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THE BATTLE OF THE REICHSWALD

by Steve Svare

Mud. Thick slogging mud that grabs your boots, saps your strength and keeps you cold, wet and miserable. Your fatigues are soaked through, and there is no place to get dry for weeks on end. Vehicles bog quickly and can provide limited support in most areas. Movement is slow and arduous everywhere you turn.

This is the most common vision people have when they think of the Battle of the Reichswald. But that mud only tells part of the story. As the Allies geared up for one last punishing push into Germany, several formidable obstacles were in their way along the northern sector of the front. The Germans had several lines of defense in the Siegfried Line, in a depth not seen since Normandy. Many anti-tank ditches, along with fortified buildings, numerous minefields, and strategically placed pillboxes bolstered the line. And that mud. The Germans had held onto the dams to the north along the Roer River in spite of numerous attempts by the Allies to bomb them into oblivion or capture them with infantry, but to no avail. As the impending date for the Allies Operation Veritable crept ever closer, the Germans decided to play their hand and release the millions of gallons of water from behind those dams and flood the

Roer Valley for miles to the south.

At first this caused some great concern amongst the British and Canadian forces charged with attacking along the northern section of the Siegfried Line. But as the winter of 1945 dragged on, the frozen water and mud seemed to present less of a hindrance than previously thought. The major roads and traffic arteries were still easily passable, and vehicular movement seemed as if it would be quick and efficient. Of course, this was not to be the case.

The British, in overall charge of Operation Veritable, along with support from Canadian forces, were committed to a timetable that had already been pushed back several times. The planned operation had originally been set for the previous September, but various delays had disrupted that idea. First was the previously mentioned inability of Allied bombers to destroy the dams. Several infantry pushes in December through the Monschau Forest were ultimately defeated, resulting in over 2,500 casualties. A partial reason for this was that on the day of the Roer dams offensive, the Germans launched their great offensive in the

see **Reichswald**, page 2

BUNKER BUILDING AND BUNKER BUSTING

by Marty Snow

What's a pillbox? A pillbox in ASL can represent anything from a hole in the ground with a few logs on top to a reinforced concrete casement designed to withstand a naval bombardment. The game system simplifies the universe of pillboxes down to two basic types: wood and stone.



It also simplifies them further to say that all pillboxes have a Covered Arc (CA) that is the same shape as a vehicle's CA (i.e. a 60 degree wedge). Anything not in the CA is in the Non-Covered Arc (NCA). LOS exists to hexes within the CA and is blocked outside of it. The contents of the pillbox are vulnerable to fire traced through the CA, although they still get a hefty TEM. Attacks from outside the CA (including OBA) pay an even higher price if they are allowed at all.

The stacking limit of a pillbox is 1, 2, or 3 squads. The first number on the counter indicates the size. A pillbox can never be overstacked. The TEM of a wooden pillbox is +3 through its CA, and +5 through its NCA. A stone pillbox provides +5 and +7 TEM.



see **Bunkers**, page 3

Spotting Rounds

Well, we had hoped to bring you an interesting glimpse into a new mini-CG for Gavutu-Tanambogo, but time and space considerations got in the way.

One of the really cool things about the ASL community is that somewhere someone is always working on an interesting facet of WWII. After we started researching and writing the two-part article on the Battle of the Reichswald, we discovered that MMP is working on a Historical Study of Operation Veritable, the companion campaign to Operation Grenade. Hopefully the article here will whet your appetite for this fascinating military chapter.

We've tried to cover a lot of ground in this issue, and hopefully there is something for everybody. A little historical analysis, some hard ASL rules stuff, a laugh or two, and our usual offerings of some scenarios (found on the website with this edition) along with designer notes, make this an even better issue than the first one. Enjoy!

If you have comments, criticisms, kudos, or ideas for future issues, please contact us at: coastalfortress@thegame.com.

Scott Faulk and Steve Svare

REICHSWALD

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Ardennes, and all other operations were put on hold to counter this devastating blow. Eventually the capture of the dams was called off. Secondly, the Allied drive to capture Antwerp, the best deep water port available for circumventing the horrendous supply problems they had been suffering from since the breakout from the Normandy invasion, had not gone according to plan. After the brutal fighting for the Scheldt Estuary, Antwerp was eventually captured, but the entire timetable for the fall of Germany was pushed back. A third factor was the redeployment of the British XXX Corps from their supporting role in the Battle of the Bulge for an attack aiming to clear the Germans up to the Rhine. This redeployment did not go according to plans, and the timetable fell further behind.

Along with Operation Veritable, the US Ninth Army was committed to a joint attack, named Operation Grenade, from along the southern sector, with the thought that this would stretch the German defenses thin and allow for a final push into Germany and end the war quickly. Most Allied commanders thought that German resistance would crumble once the Allies were actually on German soil, but this was not to be the case. Hitler had dictated a "to the last man" order for the defense of the Siegfried Line, and even though many of the German defenders were inexperienced and of generally poor quality on paper, they were to put up a spirited defense of their homeland that severely hampered the Allied attack and threatened the entire joint operation for several weeks. In fact, the entire affair was in doubt for quite a while, but as we know, the Allies ultimately overcame these obstacles and proceeded to advance into the Fatherland to hasten the war's end.

With the following maps, we will explore the brutal advance of the British and Canadian forces against the Siegfried Line and through the Reichswald Forest. Along with this we will see the unexpected delays and failure of the Allied forces to keep to the overly optimistic timetable they had set

for themselves, and the unexpected stubbornness of the Germans in refusing to fall back to the Rhine in defense, as Montgomery had hoped for.

The Buildup

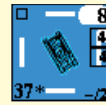
The buildup for Operation Veritable, the largest Allied offensive since Normandy, affected all aspects of planning in the European Theater. Before the huge amount of supplies and personnel could be moved up to their jumping off positions, railways, roads, and bridges had to be repaired or upgraded. Nine days before the battle, when all this traffic was at a maximum, a sudden thaw in the area caused the virtual collapse of all military movement.

Fifty companies of engineers worked around the clock to repair and rebuild over 400 miles of existing roads, and construct nearly 100 miles of new roads. Almost 100 new bridges were built. On the day before the battle, the First Canadian Army was finally able to report that enough fuel had been brought forward to carry XXX Corps 150 miles, with reserves for another 150-200 miles delegated to Canadian II Corps for the second phase. Over 1,000 artillery pieces were added just prior to the attack, with the combined firepower of 4 divisions. Supplies of all kinds of a magnitude rarely seen in the war had to be moved into position without alerting the Germans, and many tactics were used to deceive them. Almost all road traffic was at night. Dummy gun positions were created, but designed such that expert photographic examination would reveal them as fake. Then, 48 hours before the attack, they were replaced with identical real guns. Wireless traffic was maintained at the same rate as the previous month, and patrols and reconnaissance were kept at the same numbers and frequency, but these patrols often contained high ranking British officers that were scheduled to participate in the attack, wearing Canadian battle dress so as to appear to be from units that had been in the area for months.

Bogus activity on other fronts was increased to further confuse the Germans. West of Nijmegen, traffic

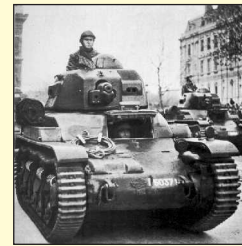
WHAT IN THE 'H'?

This regular section of the Forward Observer will offer a closer look at a vehicle found in the Chapter H of your ASLRB.



Vehicle: R-35 Char Légère mle 1935 Renault
Nationality: French (although often found in German OOBs)
Chapter H Vehicle Note: French #4
Weight: 10 tons
Length: 13' 2" **Width:** 6' 1" **Height:** 6' 10"
Powerplant: Renault 4 cylinder @ 82hp running on gasoline
Maximum Speed: 12.5 mph (8 MFs)
Crew: 2 (CS of 2)
Armament: 37mm turreted gun (37*), 7.5mm coaxial machine gun
Ammo Capacity: 37mm=100, CMG=2,400rds
Fording Depth: 2' 7"
Maximum Elevation: 10°

Designed as a replacement for the outdated FT-17, the Renault R-35 design won out over competitors; FCM, CGL and Delaunay-Belleville. Based on a light reconnaissance vehicle known as the ZM, Renault developed the tank solely from this prototype. In production, the armor was thickened from 30 to 40mm and the suspension and running gear were changed to accommodate the added weight.



After the 1935 German re-occupation of the Rhineland, the French infantry called for and received its first batch of 300 within months. By the time the Germans and French were shooting at each other, the French had more than 1,600. By far the most numerous of the light tank designs, the R-35 saw service with, not only the French, but also the Poles, Rumanians, Turkish and Yugoslavians.

After the fall of France in 1940, the R-35 fought on with Vichy forces and was also used as a stopgap with the German Wehrmacht. Nearly 400 were upgunned with the Czech 47mm main armament and used as reconnaissance vehicles on the Eastern Front. The Germans also pressed the R-35 into service as munitions tractors and with considerable modification, into self-propelled artillery, mounting everything from a 47mm gun to a 105mm howitzer.

Tips while using the R-35 in ASL:

- Ask to receive scenario balance. ;-)
- Take a long look at the Platoon Movement rules. Being a radioless vehicle is seen as a handicap, however, there are certain things that platoon movement allows for that are advantageous. (Recent talk of "crabwalking" on the ASLML comes to mind). One such advantage is strength in numbers. All of your tanks will arrive on the front line at the same time.
- Remember that even though it's got a AP depletion of 10, most ASL players have the kind of luck that will see these tanks marked "No AP". Use your judgement against those OT vehicle and lightly armored halftracks and fire HE. Granted, it's a 25% diffence in effectiveness against armored targets, but you don't want to be out of AP when you need it.

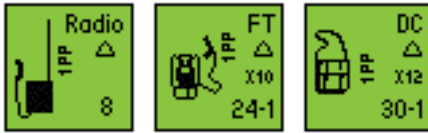
Some scenarios featuring the R-35:

- ASL80: Play Ball
- AS2: Swan Song
- SP71: Cutler's Cross
- TAC44: Lebanese Drama
- A119: Showdown in Syria

BUNKERS

continued from page 1

Units in a pillbox don't get any benefit from concealment, although your opponent never has Right of Inspection. (B30.7)



What can attack the back of a pillbox?

OBA and Indirect/Aerial Fire pays NCA TEM.

FT pays NCA TEM

Ordnance

- a) HE can attack normally with big TEM
- b) AP can make special attack if TK is more than double the NCA TEM of the pillbox. Attack on Infantry Target Type, but with +0 TEM using the AP equivalency.

