japanese player now enters squad "W" at DD10 using Assault Movement, and the French player decides to attempt an Intensive Fire shot from his FT-17C. Regardless of the results of the shot, no Residual is placed because the tank was using Intensive Fire (A8.25).

Now the Japanese player enters squad "X" also at DD10, using regular movement. The French player declines to fire, so the squad enters EE10 using bypass. It suffers the 2 FP Residual attack, for which it receives the full +3 Building TEM (plus –1 FFNAM) even though it is moving through open ground hexsides (A8.2). The Residual attack has no effect and squad "X" completes its move by entering FF9.

Japanese squad "L" in Z5 now declares an Assault Move, with an attempt to throw a Smoke grenade into Z4. (This would have been useful to cover the movement of the Berserk unit earlier, but since Berserkers have to move first in the MPh, it was not an option.) The Smoke dr is "1", and the Smoke is placed for 2 MF but no Residual attack. Squad "L" now continues its Assault Move into Y5. It first takes the 2 FP Residual attack, with –1 for FFMO. (The Smoke in Z4 has no effect, even though the Residual was placed in an attack from AA4.) The French DR of "8" has no effect. Squad "L" now takes the Fire Lane attack from the HMG in CC5. The attack is on the 4 column, with +1 DRM for the Wreck; the Smoke (a "soft" hindrance) does not apply to the Fire Lane attack (although it would cancel FFMO). A DR of "4,4" ("8") results in no effect; it does not result in Cowering and would not even if Lt. Lindeau had not been present in CC5.

Finally, the Japanese player declares a Dash with squad "M" from Z5 through Y5 to Y4. As the squad enters Y5 it takes the same Residual FP and Fire Lane attacks as squad "L" did, but with an additional –1 DRM for FFNAM. (Dash movement has no effect on the strength of Residual FP or Fire Lane attacks, A4.63.) These attacks have no effect on squad "M", so French squad "E" in AA3 fires on the 2 column (due to Dash movement), with +2 for Smoke and –1 for FFNAM; a DR of "3" causes a 1MC, which squad "M" fails, and is step reduced before entering Y4. Any Residual FP from this shot would be based on the 1 column, and reduced by 2 columns for the +2 hindrance of the Smoke in Z4, so no Residual FP could possibly be placed, even if none had existed previously in Y5.

Tommy Atkins at War Revisited

A Deeper Look at the British in ASL

By Charles Markuss

With MMP's release of *For King and Country*, (henceforth *FKaC*) the revamped British module in Advanced Squad Leader, another look at the British in ASL seems appropriate. Since 'Tommy Atkins at War' first appeared in the Avalon Hill *General* Vol. 25 No. 6 much additional information has come into this writer's possession, to the extent that a major revision seemed desirable. Shortly after 'Soldiers of the Sun' appeared, Rex Martin, then editor of the *ASL Annual*, asked this writer to produce an expanded article on the British with more information on the PTO campaign and the desert war. Eagerly accepting the offer, yours truly soon fell foul of the sheer volume of material that had been accumulated, plus pressures from family and work and a wish to do something else for a change. After a long rest, and the accumulation of even more material, it is perhaps now time to write again about Tommy Atkins. 'Tommy' and 'British' can be taken to mean any troops that fought within the overall structure of the British Army, including Commonwealth, Polish and other personnel unless otherwise specified.

This article will not attempt to change every word or sentence from the original, but will nonetheless try and re-examine *FKaC's* cardboard inhabitants, compare some aspects of this game with its ancestors, *Crescendo of Doom* (hereinafter *CoD*) and *West of Alamein*, (henceforth *WoA*), offer some explanations of the rules and capabilities that are peculiar to the British in ASL and debunk some well-worn myths (perhaps the most enjoyable bit) about the 'Tommy' of world war two. His strengths and weaknesses will be measured against the rather sweeping statement made by Hitler about 'Tommy' after the Dunkirk debacle:

The British soldier has retained the characteristics which he had in World War I. Very brave and tenacious in defence, unskilful in attack, wretchedly commanded. Weapons and equipment are of the highest order, but the overall organisation is bad.

Certainly Hitler was being rather generous when he praised British equipment, as we shall see, and Tommy's uniform in particular did nothing to improve his image when compared to the often elegant German uniforms of the early war period. The choice of Tommy's often ill-fitting new uniform, called 'Battledress', was made in 1938 and comprised, as one author described it "...the top half of a golfer and the bottom half of a skier along with the most ridiculous head-dress imaginable...There was no escape and the Army went to France dressed as convicts". The Home Guard uniform, when eventually available made a man either resemble "...an expectant mother or an attenuated scarecrow".

The soldiers depicted on the old *WoA* box-lid, produced by the late and great George Parish appear comical perhaps in their short trousers and resemble over-grown schoolboys from some select English educational establishment, the new box art for *FKaC* makes use of a painting by David Pentland and shows Scottish infantry wearing the comfortable but inelegant battle-dress, marching down a dusty road in Normandy during Operation 'Bluecoat', accompanied by the wail of the bagpipes, which are no doubt drowned-out by the purr of a 15th (Scottish) Division Dingo scout car and the roar and clatter of a Churchill Mk IV belonging to the 6th Guards tank Brigade. This module, unlike *WoA*, contains no desert boards or desert scenarios.

The generic 'Tommy Atkins' nickname is often, but wrongly, attributed to the celebrated encounter between the future Duke of Wellington and the dying Private Thomas Atkins in 1794, but the term actually dates back to at least 1743, along with less enduring but more colourful names like 'Thomas Lobster' (because of the traditional red coat worn by troops) and 'John Tar', which were both in use by 1740, or some 29 years before the future Duke, Arthur Wellesley, was even born!

Infantry

The most obvious difference between the *FKaC* and *WoA* and *Crescendo of Doom* (hereafter *CoD*) is the squad counter artwork; those boring static poses are now gone and Tommy is now doing something more strenuous than idly standing about waiting for the tea to brew. In addition, the crew counters have also been revamped to show the now familiar 'standard' gunners' poses. Of much more importance, the British Elite and First Line squads now have some very useful and welcome smoke-generation exponents, while the old 6-3-8 Airborne and Commando squads have a longer reach as 6-4-8s. Bear in mind, however, that most commandos (Army as well as Royal Marine) actually carried rifles, not SMGs, and should therefore be represented by 4-5-8s. The Gurkhas have quite rightly been 'promoted' from 4-4-7s to Elite status too (more on this later), so the 4-4-7 squads are no longer used to represent these fierce fellows, but rather the less well-trained, less cohesive units like some, but not all, of those in the hastily-expanded Indian Army of the early war years (more on this later too). The ASL rulebook reveals further changes like Tommy's immunity to Cowering if Elite or First Line, Stealth advantages for the ANZACS and Gurkhas to reflect their renowned stealth and ferocity in close combat, and that helpful +1 drm to nocturnal recce attempts to 'spot' enemy defenders. The immunity to Cowering reflects stoicism (more on this later), while the latter simulates the British flair for reconnaissance and night patrols (a legacy of World War I trench raids – more on these anon too).

The cool-headed British also score well on Heat of Battle drms, and are less likely to go 'Beserk' and more likely to become 'Heroic' than most other nationalities, although these traits are all of course stereotypes to a large degree. Certainly some Gurkha, ANZAC, Irish, Scottish and French-Canadian troops earned a reputation for their fiery tempers and sometimes exhibited far less self-restraint towards wounded or captured enemy personnel than other British soldiers. That said, like the American GI even the usually more restrained British personnel would murder prisoners or civilians on occasions. A celebrated, and controversial, British Lieutenant Colonel Colin ('Mad Mitch') Mitchell and veteran of Aden and Northern Ireland once observed that the British Empire spanning one third of the world's land surface was not won by being nice to people, and a veteran naval officer observed that Britons are "when roused from lethargy, a barbaric people". In Burma, one British officer, aware that some junior US officers wanted to 'frag' their blustering US colonel, deliberately took him into an area infested with Japanese snipers—but without 'success'. Certainly any local civilians caught robbing British dead or wounded during the war were usually given short shrift, but balanced against such ruthlessness a Brigadier General was court-martialled and reduced to the rank of private for inflicting violence on captured German bomber crews.

Leaders

A notable omission from ASL is *CoD's* automatic motorcycle experience for British leaders. The writer considered this a nice rule, simulating British Army requirements that all junior officers be competent motorcyclists. The different counter art for the 6+1, 10-2 and 10-3 leaders is an inspired touch (like all the men wielding bayonets on the Japanese squad counters yet sporting a mixture of different head-dress to emphasise equipment shortages); these officers brandish nothing more lethal than a cane and would probably frown on a Japanese officer being so ill-mannered and theatrical as to wield a sword. In reality, many officers in Franceand Burma during the early war period had to privately-purchase their own side-arms, if opportunity and time allowed, and the counter artwork also brings to mind the more eccentric breed of British officer who, like their Japanese counter-parts, believed in adopting a deliberately-conspicu-

ous leadership profile despite the obvious hazards from enemy snipers; for example the use of hunting-horns to spur-on or rally their men in Normandy and Arnhem, or the major who led his men into battle at Arnhem wearing a bowler-hat and carrying a battered umbrella for, as he later claimed, identification purposes, or the company commander in Burma who toted a shepherd's crook and thus "stood out like a biblical prophet". Such behaviour was partly fostered by pre-war Indian army drills which demanded that infantry officers lead attacks by waving their walking-sticks in the air as they advanced to encourage their men. In Italy the commando officer Colonel Jack Churchill wielded both a sword and bowler-hat! Small wonder then that German and Japanese snipers were able to identify and pick-off British officers with ease until some at least swallowed their pride and both dressed and behaved to better resemble their subordinates, like those on the lower-ranking British leader counters in ASL.

Other examples of this often casual attitude towards the hazards and grim realities of war include the Colonel who attempted to catch partridges in a minefield and the battalion CO in the desert whose unit was overrun by the Germans because he had insisted on stopping the retreat at dawn to have break-fast! The above examples do little to improve the poor historical reputation of British officers as all being high-born idiots, based on their antics in the Napoleonic and Colonial Wars, and on the 1914-1918 "lions led by donkies" stories, however much all these might be very sweeping generalisations. One British CO in Normandy risked the wrath of his men when he insisted that they 'unnecessarily' risk enemy fire to pick up paper and other litter before handing over their positions in a 'tidy' manner to a relieving formation, but there was method in his apparent madness. A veteran RAF photo-recce pilot testified that US trenches especially were always easy to spot (and hence vulnerable) due to the vast amount of litter strewn about from ration packing—the 'K' ration being notorious in this respect.

All armies have their share of idiots, particularly in wartime when standards inevitably fall, but the evidence shows that most British officers were good at their job despite a degree of apparent eccentricity in foreign eyes. Certainly by 1918 British officers commanding front-line troops were very young, professional and both eager and willing to adopt and teach to other units *Stosstruppen* style infiltration tactics that saved their men's lives and continued the advance against the Germans as efficiently as possible after so much fruitless slaughter in the previous years' failed offensives. The British platoon training manual of February 1917, SS 143, was described as "a storm trooper's handbook'. The troops themselves were hard, cunning, skilled in night attacks and determined to sell their lives dearly—scouting talents and the ability to use the Lewis gun and feed its insatiable appetite for ammunition were highly prized qualities.

