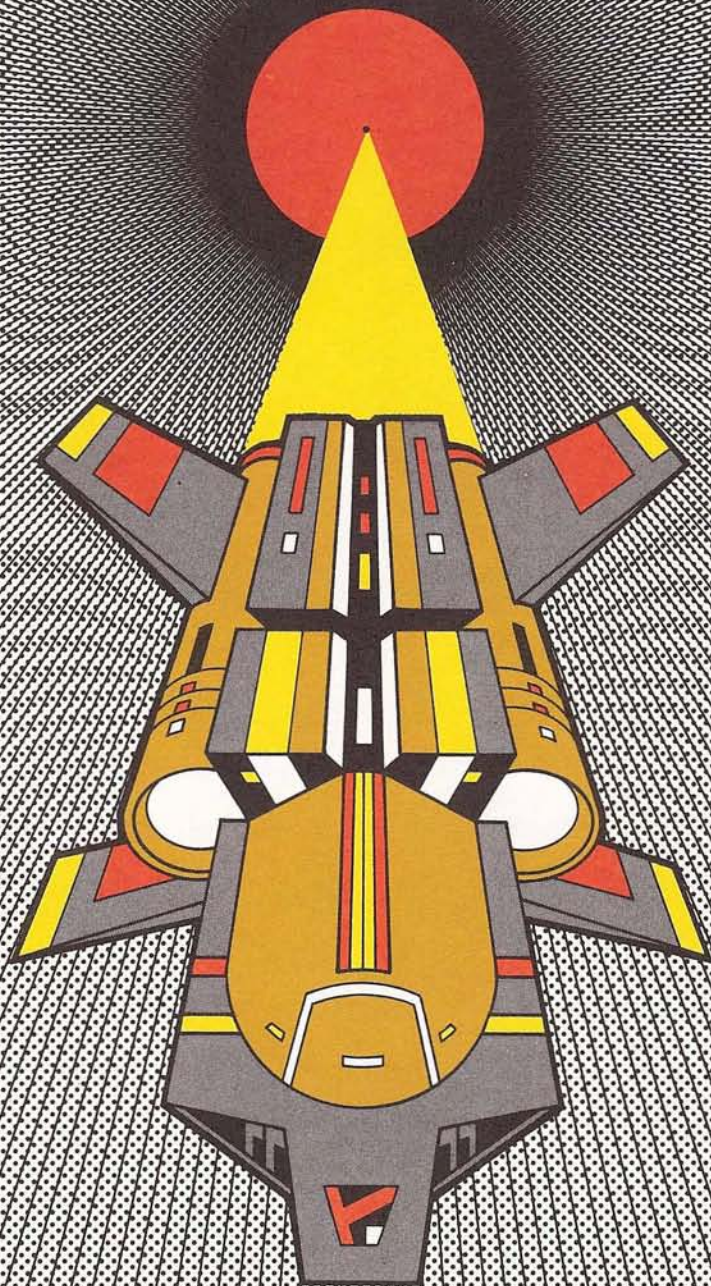


GENERAL

\$3.00

AVALON HILL

Volume 20, Number 4



★ The AVALON HILL GENERAL The Game Players Magazine

The Avalon Hill GENERAL is dedicated to the presentation of authoritative articles on the strategy, tactics, and variation of Avalon Hill wargames. Historical articles are included only inasmuch as they provide useful background information on current Avalon Hill titles. The GENERAL is published by the Avalon Hill Game Company solely for the cultural edification of the serious game aficionado, in the hopes of improving the game owner's proficiency of play and providing services not otherwise available to the Avalon Hill game buff. Avalon Hill is a division of Monarch Avalon Industries, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Monarch Avalon, Inc. The shares of Monarch Avalon, Inc. are publicly traded on the NASDAQ System under the symbol MAHI. For information about the company write to Harold Cohen at the executive offices of the company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214.