There's an important distinction between a pillbox hex and a pillbox Location. The pillbox hex is the terrain on the outside of the pillbox.

The pillbox Location is a separate location in the hex.

Are there any disadvantages to residing in a pillbox? Perhaps. The main disadvantage is that there is no LOS through the NCA. If enemy troops approach your pillbox from the right angle, there's nothing the guys inside the pillbox can do except pray they don't get Ambushed. See below for how to improve the usefulness of a pillbox.

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Candygram!



How hard can it be to capture a pillbox? All you do is sneak up on the back, then Advance in and kill the enemy in CC. Easier than taking a building! Right? Not quite.

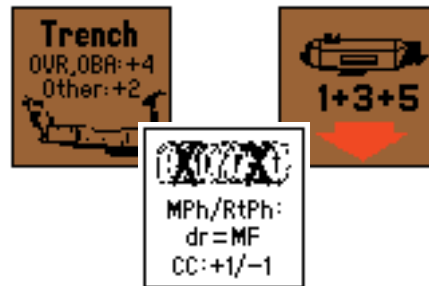


Assuming that your opponent allows you to approach a pillbox from the rear unmolested, you still have a small problem. You can advance into the hex containing the pillbox and you can fight the contents in CC, but you can't enter the pillbox until it is empty, and you can't control it from the outside.

The Basic Attack

- 1—Advance Into Pillbox Hex
- 2—Engage contents in CC (Ambush is likely, +2 for pillbox occupants)
- 3—Move/Advance into empty pillbox next turn

Step 2 is the important part. It's fairly easy to ambush the contents of a pillbox. If they do survive, there's no Melee between the two hexes.



Preventing the Basic Attack

$$B = P + T$$

A Bunker is a pillbox with an Accessible trench (i.e. a trench in the pillbox's hex, or in an adjacent hex). The pillbox's contents can move or Advance to the trench as if it were also a trench. So how do you prevent the enemy from sneaking up on the back of the pillbox? You pop out into



the trench. The trench's +2 TEM is pretty decent, and is likely the safest terrain around (except for your pillbox, of course). LOS is not restricted from a trench, so you can see everywhere. The

HALL OF HEROES

A LOOK AT WWII MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS



TERRY, SEYMOUR W.

Rank and organization:

Captain, U.S. Army, Company B, 382nd Infantry, 96th Infantry Division

Place and date:

Zebra Hill, Okinawa, 11 May 1945

Entered service at:

Little Rock, AR

Birth:

Little Rock, AR

G. O. No.:

23, 6 March 1946

Citation:

1st Lt. Terry was leading an attack against heavily defended Zebra Hill when devastating fire from 5 pillboxes halted the advance. He braved the hail of bullets to secure satchel charges and white phosphorus grenades, and then ran 30 yards directly at the enemy with an ignited charge to the first stronghold, demolished it, and moved on to the other pillboxes, bombarding them with his grenades and calmly cutting down their defenders with rifle fire as they attempted to escape. When he had finished this job by sealing the 4 pillboxes with explosives, he had killed 20 Japanese and destroyed 3 machineguns. The advance was again held up by an intense grenade barrage which inflicted several casualties. Locating the source of enemy fire in trenches on the reverse slope of the hill, 1st Lt. Terry, burdened by 6 satchel charges launched a 1-man assault. He wrecked the enemy's defenses by throwing explosives into their positions and himself accounted for 10 of the 20 hostile troops killed when his men overran the area. Pressing forward again toward a nearby ridge, his 2 assault platoons were stopped by slashing machine-gun and mortar fire. He fearlessly ran across 100 yards of fire-swept terrain to join the support platoon and urge it on in a flanking maneuver. This thrust, too, was halted by stubborn resistance. 1st Lt. Terry began another 1-man drive, hurling grenades upon the strongly entrenched defenders until they fled in confusion, leaving 5 dead behind them. Inspired by this bold action, the support platoon charged the retreating enemy and annihilated them. Soon afterward, while organizing his company to repulse a possible counterattack, the gallant company commander was mortally wounded by the burst of an enemy mortar shell. By his indomitable fighting spirit, brilliant leadership, and unwavering courage in the face of tremendous odds, 1st Lt. Terry made possible the accomplishment of his unit's mission and set an example of heroism in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

World War II Medal of Honor Recipients.
WWW: <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/moh1.htm>

ORDER OF BATTLE - An Interview with the Southern Kansas ASL Club

by Scott Faulk

If ASL competition prompted beer commercials, these dudes would be the new “wazzup” guys. Everyone in the club has a nickname, they meet at a bowling alley and they hang out with a guy named Bud. If that isn’t ASL’s version of the “Man Show”, I don’t know what is.



Every first and third Saturday of the month the members of the Southern Kansas ASL Club close on Wichita’s Seneca Bowl to do cardboard battle. Founded in 1999 by Roy “Booger” Connelly and Mike “Recon” Rose, the SKASL club finds it home on the web at (<http://home.kscable.com/skasl/>). Housed there you will find the superb AARs that any longtime member of the ASL Mailing List will recognize as some of the finest posted. Alongside the group AARs, you will also find Roy’s series of “Newbie Tips”, a must for anyone new to the intricacies of this game.

After working out a deal that sadly didn’t include a flight from Wichita to San Diego, the emails started flying and I got a glimpse of the world of ASL in Southern Kansas. (shudder) :-)

Forward Observer: *First off, we know that Mike got the nom de guerre of “Recon” from his ...ahem... “clumsiness” around his opponent’s concealed stacks. However, and I have to ask, what’s the story behind “Booger”?*

Mike ‘Recon’ Rose: He’ll have to answer that one since he calls himself that, but I always figured it had to do with his peculiar ‘mucus odor’. Come to think of it, you really can’t give yourself a nickname - we will have to come up with one for him. Perhaps a contest is in order.

Roy ‘Booger’ Connelly: It was simply a nickname I used on VASL. My name on VASL is now RoyC, but all my old bud-

dies from VASL still refer to me as Booger, or boog, or boogie. Now Mike calls me by that name and I’m afraid that soon, my wife and kids will start calling me booger.

Recon: That would have to be a big improvement over what your wife usually calls you...

FO: *We’ll get to that one later.<ahem>. So, who were the founding fathers behind the SKASL Club?*

Recon: Me and Roy. I saw a sign he put up in a local (now defunct) game shop, gave him a call, and the rest as they say is ‘history’. I really thought he was psy-

really have a ‘B’ nickname). Within the past few months we have had a new player - Brian. We really gotta recruit some non-‘B’ players.

Booger: We also have some part timers, we have been up to 10 and as low as 3, but Mike is right, six is the magic number usually.

FO: *This Brian guy, he beat any of the grognards yet? I mean, he must have read the newbie tips. Has he taken down any of the kingpins?*

Booger: No. We treat newbs like they should be treated....Cannon Fodder. First you must break their will, then



From left to right: Roy “Booger” Connelly, Brandon “Tony” Garding, Mike “Recon” Rose, Brian “Fingers” Mamaril, Greg “Waldo” Schmittgens, Jesse “Boomer” Boomer and Bud “Papa Roach” Garding.

cho when he came over to play the first time- he has a crrrrreeeepy flattop hairdo. Now I realize that that’s the most normal thing about him.

Booger: Mike and I were getting tired of playing each other all the time. After 3 or four years at two games a month, you start knowing what to expect from your opponent. So, we thought seriously about getting ahold of some of the people we knew, and starting a club. I had a place, and a good night for it, so we called Greg and Bud, and away we went.

FO: *How many guys are considered regulars at the Seneca Bowl meetings?*

Recon: Six of the most irregular people you’ll ever meet: Me, Booger, Boomer, Bud, Brandon and Greg (who should

smash them repeatedly to show them where they stand. Then the re-training phase (brainwash actually, but keep that to yourself huh?), where we make sure they never play their best against us but will be a juggernaut in any tourneys we enter. We like to do things the right way here at SKASL and we feel we’re on the right track with this.

Recon: He whipped me in Ranger’s Stronghold. Actually it was a team effort for his defending GI’s, as Bud and Greg provided just enough tactical advice to get him over the top (they’re helpful like that). Brian also took Greg and Boomer down to the last CC Phase in Bridge at Verdalsora, and had a chance against Booger in Suicide Creek. Oh he’s a

ORDER OF BATTLE

continued from page 4

cagey one, that Brian.

FO: *Great idea behind the ASL demonstrations at your local Barnes and Noble. How's this venture going? Any recruits?*

Recon: That was Greg's idea, and he gets all the credit for making the initial contact and organizing the whole thing. We're having a good time and have managed to pick up a player (Brian) from our demonstrations. We haven't had too many people look on, since I think most of them are too afraid to get too close to us (for good reason).

Best story from the demonstration has to be the time I was playing Bud 'Papa Roach' in Silence That Gun. On his last movement phase, he moved a wounded hero with a DC over a wall into the street right into the sights of my 75 ART Gun, which already had a -2 Acq on him. FFMO, FFNAM, Pt Blank and twice acquired meant that I needed a 14 to hit him, and would get a CH on a 9. I rolled snakes. He passed the 4MC. I shot him again. Another Crit. He lived! By this time I was laughing so hard I could barely breathe. I mean, this poor slob basically caught 2 rounds right in the belt buckle and just shook 'em off.

The little _____ finally went down on a wound check on a 6 -2 IFT shot. Of course.

FO: *You guys meet at the Seneca Bowl. Do a little bowling yourselves?*

Recon: Roy works there (or at least that's his story). I realized long ago that I have no business bowling. I got no 'skills'.

Booger: Yes, I bowl. I have taken a couple of years off, but I carry about a 198 average. The meeting room is on the other side of the building from the pinsetters (that's what I do....fix pinsetters) and is relatively quiet. I get the room for free, so you can't beat the price.

FO: *We see the great AARs that are written on the ASLML. Within those are some classic moments of ASL play. Any Seneca Bowl memories come to the forefront?*

Recon: -The time Boomer nailed one of Bud's JSII's in 'Urban Guerrillas' at 4 hex range, moving, through smoke, in the snout with a CH from a PSK. Improbable hit - no problem.

- the time I beat Boomer in 'Shanghai in Flames' by completely surrounding his last 3 squads in a Fortified Building location in the factory and watching each one of them go down to an NMC. Boo-ya! - the time Greg laid down the 'Firelane-of-Despair' against Roy's Bulgarian 'horde' in Ambush! with a B9 MMG, and then refusing to roll higher than 5 on about 10 shots, breaking/eliminating about 1/3 of Roy's squads.