Some senior officers may have been mediocre at the start of World War Two, but staff work became at least adequate after a poor start. However, the British army was (and until the 1990s still was) hampered by the stubborn refusal to develop a doctrine based on the experiences of previous wars—certainly many of the painful lessons of the 1914-1918 war had been forgotten by 1939—or to define its precise role. Moreover, pre-war theories envisaged only a minor, supportive, role for the British army (even when the obsession with colonial defence began to wane) and Germany was supposed to be defeated with a modified re-run of the Great War—a naval blockade, British bombers and then the French army to go in for the final kill, if the confidently-awaited collapse of the German economy in the first 18 months of the war did not materialise. In keeping with this perception, the British Expeditionary Force (henceforth BEF) sent to France in 1939-1940 was composed largely of infantry reservists (cheaper to deploy than tanks and better at holding ground), whereas that of 1914 contained the cream of Britain's professional soldiers. When these strategies proved illusory and the army had to be rapidly expanded for a new and greater role there were insufficient trained staff officers. The absence of meaningful pre-war exercises compounded matters and during the war there was an understandable reluctance among commanders to release their brightest subordinates for staff college courses. On a tactical level, similar shortcomings allowed old methods and inadequate officers to linger on. Even in 1944 officers in the UK were taught "how to command a battalion from a coal-cellar", rather than near the front line, although experienced desert veterans knew better. Many pre-war officers were expected, even pressured, to participate in polo matches, fox hunting, pig-sticking or other 'machismo' sports rather than encouraged or instructed to study their profession seriously. Ambition in an officer was seen as an unsavoury trait, and in 1942 some officers in Burma were still expected to ride and hunt with hounds.

"Inconvenient or unpalatable orders were disputed, command being exercised more by conference than obedience in the desert and later in Normandy..."

If these 'sporting' officers ever read (or wrote in) any military journals they chose as their subjects such compelling themes as 'Hunting [foxes] as Training for War' (which at best might have developed an eye for terrain) and this did little to rid many officers of the habit of treating soldiering and war as merely a gentleman's game or sport. On one occasion senior British officers were seen to be picking-off enemy soldiers as if they were shooting pheasants. In army life and language fox-hunting or other 'sporty' terminology abounded and many BEF officers went to France with their horses, dogs, golf-clubs or tennis equipment. One lieutenant colonel even took his shotgun and golf clubs to Arnhem, and a sergeant his football and French officers manning the Maginot Line in 1940 criticised the British tendency to view their time in the line as an adventure or sport. Even Commonwealth officers were not immune to such attitudes, and ANZAC soldiers were initially unwilling to accept advice on a need for more training. Furthermore, their over-aggressiveness and "romantic determination" to outshine their fathers' heroism in the Great War stemmed from bad examples that would cost them unnecessary casualties in the desert. As late as 1944 one British commander in Burma had to be removed because he insisted that his troops stand and fight upright "like men" rather than dig in. Even the British High Command suffered from this gentlemanly and Napoleonic mentality and refused until 20 May 1940 (i.e. ten days after the German attack) to permit BEF troops to improve their defences by 'loop-holing' or 'mouse-holing' French buildings by knocking through internal walls to improve access for the occupants, through a misguided respect for private property. Nor, of course, was any training given to, nor tactics developed by, the BEF to fight in urban terrain for the same reason—with unfortunate results for the poorly-trained defenders at Amiens and Abbeville. Similarly, in Burma, the defences at Kohima were seriously compromised by the Naga Hills civil authorities forbidding the use of barbed wire to hinder the Japanese.

Coupled to these dangerously-inappropriate notions, the 'public school' (roughly the same as a US private school) education received by most pre-war officers encouraged the admiration and pursuit of romantic idealism and heroic amateurism and a hostility towards any hint of professionalism except perhaps in the care of horses—Gurkha Battalion officers excepted. Regimental history, jargon and etiquette in the mess took precedence over teaching new officers how to wage war, and these attitudes were particularly common in the cavalry regiments, some of whose officers, though by no means all, had fought their badly-managed, frantic and belated mechanisation tooth and nail even though mechanisation was inevitable due to the lack of reserve horses in any conflict, and to a lesser extent by the Royal Horse Artillery. These regiments' play-boy officers were selected by private income and class rather than merit since pre-war army pay was insufficient for the expenses of the typical officer in all but the most humble regiment, let alone for the horse-orientated life-styles and glittering parade uniforms of the cavalry. This obviously deterred many poorer but otherwise suitable applicants. To some extent these hurdles still exist today, certainly in the Household Cavalry regiments so photographed by foreign tourists.

To the cavalry, "the haughty queen" in this "spiritually eighteenth-century army"and this "most mentally inert, unprofessional and

reactionary group" within it, a large percentage of the wartime AFVs were entrusted—despite the initial reluctance of the cavalry to accept them. Men such as these were unwilling to fight, much less socialise, with 'inferior' regiments and humans—an attitude not even found in medieval Anglo-Welsh armies. Inconvenient or unpalatable orders were disputed, command being exercised more by conference than obedience in the desert and later in Normandy, and to General Hobart's chagrin in North Africa 7th Armoured Division officers preferred playing polo to combat training. Small wonder that there was often a mindless insistence on simple, futile, and suicidally-inappropriate tactics until the Axis obligingly and violently removed them from command. Unfortunately some of them were still there in Normandy primarily because only cavalrymen or (exceptionally) Royal Horse Artillery officers were permitted to command cavalry regiments, and guardsmen to command Guards divisions, regardless of the qualifications of otherwise eligible contenders, of the sheer incompetence of cavalry commanders generally or the growing dearth of experienced and competent officers, especially at the higher levels of command.

Luckily, the artillery and infantry were less infected by this mental malaise, especially officers in the pre-war Indian army (who were probably far more professional overall than their British home forces counterparts), as were those in Egypt. Certainly at the junior level in particular most officers were as good as their allies, if usually not quite up to the best German standards, particularly when they began to be recruited from a wider social group through modified selection procedures. This is reflected in ASL's British 'Leadership Generation Number' of "5", the best in the game after Germany's "4" and on a par with Japan's value (albeit for different reasons—see my article 'Soldiers of the Sun' in the *ASL Annual* 1992). The better quality of British leaders was due as much to social factors as changes in recruitment as there has always been a reluctance (at least until very recently) among Britain's self-styled 'upper classes' to follow commercial or (God forbid!) technical vocations ("getting one's hands dirty", as it was disparagingly-dismissed) and thus soldiering has usually been more socially-acceptable than in, say, the USA. Social trends therefore placed 'public school' types, sons of professional soldiers and other natural leaders into the armed forces, especially into the 'glamorous' combat formations rather than into 'grubby' (and less prestigious) supporting branches. While men like this found it difficult to adjust to life in the armoured formations of World War Two, and were not exactly renowned for their tactical brilliance, they did at least know how to care for, motivate and lead their men properly.

This is not to say that the British army bridged the gulf between officers and men as successfully as the Indian army or the Germans (especially in the better *Waffen SS* formations), and there were numerous complaints of how crassly the differences of rank were flaunted. One British tank officer in Normandy, perhaps harshly, said of infantry brigadiers that they "all... look the same—middle-aged, rather grim, slow thinkers and without any sense of humour." But most officers—however tactically-inept some might have been—were taught in no uncertain terms and took to heart the notion that the welfare of their men was "a solemn responsibility", not least because the supply of British and Commonwealth personnel was severely limited. Once war was declared almost all aspiring officers had first to serve a term in the ranks (as in the German army, albeit for a shorter period) and this helped the newer officers to appreciate their own men's situation better. Overall, British officers showed far more concern for the welfare of their men than US officers, among others, although there were of course exceptions to the general rule. In 1939 the social 'elite' supplied 84% of aspiring British officers (40% of these from 'military' families), but wartime samples showed a fall to only 25% when demand exceeded supply. The equivalent figures for self-recruitment by such families in Germany was 29% in 1933 and 15% in 1939, and 23% for the US army in 1935. A less elitist approach had to be adopted as in 1916-1918 and (albeit reluctantly in some quarters) well-educated 'middle-class' men thereafter comprised the bulk of the officers. German selection procedures were copied, including psychological assessments with great success and officer quality was also enhanced by the recruitment of more worldly-wise individuals who had hitherto followed civilian careers, especially in Africa and the Far East; the latter ensured in part that African, Indian and Burmese formations among others received officers who were experienced at handling personnel, spoke their language and knew their customs and culture.

This pool of officers was also swelled by a significant number of British-born officers who were loaned or transferred to the African, Indian or Burmese forces from the British army for financial or other reasons in the inter-war years, since army pay in the Empire's backwaters far exceeded the living costs even when a comfortable life-style was adopted, which as already noted demanded a private income in most pre-war British units situated in the UK. As an example, even in wartime, a junior Guard's officer's UK clothing allowance covered only 54.9% of the cost of the wardrobe, including walking stick! Not only was officer's pay in the pre-war Indian army higher than in the UK but only the top 30 officers graduating from any one year were eligible to apply for Indian army service, ensuring that standards remained high irrespective of wealth or connections. Unfortunately, in wartime the different pay-rates between the British, Australian and Indian armies were a powerful disincentive to the transfer of officers between the three armies in order to optimise their skills and experience in the ill-fated defence of Singapore though General Auchinleck then put an end to this pay discrimination. The gradual 'Indianisation' of the Indian army, while resented by many reactionary British officers, also gave commissions to many wealthy, well-connected or well-educated men of Indian birth. Those selected (87% were rejected) gave good service even though their "leisurely" training in the early war years concentrated more on gentlemanly behaviour than on producing good officers, and similar complaints were made about the training system in the UK. In 1939 there were 3031 British and just 697-1000 Indian officers in the Indian army (sources vary), but by the war's end the numbers were 18572 British and between 13947 and 15740 (sources vary) Indian officers, plus another 14000 seconded from the British army.

The Indian and Burmese armies differed from the British in that commissioned officers were not present below the position of second-in-command of a company, and platoons were commanded by 'Viceroy Commissioned Officers' promoted from the ranks, who had no direct equivalent in the British army, but who performed admirably once properly trained and experienced. Officer quality in the British army was also enhanced by the many NCO platoon commanders (sergeant-majors) of 1939 who were also commissioned, some rising to command battalions or regiments by 1945, as well as some men who received commissions-in-the-field for outstanding bravery or initiative. However, the commissioning of so many NCOs had drawbacks in the long term because it caused a leadership gap, and the quality of infantry NCOs declined noticeably by 1944 not only because those men with leadership abilities had already become officers, but because the repatriation programmes before the start of the war and towards it's end understandably sent the veterans home first from places such as Burma. So serious was the shortage of officers that by 1945 some of the newer ones were barely 18 years old, despite the fact that a number of Dominion and Commonwealth officers, especially from Rhodesia and South Africa, had been transferred to British units by 1942, and that the 'Canloan' scheme of October 1943 had provided 673 Canadian officers for British units in the ETO and PTO. Under 'Caloan' every British infantry division received about 40 Canadian officers. These were regarded as particularly aggressive patrol leaders and not surprisingly 465 of these became casualties. In addition to almost 1500 South African officers seconded to the British army, 168 Australian officers were transferred to the Indian army in 1944 to alleviate the officer shortage.