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Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 100

The *GENERAL*, now in its twentieth year, can only devote a certain percentage of space to each title in Avalon Hill's vast line. In correspondence with readers, it would appear that some feel that the magazine may concentrate on certain titles to the detriment of others in relation to total "live" space in a volume year or a single issue—a complaint heard ever more frequently today in a period of uncomparable growth and expansion for Avalon Hill. The decisions that this editor makes on content are obviously influenced by this fact; I strive desperately to "balance" the coverage of our vast and diverse line of games. New games are introduced in the feature material, while new views of AH's older titles can be found in the remainder of the issue's pages. Recently, I've turned to a thematic approach in devoting an issue to a certain time period, type of game, or other unifying concept—filling these pages with excellent articles on the popular and overlooked games in the AH line

which fit with the issue's theme (a luxury few hobby periodicals can afford). The most popular games usually get more coverage; this is only reasonable since material on such games is more plentiful and will find a larger audience among the readership.

Wargamers have been regularly receiving The *GENERAL* since 1964—making it the elder expert among wargaming hobby periodicals. The magazine has been through many changes, additions and—to date—three editors (Shaw, Greenwood and myself). The present *GENERAL* contains an average of 38 pages of material devoted to analyses, strategy, tactics, variants, replays and historical background of Avalon Hill games (discounting the occasional miscellaneous articles). The remaining ten pages are devoted to many regular columns which support the games and provide continuity for the readership.

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Panzerkrieg®

**The Eastern Front, WW II ... The Ukraine
... Stalingrad ... Tanks breakthrough ...
Armored spearheads ... Pincers ...
PANZERKRIEG**

The vast and varied plains of southern Russia harbor the seeds of destiny, and have been the battleground between East and West for a thousand years. Throughout the course of the Second World War the fortunes of nations were inextricably bound with momentous military events taking their names from cities like Kursk, Kharkov, Kiev, and Stalingrad. Massive battles along the rivers Dneiper, Bug, Volga, and Don have passed into legend. Historians examining that time and place are only partially effective in expressing the scope and importance of these events.

PANZERKRIEG is Avalon Hill's new strategy game for 2 players which portrays in nine scenarios the immense events of WW II in southern Russia. The game opens with an examination of the Kieva Pocket and proceeds to the first Soviet winter offensive, Operation Blue. From Stalingrad and Zitadelle to the Korsun and Cherkassy


Pockets, PANZERKRIEG offers the gamer and amateur historian a comprehensive picture of the war in this theatre. The campaign is broken into easily managed pieces (the longest scenario is twelve turns).

The players will maneuver their divisions and corps of infantry and tanks across a detailed map depicting cities, transportation lines and geography of southern Russia. The system of play emphasizes the importance of breakthroughs by tanks, proper placement of reserves, air power and leaders. PANZERKRIEG, plus the included historical commentary, explores the enormous and complex events of the south Russian front in a concise and entertaining manner, offering an insight into the overwhelming scope of warfare on the steppes.

Complexity (on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 the highest): **5**

PANZERKRIEG is now available for \$18.00 from the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% for postage and handling (20% for Canadian orders, 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.





#14 PFC WAGNER **CCV:3/4**
Flamethrower: * **X5-6**

Range	Firepower
0	NA
1	NA
2	NA
3	NA
4	NA
5	12

MORALE:4 PT: 72 KIA:7

Only once in a great while does a game dare to be truly different and abandon old concepts while striking out to chart virgin territory in game design. Rarer still are the instances in which these games succeed in presenting a simulation of unparalleled realism in an easily comprehended and playable format. In **UP FRONT**, we have just such a game. Gone are the hexes and charts of conventional war-games; replaced by innovative and attractive game components which have distilled a wealth of technical data into one of the most playable, yet detail laden, formats ever devised.