- the time in 'The Mad Minute' when Brandon passed up a good shot on Boomer's Mark IV with his 57L so that he could get one APDS shot at Boomer's trailing Panther, which he promptly nailed. - and of course the time Roy fried 5 of Boomer's Big Cats in 'The Awakening of Spring' with a 100L ATG in 2 brutal firephases.

Booger: Uh, yep, that one has to be my fave. Amazingly enough, Mike and I used to play every other week. Now in almost two years of the club, I think we have played once. Believe me, that was way more of his ugly mug than I needed, and I suddenly realized why we started looking for other opponents.

Recon: Yeah, and Roy's counselors thought it would be a good idea to start interacting with some non-inmates now that he's been in the program for awhile.

FO: *Okay, so how's it done? The AARs are great, everyone loves 'em and I can say with some confidence that Mike is the premier AAR author on the ASLML. So, what's the process for gathering all the info? How in the heck do you remember what happened in your scenario and also remember what happened in everyone else's scenario?*

see **Order of Battle**, page 13

What's in the Next Issue:

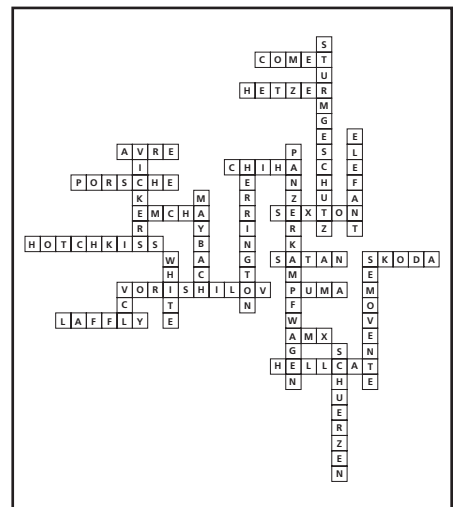
History In Focus:
Part Deux of the Reichswald

Two New Scenarios:
Chris Olden delivers Crocodiles & Steve Svare places the Poles on defense.

Balancing a Dog: To the Last Man

Club Interview:
Brien Martin takes us to the gaming tables of Chicago with the WCW

Subject to our whims and desires.



What's Not in the Next Issue:

Humping a 105:
Why alcohol and ASL don't mix

Summer Thong Fashion Show Report

A Look at AoO, MMP's new release

Potato Masher or Potatoe Masher?
Dan Quayle examines this burning ASL debate

Plus a random assortment of odds and ends.

Salute!



We would like to thank the following contributors: Chris Olden, Tom Repetti, Marty Snow, Brien Martin, Bruce Kirkaldy, Mike Rose, Roy Connelly, Pete Shelling, John Provan, the ICCT "focus group" and all the SKASL boys. We would also like to thank Rodney Kinney for permission to use the VASL artwork and mapboards.

THE INCREMENTAL CLOSE COMBAT TABLE

by Tom Repetti

I haven't always wanted to do an Incremental Close Combat Table, but it's been one of those Urban Legends that tends to lurk around the camp long enough, snarling in the bushes until eventually you get intrigued enough to go hunt the thing. So one day I took my bearers and beaters out into the veldt to pursue the elusive beast and, if possible, bring him to heel.

Much like Matt Shostak suggested in the Austin ASL Group's issue of Bonsai, in order to calculate the DR needed for a CC attack that doesn't happen to fall on one of the standard CC Table columns, one must interpolate between them. A 3:1 attack, therefore, should fall halfway between a 2:1 and a 4:1 attack in terms of its probability of success. Thing is, it's really hard to make a DR halfway between a 7 (2:1) and an 8 (4:1). Unless you use a third die. To succeed on a 3:1 attack, then, you can have a DR of 8, but you need a subsequent dr of 1-3, since 3:1 is exactly halfway between 2:1 and 4:1.

And thus the Incremental CC Table was born. Instead of making you calculate the odds of your particular attack, we've done that for you and reported the DR(dr) you need in order to achieve a Casualty Reduction result. Just cross-reference the Attacker Firepower across the top with the Defender Firepower along the left side to find the right DR(dr) value for your attack. To succeed with the subsequent (dr), one must roll less than or equal to that dr. Numbers without a (dr) correspond to standard CC Table odds, which have not been modified from the original.

Having whipped this baby up, I sent it off to a select Focus Group of beta-testers and sat back, waiting for the praise and adoration to roll in. "Yessir, another boffo Player Aid from ol' Tuomo himself. I still got it."

Well, the feedback came in, all right. They hated it.

"This seems like a pretty low bang-for-buck exercise... I'm also a little confused

about why you think this is called for." "While your execution is sound, it solves a problem that isn't there... Use your powers for good, not evil, Tom." "This gives me a real headache." "This is no joke Tom: don't use it. Throw it away. Purge the idea completely. I'm serious. The IIFT was bad enough; now we'll have this? No thanks. I'd seriously consider quitting ASL and playing something else." "BURN THE WITCH!!!! BURN HIM!!!!!"

Only Rodney Kinney, bless his heart, expressed even lukewarm support for the red-headed stepchild that is the ICCT, and even then, I think he was humoring me on the mistaken belief that dissing my idea might endanger his chances of recovering the 20 bucks I owe him. Hah!

So while 97% of the world might not love it as much as one might hope, I'll still offer the ICCT to the public, free of charge, in the hope that it may make your day a little funkier. And hey, wait'll you see the Incremental To Hit Table!

ATTACKER CC FIREPOWER

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DEFENDER CC FIREPOWER	1	5	7	8	9	10(3)	10	11(3)	11	12(3)	12	-	-
	2	4	5	6	7	8(3)	8	9(3)	9	10(1)	10(3)	10(4)	10
	3	4(2)	5(1)	5	6(3)	7(2)	7	8(2)	8(4)	8	9(2)	9(3)	9
	4	3	4	5(2)	5	6(2)	6	7(2)	7	8(1)	8(3)	8(4)	8
	5	3(2)	4(3)	5(1)	5(3)	5	6(2)	6(4)	7(1)	7(3)	7	8(1)	8(2)
	6	2	4(2)	4	5(2)	5(4)	5	6(2)	6(3)	6	7(2)	7(3)	7
	7	-	4(1)	4(5)	5(1)	5(3)	5(5)	5	6(1)	6(3)	6(5)	6	7(2)
	8	-	3(3)	4(4)	4	5(2)	5(4)	5(5)	5	6(1)	6(2)	6(4)	6
	9	-	3(2)	4(3)	4(4)	5(1)	5(3)	5(4)	5(5)	5	6(1)	6(2)	6(3)
	10	-	3(1)	4(2)	4(3)	4	5(2)	5(3)	5(4)	5(5)	5	6(1)	6(2)
	11	-	2	4(1)	4(2)	4(4)	5(1)	5(2)	5(3)	5(4)	5(5)	5	6(1)
	12	-	-	3	4(1)	4(3)	4	5(1)	5(2)	5(3)	5(4)	5(5)	5

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continued from page 2

along the Waal and lower Maas was increased during daylight hours, and wireless messages were designed to give the impression that troops in those areas were being reinforced for a push towards Utrecht and Amsterdam. In hindsight, we now know the efficacy of all this misdirection. On 5 February, the Chief Intelligence Officer of General Rumstedt's HQ sent a memo to Army Group H, in command of German positions from the North Sea to Dusseldorf, telling them that the Allied activities were the prelude to a push that would

most likely come along the Maas River, and that the activity observed in the Nijmegen area was designed to deceive them. However, German officers in the Reichswald area were not convinced of this, and General Schlemm, commanding the First Parachute Army, expected the Allied offensive to come through the Reichswald, and quietly moved part of his 7th Parachute Division to Geldern at the southern end of the second defense line east of the forest.

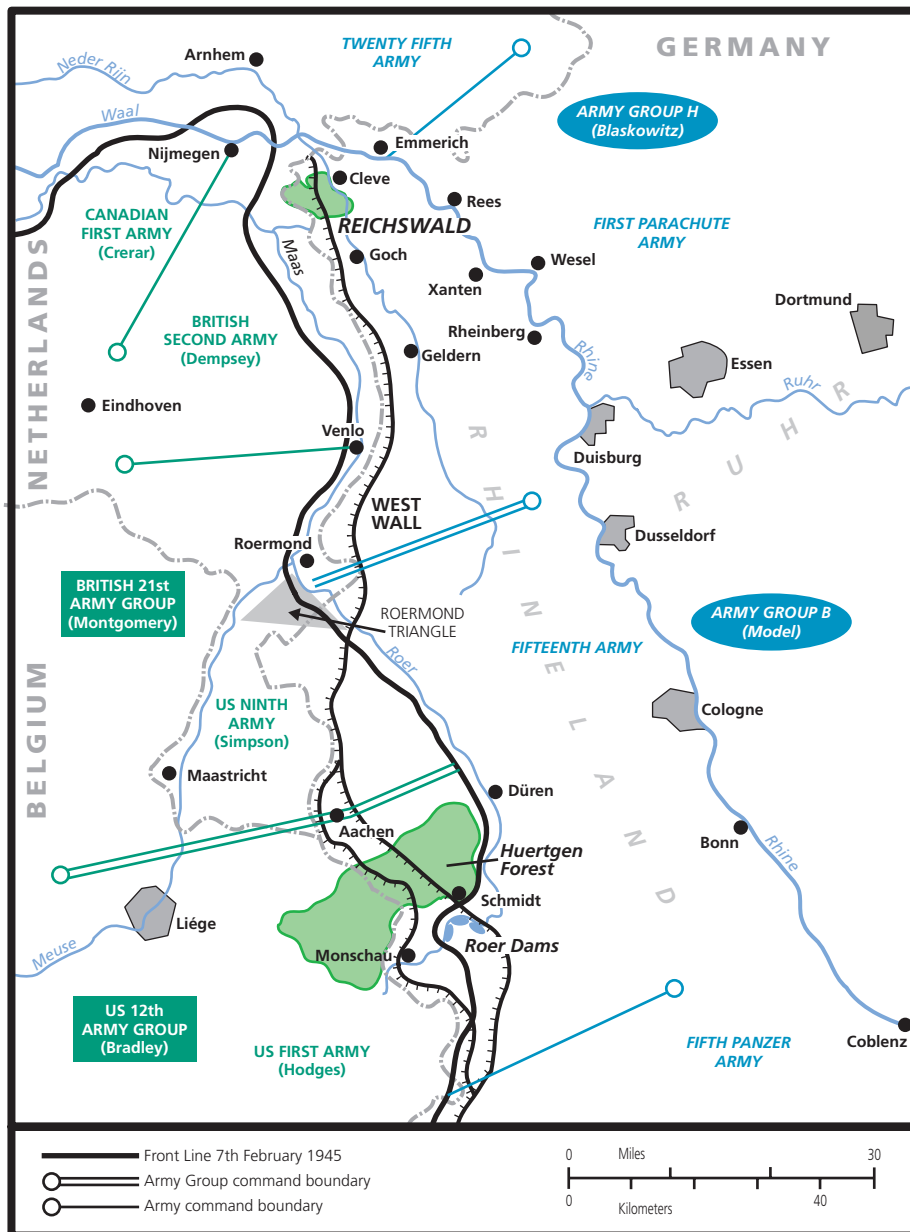
By the evening of 7 February, some 200,000 men, with their full complement of guns, tanks, and other weapons and backed up with air support on a maximum scale, were poised to attack the German lines.