But in the end all this was not enough, especially as the real tactical training of officers was provided only when they joined their units, and this was often patchy. Small wonder that there were continued complaints about poor officer quality and training. In Burma the toll of 19-21 year old inexperienced junior officers became so great in some 'Chindit' units that their senior NCOs persuaded their commander to leave the NCOs in charge rather than fly in yet more young officers to die needlessly in misguided attempts to 'prove' their courage. Officer casualty rates were probably so high in most units because

they had to personally compensate by their own actions for deficient NCO leadership, yet nonetheless there were numerous complaints that British officers lacked the force of personality to ruthlessly push their men forwards in the way that the Germans, Americans, Soviets or Japanese were renowned for, despite the fact that officer casualty rates in 1939-1945 were (proportionally) higher than they had been in 1914-1918, and roughly double that for enlisted men. Yet the need for so many officers was partly self-inflicted; by 1943 it was unthinkable—at least officially—to have mere NCOs commanding platoons as practised so successfully in the German army, though the Indian army (as related above) was an exception to this British practice. There was also a glut of senior officers due to over-promotion, as in the US army. By contrast, the Germans used their officers much more economically and efficiently, delegating far more responsibility out of sheer necessity and giving their NCOs equivalent responsibilities to Allied junior officers or even higher when occasion demanded.

Infantry

Turning now to the multi-man counters, the firepower of British squads in ASL is low (rifle squads 4, airborne 6) due to an over-reliance on bolt-action rifles and the small size of the British infantry squad, as well as for organisational and historical reasons. As far back as November 1926 the British War Office had issued a specification for a new automatic rifle to replace the old Lee Enfield rifle of 1903 vintage, but none of the designs met all the specifications; the best contender had about 2.5-3 times the rate of fire of the old bolt-action weapon—i.e., a practical rate of 35-45 rpm—and might have had a bright future but for the fact that the British Treasury (an organisation that always knows the cost of everything but the value of nothing) objected to the cost of replacing the old rifles, and because the General Staff wished to avoid placing any greater strain on the logistical system that higher ammunition expenditure from automatic weapons invariably brought. Moreover, as Imperial Policeman giving 'Tommy' a bolt-action rifle for dealing with rioters was less destructive/more discriminate and hence politically safer than an automatic weapon. Organisationally, too, the British squad had only 8 men up to 1943, ten thereafter (sometimes 11 in Burma from 1944, personnel permitting), and this compared badly with the 9-man Soviet squad, 10 (later 9) for the German, 12 in the French and US squad, 13 in the USMC squad and 15 or more in the Japanese. This small size, and hence reduced firepower, was mirrored in larger formations too, for the British infantry company TO&E was one of the smallest of any World War Two army; at full strength in 1939 it had 129 men if there were 4 platoons, but usually there were just 3 with 100 men between them. By 1944 this had grown to a nominal 125-127 men, whereas foreign equivalents were usually much larger—US infantry divisions had between 193 and 223 men per company, a US armoured division's between 178 and 251, the Germans between 191 and 200 before 1944 and 161 thereafter (but partly offset by a great increase in firepower to offset the manpower reduction). While the Soviet SMG companies boasted only 78-100 men (but had lots of firepower), their rifle companies contained 143 men, the French 190 men, the Italian between 144 and 156 men and the Japanese between 180 and 262 men.

Nor was this the whole story. British rifle battalions were also far more poorly equipped with organic support weapons than their foreign equivalents, as the Support Weapons Allocation Charts in ASL show. Table 1 demonstrates the serious British deficiencies in MMGs and HMGs.

British MMGs were not organic below divisional level until late in the war, being kept in specialist MG Battalions with 36 or 48 MMGs apiece, and they had little direct contact with ordinary infantrymen, which did little to enhance tactical efficiency. MMGs were doled out downwards to smaller formations 'on loan' as required and in defence this usually sufficed but in fluid situations or in attacks they were rarely in the right place in meaningful numbers when suddenly needed; by 1944 there were MG Companies detached to infantry brigades, but there were never enough of them. Ironically, even in 1914-1918 the Canadians and Germans used a much more generous MMG allocation than the 'specialist' British TO&E, but the lesson was ignored—another instance where new weapons of apparently dubious value (like tanks and aircraft) in the eyes of the conservative top brass were quarantined in specialist corps because no established branches of the British army would accept them. This quaint legacy of the Great War ensured, in the case of MG Battalions, that the troops therein were 'technicians' first, soldiers second and infantrymen only a poor third. The crucial importance of such firepower to support attacks is ably demonstrated in the *FKaC* scenario 102 'Point of the Sword'.

Hopefully this explains the rather odd British MMG and HMG allocations in the ASL charts, with such variations for attackers, defenders or neither. While the earlier 8-man rifle squad was probably not seriously disadvantaged in combat with larger enemy squads, especially when defending, the deficiencies in organic MGs was quite another matter at company level and above, as was the latter's low firepower; in this respect Hitler's observation about bad British organisation was justified. Later on, when the British army assumed an increasingly offensive role it was clear, even against those German squads using the older MG 34, let alone the faster-firing MG 42, that the British squad could not generate enough firepower to suppress these formidable German weapons without significant supportive fire from distant heavier weapons. To say that this caused a feeling of inferiority and a crisis in confidence would be putting it mildly. However, as a humorous aside, at least one British non-elite formation enjoyed unusually high firepower; the 1st American Squadron of the London Home Guard (in which 128 US citizens eventually served their host nation) provided not only their own transport but also Thompson SMGs at their own expense. Whether these were carried in violin-cases is not recorded. The British No 2 Commando were given Thompson SMGs by the Mayor of New York after they had been confiscated from gangsters. For the most part however, unless it was a squad in an elite 'private army' like the Commandos or paratroops, the typical British squad had to make do with just a Thompson or STEN SMG for the leader, and only the BREN LMG to bolster the firepower of the bolt-action rifles, although as in all armies 'scrounging' could improve upon the official weapons issue. The slightly more generous flame-thrower allocation on the SW Allotment Chart reflects the priority given to the PTO in their issue, though they proved to be of little real value in the field.

In ASL the best British squads still have a range of only 5 hexes, though 'home-grown' Britons (at least) were famous for their marksmanship. 'Tommy's' firearms training was a legacy of his traditional and primary role as Imperial Policeman in situations where sometimes every shot had to count when confronting hordes of unfriendly chaps. But range factors in ASL represent much more than just shooting skill, for pre-1914 British trials had shown that *weight* of firepower mattered far more than *accuracy*; 150 second-class shots could quickly silence 100 crack marksmen, and the men could also be trained faster. Unfortunately there was also another legacy

Table 1 Support Weapons Allocation Per Battalion

Weapon	British	US	German	Soviet	Italian	Japanese
Lt Mortar	12**/9	9	9/—	9/6	18	27-36
Med Mortar	2/6	6	6	6/9	—	2*
Hvy Mortar	—	—	—/4	—	—	—
MMG or HMG	+	14	12	12/9	8	8
.5" cal HMG	—	6	—	—	—	—

Notes:
Numbers separated by "/" denote initial and late-war totals
** denotes the rarer 4-company TO&E of 1939, otherwise 9
* sometimes present
+ motor battalions had 8 after 1941

from the colonial wars that militated against tactical efficiency (in ASL, range factors)—the regimental system of the British army. Created largely by Edward Cardwell, the Secretary of State for War in 1868-1874 and the main protagonist for the abolition of army commissions by purchase (rather than merit), this type of organisation was coupled with recruitment on regional, geographic, lines to supply the far reaches of the Empire with sufficient troops; one battalion remained at home refitting while the other served overseas, then *vice-versa*. The 'Regiment', or more precisely a battalion therein, gave 'Tommy' a home (often the best he ever had), a sense of belonging with its emphasis on unique and regional differences, a focus for his loyalty and a boost to his morale when things got bad —for the honour and success of the regiment meant a lot.

But regimental customs, jargon and traditions could also make it difficult for newcomers to fit into what was essentially an army organised into separate and distinct tribes. This fostering of cliques often also undermined the cohesion of larger formations (or even regiments receiving a large influx of replacements), and regimentalism also bred a dislike, suspicion and even hatred on occasions of outsiders, i.e. other regiments or services within the British army—which still persist to this day in their milder aspects (and are certainly not discouraged). One source describes it as "an unprofessional coalition of arms and services" and as "a number of loosely co-ordinated social groups which mirror the views of the society from which they derive their attitudes to military problems". Another source refers to the "heartfelt parochialism" of the wartime British army. Small wonder then that in 1942 a British cavalry officer in North Africa loftily refused the offer of assistance from a field artillery unit with the words "We only accept help from the Royal ***Horse*** Artillery". In 1944 a British tank officer faced with a difficult mission likely to bring heavy losses exclaimed "couldn't you send a less well-known regiment?". Not so the Germans or Americans, their loyalty was to the division, with all the benefits that accrued from this lack of organisational arrogance at the lower tactical level.

The traditionally regional pattern of recruitment (still practised to some extent today) reinforced this insular outlook during the war, as did the increasingly multi-national character of the British army; the British soldier of all ranks traditionally looked down on the '*sepoy troops*' of the Indian army—with, ironically, increasingly little justification—dismissing its troops as mere "frontier soldiers". Although wartime necessities eroded regimentalism somewhat and provided a greater mix of personnel within battalions, its members still thought in terms of "regiment" rather than "division", and as a result different types of unit often fought their own bizarre and hopeless little private wars against a fully integrated foe. Pre-war complaints about a lack of inter-arms training to mitigate the effects of such poor teamwork had been ignored and only the PTO provided more consistent and early exceptions to this rule, largely because the type of fighting in dense vegetation against so ruthless and suicidally-brave a foe as the Japanese soldier made inter-arms co-operation plainly mandatory to even the most arrogant 'regimental' die-hard. But even here there were exceptions.

Elsewhere though, successive defeats at the hands of the Germans merely prolonged the suspicions and mutual recriminations and it took 'Tommy' a long time to forsake the false notion of 'independence' and learn to fight in larger, division-sized, formations or mixed battle-groups of the sort the Germans wielded so skilfully. The British armour's habit of withdrawing from the battlefield at night to form a defensive leaguer not only put more strain on men and machines and surrendered any gains made to the enemy, but also gave the infantry the (correct) impression that they had been abandoned. The Germans remained where they were at sundown to provide, and receive in turn, support from different arms and to recover unmolested any unserviceable or abandoned vehicles. In western Europe full co-ordination in some formations was not achieved until many bitter lessons of the desert war had been relived in Normandy or later, although some Canadians, ANZACS and the troops in Italy had managed this much earlier; even as late as the Arnhem fiasco British inter-arms co-operation was sometimes found wanting. Although the British began fitting telephone sets to the rear of their tanks in July 1944 as tools to aid inter-arms co-operation, photographs show that many vehicles never had them in wartime and the evidence suggests that neither the infantry nor the tank crews used them much; nor were portable infantry radios used much despite being plentiful in 1944, since a radio 'specialist' took away a combat soldier in order to carry around a heavy and unwanted piece of equipment at a time when the company strength was often well below the TO&E. Instead orders tended to be issued in time-wasting 'O Group' meetings where concentrations of officers were vulnerable to attack.

Moreover, the Regiment's paternalistic environment helped to stifle personal initiative (and not only among the less educated pre-war 'regulars'—i.e. long-term volunteers) when compared to German and US troops, and this applied as much to officers as men in the ranks, if less so among pre-war Indian army officers or those in the PTO generally who had to operate with poorer communication links to their senior officers. Although Canadian, ANZAC and some other Commonwealth troops were often less inhibited (unless raw and untrained), Indian and African troops were sometimes treated like children by patronising officers. One officer wrote that Gurkhas "are not subject to mass suggestion, but require careful training, familiar leadership, and love". Consequently 'Tommy', like his Soviet ally, was usually hard to dislodge when defending in strong positions but (as the Germans observed, did their best to bring about and then quickly exploited) their combat performance deteriorated when officers became casualties. 'Tommy' expected his officers to lead and in the attack often went to ground if rendered leaderless, commandos, paratroops and other elite types excepted. In contrast, the Germans since the inter-war years had trained all men to be able to do the job of someone up to two ranks above their own to minimise the effect of casualties, while officer cadets were trained to take command of an infantry battalion if necessary. Thus German troops were *expected*, let alone encouraged, to show high levels of personal initiative, and US troops often tended to do likewise because of poor leadership by many '90-day wonders', whereas the British army's training methods were enshrined in over-detailed orders and tended to emphasise obedience at any cost and the consolidation of newly-won objectives (a throw-back to the Great War). All this was very much at the expense of fostering personal initiative, despite official recognition that personal initiative at all levels was important in modern warfare. This paradox took a long time to resolve, and although personnel for the Recce Corps were selected by IQ tests and were expected to display higher levels of initiative, this branch's role was primarily to gather battlefield information, not to fight.