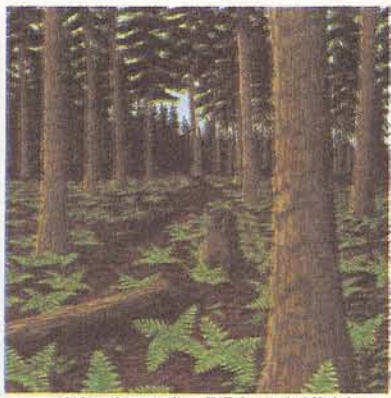
UP FRONT is a game of man-to-man infantry combat set in WW II Europe and is based loosely on the popular **SQUAD LEADER** game system. Players need not be familiar with any of the various **SQUAD LEADER** games or rules to play. The basic theory behind the design remains the same; only the mechanics of play differ. **UP FRONT** is a far simpler adaptation of **SQUAD LEADER** principles designed to a card game format. Yet, in many ways, the game is more realistic than its predecessor in that its inherent mechanics simulate the fear and confusion of the battlefield and the inability of leadership to assert itself far better than any tactical combat game yet

published. There is no playing board; it has been replaced by Terrain cards which become the "hexagons" of the game as players maneuver their forces via Action cards over constantly changing terrain. The scale of the game is measured in terms of relative ranges between opposing forces, with most combat occurring within a scale distance of 500 meters during the course of player turns measured in varying seconds of actual time.

UP FRONT is a game player's game, rich in detail yet easily playable within the space of a lunch hour. However, it also contains engrossing Multi-Player and Campaign Game versions which could last a week or more. Like **SQUAD LEADER**, its famous predecessor, **UP FRONT** is an open-ended game capable of depicting endless Design-Your-Own variations of small unit actions between American, German and Russian combatants. Tanks, Assault Guns, Smoke, Anti-Tank Rifles, Demolition Charges, Pillboxes, Partisans, SS, Entrenchments, Anti-Tank Mines, Infantry Guns, Flamethrowers, Armored Cars, Half-tracks, Panzerfausts, Bazookas, Panzerschrecks, Wire, Ambushes, Radios, Artillery, Minefields, Mortars, Snipers, Starshells, Heroes, Prisoners and Fords are all accounted for. In fact, **UP FRONT** encompasses almost everything that the **SQUAD LEADER** game system has taken four gamettes to do, and does so in a far more playable format. The game can be summed up in four words: innovation, playability, detail and realism. That's an unbeatable combination.

UP FRONT is available now for \$25.00 from the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% for shipping and handling (20% for Canadian orders, 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add an additional 5% state sales tax.


#147 **WOODS** **3**
-2*



*NA to Mortar fire; INF from: 1 shift left
 AFV Entry/OVR: BOG check: (RPC); Exit: sideways
 OVR: OT AFV: 6 IM, 5 EL; Others: 6 IM