The Plan

The plan for Operation Veritable, which had undergone many changes since its conception the previous year, was largely designed by General Horrocks and his XXX Corps planning staff. His directive was clear: "to clear the Reichswald and secure the line Gennep-Asperden-Cleve". XXX Corps was expanded to 5 divisions, but since Field Marshall Montgomery had specified that he wanted the Canadians on the left, the British in the center, and the Americans on the right as the 21st Army Group closed in on the Rhine, there really was no option other than to lay the majority of the attack on XXX Corps.

With flooding on both flanks, there would be no room to be clever. It would have to be a frontal assault against well-fortified positions. But the Allies had almost unlimited air support and massive amounts of artillery, with the hope of hammering the Germans into the ground and destroying their communications and defenses. Then 3 infantry divisions, supported by 2 armored brigades, would advance in a solid wall over and through the German lines before they had a chance to reorganize. Even with this strength, the essence of the plan was speed, as the initial wave had to be through the Reichswald and in possession of the fortified towns of Cleve and Goch before any German mobile reserves could be brought into the battle. Realizing that it would be a race between the 15th Scottish Division and German reserves, and all of those German reserves would have to pass through Cleve, General Horrocks decided to call for air strikes against the town. Initially he asked for incendiary and anti-personnel bombs be used to preserve the fragile roads in the area, but the RAF persuaded him that only the heaviest bombs could hope to destroy the town. Horrocks did get the RAF to agree that only airburst bombs be used for the last 4 miles of the road from Nijmegen to Cleve.

As soon as the last bombing run was finished the massed guns of the artillery were to begin their concentrated fire on carefully pre-selected targets laying in



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the path of the intended advance. As it neared completion, this barrage would be increased when the initial 4 divisions involved would fire their tanks, AT guns and mortars in a saturation of the ground in front of them. After 5 hours the barrage would be lifted and the waiting troops would begin their advance, with continued light air support from Spitfires and Mosquitos. The flooding had reduced the front to only 5 miles wide, from the high ground just west of Wyler south through Groesbeek to just east of Mook. In this area were crammed 4 infantry divisions and 2 armored brigades. From north to south these were comprised of: 2nd Canadian, who were spread out in their "normal" positions that they had held for the last month; 15th Scottish supported by 6th Guards Tank Brigade, charged with the northern attack; 53rd Welsh, along with part of the 34th Armored Brigade who were assigned the center attack; and 51st Highland, with

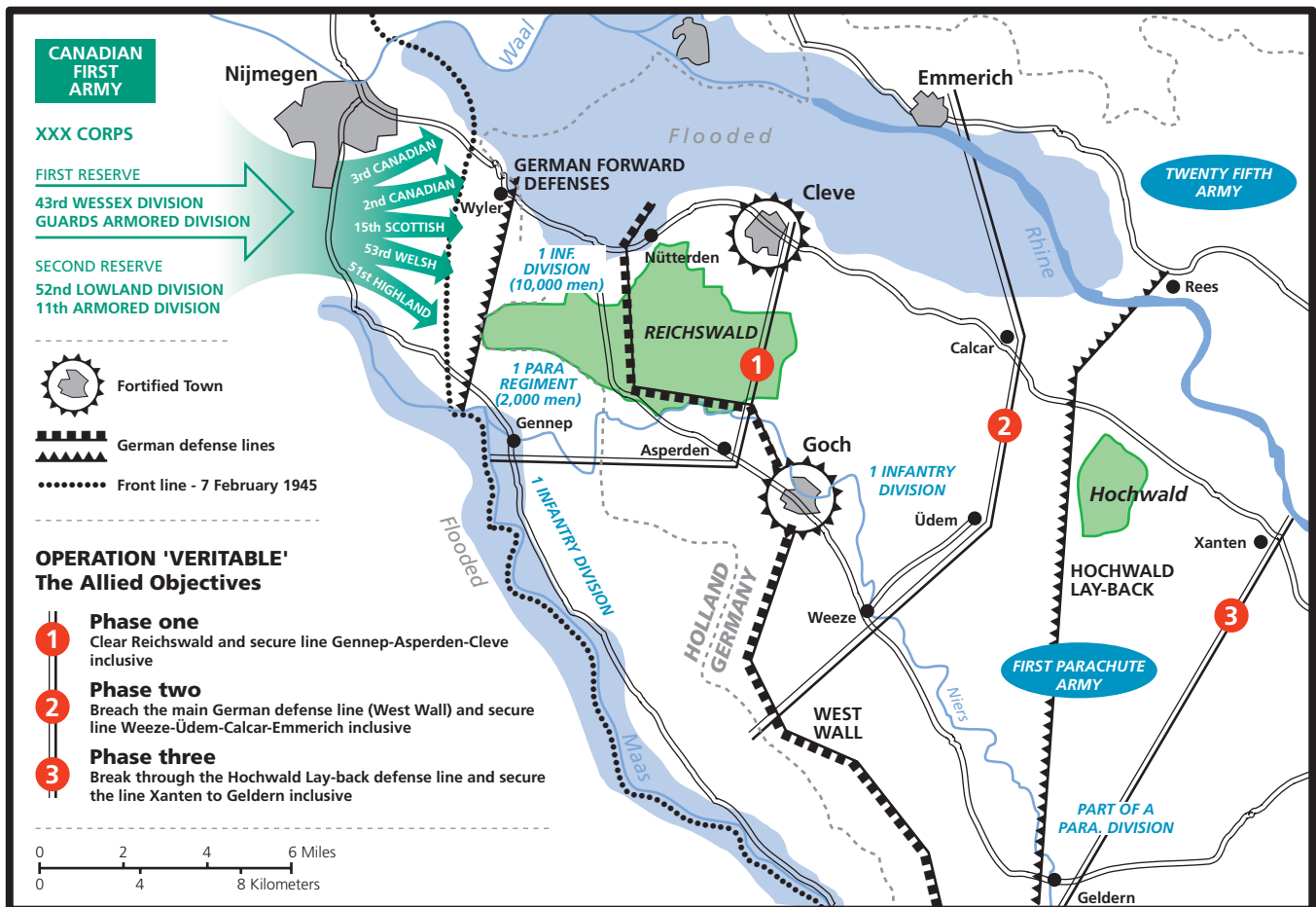
the balance of the 34th Armored Brigade, who had to clear the southwest corner of the forest and open the Mook-Goch road as far as Gennepe. Because most of the troops in 2nd Canadian Infantry would be tied down in their front line positions as the assault troops moved through them, their first day objectives were limited to capturing Wyler and the surrounding areas and clearing the Nijmegen-Cleve road to just short of the Siegfried Line. The far northern flank of XXX Corps was held by 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. They were scheduled to move to the northeast and, assisted by specially adapted vehicles of the 79th Armored Division, capture the marooned villages of the area and clear the south bank of the river.

When all units were in place, the starting forces totalled 50,000 troops supported by 500 tanks and 500 specially adapted tracked vehicles. There were an additional 10,000 men waiting to strike to the northeast and secure the left flank, and another 15,000 in reserve along with

500 more tanks. Facing this formidable assault force were stretched 2 German infantry regiments and 1 parachute infantry regiment, totalling about 8,000 troops. A third infantry regiment of about 3,000 men were far back in reserve.

The northern half of the German defenses were manned by the First Parachute Army, commanded by General Schlemm and considered at full strength and high combat value for this late stage of the war. Joining them were regiments of 25th Army's 2nd Parachute Division, shoring up their north flank. Behind both of these units were small units of elderly men and elements of the Magen (Stomach) Battalion of men with stomach ailments. The Luftwaffe was totally shut down by the Allied Air Forces, there was no German armor near the Reichswald, and only 100 artillery pieces. 36 self-propelled anti-tank guns would oppose almost 500 tanks in the initial assault. Available reserves were a division of

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parachute infantry, one of panzer grenadiers, and the remnants of 2 panzer divisions that had been almost obliterated in the Ardennes Offensive, totalling about 50 tanks.

At 0500 on 8 February, the heaviest artillery barrage employed by the British during WWII was unleashed. 122 large caliber guns, ranging from 155mm up to 240mm, began firing from the rear positions. The second line of 280 smaller guns followed, then a third wave of lighter caliber AA guns and 25 pounders. In addition the armored divisions formed "Pepper Pot Groups" to keep the front under such intense fire that hopefully no resistance could take place. These were comprised of 60 Sherman tanks, 80 mortars, and multiple 32-barrel rocket pro-

jectors. Under this horrific bombardment, which lasted almost 5 hours, the Allies expected the assault to be relatively easy. This was not to be the case.