This British weakness was evident in other situations when forceful and formal leadership was absent or impractical; despite using infiltration tactics at Cambrai in 1917 and facing similar German tactics a year later, most British line troops never developed effective counter-measures in 1939-1945 (except perhaps in siege-type situations against the Japanese) and were far less willing to use such tactics than German, Japanese or Soviet troops despite such measures being advocated before the war in Captain Liddell-Hart's book *The Future of Infantry*. The closest that 'Tommy' got to infiltration tactics were the nightly raids and patrols, which invariably involved returning to his own lines before daylight rather than remaining behind the enemy's to cause trouble, and even here they were generally very unpopular among troops , Australians excepted. Infiltration tactics were second nature to the Germans, as were sudden and rapidly-executed counter-attacks to retake lost positions. British equivalents were slower, more deliberate and methodical—and hence less cost-effective. Perhaps the only tactics at which the British excelled were in carefully planned and executed night attacks.

Such unimaginative tactics and inflexibility were reinforced by other poor traits. Until 1938 imperial policing by means of a comparatively small, and cheap, army of volunteers was regarded as the British army's first priority, and another long war (requiring a mass conscript army not seen, apart from 1916-1918, since the days of Oliver Cromwell in the English Civil War of the 17th Century), was deemed unlikely due in part to wishful thinking. Thus preparations for such a 'worst case scenario' came low on the list of military priorities, so that the tactics in use even late in the war were based on those of 1918. Similarly, the Indian army and other forces in the Far East were preoccupied with combating public unrest and guarding the North West

Frontier and no thought was spared for how to combat a Japanese invasion through jungle terrain. Tactics and equipment reflected these myopic views, and there was a tradition of public sentiment against continental (i.e. European) doctrines of military efficiency; fighting wars was regarded more as an obscene art-form and an unwelcome but brief interruption to the many delights of peacetime soldiering, rather than as a science. Both peacetime and wartime army manoeuvres, which only rarely took place, were similarly unrealistic while memories of the 1914-1918 slaughter bred caution, since officers had nightmares about similar losses from Britain's very limited manpower resources. Indeed official nervousness of this subject even extended to Winston Churchill asking General Eisenhower to avoid heavy British casualties if possible during the liberation of Europe. This must have tested even 'Ike's' renowned diplomacy and patience.

Infantry tactics, in the absence of an official tactical doctrine and with the British army burdened with a poor mechanism for analysing and then distributing the lessons gained in combat, were therefore usually over-cautious, unimaginative, inflexible, relatively predictable, slow in their implementation and sometimes very parsimonious with the human resources provided for a military task. A US officer in the ETO observed that the British would send in a company of infantry to take objectives against which an American commander would have sent a battalion. All this paradoxically made British methods, like the tightly controlled but larger and more aggressive Soviet operations, sluggish in execution and expensive in lives and the exploitation of battle-field opportunities was generally poor compared to German or to a lesser extent US performance. *FKaC* scenario 109 'Dreil Team' is a good illustration of how this parsimony wasted valuable time, which in that particular action the British could not afford to lose. For their part, the British saw the US troops as "slap-happy in their approach. They had a heavy reliance on superior armour and used ten times as much material as they needed to accomplish their targets".

Pre-war, and even war-time, training was no real preparation for fighting a first-rate mechanised army; although the '*1937 Infantry Training Manual*' modernised tactics a little and theoretically allowed commanders more discretion throughout the war there was general dissatisfaction with the adequacy of British (and US) training for the realities of combat. One author observed that "Although capable of marching 20 to 30 miles a day and sticking bayonets into sacks filled with straw, the British infantry in truth was not prepared for modern war". The finer points of tactics were not taught during basic training, and officers and men alike learned these (if any were indeed ever formally taught) on joining their unit as and when time and inclination allowed. To try and bring some degree of uniformity to training, the War Office began to issue to units a blizzard of training pamphlets and memoranda which were of patchy quality and not always frank and truthful, and sometimes even contradictory. Most if not all remained unread in a lonely corner of the officers' mess. As an example, in 1942 an officer in an armoured regiment was faced with a stack of 300 to get through! Veterans complained of an outdated emphasis being given to 'die for one's country', on 'spit and polish' type menial chores, excessive time spent in close-order marching ('square-bashing') or lengthy route marches, and unrealistic, often farcical, battle exercises which taught nothing about minor tactics. Worse, time that could have been spent more profitably on tactical or weapons training was wasted in the preparation of static defences or guarding 'vulnerable points' in Britain or France throughout 1939 and 1940, or in the Far East in 1941 because the British would not pay local labour fair wages to do the manual work instead.

When weapons instruction was given, it was less about how the device worked and should be used so much as a charade with "...monotonous sing-song catalogues... [and] ...a tendency among instructors to regard the names of [component] parts with the same awe as child regards his catechism". Major General Percy Hobart complained about this lack of realism when he referred to "military buffoonery" and to "...all this dressing up. This emotional intoxication by bagpipes and bearskins, and the hypnotism of rhythmical movement and mechanical drills. The glorification of the false side of war ... [and] the deliberate inebriation to avoid seeing thing as they are". Another author described pre-war British soldiering as "'Fuss and Feathers'" which centred around Royal birthdays, parades in which "the ordinary soldier was to be a male ballet dancer in a piece of military choreography...". By contrast, the Germans, particularly the *Waffen SS*, had given up this parade-ground nonsense by 1943 to concentrate on weapons training, which the British would only began to emulate in 1945 when divisional-based 'battle schools' were created and run under more realistic conditions by combat experienced officers. Prior to that, and by way of example, no British (or US) units received any preparation for fighting in the Normandy *bocage* prior to D-Day, or in the jungle, even though many British units in India and mainland Britain had been 'trained' almost stale for years on end, and a desert veteran from 51st Highland Division later recalled how he was given just a few minutes' advice from an officer as 'training' in house-clearance and street fighting before being thrown into the *Reichswald* battle in 1944. However, as an illustration of how haphazard and unit-dependent proper tactical training in the British army was, the Home Guard had been thoroughly trained in street fighting tactics years before, and the subject had been taught in the centralised British 'battle schools' throughout 1940-1942! A veteran of Arnhem also complained about the months wasted on 'drills', inspections and other nonsense at the expense of training for house-to-house combat.

In a similar vein, whereas the Germans conducted training exercises with live ammunition and strove to make the whole business brutally realistic regardless of casualties among the recruits, the western Allies (army commando training excepted) were slow to do likewise due to the constraints imposed by public outcries when accidents occurred—one of the drawbacks of democracy. Although British training methods did become more brutal they lacked one vital ingredient that the Germans routinely included; they (unlike Anglo-US armies) gave each new formation, however raw, a nucleus of battle-hardened officers and NCOs to ensure that training was not only realistic but also up-to-date and they also rotated not just officers and NCOs but also battalions and companies between the battle fields and training commands. The closest the British got to this approach was their LOB ('Left out of Battle') concept which was initiated during the early desert campaign and would withdraw a proportion of experienced officers and men from each infantry battalion before a major attack so that a nucleus to rebuild a battalion was preserved if the rest were wiped out. However, this did nothing to 'export' expertise to newer formations and even in mid-1944 Britain (and the USA) had OBs with completely 'green' units who had spent years conducting mock 'battles' of dubious relevance, but had not benefited from having experienced officers and men from the front transferred to their training establishments. Because British training was very decentralised and much was left to the whim of unit commanders, the quality of training varied much more than the standardised training in German or US formations; a comparison between the 'green' teenagers of Germany's 12th SS Panzer Division in Normandy and similarly 'green', or even veteran, Allied units demonstrated the superiority of German training methods in boosting combat performance. A better example might be the ill-fated Operation Market-Garden, in which improvised German *Kampfgruppen* of 16-17 year olds and old men (of whom on average only 10% had seen any active service) fought British and US elite troops to a standstill and inflicted two enemy casualties for each one suffered. As late as April 1945 Rifle Brigade officers were aghast at the poor field-craft of 45 Royal Marine Commando. which made no attempt to conceal their movement in daylight and brought down German artillery fire to the heavy cost of both units.

Historically too, the British army had regarded training as 'Cinderella' even before the Great War, as well as during it and comparisons with contemporary German methods are sobering, indeed the study of German methods was even forbidden before 1914! Even in the inter-war years the study of foreign armies was discouraged until 1936. Such British attitudes survived well into World War Two, and even the Canadian official history admitted that many of its officers had a "casual and haphazard rather than urgent and scientific" attitude to training and admitted with amazing understatement that the German approach demanded more from their men and was "...perhaps less casual", while US General James Gavin remarked that the

British "took the war far less seriously than we". A good example of this was the large number of head wounds sustained by commandos in Burma through a stubborn refusal to wear steel helmets in place of berets—until ordered to do so. General Auchinleck admitted that his forces were "not as well trained than the Germans" and blamed this state of affairs on pre-war training, "We don't really train for war in peacetime England—we play at it". In pre-war Burma too, the training given "...was like playing soldiers". Britain's first 'battle schools' typified this with obstacle courses, mock explosions and simulated 'tough' conditions like "running up-hill to bayonet straw sacks", thus over-emphasising the physical rather than mental demands of combat.

During the war there was too much preoccupation with the orchestral approach to battle, and the 'correct solution' to a tactical problem from a choice of pre-determined 'drills' was practised. The origins of these drills actually went back to 1918, and were first used by Lt Colonel Harold Alexander when he commanded (ironically) a German (!) unit in 1919 fighting against Soviet incursions into Latvia. The drills mimicked German and Indian army practice, being intended as merely a wartime training aid in the absence of any official doctrine so that, to use a modern British expression, all units 'sang from the same hymn-sheet' and had at least some tactical awareness, but inexperienced and largely inadequately trained junior officers came to regard them as ends in themselves or a universal panacea and, unfortunately, were allowed to do so by default when senior officers left them to their own devices, so that they were applied far more rigidly than battlefield conditions demanded, sapping initiative. Moreover, by emphasising fire and movement, the infantry had to work purely with their own firepower and so the drills (ironically) undermined inter-arms co-operation based on artillery or other fire support, as well as increasing small arms ammunition expenditure. They were not a success, especially in the chaos often created in attacking situations where flexibility, imagination, rapid-decision-making and a willingness to exploit situations an take the initiative were needed, and fell out of favour after 1943 so that the tactical awareness of troops thereafter actually declined and head-on assaults behind ('leaning on' in contemporary parlance) supportive barrages again increasingly became the custom. This, of course, further eroded initiative. Significantly, Rommel observed that the British were better trained for static warfare than for mobile battles; with good reason, for he had his proverbial fingers very badly burned during his initial and forlorn attempts to capture Tobruk thanks to an inspired British, Australian and Polish defence.