1	2b	3	4c	5o	6	7w	8	9	Or
1	1	3	3	2	3	7	3	3	7

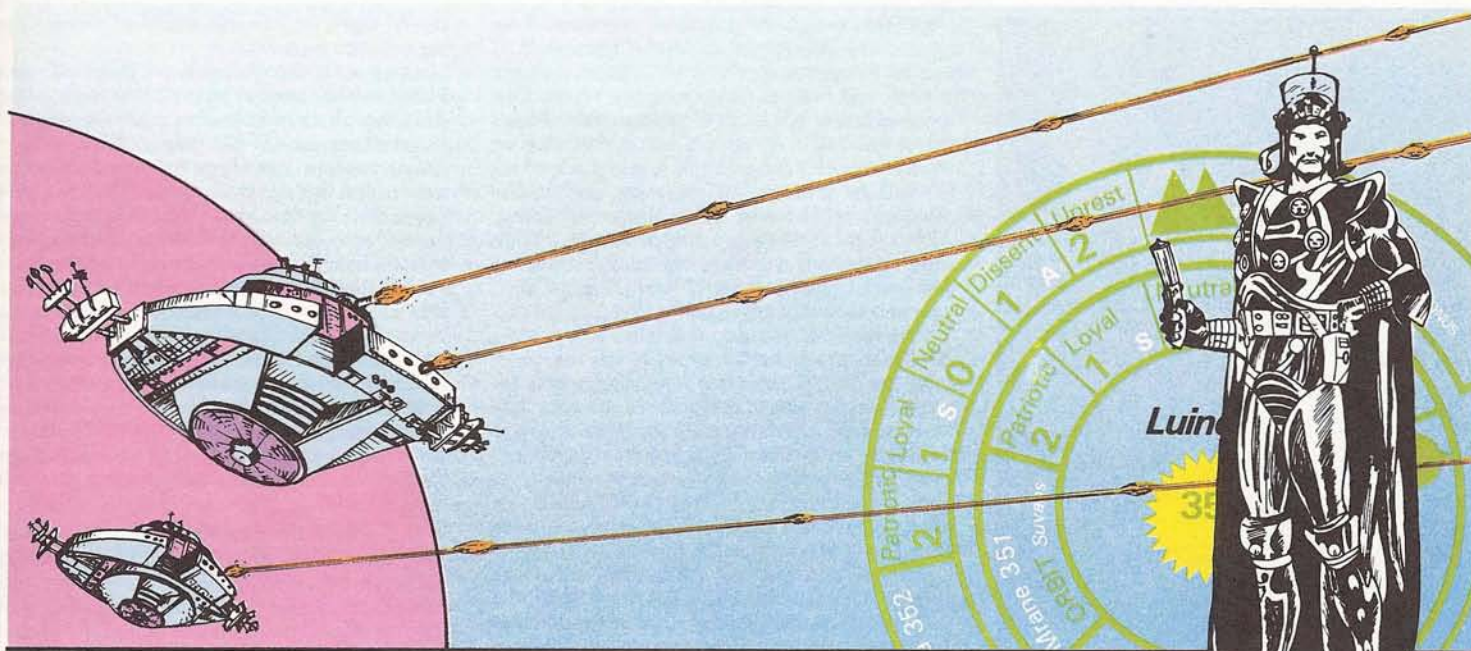
#137 **MARSH** **0**
⊖1 +1



EXIT: 1 sideways Move plus any other Move
 No AFV/IG entry; No mortar, MMG may fire
 [all other non-moving, fully crewed weapons]

1	2b	3	4c	5o	6	7w	8	9	Or
1	1	2	1	2	5	4	1	2	7

UP FRONT®



Star Cruisers

Cannons/Shields:	1/2
Maneuver:	2
Max Passengers:	10

Redjac

Combat:	6	Leadership(s):	2
Endurance:	6	Diplomacy:	1
Intelligence:	3	Navigation:	5

SCIENCE FICTION FOR THE WARGAMER

AH's FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY

By Nicky Palmer

These pages have not been graced by the work of Nicky Palmer—author (The Comprehensive Guide to Board Wargames; The Best of Board Wargaming), editor, and expert gamer—since the THIRD REICH Series Replay back in Volume 17. He finds FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY, like 3R, a superb challenge. It was inevitable, once this was discovered, that we ask him to write on it.

Like so much in this curious world of ours, wargaming has increasingly become polarized into two camps. On the one side we have the traditional "panzers-at-Stalingrad" historical games; on the other, fantasy and science fiction, with tactical space battles predominate, are the norm. Many players enjoy both, but there are also the numerous individuals with selective tastes who love one and cannot abide the other. I'm sure that there are any number of readers already oiling their typewriters for an angry letter to the Editor: "Sir, Do you realize that you could have used the space for 16! new SQUAD LEADER scenarios instead of this futuristic trash?" But wait—FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY is not what you might think. Almost uniquely, it is genuine science fiction, yet presented in the form of an intricate and challenging strategic wargame. Like its Avalon Hill tactical counterpart, STARSHIP TROOPERS, the game system is deeply colored by the theme (that is, it is *not* just a conventional wargame dressed up, with Stukas renamed "Imperial Ground Assault Machines" and the like), but it can be studied and enjoyed even with no interest in the theme simply as a fascinating strategic campaign.

In this case, the theme is simply stated and not exactly unfamiliar to movie-goers: a valiant band of Rebel characters is attempting to foment an uprising against a despotic galactic empire. The galaxy is divided into five imperial provinces—four arranged like wheel spokes radiating from the central province—each with four to six inhabited star systems. Each star system has from one to three planets, giving a galactic total of 51 inhabited worlds. The Rebel objective in the main ("Galactic") scenario is to gain control of about half of these in forty moves. This scenario takes 10-30 hours for experienced players. More modest scenarios, ranging in playing time from 30 minutes upwards aim at control of a particular system or province. The comments here relate to the Galactic Game, but often apply equally to the smaller scenarios as well.