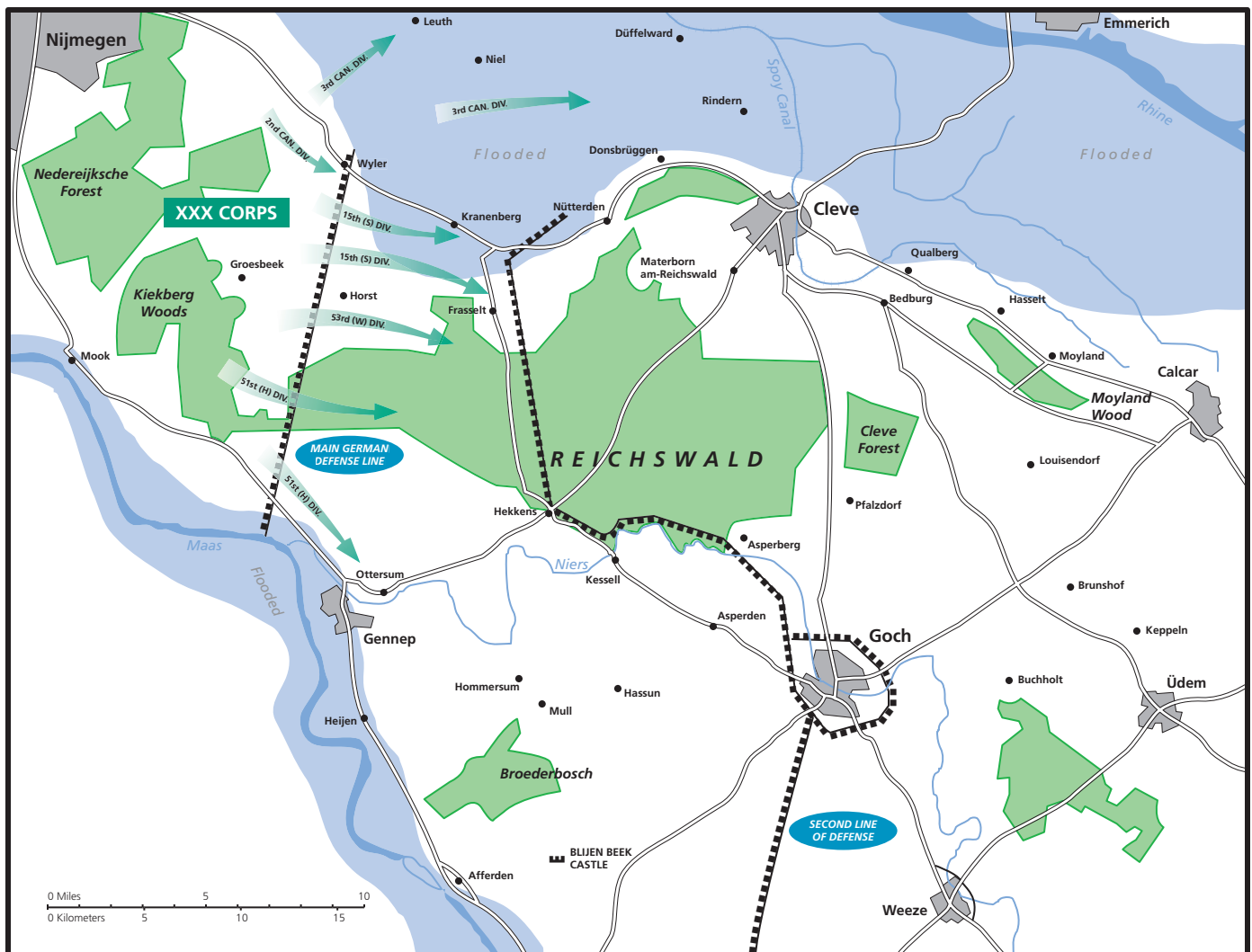
First Stage

At 1030 hours the infantry started forward, keeping as close as possible to the line of bursting shells. The northern flank of the initial assault was assigned to the 15th Scottish Division. 2nd Canadian split off to take Wyler, a key objective that would give the Allies control of a major roadway. Wyler was actually bypassed and attacked from the southeast, and proved to be a harbinger of things to come. The defenders were nowhere near being incapacitated, and set up a vigorous defense. Another round of artillery fire had be concentrated on the town, and it wasn't until past midnight that the main road to Cleve was able to be opened. This would have serious conse-

quences on the rest of the campaign.

Past Wyler, 15th Scottish was to advance as far as the Kranenberg-Frasselt line by 1600 hours, and then jump off from that point to capture Nütterden in a night assault. Because of the narrow roads and rising waters, only a small portion of the total division could participate in these advances. Precious time was lost as many vehicles immediately bogged down, and erroneous reports of minefields hampered the advance even more. Kranenberg and Frasselt was captured by 1800 hours, but at a cost of many of the supporting tanks that were needed for the anticipated assault on Cleve later in the campaign. This put the plan for an advance on Nütterden that night in jeopardy. They were to begin at 1700 hours, with Nütterden cleared by 0100 hours the next morning. That was

see Reichswald, page 10



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not the end of the plan for this group though. They were to continue the the attack to Cleve and secure the high ground overlooking the city by day-break. On paper, with the amount of armor and artillery available, it was a reasonable plan. What was not accounted for was the poor state of the roads, along with the steadily rising flood waters. These slowed the Allies much more effectively than the Germans. The wet and muddy conditions, combined with the jammed roads, delayed the move for almost the entire night, and it was not until 0500 the following morning that the attack on Nütterden was actually launched. The attack in itself was short and mainly resulted in the opening of the route to the high ground to the south of Cleve, centered around the heights of Wolfs Berg.

In the center of the advance was the 53rd Welsh, who advanced toward the forest across a wide valley against almost no opposition, bypassing a huge network of anti-tank ditches and progressing into the northwest corner of the forest. The infantry was able to continue farther, but almost all of the vehicles, save a few Churchills, bogged down once off the roads. They had hoped to be able touch on to the heights just southwest of Cleve, but as a steady rain began to fall and movement became difficult on the congested roads, they were only able to reach the Siegfried Line by about midnight.

The 51st Highland encountered the hardest fighting of the first day. Led in the initial assault by the 1st Black Watch, German defenses delayed them so effectively that they were only able to get to the edge of the forest as night fell. They were also tasked with cutting the Mook-Gennep road and securing a high ridge in the southern corner of the forest, but bogging vehicles and tough terrain made that a tough call. The German defenders in this sector did not surrender as easily as elsewhere but fell back to prepared defenses, so the 51st Highland was not able to consider any objectives met until almost at daybreak of the next day. In the process many specialized vehicles,

notably Flails and AVRE bridge carriers, were lost to mud in the darkness.

The only other action of the first day of note was the attack by 3rd Canadian Division through the flooded areas along the far northern sector to secure this left flank. By the time they got underway, the rising floodwaters had completely surrounded several of the villages. Rocket-equipped Typhoons laid down a smoke screen ahead of the advance, and the two brigades moved out in Buffaloes. The left attack captured Leuth by 2100 hours. On the right side of their advance, faulty navigation caused the lead elements in Buffaloes to attack a group of fortified houses about a mile south of their intended target, Niel. By the time the error was discovered, the Germans had readied themselves in Niel, so that when the Canadians attacked, the Germans were able to inflict tremendous casualties before being overwhelmed.



The first phase of Operation Veritable had not gone precisely to plan. The entire timetable was several hours off, which worried General Horrocks that he would have trouble taking Cleve, due to German reinforcements. Overall though, the worst of the weather, terrain, and the enemy had not been encountered. The momentum of the attack had to be sustained for another day, and all of the conditions would conspire to give the Germans the one thing they desperately needed: time.

In the next issue of the Forward Observer, I will take a look at the final phases of Operation Veritable, and also see how the battle for the Reichswald affected other operations in the European Theater.

DESIGNER NOTES -

A Look at "Catcher in the Kunai" (FO4)
by Scott Faulk

I never really "set out" to design this scenario. Yeah, scenario design was something I've wanted to do since I started playing. However, I didn't really think I was an experienced enough player to tackle the in and outs of design. Well, after reading Gruennert account, I knew I had to give it a fling.

I first came across Sgt. Gruennert's exploits while reading Edward Murphy's "Heroes of WWII". The book itself gave a rough overview of the action and did not go much beyond what the Medal of Honor citation said. Of course, the name of the scenario came to me first. Playing upon Salinger's title, I knew I needed more other than a remotely witty scenario title. Next came the browsing of the dusty shelves of the used book stores of Eastern San Diego County, followed by trips to the local library. Coming away with numerous accounts, I began to piece together the whys and hows of the action that day.

First off, I loaded up VASL and found a configuration that might represent the area of Buna around the Government Gardens. Looking for definitive woodlines (or "jungle-lines" as the case may be), and fields of kunai, I chose 19 and the "PTO Airfield" board, 38, with the full intention of overlaying the hell out of both of them.

The original version of the board layout is much the same as my original scheme. The only difference is the addition of the grain overlay in 19N4. It was found that without it, the American advance was easily predicted. I also "stacked" the "Mission House" overlay on the hut overlay to try to represent the coconut plantation that the troopers had to assault on Christmas Eve of '42. I'm really happy with the way it's represented and how challenging it is for both attacker and defender. As attacker, I think the challenge arises from the slow advance through the kunai and then the lack of really solid terrain until reaching the

DESIGNER NOTES - A Look at "One Story Town" (FO3)

by Chris Olden

In the Beginning

The reason I began playing ASL, back in 1998, was so I could design scenarios. I'd just finished reading "A Frozen Hell" by William Trotter and thought that designing Winter War scenarios would be a lot of fun. I was disappointed when I found out that almost every major battle of the Winter War had already been covered. So, I put that idea on the back burner and began my ongoing ASL newbiehood.

As I slowly worked my way back into World War 2 history, I began to read about the so-called "Continuation War" (properly called "Jatkosota" by the Finns) between Finland and Russia. Even though Critical Hit had already released a scenario pack about the Continuation War, I thought that there must still be some raw scenario "ore" waiting to be mined. Now came the difficult part; research. An interesting aside; although the scenario "Toast Victory with Vodka" from the CH Jatkosota pak covers some of the fighting for Petrozavodsk, I was unable to verify that the Russian 3rd Infantry Division, that is the Russian force in "TVwV", was a defending unit at Petrozavodsk. To quote Mr.Schilling; "Can you ever be sure?".

Petrozavodsk? You can't get there from here.

The Continuation War, unlike the Winter War, is viewed by most historians as not being "heroic" or "epic", only because Finland was fighting along side Germany against the Soviet Union, and not alone against the Russian "Bear". This being the case, there is considerably less written about the Continuation War. Taken as a whole, the Far Northern Front, on the Eastern Front, is viewed as a backwater war by western historians. Not being easily deterred, I began my search for sources. I was able to find four books that allowed me to put together "One Story Town", as well as information from a somewhat surprising source.

The books I used were;

"Finland at War & Peace" by H.M. Tillotson; "The German Northern Theater of Operation: 1940-45" by Earl F. Ziemke;

"The Last Finnish War: 1941-1944" by Waldemar Erfurth; and "Cold Will: The Defence of Finland" by Tomas Ries. None of these books by themselves had enough information to construct a scenario. Put together, they had about 75-80% of what I needed. What I needed though, was a source on the Soviet forces. I initially was just going to use the old stand-by "Forces of the Petrozavodsk Garrison"; but I didn't think that'd look accurate. So, I e-mailed an acquaintance of mine, Col. David Glantz. Col.Glantz is the U.S. Army's res-



ident Soviet Military expert and historian. If he didn't have the answer, no one did. He did, of course. He sent me a run down of the Soviet forces in and around Petrozavodsk and I was on my way. Sort of.