British training was therefore prescriptive (all tactical problems being categorised into types) and fostered a methodical and set-piece approach to combat, itself a sort of attritional battle using superior material to compensate for a lack of tactical excellence. British officers complained that it was difficult to get their men to do more than the minimum required, whereas the Germans who saw all tactical situations as essentially unique, trained men to continually do more than should have been reasonably asked of them. A typical British attack after the slaughter in Normandy "...had become a short rush forward, dig in and await the inevitable German counter-attack. These were soldiers who would grind the enemy down, or hold a defensive perimeter to the death, but they had acquired neither the battlefield habits nor the confidence in their leaders necessary for a blitzkrieg [sic] -style operation such as Market-Garden". There was a willingness to 'do their bit' but the loss of so many junior officers and NCOs in Normandy showed an increasing need to "pull men into battle by personal example". Complaints in Normandy and Burma cited excessive bunching-together by troops and an over-reliance on supporting fire rather than their own weapons (partly, as already observed, because of the British infantry squad's low organic firepower) and the problems of fighting in the Normandy 'bocage' and beyond demonstrated that there were clear limits to the western Allied policy of expending ammunition rather than lives, particularly if 'ammunition' of whatever sort was scarce or absent.

"There had been no rush to volunteer for war service in 1939 as there had been in 1914, the grim slaughter of the Great War had seen to that..."

As if these deficiencies were not enough, the pressure of events and often poor organisation sometimes meant that mostly raw troops with little or no training faced a much more proficient enemy, especially in Norway in 1940, France 1940, the Far East and then North Africa. Where training was given it was sometimes wholly inappropriate as for example when Commonwealth, especially Indian, units were equipped and trained for mountain warfare or mobile desert warfare but were then thrown against the Japanese in the jungle. Attempts to train troops for jungle warfare were usually undertaken reluctantly and were initially both short-lived and unsuccessful, discouraging renewed efforts until the Japanese had driven the Allies out of most of South East Asia. A shortage of experienced leaders aggravated this situation, particularly in Indian army units due to the rapid wartime expansion of British and Commonwealth forces which ruthlessly 'milked' existing units of too many experienced officers and men. Their replacements were often unable to even speak the language of their superior officers or men let alone win their confidence (or vice-versa), and this had a disastrous effect on combat performance. The multi-national British army of World War Two was never to be entirely free of this linguistic problem, as shown by the communication problems between the British and Poles at Arnhem. In mitigation however, where these language problems had been overcome, the routine use of languages such as Welsh, Hausa (used by African troops) Urdu, Hindustani or Gurkhali or even English laced with Arabic in British radio communications robbed the Germans and Japanese in particular of very valuable intelligence previously gleaned from poor British radio security.

In some African units a dearth of local officers and (especially) NCOs necessitated the use of British and Polish officers and partly explains why in ASL some African, Indian and other native colonial squads only have a '4' range factor in PTO scenarios prior to 1944, despite these being volunteer units. That these forces eventually overcame the deficiencies by means of thoroughly revised training methods from 1942 onwards is shown by the fact that the range factor increases to '5' in 1944. As such the Indian army became the largest volunteer army in history some 2.5 million strong, and without the Indian *Jawan* the final victory in Burma against Japan would have been impossible. The poor '4' range factor of some African units can be ascribed to a general lack of empathy by some of their (white) officers and NCOs for their religion and customs, and a demonstrable lack of faith in their men's abilities, stemming in part from the total unpreparedness for modern mobile warfare that their traditional imperial policing role at home had brought about, and the widespread fatalism shown by these troops. Once better leadership was provided, such African troops fought well, though their morale was often fragile. Certainly those African troops used in Burma both by Wingate's *Chindits* and on daring commando-style raids in the Arakan region proved to be ferocious in close combat. In the latter case when deployed as raiding forces, they went into close combat bareheaded and barefooted with machete, rifle and bayonet—they too deserve 'stealth' advantages. However it should be borne in mind that volunteer troops should not automatically qualify for elite status in ASL, for example the raw Canadian troops sent to defend Hong Kong, some of the untrained Australian units in New Guinea and Singapore, or the Indian army before 1944. This fact has been recognised in ASL scenarios, in some of which the stalwart Gurkhas are a mix of elite and first-line squads, although even green Gurkha troops usually fought well. The patchy quality of some, but not all, of the Burma Rifles battalions in the early stages of the Pacific war was due to the fact that most of the personnel were deliberately recruited from the (comparatively less educated) 'loyal' and 'martial' ethnic jungle tribesmen rather than from the 'unreliable' or 'disloyal' Burmese *per se* who resented all foreigners in Burma, not just the British and Indian presence. These tribesmen later excelled as scouts and guerrillas but were initially out of their depth when deployed defensively as badly trained conventional troops. Matters were not helped by their having had generally poor pre-war officers, described as "natural backwater material", nor by the poor training of some

units. For such units '4-3-6' factors are more appropriate than the '4-4-7' values.

The 4-3-6 counters are also ideal for the representation of most of the British LDV (Local Defence Volunteer, and wryly renamed 'Look, Duck and Vanish'), but from 23rd July 1940 renamed Home Guard. These units tried to make up for a lack of physical fitness and initially-poor training with enthusiastic optimism and perhaps some previous military experience in the Great War; personnel nominally ranged from between 17 and 65 years old (sometimes more). The 4-3-6 counters can also represent the various private, unofficial, vigilante-style groups of British civilians who searched for imaginary 'fifth-columnists, spies or German paratroopers disguised as nuns in 1940, and included factory or office 'private armies' and the all-female *Amazon Defence League*. Although at least one unit was exceptionally well-trained, contrary to the depiction of these units as *ersatz* combat troops, their primary duty was to observe and report enemy activity or undertake security duties rather than to fight. Only after November 1940 when the immediate threat of German invasion was over did the Home Guard evolve into a more potent force with the introduction of uniforms, better training, a military command structure and more effective weapons than the initial pitch-forks, clubs and museum-piece firearms that most personnel had toted. Of these re-equipped units, only certain coastal AA units ever fired their weapons in anger at the enemy. Significantly, when its younger members were absorbed by the regular army when they attained military age, they were retrained from scratch regardless of their previous Home Guard experience. As a military force it was best described as "...a gigantic bluff", particularly in 1940 when Britain faced the greatest perceived danger from invasion. Despite being cheaper to deploy than regular troops by a factor of 40, because they were unpaid and received few monetary allowances, they were in many respects a cost-ineffective exercise.

Turning now to morale, 'Tommy's' good morale factors appear to contradict the fact that the majority of troops had little enthusiasm for the war and did not feel the lust for revenge or blind hatred for the enemy that motivated other victims of Axis aggression. However, fighting the Japanese or the *Waffen SS* brought something of an exception to this rule, while Polish, Free French and other 'refugee' contingents in the British army (including Austrian and German refugees) were understandably less philosophical or dispassionate. There had been no rush to volunteer for war service in 1939 as there had been in 1914, the grim slaughter of the Great War had seen to that, and in the early war years 'Tommy's' confidence was severely dented by a succession of bitter defeats with a consequent deterioration in morale. In all theatres troops sometimes behaved less than heroically than the popular myths created during and after the war would have us believe. This was due to de-moralisation, a breakdown in discipline and the realisation that enemy fighting prowess had been woefully underestimated, and things were not helped by the shortages of equipment (especially in the BEF in 1940, the PTO, and just after Dunkirk), the often harsh conditions encountered in overseas theatres (for which the temperate climate of the UK was no preparation) and the frequent displays of indifference or even outright hostility shown towards 'Tommy' by local populations or even British civilians who were supposedly being protected from Axis aggression. Examples of this can be found not just in Burma, India and Malaya, but also in many parts of France in 1944. In the latter case, whereas the Germans had behaved correctly to safeguard the area as a valuable food source the liberating allies then knocked everything flat and, as a member of the French resistance put it, began "levelling everything in front of them...and distributing to the civilian population in the same breath chocolate and phosphorous shells" . In the PTO many troops had already served for up to nine years without home leave when Japan attacked, and this did little to enhance morale or a sense of commitment. Draft-dodging was of course not unknown and in all theatres there were sizeable numbers of deserters and malingerers of all ranks behind the lines, as well as in Britain. Another factor that certainly affected non-white Commonwealth troops was the racial discrimination that many had to endure; some British writers dwell on the brutal treatment meted out to black American personnel stationed in the UK by white supremacist racists from the southern US states, while forgetting that the British army practised a more subtle and less violent racial discrimination too.

Given all the above, the reader might be forgiven for thinking that 'Tommy's' morale factor of '7' ('8' for elite and '6' for green), let alone the immunity to ASL's cowering effects, is a trifle generous. However, while the behaviour of a minority of troops was bad, for the most part morale held up remarkably well, even in the dark days of Axis ascendancy in 1939-1942, and against the Germans, Italians and Japanese even inexperienced or outnumbered British or Commonwealth units gave their foes many a bloody nose tactically, however irrelevant strategically. A good example of this is depicted in *FKaC* scenario 92 'Stand Fast the Guards'. In theory 'Tommy' could on average go for 400 combat days (680 calendar days) before breaking down psychologically, the American GI some 200-240 combat days (340-408 calendar days), according to separate wartime studies, and this is reflected in ASL by their different, respective, morale values. There are various reasons for these differences in morale factors.

Firstly, there was the environment. Due to geographical proximity the Axis was a more immediate and tangible threat to 'Tommy' and his family than to the average GI, particularly when facing the Germans. Secondly, the two armies used different selection processes to fill their combat units with personnel. The British method lay somewhere in between the two extremes represented by the German (and also to some extent the Japanese) practice on the one hand and the US practice on the other. The Germans deliberately gave their combat units a fair proportion of the high quality personnel of all ranks available (i.e. not all were creamed off into technical, non-combat functions) whereas the US army consciously diverted the cream of the intake, in most cases, away from combat units—particularly infantry units—and into the more technically-orientated branches were rewards and promotion also often came easier with less risk to body and soul. In the British army many of the non-combatant branches had little appeal to the more ambitious individuals since the rewards were comparatively poor and the British got a somewhat better cross-section of the available personnel into the fighting branches of the army, especially into units with long and distinguished histories, while the Indian army (composed wholly of volunteers) recruited largely from the same families of the 'martial races' by tradition, at least initially.

Moreover, efforts were made not to compromise the quality of the British intake despite manpower shortages because experiments had demonstrated the cost-ineffectiveness of doing so. Although some sources state that the quality of the manpower available to the wartime British army suffered from the competition for recruits posed by the RAF, Royal Navy and 'private armies' like the paratroops and commandos, in the case of the RAF and navy this had been a problem even before the war. Many volunteers had joined the pre-war forces to escape poverty and learn a trade that they could later use in civilian life; of the three services the army had the smallest percentage of technical personnel and was therefore the least attractive. It should also be remembered that every participant of World War Two that created air and naval units to compete with their armies for personnel faced a similar problem. However, it must be admitted that the British were far more reluctant to use specialist, elite, units like paratroops and commandos for prolonged periods as normal infantry than Germany, Italy or the Soviet Union (most of the latter's paratroops were transferred to the Guards Divisions for more frequent and profitable employment), and British 'private army' personnel might have been better used in ordinary infantry units to raise overall standards, especially as paratroop units used far more sergeants per rifle platoon than infantry units.

Thirdly, when circumstances permitted the British rotated their combat formations more frequently than the US army did and also had superior psychiatric treatment available to detect, prevent and cure mental breakdowns, as well as a better knowledge on how to distinguish the malingerers from the genuinely-afflicted, based on the lessons of 1914-1918 'shell-shock' controversy. Experience showed that this medical support was far more effective than short-lived and unsuccessful attempts to 'toughen' troops by visits to slaughter-houses, strewing assault-courses with offal and animal blood, 'hate' indoctrination and seemingly endless marches.