At the start of the game, 14 Rebel characters are on the map in four groups, each with a spaceship. Three also have randomly-chosen Possessions from a deck of twenty depicting various useful artifacts: powerful weapons, anti-detection devices, robots, and so forth. Another six Rebels may be recruited as the game proceeds. Against them are ranged ten Imperial characters (two more may be recruited) and the vast might of the Imperial armed forces. There is at least one Imperial military unit on every planet, the more powerful Mobile units being face down to conceal their true strength. Each planet also has a Planetary Defense Base (PDB) which may detect, damage or even destroy enemy units flying in or out. Only detected characters are liable to attack, so the PDB is an important first line of defense, even though actual destruction by PDBs is

rare and characters may eventually become detected anyway in the course of their missions. The PDB may be *Up* (functioning) or *Down* (useless) and range from *Level 2* (high chance of detecting interlopers and of hitting them) to *Level 0* (no damage or destruction capability, only detection). Certain detection die rolls allow the PDB owner to send detachments to attack the enemy spacecraft; this is, in fact, the most common way of killing enemy characters—to trap them on a planet with a strong PDB and a military unit poised to send detachments when they try to escape. At the start of play, PDBs are *Level 0 Down*; the Imperial player can buy improvements as an alternative to buying troops.

In addition to this array of characters and hardware, each planet has a Political Track on which a marker shows the current mood of the population. This may be *Patriotic*, *Loyal*, *Neutral*, *Dissenting* or *Unrest*. Beyond *Unrest* lie the states of open rebellion or Rebel control. Most planets start the game *Patriotic* or *Loyal* (see Table 1). Until they are brought to *Unrest* they cannot be persuaded to revolt, so one of the Rebels' many competing priorities is to stir up *Unrest* in all likely areas.

The heart of the game is the Missions. Table 2 shows all the missions on which one can send characters (though some are for Rebel characters only). Any character can undertake one mission per game turn, alone or in the company of other characters as the player may think fit. Thus, if you have Agan Rafa and Vudot Vudot together, Rafa might "Scavenge for Possessions" while Vudot undertakes "Diplomacy", or they might jointly do one mission. Each character has a range of attributes



nr. 03 REBEL RHONE

Agan Rafa

Combat:	5
Endurance:	6
Intelligence:	1
Leadership:	2
Diplomacy:	0
Navigation:	3

Home Planet: Pronox

Receives one bonus draw on Gather Information mission (I) and two bonus draws on Assassination mission (A).

which makes him or her more suited for some missions than for others. For all missions, there is a certain risk of being attacked by "irate locals" or indiginous creatures of varying degrees of nastiness—so it is always wise for a bodyguard (high in combat and endurance ratings) to accompany the more delicate specialists.

There are three environ types which can be found on different planets (usually a planet has two environs)—Urban, Wild and Special. Special environs are further divided into four subtypes (Liquid, Subterranean, Air, Fire) which give combat bonuses to Rebel units of the local type. Having decided on the missions being performed in an environ, the player starts turning over Event cards. Each card has three sections, but only the one relating to the current environ type is used. First the Event (if possible in the context) is carried out; then, if the characters survive, the mission letter abbreviations preceding the Event indicate which missions are successful. A "D", for example, shows that any "Diplomacy" mission in the environ has now succeeded, allowing a shift on the Political Track of the planet (e.g., from *Patriotic* to *Loyal*). The player continues turning cards until either:

- all missions have been completed or aborted, or
- all characters are dead, or
- as many cards as the size of the environ allows have been revealed.