Although each book told a piece of the story, I had to reconstruct the flow of the battle by reading and re-reading each account. One book gave the unit designation of one of the Finnish units, but not the other; while another book didn't give any unit designations, but gave the location of the battles and which directions the units came from in map form. After I pieced it together in my head, I sat down with the boards and started looking for a good representation of the town.

A Worker's Paradise with a view of the lake.

In one of the books, it mentions that the Finns and the Germans were unimpressed by the towns that they captured in Karelia SSR. The most vivid description was a "whitewashed clapboard town". For some reason I kept picturing the town from "High Plains Drifter"; except without Clint Eastwood, and with a friendly neighborhood commissar instead. Petrozavodsk is situated on the western shore of Lake Onega and has quite a splendid view of the lake. I didn't think that it was a necessity to represent this, so board 22 seemed to suffice well enough, although I did opt not to use any railroad overlays to represent the Murmansk-Leningrad RR which runs through Petrozavodsk.

I really like the way that boards 22 and 49 combine to give the playing area a wide open feel. It makes it unlike most ASL engagements in an urban area, where LOS's are quite limited. Also, the limiting of all buildings to ground level makes maneuvering and routing tricky. No quick escapes upstairs for the "brokies".

A25.7

In the ASLRB, somewhere in the section on the various nations capabilities, there is a little section on the Finns. A25.7 states something like(paraphrasing here) "Finns operating outside their historical borders should be represented by 5-4-8's and not have self-rally capability." Well, as a scenario designer, I'm allowed to take certain liberties with the rules and I did here. Historically, I think that A25.7 is fine IF you are representing Finns during the "sitzkreig" of '42-early '44. However, when the Finns attacked Russia in the Summer of '41 and into the Fall of that year, they were motivated by the treatment they received from the Russians after the Winter War. They wanted their land back and, (something I'm sure Stalin would understand) wanted enough land to the east to make a buffer zone between Finland and the Soviet Union. This is why I utilised the 6-4-8 1st Line squads for the Finnish OB. "Here they come. And boy, are they pissed off!" Also, for the VC I had established, the Finns needed the self-rally

BUNKERS

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pillbox makes nice skulking terrain (i.e. Assault move out of LOS to avoid Defensive Fire). A Wire top to your pillbox is nice too.

Who's that trip-trapping across my pillbox? An SSR may grant a tunnel for your pillbox (automatically included for Japanese (G1.632)). If so, you've got another way to avoid being trapped in the pillbox. If there's a nice bit of terrain near the flank of your CA that you think the enemy will use as a launching-point for their assault, you might consider digging a tunnel to there. A well-timed emergence (concealed) can disrupt any attack. If your opponent is also using this spot as a Rally point, so much the better! Don't be afraid of being called a troll. Tunnels are a pillbox's second best friend (after trenches, of course).

Teamwork!

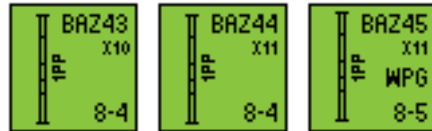
A single bunker can be a good defensive point, but they become even better when



used in tandem. A pillbox out in the open can be approached from the rear, but if there's another pillbox facing it, there's no longer anywhere to hide. Some purists might not like the look of the two



pillboxes pointing at each other, but this is a case where one must remember that ASL is not a simulation, it's an abstract representation of the situation.



Bunker Busting

Ok, now you've got an even tougher foe. He's not only in a pillbox, but there are two of them with an accompanying trench network. There's no cover to hide behind. What can you do?

Smoke on, smoke dog. No matter how big your OBA might be, it still might work better as SMOKE if available. That might be enough to get you into position to conduct the Basic Attack.

Armor support should probably be firing AP (if it's out of SMOKE). A BU tank two hexes away from a stone pillbox (+1 BU, -1 Range, +5 TEM) firing HE will hit Infantry Target Type on a DR of 3 (rising to a 5 with -2 ACQ). A more effective method will be to use AP (B30.35). You'll be able to ignore the TEM of the pillbox and hit on an 8 or less. The firepower will only be 2 (or 1 if less than 37mm), but that might be doubled to 4 on a CH.

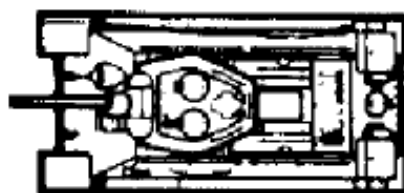
TH MATH:

+1 BU, -1 RANGE, -2 ACQ FOR A NET -2 DRM
CH ON A DR OF 5.

IF YOUR VEHICLE IS HITTING THE NCA, YOU MIGHT
BE WILLING TO GO CE AND CLOSE THE RANGE TO 1.
THEN YOU'LL BE GETTING A CH ON A DR OF 7.
SWEET!

Where is the best place to put a pillbox?

Let's start with the opposite question. Where is the worst place to put one? The one shown here would seem to be pretty bad. The only hexes in LOS have a high TEM that can only help the attacker. The flanks also have decent cover, so an attacking unit could move from the cellar to the trench and the Advance onto the PB for CC. Pretty much the only way this could be worse is if the PB were in



woods. Then the attackers would even have good cover while in Melee.



Don't Do This

Ideally, the pillbox would be in a spot that cannot be approached from the rear, such as on a cliff, or backed by a swamp. Attackers would have to get into the PB's CA, preferably in Open Ground, in order to get near the PB hex. Take a look at the situation below. Unless that water is fordable or you've got boats, you're not gonna capture this bad boy without taking a lot of fire. If you get to Z9 and break, you might think about routing to Z8. But the Bunker Builder may have also thought about that and installed a handy tunnel. You'll find out when he sends a concealed stealthy squad out to round up your brokies and herd them into the river (Ambush drms: -2 Concealment, -1 Stealth, +1 Broken for a net of 4 in his favor. UGLY). A trench in those woods would have good chi. Consult your local Feng Shui master.



BUNKERS

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The rules section on DCs vs pillboxes (B30.31) is excessively complex.

But here's the analysis.

If you don't have any special tools, you're back to the Basic Attack.



DC Placer Location	Target Location	Effect
Adjacent in CA	Inside PB	Attack modified by CA TEM (Placed or thrown OK)
Adjacent in NCA	Inside PB	Attack modified by NCA TEM (Placed or thrown OK)
Outside PB (PB hex)	Inside PB	Attack modified by CA TEM (Placed or thrown OK)
Inside PB	Outside PB (PB hex)	Attack modified by PB hex terrain (thrown only-NCA TEM and +3 applied to thrower)
Inside PB	Adjacent	NA
Inside PB	Inside PB	Resolved as Set DC (hard to imagine this happening, but it might)

ORDER OF BATTLE

continued from page 5

Booger: We all report to him, and try to give a good account of our games (EXC: Brandon usually just says "I got hosed!") But Mike has some trouble sorting things out sometimes which is understandable. After all, what would you do if there were six players, three games, and all six players claimed victory? Actually, Mike usually just makes things up.....we don't have a club, it's all a conspiracy by Mike and I to get our 15 minutes of fame.

Recon: It's all in the preparation. Before every meeting - fill a glass half full of tequila, throw in two allergy pills, shot of Tabasco, shot of Brandon's Lizard Fuel and top it off with orange juice (Minute Maid is best). Drink in one gulp, and then write all the AAR's before the games are even played.

Actually, I make sure I look at all the setups and try to understand what each attacker/defender plans on doing, if they'll talk. Then I try to look in during the match to see how things are going, get any juicy details, etc., then I bug the Hell out of them at the end of the night to fill me in on how things ended up. Plus, I make a lot of stuff up (for instance, Roy has never actually won a game at the club).

FO: So, do any of the SKASL regulars do any ASL tournament traveling?

Recon: Yeah, we try to make tournaments that we can drive to - since Roy won't fly (wuss). We've been to WWF in Denver, March Madness in KC, the tournament in St Louis and the Team Tournament in Austin. I made the mistake of sharing a room with Bud last year in Austin. Word to the wise - don't share a room with a guy who normally gets up at 3am to go to work and snores like a lovesick basset hound with a sinus infection.

Booger: And Bud actually owns a Basset Hound, so imagine what his wife has to endure.

FO: Any thoughts of a Wichita tourney? You guys are centrally located, have the largest airport in the State of Kansas and, from the sound of it, have a good player base.

Recon: Uhhh... it's like real expensive to fly in/out of Wichita. We've bounced the idea of a tournament around a few times, but it would have to be a regional (within driving distance) thing. Unless of course (Lizard Fuel) we could get (Allegra) a sponsor (Jose Cuervo, Tabasco).

Booger: We've thought about it. But it would really have to be a local deal involving places no further away from us than OKC, KC, Omaha, St Louis, and

Denver. The Air-fare into Wichita from anyplace USA is like triple the standard rates anywhere else. We are trying to set up a home-and-home with the OKC guys as it's only 2 1/2 hours away.

FO: Any chance of a "newbie tips" ASLML revival, Roy?

Booger: Thought about it, might still. They were good when I kept it to tips, then I got to thinking I was pretty intelligent, and tried to explain rules. That didn't work well. So I gotta be focused. Meditation and Yoga. Coffee and peanut M&Ms. Oh, and eventually I will probably want to actually read the RuleBook.

FO: Oh yeah, sorry about not flying you guys out here to San Diego for the interview, but we didn't make much profit from the first issue...

Recon: Hey, I already told MRS. Recon that we were going - YOU get to tell her that we aren't....

FO: Uh-oh, looks like a great time to use those "voluntary break" rules. :-)

Thanks for the exchange guys. Good luck with all the SKASL endeavors and keep those AARs coming!

KUNAI

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Mission House. On the other hand, as a defender, the sightlines are constricted enough that ranged shots will most likely have a +2 or +3 modifier. Hence, it looks like there'll be some Close Combat before the whole thing is over, as is with a lot of PTO scenarios.

The other major terrain change that developed from playtests was the inclusion of the Wet EC. With numerous huts and numerous MGs come numerous fires. If the VC building burns down it turns into a few hours of frustration for players. Not a whole heck of a lot of fun. Thank Marty Snow for that as he saw half the board go up in one his PTs. Oops.

Next thing I did was try to emulate the heroics performed by Gruennert, as this was the focus of the scenario. As inspiration I looked at the well designed "Medal of Honor" and "Victoria Cross" packs put out by Schwerpunkt. I'm a big fan of these packs and have played quite a few of the scenarios from both packs. The "heroic" SSRs add to the flavor of the game and bring a historical light to the action being portrayed. So, with the example set by the Florida boys, I made Sgt. Gruennert a 149 hero with a -2 wound severity and some serious grenade throwing skills represented by a -2 modifier when directing fire at Occupants of a pillbox.