Fourthly, Britain's social structure and military traditions made civilians more readily adaptable to military life and discipline than US personnel, and one source states that the US army's disciplinary code was both stricter and more harshly applied than the British equivalent, presumably for that very reason. But that is not to say that the British army was a model of restraint in meting out punishments; in the West African Frontier Force and among the 'Chindits' in Burma unorthodox and humiliating punishments were inflicted on defaulters. In the former case, beatings on the bare buttocks with rods was a lawful military punishment, while the eccentric General Orde Wingate brought the harsh physical punishments (including striking defaulters of lower rank, in true Japanese style) from the otherwise excellent pre-war Sudan Defence Force to firstly the pre-war Jewish Gideon Force and then the 'Chindits' with him when he formed the latter for service behind Japanese lines. Here he imposed (without official approval) such draconian measures as tying defaulters to trees, flogging, banishment to the jungle—virtually a death sentence in all but name—and even the threat of summary 'execution' to enforce discipline among the 'Chindits' when behind Japanese lines. Those West African units fighting with Wingate of course had *all* these punishments available to enforce discipline. However, banishment was rarely imposed on 'Chindit' personnel and the death penalty apparently never, as far as is known. Unofficially, strictly illegal physical punishments were meted out in all theatres to enforce discipline, regardless of what military law prescribed.

Fifthly, the regimental system—as noted earlier—helped to bolster and sustain morale, and lastly the British officer's greater concern for the welfare of his men was also a contributory factor, going at least a little way to limit the genuine, deep, resentment and harm to morale that the vast differences in pay, rations and comforts between British (but not Australian or Canadian) personnel on the one hand and US troops on the other might otherwise have caused. For example, a US staff sergeant earned as much as a British captain, and a US private first class almost four times as much as his British equivalent (though the differences narrowed at more senior ranks). But for all that, a British infantry unit in the line was more likely to get a hot meal than a US one, particularly in the PTO or Italy, and the rations were generally considered to be better, for all the lavish US rear area support and generous ration portions. It was also routine for British officers, but rare for US officers, to inspect their men for ailments like trench-foot. That said, the writer does not believe, as has been suggested, that European (here, specifically British) troops were necessarily better accustomed to physical hardships than the GIs, particularly as US infantry units were at least if not more likely to contain a greater proportion of men from impoverished backgrounds than a British unit due to US recruitment policy. Even if it were the case, it would not necessarily make Europeans better soldiers since socio-economic origins are less relevant to combat performance than training, leadership, discipline and tactics. In the PTO especially, but also in the desert and later in Normandy, British commanders (obsessed with the spectre of poor morale, often without foundation) complained about a lack of 'toughness' and 'spirit' among troops facing the Japanese and Germans and in the first two theatres blamed it on the softer living of peacetime soldiering.

In comparing western Allied practice with that of the Germans, rewards and punishments are also illuminating, for while the Germans were amongst the more fair and egalitarian in rewarding *exceptional* courage when combined with *initiative* (heroism alone was no qualification for a medal), they were also the most ruthless towards 'cowards' and deserters. One source estimates that 5,302 men were executed for desertion alone between 1939 and 1945 (compared to only about 22 in 1914-1918), of which 1,605 took place in the first nine months of 1944 alone. The total number of German troops executed for all offences in World War Two is estimated to range between 10,000 and 15,000, compared to just 48 in the Great War. Moreover, thousands of men were also either sent to punishment battalions where most died trying to 'regain their honour' or received long prison sentences, while their families also faced official persecution or even death under the old German medieval code of *Sippenhaft* (arrest of clan, or kin) which held other family members accountable for the crimes of an individual. By contrast, the British and Americans were amongst the most humane; only one GI was executed for desertion (among much controversy during and since the event) and, despite Churchill's protests, the British army refused to reintroduce the death penalty after it had been abolished in 1930. This was because the experiences of 1914-1918, when about 266 executions for desertion took place cast doubts upon its effectiveness as a deterrent, and experience between 1939 and 1945 vindicated this policy.

Statistical analysis after World War Two also appeared to confirm this, for the official desertion rate for British troops in the Great War was 1.026%, but only .689% in World War Two. However, if combat units alone are considered, the desertion rate was about 4% throughout 1939-1945, the bulk being infantrymen, and consequently Generals Auchinleck and Alexander advocated the restoration of the death penalty for desertion but were overruled by senior officers, for political as well as humanitarian reasons. The harshest prison sentences imposed for desertion were 3 years' jail, but a mere 6 months' was more usual, and even though British military prisons were grim, brutal and degrading places (as vividly portrayed in the film *The Hill*, MGM, 1965), few inmates accepted the offer of a remission of their sentences if they agreed to return to combat service, although the Canadians appear to have been more successful than the other British or Commonwealth forces in this respect. The *estimated* German desertion rate in World War Two was .79%, apparently higher than the British, but it is unwise to compare estimated and compiled figures too closely due to differing criteria and compilation methodology. Sources state that on average the German desertion rate was much lower than the US army's, and that the British desertion rate was also lower than the US rate; peak rates being British 4.5% (October 1940-September 1941—the year of defeats in the desert, Crete and Greece), US army 6.3% (paradoxically in 1945, seemingly justifying a lowered ELR for that period), and Germany 2.15% (1944—not the Third Reich's best year). Desertion rates were highest in the bloody and static 'sideshow' fought in Italy and for British soldiers at least this leniency allowed them to unofficially transfer from one unit to another by deserting and letting themselves be rounded up for random re-assignment to understrength formations. With so many units short of men by 1944, such replacements were gratefully received without too many questions being asked—enabling 'Tommy' to find a unit to his liking.

The British Empire's land forces lost 188,241 men killed, 401,211 wounded and at least 353,941 missing/POW in World War Two, of which the British army proper lost 126,734 killed and 239,575 wounded or, respectively, 67.3% and 59.7% of the total for the whole Empire. This represented only about 25% of the 1914-1918 slaughter, but was spread through a much smaller proportion of combat ('teeth') to non-combat ('tail') personnel. The total number of British and Commonwealth troops taken prisoner or otherwise 'missing' is not precisely known, but the estimated figure given above represents 37.5% of the total Empire army losses. The Canadians had the lowest overall percentage of missing/POW as a proportion of total losses. Moreover, they and the Indian and New Zealand contingents were proportionally the hardest-hit due to their smaller non-combatant sections as their support services were mostly provided by British personnel, within the larger structure onto which Commonwealth units were grafted. In most theatres casualty-rates approached or exceeded 1914-1918 rates on occasions and the shortage of infantrymen who bore the brunt of the losses could only be alleviated partly—as in the US army—by an influx of hastily-trained or even untrained personnel of often inferior quality, by disbanding or amalgamating some units (as with the British pre-war cavalry regiments, albeit less formally) and by transferring AFV crews, artillery-men, rear area personnel, military prison inmates and even surplus RAF or Royal Navy manpower to infantry units, often with only scanty training. To allow for this, late-war British infantry tactics reverted to simpler Great War style set-piece advances behind artillery barrages to compensate for these training and experience deficiencies. A reduction in the overall proportion of non-combat to combat personnel within units (along German, Japanese or Soviet lines) was not attempted, so that—despite the fact that the infantry battalion TO&E manpower total was reduced—their combat strength fell steadily while the non-combat element actual-

ly grew. Infantry companies shrank from about 125 men down to 40 or even just 6 men, and were then rebuilt with raw 18 or 19 year-old replacements. By 1945 most British infantry companies might have just one veteran left, while 45-year old men, previously deemed too old for active military service, were being inducted.

This state of affairs reflects the gradual exhaustion of Britain's finite infantry rather than manpower reserves, and in reality the strength of the British army actually *grew* from 2.7 million men in 1944 to 2.9-3 million men in 1945, not counting Commonwealth contributions which totalled 1.4 million men during the war. Earlier in the war the British high command had unwisely reduced the ratio of infantry to armoured and artillery formations so that there were not enough infantry units, and had also raised far more units than could be maintained in the long-term. Infantrymen also became scarce because the British (and US) armies had under-estimated the personnel losses that they would suffer in Normandy's 'bocage', especially infantrymen, due to an over-reliance on casualty statistics compiled in North Africa and were therefore unable to rapidly replace their losses. Other factors militating against the efficient replacement of casualties included the regimental system's rigidity in allocating replacements to specific units regardless of need and the (political) decision to grant leave to long-serving personnel before the war had actually ended. Although regiments became steadily less fastidious and had to accept 'outsiders' within their ranks there were clearly limits to how far this 'pooling' of replacements could go. This was especially true in the Indian army due to the ethnic and sociological basis of unit organisation that was used to minimise problems otherwise caused by widely differing languages, castes, religions, cultures and (not least) dietary requirements.

One US historian, Carlo D'Este, argued that the British appear to have deliberately kept back from the fighting in Europe no less than 38,629 officers and 501,109 men, of whom 6,373 and 109,251 (respectively) were infantry-trained at a time when field commanders in all theatres were clamouring for replacements. However, more recent research had discovered that British infantry shortages actually began to bite as early as 1942, but that the UK (presumably for the sake of prestige) was reluctant to admit this so that the USA did not for a time understand the British difficulty. By August 1944 almost all the infantry fit for combat had been sent to NW Europe, and D'Este's figures are 'paper' strengths including physically unfit men, instructors and men suffering from battle fatigue. Thereafter, replacements could only come from cannibalising units or hastily 'retraining' non-Army or non-combat personnel. Matters were not helped when Canada initially refused to send conscripts overseas and allowed (for a time at any rate) 70,000 trained infantry to languish at home unused, but her manpower pool was also exhausted by August 1944. South Africa's decision to forbid non-whites from serving in combat formations also conspired to reduce the overall manpower pool despite the fact that enthusiasm for the war *among whites* was never very high. Moreover, the USA was also facing a self-inflicted infantry replacement crisis, in order to protect her economy.

Turning now to British ELR, the British General Horrocks stated that of any ten men, two would lead, seven would follow and the tenth would do almost anything not to be there at all; the leaders would therefore take most of the risks and become casualties, while an infantry commander in Burma said that 25% of his men were potentially brave, 5% were potential cowards and the rest were neither but were prepared to nonetheless do their duty. An ANZAC officer observed that all men save about 3-5% could control their fear before combat, all of which tends to endorse the relatively good ELR ratings that the British have in ASL for DYO scenarios. On average the British ratings match those for the Germans and Japanese more closely than those of other nationalities. However, given the problems that the British had early in the war after a string of defeats, and later in the war when units were 'tired' and their men wanted to survive a war clearly in its final stages, the ELR factor of '3' for the period 6/39 to 6/42 and then again for 1945 should come as no surprise. On the available evidence, a case could be made for extending the '3' ELR factor for some units back to 7/44-12/44 in the ETO, and for also reducing the US ELR rating to '3' in 1945, because it is plain from reports that even the most enthusiastic soldiers became homesick eventually and often felt that their cause and the country they were deployed in was not worth dying for. 'Tommy' was no exception to this rule and the reluctance to become a casualty statistic grew as the war drew to a close. Worse, as the quality of British and Commonwealth units was often very inconsistent and the relatively lightly-equipped 'private armies' spent comparatively little time in the line under fire, even as late as the end of 1944 the better formations tended to get over-used (despite the British rotation policy), losing their elan and becoming tired and resentful. Such 'war-weariness' which, in extreme cases led to a refusal to obey orders, is also encapsulated in the lower '3' ELR values.