If there are still missions in progress after reaching the environ "size", the player may claim bonus cards for each mission, the number depending on the mission undertaken and any special advantages of the characters involved. For example, the basis for a "Gather Intelligence" mission is the Intelligence rating of the brightest character on the mission; if this is "4", he is entitled to four bonus cards. The pleasant thing about bonus cards is that

the Events (which do tend to be a nuisance) are ignored and only the mission letters considered. If one has a large bonus entitlement, therefore, it will pay to seek out a small environ, where little unpleasantness is likely to happen from Events before the bonus stage is reached. Deciding on which characters and environs to use is one of the key tactical problems in the game, and careful calculation will transform your chances of success. Although the system may sound quite complex, it is elegantly smooth in practice and readily assimilated (since one spends perhaps 75% of the game planning and executing missions).

One possible mission, naturally, is starting a Rebellion on a planet in unrest. If this is successfully carried out, Rebel troops will spring onto the map in each environ of the planet in question, their exact strength depending on a Resource Rating to be found in each environ. This (or the rarer and less useful "Summon Sovereign" mission, which whistles up the local bigwig with his armed retinue) initiates the military phase of the game, in which armed combat takes place in parallel with the continuing character activity. All military units have ground and space combat ratings, the latter also useful as a movement factor to determine how many star systems the unit can traverse on each turn. Either player can initiate combat between military units in the same environ or orbiting the same planet, and characters may be put in command if desired, giving column shifts equal to their Leadership rating at the price of being unavailable for missions that turn. The Combat Results Table is fairly bloodless and biased to the defense, so swift knockout blows rarely occur. However, it is easy to pin down an enemy stack for a drawn-out slugging match.

If Imperial troops can be evicted from a planet in rebellion, and the PDB is *Up* at the end of an Imperial turn, the planet becomes Rebel controlled, a state which is very hard for the Imperial player to reverse. There is an unfortunate snag in the game balance here in that the Imperial forces tend to be better in space combat, and usually have little difficulty in shooting down the PDB from the relative safety of orbit (see the "Balanced Variant" for further notes on this).

Basically, the Rebel program is to accumulate all the characters (Mission G) and their possessions (Mission P), put half of the galaxy into Unrest (Missions C and D) and then Rebellion (Mission R), and finally hold off the Empire's military forces (which are reinforced every two turns by builds chosen by the Imperial player using the resources of any one province) long enough to establish control. This is a tall order since the Imperial player will be scurrying around with his own characters trying to stop the rota while his military units try to intercept your characters. Military units in the same environ as detected characters can search for them, with a good chance of success in small environs or against large groups of characters. If successful, a Squad pounds after the located characters in vicious fire combat—unless the dreaded Suicide Squad is present (this simply blows both the characters and themselves to smithereens).

Winning for the Rebels is indeed extremely difficult, but the outlook is lightened by four major assets they enjoy.

Asset #1 is the infamous "Domino Effect". If a double shift is achieved in the Political Rating on one turn on some planet, or if a rebellion is started or Rebel control established, the news spreads through the star system to the other planets and possibly (if the race of that planet is star-faring) to other planets populated by the same race. This allows one to shift the political indices on some of these planets if they are not *Patriotic* as well; and gaining Rebel control actually allows you to spark off rebellions on other planets already in Unrest. An effective "Domino Effect" is a truly spec-

tacular sight, with a whole chain of rebellions flaring out over the galaxy.

Asset #2 is the "Rebel Secret Base". On some planet secretly selected by the Rebel player, a hidden army is built equal in size to the troops recruited in rebellions around the galaxy. Thus, each rebellion produces new forces for immediate use and new zealots for secret reserves. When the Rebel player feels the time to be ripe, the Base is revealed and the array of troops—which can be better quality than those in rebellion—is deployed on that planet (which you do not have to control). The base can also unfortunately be revealed by a series of successful Imperial "Intelligence" missions or the questioning and torture of captured Rebel characters. If the base is revealed before a single planet is Rebel-controlled, the game ends in instant Imperial victory (another point of possible game imbalance since an early capture of a Rebel character may enable the Empire to extort the information quite quickly).

Asset #3 is the "Strategic Assignment Rota". This bureaucratic arrangement (suspended when the Secret Base is revealed) bars movement to most planets, or across provincial boundaries, in three of the five provinces at any one time. The Imperial player decides secretly before the game which provinces will be exempt each turn. He may, for instance, decide to exempt First and Second Provinces on the first turn; units may then move freely within these, but one can be certain that the Rebels will be busy elsewhere. This rota effectively safeguards cautious Rebel players from early attack and destruction or (horrors!) capture.