While the citation and eyewitness accounts jibed with the -modifier vs. pillbox'd enemies sure made sense, the ASL mechanics didn't. The Forward Observer group recommended the modifier be a bit tighter around the edges. Otherwise, Gruennert and his buddies could just sit back and blast away at the entrenched Yasuda Detachment. I wanted to keep Gruennert from being a killstack director. Instead I tried to sweeten the deal by making it a -2 heroic modifier, which makes him somewhat deadly in PTO close combat. With all the ambush terrain out there, Gruennert should do well with those grenades.

Next, Sgt. Gruennert needed someone to throw grenades at and some buddies to back his play. The Japanese are an approximation of what was the standard detachment At the tail end of a seven month campaign with very limited resupply, the Nipponese troops on Buna were hungry, short of goods and racked by disease. Thus, once first liners and represented by a mix of line troops. Leadership however, was still strong as the Japanese backed towards the shores. Little has changed since the first version, with the omission of an 8+1 leader in the OoB.



U.S. forces fighting in Saipan

The American force was a bit more challenging. Primarily, they have to deal with an opponent that is unlike anything else in ASL. So, they have to have enough firepower and numbers to deal with an almost unbreaking enemy. In simple terms, the Yanks need to swing uppercuts, not body blows. To do this, I gave 'em some pretty impressive 1942 firepower.

Historically, before initiating the push on the Government Gardens, an artillery observer perched himself in a tall palm overlooking the plantation. Dropping a few salvos into the enemy held compound, the barrage quickly stopped as the observer saw Americans advancing on the position. This, and the fact that an offboard observer is gonna have a tough time seeing anything over jungle in this relatively flat area of Buna, resulted in SSR4. I really enjoy the way this one worked out. Finally, ASL mechanics and history came together.

I based the bulk of the American force on the old 666 Army standby. Adding some assault engineers really made the force quite potent. While the firepower of both is a plus, the smoke capability and the morale that matches the enemy really adds to the value of the 667s in this scenario. The two 546s were the last piece of the puzzle that came to be. I felt they added to historical flavor of the struggle. While not as poor off as the Japanese, the American troops fought the same battle with tropical disease. (Dysentery was so bad, that many British troops in the hinterlands of Buna cut the backsides out of their trousers for quicker "access").

The question of American leadership was a hot topic for this scenario during it's development. While some felt the leadership was (and still is) lacking. However, the morning of the attack, the CO of the assembled forces was killed by sniper fire. The attack was placed on hold while a new CO was brought up. To make American matters worse, the leadership situation of the Urbana group at company level is repeatedly referenced as 'woeful'. Hence, while there are three Ami leaders present, there isn't the usual "all-star" you'll find in many other scenarios.

Well, that's pretty much the story of the genesis of my first scenario design. Thanks to the FO playtest group for helping with the evolution of this work. The bumps on my head are finally healing...

Scenario Bibliography:

Archer, Jules, *Jungle Fighters*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1985.

Cook, Haruko Taya & Theodore F. Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History*, New Press, New York, 1992.

Ellis, John, *World War II Encyclopedia of Facts and Figures*, Military Book Club Press, New York, 1995.

Mayo, Lida, *Bloody Buna*, Doubleday, New York, 1974.

Murphy, Edward, *Heroes of WWII*, Ballantine, New York, 1990.

Web Resources:

United States Army Center for Military History : <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/books/wwii/papuan-camp/papepn-fm.htm>

United States Army Center for Military History: <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/mohiia2.htm>

THE PUZZLER AFV EDITION *('cause you can't take your ASLRB to the can)*

by Scott Faulk



4 Down

A crossword puzzle grid with 23 numbered starting points for clues. The grid is composed of white squares for letters and black squares for empty space. The numbers are: 1 (Down), 2 (Across), 3 (Across), 4 (Down), 5 (Across), 6 (Across), 7 (Down), 8 (Across), 9 (Across), 10 (Across), 11 (Down), 12 (Across), 13 (Across), 14 (Across), 15 (Across), 16 (Across), 17 (Across), 18 (Across), 19 (Across), 20 (Across), 21 (Across), 22 (Across), and 23 (Across).

Across

- 2. The last of the WWII British Cruiser Tanks.
- 3. JagdPanzer 38(t) nom de guerre.
- 5. British sapper's mode of transportation.
- 8. Japanese Type 97 Tank.
- 10. Not the Henschel Turret.
- 12. Soviet name for the American Sherman Tank.
- 13. British 25pdr SPA(a).
- 14. The "H" in H-35.
- 16. FT-equipped American M3A1.
- 17. A Czech Tank Design.
- 18. The "V" in KV-1.
- 19. PSW234/2.
- 20. French firm that produced the S15T Truck.
- 21. Abbreviation of the Moulinex Aresenal.
- 23. Fastest American AFV of WWII.

Down

- 1. StuG
- 4. See inset photo at the top of the page.
- 6. Producer of the Edw and Ejw Polish Tank.
- 7. PZKPFW.
- 9 Marmon-_____ Armored Car.
- 11. Engine manufacture found in the Tiger.
- 15. American Scout Car.
- 17. Italian Assault Gun.
- 18. Chinese Vehicle Note #1.
- 22. Anti-HEAT armored plates.

Let's play...

ASL Clue!

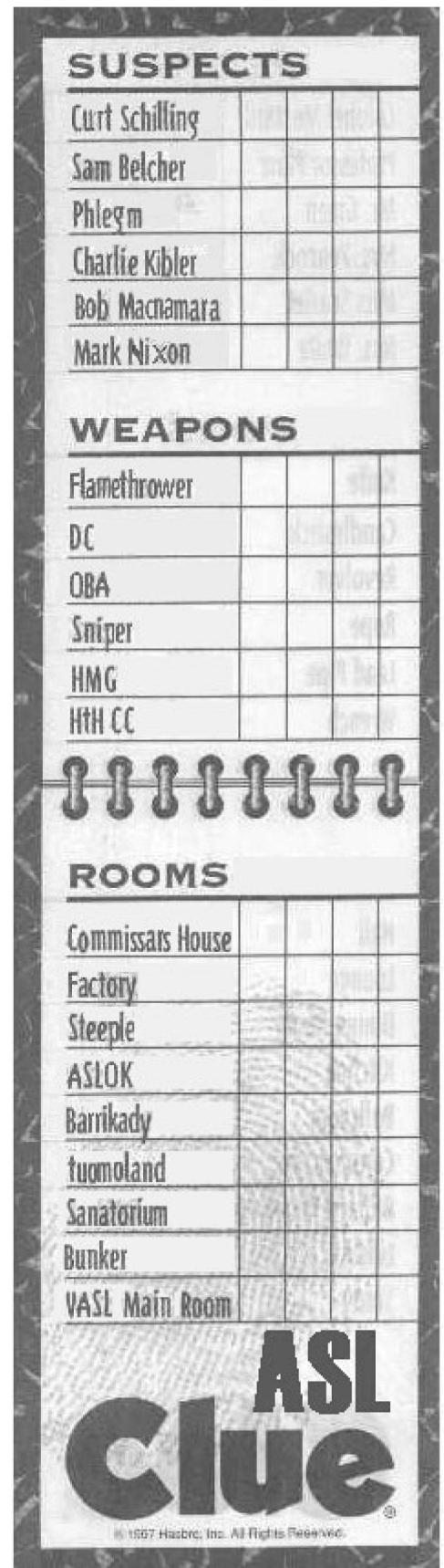
Who Killed Don Greenwood?

The famed game developer lies dead, and it's YOUR job to find out who dunnit!

Was it:

- × **Curt Schilling, erstwhile pitcher for the Arizona Diamondbacks, because Greenwood wouldn't sell the rights to ASL?**
- × **Bob Macnamara, who wanted all the ASL credit for himself?**
- × **Charlie Kibler, because Greenwood called his drawing style "amatuerish"?**
- × **Mark Nixon, who didn't get a 10-3 named after him?**
- × **Phlegm, driven to insanity by living in New Jersey?**
- × **Sam Belcher, Greenwood's evil twin?**

Now you and your ASL buddies can take a break from "the game" and put on your detective hats, chasing clues around the game board to find the bad guy. Cross off suspects, weapons, and rooms as you gather information, until you're ready to make your accusation. Was it Schilling in the Factory with the DC, or Kibler in the Sanatorium with the OBA? Perhaps Nixon at ASLOK with the Sniper? It's for YOU to find out!



ONE STORY TOWN

continued from page 11

capability and the extra firepower. If you play this scenario as the Finns, you'll be thankful for that self-rally capability.

Beware of Russians bearing sporks

Playtesting is a large part of scenario design, possibly even a larger part, time-wise, than the designing itself. To make matters more difficult, it's tough to convince people to use their increasingly rare ASL time to playtest a scenario, when they could be playing a really good, tried and true, scenario. I've read a lot of posts to the ASLML from people saying "Playtesting - is- playing ASL." So, my thanks for playing AND playtesting "One Story Town" go out to, in no particular order; Roger Foss, Marty Snow, Zeb Doyle, Dave Haasl, Dean (I'm sorry, your last name wasn't in Marty's AAR, I owe you a beer!), Steve Svare, Tom Campbell, Scott Faulk, and Tom Repetti. You guys made it work. Thanks!

Two-Fisted Tales of ASL Terror

Roger Foss and I were playtesting "1ST" and his Finns were mopping up the board with my hapless Russkies. He corners a

squad and a leader of mine and Pins them with a little Advancing Fire. In his Advance Phase, he moves in two 8-3-8 squads and a CX'd 6-4-8 squad to deliver the coup de grace to my guys. There's no way, short of Roger rolling boxcars, that my pinned 4-4-7 squad and 7-0 leader are going to survive this. Roger has me at a 4:1 CC. He doesn't declare HtH. Voila', he rolls boxcars. I breathe a sigh of relief. At least I'll tie up his squads for my half of the turn and part of his next one. I roll the dice; snake-eyes! So, I'm attacking back at some- thing worse than an 1:8 CC; I roll for leader generation; instant 8-1 leader!! After we check all the mods, Roger does his best impersonation of that head exploding scene from "Scanners" and then removes his three squads from the board, and I actually do a little victory jig at this point. "But wait! What's this? Ivan and Yuri leap out of the closet armed with a spork and a hatpin and stab three Finnish squads to death! Let's see the instant replay on that one, Jim." Who says playtesting isn't playing ASL?