At best, a decline in élan bred over-caution and lower morale, and at its worst led to a refusal to fight or even to mutiny. In the best-known example of this, the so-called 'Salerno Mutiny' of September 1944, some 1,200 veterans from North Africa refused to leave for the fighting at Salerno as reinforcements on learning that other personnel were (allegedly) being sent back to the UK on leave. Many of the offenders received prison sentences and even though mutiny still carried the death penalty none were executed, while others deserted before reaching their 'new' units. Other desert veterans sent to fight in Italy or Normandy were equally resentful if a little more co-operative and the combat performance of these veteran formations was so poor at times that it was felt they were living on their previous (North African) reputations, their previous devil-may-care attitude in the desert contrasting sharply with their timidity in the *bocage* of Normandy. Good examples were the 7th Armoured and 50th and 51st Infantry Divisions, which it might have been better to break up and so cascade their combat experience to 'green' formations. Similarly, units that performed well in the early stages of 'Operation Overlord' or were smugly arrogant became rather humble and sluggish after the heavy fighting there. There was also much resentment among desert veterans over Montgomery's indiscreet and wholly unjustified statements before D-Day, which tended to ridicule the quality of the German troops likely to be encountered there. The veterans knew better, and with something of an inferiority complex towards the Germans anyway, even relatively light casualties would lead to British attacks, especially infantry operations, quickly grinding to a halt. British units suffering 40-50% losses would expect to be taken out of the line, whereas many if not most German units on average functioned well even after 75% losses.

Weapons

Britain's financial, industrial and human resources became much more rapidly depleted than her major allies (and some enemies) and her capabilities in fighting the three major Axis powers simultaneously were dangerously over-stretched. The reasons for this inability to defend her empire are numerous, and anyone wishing to understand the underlying causes of British weakness would be well advised to consult Correlli Barnett's *The Audit of War: The Illusion of Britain as a Great Nation*, Macmillan London 1986 and Papermac 1987, Clive Ponting's *1940: Myth and Reality* London 1990 and Len Deighton's *Blood, Tears and Folly: In the Darkest Hour of World War Two* London 1993. In brief, as the cradle of the industrial revolution Britain failed to keep up with her emerging overseas economic rivals, investing money abroad (especially in the Americas) rather than in her own increasingly outclassed industries, educated too many students in subjects like Greek and Latin at the expense of applied science and engineering, and suffered appalling industrial relations as industry tried to remain competitive by reducing wages and hence costs. Britons could invent well enough—the steam engine, steam locomotive, steam turbine, tank, ASDIC (SONAR), television, radar, jet aircraft, the hovercraft and more recently 'Chobham' armour all bear testimony to that—but investment to then commercially exploit these discoveries (in US parlance, 'production engineering') and earn wealth with which to modernise, arm and defend the nation was so often very inadequate. Two examples will suffice, firstly a report by the British Board of Trade in June 1943 found that on average a machine tool in the UK was used for 20 years before replacement, compared to only 3 or 4 in the USA; and consequently the *per capita* industrial output of

America was 3-4 times higher than Britain. Secondly, whereas the production of the Rolls Royce Meteor tank engine needed 300 machine tools, the US Ford V8 tank engine derived from it needed just 18.

Up to the Great War, this underlying weakness did not surface for the Empire paid for all wars and also propped up the British economy, but the spiralling cost of twentieth century attritional warfare finally caught Britain out. Small wonder then that she was financially bankrupt long before Pearl Harbour, even though (or perhaps because) her massive investments in the USA and elsewhere had been liquidated—at bargain prices—to pay for the war. The conflict cost Britain 25% of her national wealth and ran her railways (barely recovered from the privations and miserly government compensation of the Great War) and her ageing industries back into the ground. 'Victory' merely provided a convenient smoke-screen, together with skilful government deception, to conceal Britain's fundamental economic and military weaknesses and declining influence on the world stage, which her politicians and people only gradually perceived in the ensuing decades and in some ways have still to fully come to terms with. One mechanism used to foster the illusion of continued great power status is the British nuclear weapons programme, and another is the myth of the 'Special Relationship' with the USA.

Despite frantic rearmament after the Munich crisis, the war found Britain unprepared, and ironically it was the infamous 'Ten year Rule' of 1919 (largely Winston Churchill's creation) that by envisaging no likelihood of another war for a decade, and being continually extended each year into the 1930s, that rendered it very difficult to make a good case for military spending. This of course led to the three armed forces trying to outbid each other for the scarce funds that were made available; as an island nation open to attack from sea and air, the army naturally took third place in priorities. Once war was declared, with between 33% and 50% of the British war effort devoted to bombing Germany, and most of the rest on the naval war, the British army remained low on the list of priorities for men and material. Moreover a large slice of army resources went into the 12 divisions formed for AA defence. Although deployed close to home, the BEF of 1940 lacked just about every item needed to repel the Germans effectively, and a shortage of steel helmets in 1940 for Home Guard units forced officers to stand in line with children and buy them two at a time from high-class toy shops!

It is true that Britain had become heavily dependant on US *tank* production, as we shall see, but even in 1944 61.2% of British munitions were still UK-produced, with another 8.9% from Canada (compared to 90.7% made in the UK and another 3.7% from the Empire in 1940) , so it would be wrong to see Britain as an infirm patient totally dependant on a US life support machine. The Empire produced, overall, 80% of its weapons requirements—including supplies to the USA. Thus, assistance from the USA *was* reciprocated by Britain and the Commonwealth and in some cases even matched or bettered. For example, the British Empire mobilised about 9 million men, a figure never reached by the USA, and to equal the Australian contribution alone on a *per capita* basis the USA would have need to mobilise 16 million men. Between 8.12 and10% (sources vary) of New Zealand's 1.7 million population, 10.2% of Australia's 7.1 million population, and 6.1% of Canada's 11.3 million population served in their armies, far higher than the 5.6% of the US population, and 50% of the US 5th Army in Italy was actually—British. Contrary to the myths, on VE Day in the ETO British (excluding Commonwealth) land forces alone totalled 2,846,406 men, compared to 2,041,000 US ground force personnel on 31st March 1945, and between about 2,593,000 to 2,900,000 (sources vary due to differences in methodology) US army personnel at the war's end—hardly the American preponderance so readily assumed by modern historians to have existed.

Whereas only about 37-38.3% of US army personnel were ground combat troops, the Commonwealth equivalent varies between 56 and 89%. In the PTO 80% of the allied land forces were actually Australian. In Burma, the British and Commonwealth proportion of the ground troops (roughly 16.98% African, 64.15% Indian and 18.86% British) was 91.2% in April 1944 compared to 7.8% Chinese and 0.9% US, and in April 1945 was still 87.72%, compared to 10.52% Chinese and 1.75% US Although the USA made a very valuable contribution in Burma by providing effective and heroic air support, US manpower was still well out-numbered by British and Commonwealth personnel, even if most aircraft were US built. Reverse Lend-Lease supplied the USA with, among other things, Spitfire and Mosquito aircraft, jet engine technology, rocket propulsion, 57mm APDS ammunition, the Bailey Bridge, the Mulberry Harbour, centimetric (airborne) radar, improvements to SONAR, anti-submarine weapons, assistance with the atomic bomb project which was not reciprocated, penicillin and 3000 other inventions worth in all an estimated £1000 million pounds in uncollected royalties (to the detriment of Britain's post-war economic recovery), ULTRA code decrypts and other intelligence, as well as various technical and tactical advice (often ignored) from British combat experience.

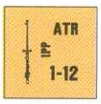
To the end of June 1944 the USA received £1000 million worth of aid from Britain, everything from hospitals, air and army bases, transportation to food. By the war's end this total expenditure reached about £1500,000,000, and Britain's war debt was not surprisingly described by one of President Truman's officials as "a millstone round the neck of the [post-war] British economy". Whereas Britain had been the world's lead creditor in 1939, in the post-war period it took almost 40 years for the UK economy to recover. Crucially, Britain poured £800 million into US industry, of which

£50 million alone went to expand industrial production, with fully £437 million on the US aircraft industry alone. This funding not only put the US aircraft industry on a war footing and financed Henry Kaiser's Liberty Ship programme, but essentially bankrolled future economic competition for the UK. Australia provided £61 million of Reverse Lend Lease to the USA, including food for the PTO; eventually 90% of US food requirements in the PTO came from Australia and New Zealand and the USA actually received more meat from this source than it itself exported. Britain also supplied her other allies not counting the USSR with £2,500 million in funding to fight the war, and 41 convoys of aid sailed to Russia with supplies worth £308,120,000, bringing everything from tanks to boots and trade secrets. A list of the main vehicles shipped to the USSR can, of course, be found in Chapter H, though small numbers of 'samples' like Churchill Crocodiles and Comets have been excluded. Much of the material given to the USSR in 1941-42 had been earmarked for the PTO, and in part explains the loss of so much Commonwealth territory to the Japanese in 1942.

Not surprisingly, Britain was slowly bled dry industrially as well as financially; as an example, even railway lines in India were torn up for re-use in North Africa to enhance logistical capabilities there, because they could not be supplied from the UK. Small wonder that 'economy' and 'conservation' became by-words in human and material expenditure; BREN gunners were taught to fire single shots or short bursts whenever possible, British mortars had low official rates of fire because the gradual embedding of the base-plate into the ground 'wasted' ammunition and made constant re-sighting necessary to preserve accuracy during rapid fire, and British paratroops carried no second, reserve, parachute until 1950. The latter did nothing to encourage volunteers, and by 1944 whole battalions were converted to paratrooper units against the wishes of the men in them. At higher levels, the British protested to the USA at the amount of shipping space 'wasted' in providing American troops with a higher standard of living than was needed—in effect about 50% more food than a man could eat (and almost twice the German ration), while her own population and armed forces had to live more frugally. In Normandy the American GI needed 30 lbs of supplies per day, while 'Tommy' managed on 20 lbs, and the German quota sometimes fell to as little as 4 lbs. In order to maintain the high standard of living that US troops were accustomed to, civilians in the UK and Australia (where there was a resultant beef shortage in 1944) went hungry. The British civilian meat ration was 16 ounces per week—compared to the US civilian ration of 28 ounces.

It has become fashionable to dismiss all British equipment as second-rate, impractical or obsolete, but this is another sweeping generalisation and all armies used weapons that should have been discarded sooner or, better yet, never built. Certainly the British had to rely on rifles for far too long, as already noted

this was because pre-war specifications for something like the M1 Garand were too stringent (even for the M1 to have met), because the emphasis on marksmanship and ammunition conservation was not to be usurped by 'gangster weapons' in the eyes of the conservative military minds, and because there were millions of unused rimmed cartridges unsuitable for such a new weapon. The demands of war extinguished any hopes of such a weapon being produced in the UK, and of course even the more progressive Germans were still predominantly rifle-equipped late in the war because demand for automatic weapons always exceeded supply.



Certainly the Boys anti-tank rifle was "ludicrously inadequate" against even the more thinly-armoured of the German tanks, having been designed for the defence of the Egyptian border after the Italian-Abyssinian war. It reflected a General Staff obsession with infantry-held ATW from 1927 onwards (the year that the lance was officially declared obsolete) and was rushed into service despite its shortcomings. Apart from the violent recoil, the noise made the wearing of ear-plugs prudent and the original steel-cored bullet had to be replaced by one of the harder tungsten-carbide to render it even remotely effective. The 1937 training leaflet recommended practice against targets moving at 15-25 mph at up to 500 yards range—extremely unrealistic advice. After Dunkirk troops were taught to hold their fire until the target was just 30 yards away, or aim at the suspension. Its effectiveness in France with the BEF was undermined both by a shortage of ammunition, the general availability of only half-charge practice ammunition and insufficient training. But the more enterprising Australians found it useful against the Italians at Tobruk in early 1941 by firing at stone sangars to produce rock fragments, and one Aussie, anchored by two of his mates, even fired it at aircraft attacking his troopship. However, its main contribution to the Allied victory was as a field punishment, "...to be given to the company drunk to be carried as a penance". British troops entering the steep and mountainous Ethiopian terrain were quick to dump them, but nonetheless by 1943 nearly 69,000 had been made, even though "... a good crossbow would have been just as useful and far cheaper".