Asset #4 is the "Planet Secrets". Sixteen planets have dreadful secrets, randomly assigned and known only to the Imperial player. One of these is a deadly trap—if unwitting Rebel characters land here they are instantly captured. Once this has been discovered (by "Gather Information" missions or orbital study by the egghead Professor Mareg, a character able to spot secrets without tripping over them), the remaining secrets are harmless to the Rebels. Indeed, a visit to a planet with a secret will often produce something very helpful: a uniquely generous casino yields possessions to intelligent characters; a Dead Planet (murdered by Imperial villainy) sends shock waves of horror via the "Domino Effect"; a Living Planet is a sentient being poised to revolt at the slightest encouragement; and so forth.

The following discussion stresses strategy and tactics in some detail. As a general comment, the more careful player should take the Rebels, who are assaulting the vertiginous heights of Imperial power and may lose through a single poor move. The Imperial player can afford a few mistakes. Even given perfect Rebel play, the Empire has an excellent chance in the standard game. In the first part of the game, the Rebel player has great fun, because the Empire is tied down by the Strategic Assignment Rota and its massive forces have little to strike at. Before too long however, both sides should be getting in some powerful blows; once the Secret Base is exposed the game explodes into a struggle across the entire mapboard. Players with less time available should find the Province scenarios (playable in an evening) quite satisfying. The Star System scenarios, though shorter still, are more suited to learning the system than to long-term enjoyment. Solitaire play, surprisingly in a game of many secrets, is quite feasible; leave the Secrets uninspected till the Rebel side takes a look, and try to avoid using knowledge of the Imperial mobile military strengths. These are face down most of the game but the sensible Rebel player will want to avoid them as much as possible in any case until the final climactic showdown—by which time it should be possible to reveal the Imperial units by raiding the Imperial headquarters (one of the secrets).

Missions: The Time and The Place

Look first at Imperial missions, as their range of possibilities is in practice much more limited than for the Rebels. The early priorities should be "Gain Characters" (to pick up the two outstanding loyalists) and "Coup" (only one coup per vulnerable environ is permitted; get in first and there will never be a Rebel Coup there). After that, it's going to be "Diplomacy" all the way until the Imperial player gets the chance to "Gather Intelligence", put down rebellions, or come to grips with enemy characters and troops. Note that the rules permit one to gather intelligence on a planet in revolt even if the foe has pushed off to safer climes; this may make it worth the while to tolerate a continuing rebellion while you chat up the locals on the subject of the Secret Base. Another occasionally useful trick is to perform a mission in every environ on a planet on which the Empire would like to commit an "Atrocity", in the hope of triggering the "Imperial Player may commit an Atrocity" event.

As a general rule, one can afford to be more reckless than the Rebel opponent with most of the characters (but take care of the top military leaders), both because the main strength of the Empire is military rather than individual and because the Empire knows where the Clone World is located (be sure to guard this against Rebel reincarnation with a Suicide Squad at the earliest opportunity). However, sending single characters on "Diplomacy" missions is unlikely to be productive, especially as most are unable to handle difficult diplomatic situations and almost as likely to put off the locals as encourage them in the ways of the Empire.

Turning to the Rebels, we find an impressive array of missions, with widely varying chances of success according to environ (Table 2 shows the full range of possibilities for either side). Considering these chances before deciding the moves is essential for good play. The planet is likely to be dictated by other considerations—the need to keep in the shadow of the Strategic Assignment Rota, the wish to trigger the Domino Effect—but there will usually be a choice of environs. If the mission is urgent, it may be best to have characters doing it in every environ—this applies especially to starting Rebellions at the preferred moment. But often the party may be too small to split safely and the Rebel player will need to settle for one environ. There is also the danger of spreading characters over the planet without spaceships to get away when the Imperials show up.