END OF AN ERA

Or, What The Hell Were You Thinking?

by Brien Martin

Ever take on a project, at home or at work, that simply became a larger part of your being than you ever wanted it to be? If so, then you know how I felt in the spring of 2001 when fiddling with the look, feel and content of the ASL Bulletin Board suddenly stopped being fun and started being a job.

To me, the ASLBB had become The Project That Wouldn't Die. And, much like the mad scientist of movie fame, I couldn't bear to kill it myself. I thought that I could lay it aside and move on to other things.

I thought wrong. During the spring and early summer, as the ASLBB laid there, not updated, not maintained, I couldn't help but start to tinker with its look and feel. After all, these fellers right here at Coastal Fortress had, in my opinion, put up a site that would forever keep the ASLBB from ever seeing a Best Of The Year Award. For a few days, the idea of knocking Scott and Steve off of their lofty perch kept me going.

But then, reality set in. I couldn't compete. I didn't have the drive and determination to do them one better. And in my reflections, I came to realize one very important thing. Something that changed my outlook on ASL and the hobby in general.

While competition is a good thing, necessary for us to attend tournaments, I found that my best games of ASL were played when my opponent and I were on the "same side" in that we were both having fun, while at the same time beating each other's brains in.

And so it hit me ... rather than *compete* with Scott and Steve ... why not join forces with them? Take two really good ASL sites and make one GREAT site. And the "how to" was so very, very simple, because I had already reached the point where the ASLBB was going to die on the vine if I didn't do *something* soon.

So it was in June of 2001 that I approached Scott and Steve, asking if they would be interested in taking over the content of the ASLBB. And so it was in August of 2001 that their conversion work was complete, giving CF visitors a whole, new batch of stuff to read.

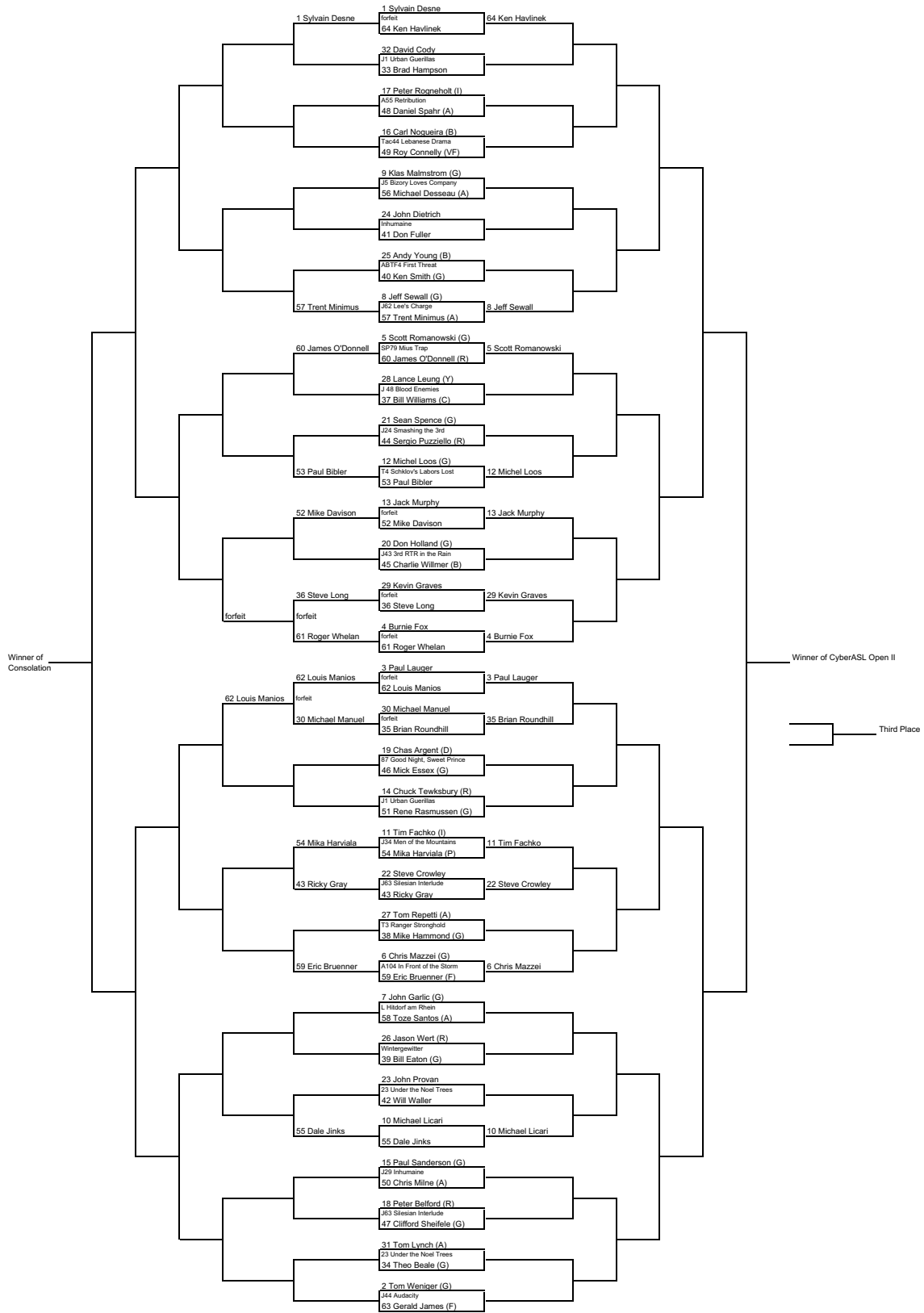
I feel good about my decision. I wanted the material to live on, even if the website did not, and I found a good home for my "baby". You can't ever really ask for more than that.

I will still be around, contributing a column to Forward Observer and hopefully writing some insightful and informative articles in the future. And, of course, I'll get back to playing ASL, something that always seemed to get left behind whenever the ASLBB called for my attention.

Like many great projects, the ASLBB lives on, albeit under the banner of another. But I think I did what I set out to do ... to create a lasting legacy that has a positive impact on ASL and on ASL players around the world. I think, as they say back home, I done good.

Brien

CYBERASL OPEN BRACKET



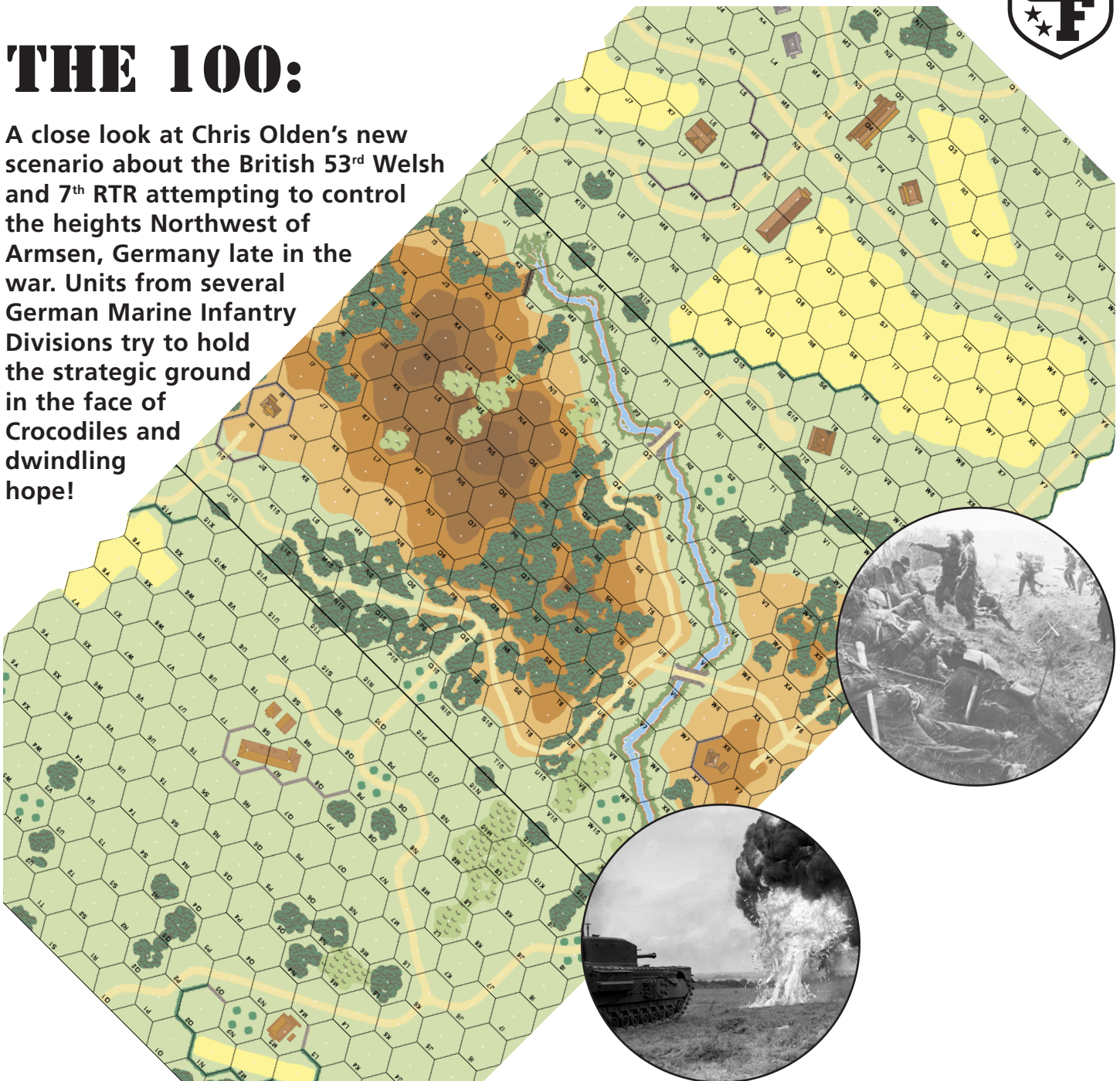
Starting annually following ASLOK, John Provan's CyberASL Open is a double elimination VASL tournament. Starting next month, regular bracket updates can be found on the Coastal Fortress website at www.coastalfortress.com. For more tournament information, contact John directly at: john_provan@hotmail.com

In Our Next Issue...



THE 100:

A close look at Chris Olden's new scenario about the British 53rd Welsh and 7th RTR attempting to control the heights Northwest of Armsen, Germany late in the war. Units from several German Marine Infantry Divisions try to hold the strategic ground in the face of Crocodiles and dwindling hope!



The Battle for the Reichswald Continues!
Steve finishes up his in-depth look at this pivotal battle in the Allied push toward Germany.



The Windy City Wargamers open up to Brien Martin.