However the main British technical weakness in infantry weapons lay in mortars, as there had been no inter-war research into mortar design or the effects of rain on ignition efficiency. The little 2" mortar was of 1918 vintage, lacked punch like all mortars of so small a calibre, and had rudimentary sights in the form of a white line painted on the barrel. With a theoretical rate of fire of 20-30 rpm, great skill was needed by the user if ammunition was not to be wasted; although it could in theory be fired point-blank horizontally (an unwise procedure occasionally practised against Japanese bunkers), it had a poor range compared to its foreign equivalents:

Nationality	Weapon	Range
British	2"	500 yards
French	50mm	503
German	50mm	569
Italian	45mm	586
Japanese	50mm	711
Polish	46mm	875
Soviet	50mm	875
French	60mm	1860
US	60mm	1985

It was the same story with the British 3-inch mortar; initially it could reach to only 1600 yards, while the German and Italian 81mm mortars could manage 2625 and 4429 yards, respectively. The fact that the British weapon threw a larger bomb and could deliver 200 lb of projectiles in 60 seconds compared to the 25-pdr gun's 125 lb at intensive fire rates was little consolation. However, its range was later increased to 2790-2800 yards, though some crews improved on this through the unorthodox use of captured ammunition, or to over 3000 yards (in Burma) by the addition of extra propellant. Only in 1945 was the range officially increased to 3500 yards by means of a stronger base-plate and barrel to cope with yet more propellant. When the 4.2" mortar was introduced only 4100 yards range could be obtained, by which time the Germans already had copies of the Soviet 120mm mortar in service with a range of 6500 yards, a heavier bomb and a lower overall weight.

More successful weaponry included the venerable, reliable but slow-firing and heavy Vickers MMG and the BREN LMG. The latter was a modified Czech design already in service when the war began and more plentiful than is sometimes suggested, as the ASL SW Allotment Chart confirms. Produced by a single factory that was never bombed by the *Luftwaffe*, over 30,000 existed by mid-1940 with production increased from 300 weekly in 1938 to over 1,000 per week by 1943. Canadian factories made them too, eventually accounting for 60% of output. Australia also produced BRENs, while most Indian troops used the comparable and visually similar Vickers-Berthier LMG, an Anglo-French design both slightly lighter and slower-firing than the BREN (though some BRENs were later issued too) so that supply kept pace with demand and losses, save just after Dunkirk. US forces would have done well to adopt either in place of the old and ghastly BAR or the flimsy and unreliable Johnson LMG and the BREN was both lighter and more accurate than the German MG 34 and MG 42, though it must be admitted inferior in weight of firepower. The simpler but not inferior BESAL (aka Faulkner, after its designer) LMG, hurriedly designed as a substitute for the BREN, was never needed, though in the early war years especially limited use was made of the old Lewis MG despite its unreliability. A lost opportunity to redress the German superiority in LMGs was the Vickers 'K' gun (aka VGO) used by RAF observers in aircraft before being issued to the SAS for use as a vehicle-mounted weapon; weighing about the same as the other British LMGs its cyclic rate of fire of 950-1050 rpm would have given British squads something akin to the very fast-firing German MG 42. 'K' guns did however eventually find their way onto a number of British scout and armoured cars by D-Day.

British and Commonwealth weapons that are not represented in SW counter form in ASL include the STEN SMG; a simplified version of the Lanchester SMG (itself a copy of the German MP28/II). While 'cheap and nasty' with a tendency to mis-feed and jam (which made it less popular then SMGs like the US Thompson, which however cost over 5 to 16 times as much to make), it could also be dangerous even to the user because it had no safety-catch, but could use captured 9mm ammunition. So impressed were the Germans that they not only copied the STEN but also made forgeries for use by 'Werewolf' guerrillas against Allied occupation troops. The Australian Austen SMG took the best features from the STEN and the German MP 40, while its more numerous rival and successor was the excellent and popular Owen SMG, which owed nothing to foreign designs.

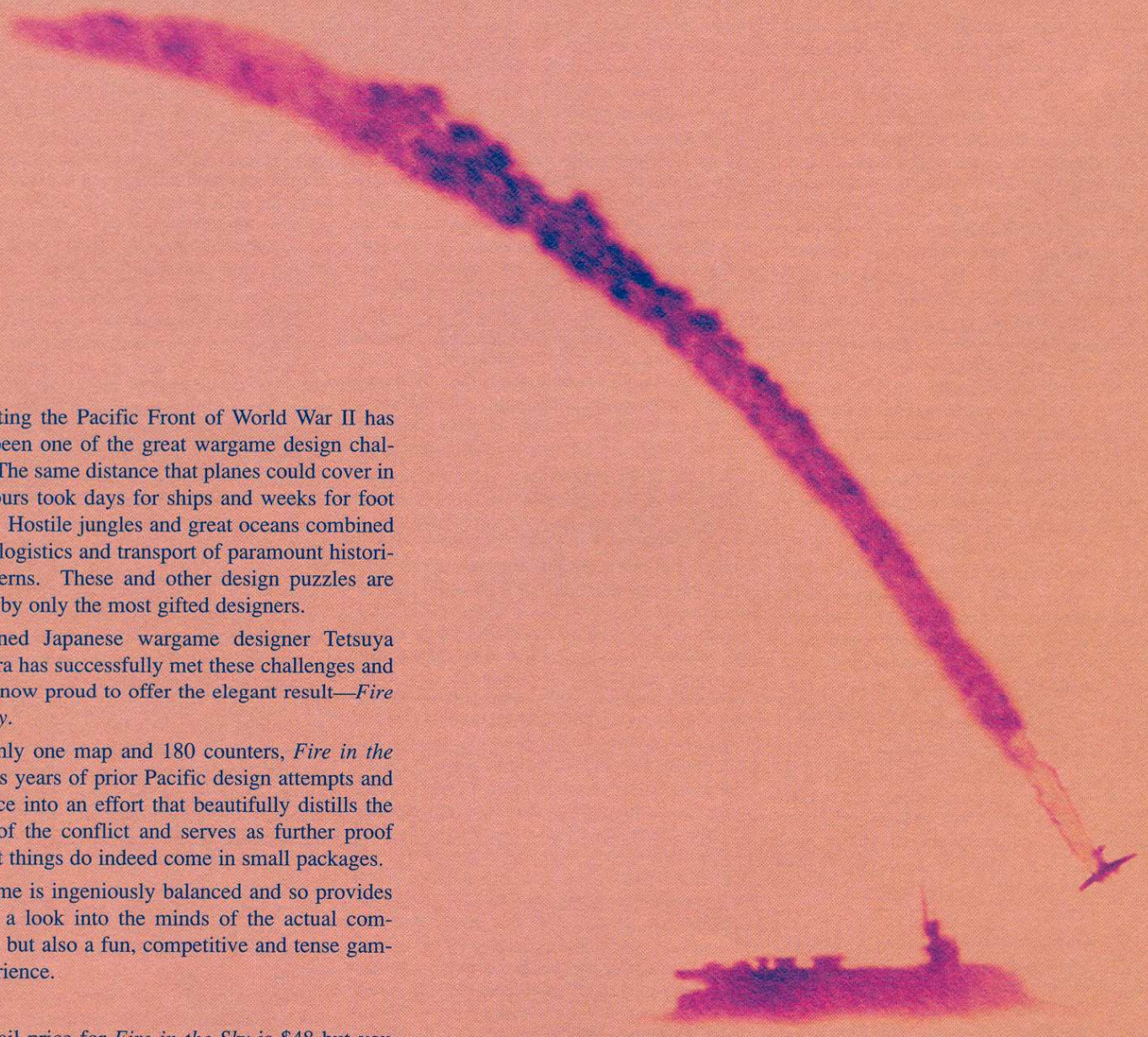
Another reasonably good if unpopular weapon was the PIAT; heavy and awkward to carry but safer to use if not as powerful as the German *Panzerfaust*, it could also be fired by one man (in ASL it is the only SCAW that can be used by SMC that are not Hero counters) and was safe to use from inside hard cover, unlike other SCAW. It also doubled as an improvised HE and smoke mortar out to 750 yards, or to 350 yards for what was described as 'house-breaking' albeit not very accurately. Given the choice of no back-blast or the ability to fire to lower elevations, the former was a more useful feature in tank hunting since the operator could stay inside buildings or other confined spaces. That said, having to try and re-cock the thing manually if the recoil from a previous shot failed to do this risked a hernia or strained back, since the operator had to use his feet in the way that the less powerful medieval crossbows were re-cocked, but by either standing or by lying horizontal. In Burma, PIAT gunner and Victoria Cross winner Ganju Lama actually managed to do this twice in succession, standing up, despite wounds to three of his limbs, and so destroying two Japanese light tanks. Although one source observed that an essential ingredient to using the PIAT was that a man "should have suicidal tendencies", analysis showed that PIATs destroyed 7% of German armour lost to the British in Normandy, compared to 6% lost to the much over-rated aircraft rockets. A skilled man could hit a target over 60% of the time at 100 yards.

[This is the first half of this remarkable effort by Mr. Markuss. The second half featuring his analysis of ordnance and vehicles will appear in the next issue. The footnoted version of this piece is being hosted on our website (just the first half for now). It was hard enough to fit this into the Journal without the footnotes.—Eds.]

Fire in the Sky

The Great Pacific War

1941-1945



Simulating the Pacific Front of World War II has always been one of the great wargame design challenges. The same distance that planes could cover in a few hours took days for ships and weeks for foot soldiers. Hostile jungles and great oceans combined to make logistics and transport of paramount historical concerns. These and other design puzzles are solvable by only the most gifted designers.

Renowned Japanese wargame designer Tetsuya Nakamura has successfully met these challenges and MMP is now proud to offer the elegant result—*Fire in the Sky*.

With only one map and 180 counters, *Fire in the Sky* packs years of prior Pacific design attempts and experience into an effort that beautifully distills the essence of the conflict and serves as further proof that great things do indeed come in small packages.

The game is ingeniously balanced and so provides not only a look into the minds of the actual commanders, but also a fun, competitive and tense gaming experience.

The retail price for *Fire in the Sky* is $48 but you can preorder it now for just $36 plus postage at **www.multimanpublishing.com**.

MMP
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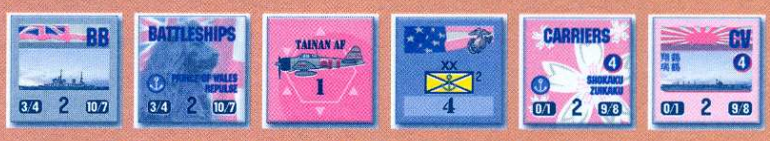

The counters in *Fire in the Sky* are larger than shown here.

ASL Journal Issue #6 Errata

ASL Scenario J92 "YOUR TURN NOW"

Both sides amass VP per the hexes listed in SSR 3; if the Japanese do not earn the listed VP by clearing the set DC, then the Filipinos do.

Filipino units do not Disrupt.

ARTICLE ERRATA

Page 17, first column, first full paragraph, replace "?" with "1/2".