Table 2 shows the number of cards giving successful outcomes for each type, as well as the events in each environ. Some points immediately spring to the eye. "Sabotage" is nearly always better than "Subvert Troops"; the latter is risky if aborted and to subvert a mobile unit one needs *both* "T" results in a deck of 30 cards, which is a lot less likely than getting two out of five "S" results. If you are trying to get a PDB *Down* by "Sabotage", do it in Urban environs, where locals are more likely to "Raid Enemy Forces" and do the job for you. "Assassination" is always risky, but outside the Urban environ it's downright reckless unless you have a lot of bonus draws. Rebel camps, as one would expect,

are best placed in the wilderness; remember that they are mainly useful in big environs (since they are then harder to suppress and get more event-free draws) not accessible in provinces not on Assignment (to delay enemy attack and give time to execute Mission B in the first place). The Wild environs of 432 and 551 are especially good candidates for camps since they satisfy all these criteria.

Looking further, "Coup" has a higher chance of success than "Diplomacy" but also a higher probability of aborting. The best bet is a Wild environ without enemy forces, since the "abort" is both rarer and non-deadly. And 512 and 551 are Patriotic Wild planets on which coups are usually more worthwhile than "Diplomacy" (whose bonus draws will be reduced by the local zeal for flag-waving). On the other hand, "Diplomacy" is a good bet in Urban, possible in Special, and downright pathetic in the Wild environ (nobody to talk to?). "Gaining Characters" and "Gather Intelligence" are somewhat easier in Urban, while "Gather Possessions" and "Start/Stop Rebellion" are (surprisingly) easier elsewhere.

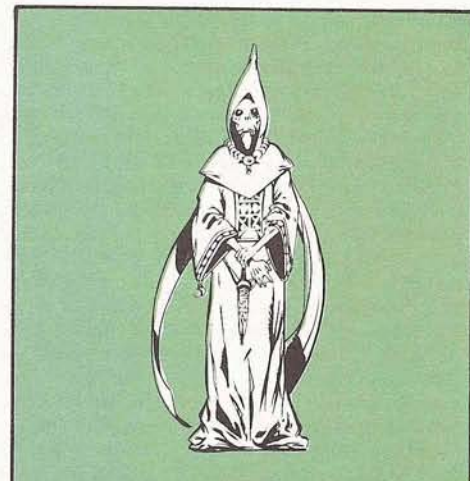
What about the dangers? Urban missions look, on the whole, safer with fewer creatures and no enemy squads at all, but note that searches and irate locals are more frequent. Parties with a good hiding value may be able to be sure of protection from searches. And inspection of the characteristics of the locals in each environ will tell you whether you need worry about them. As a general rule, the Rebel player should not take risks at all; daredevil players should eschew the glamor of rebellion and stick to playing the Empire where they can get away with being foolhardy. Forty turns is a very long time for the Rebels to keep a substantial portion of their characters alive, but they will be needed for that final confrontation with Imperial might. Do your best, and watch your back.

Playing the Dominoes

Our Table 3 shows the planets of the star-faring races. The second column indicates the planets where the Rebels can work undisturbed; the enemy cannot move to them except on Strategic Assignment. Since it is a simple matter to trap Rebel characters on accessible planets (put the PDB Up with a 4-5 in orbit to send detachments, and then land a juicy pair of ground units to flush the rebels out), the early action should be restricted to the inaccessible column.

What does the Rebel player need for a good crash of dominoes? He needs inaccessible planets which can make an impact on the other planets of that race—which means that of the others need to be non-home worlds with initial inclination less than Patriotic. He also wants to avoid Secrets at the start, since they might turn out to be the *Trap*. The first criterion rules out the Kayns (just one inaccessible planet and all of them as patriotic as Geroge III), while the second makes the Saurian and Xanthon races unattractive (all inaccessible home worlds have Secrets). This leaves the Piorads, Rhones, Sequandians and Yesters as possible candidates for early co-ordinated campaigns.

Turning now to the individual systems, one can identify a few which have two of these races and/or two or three planets on the inaccessible list: these



nr. 07

REBEL SUVAN

Vudot Vodot

Combat:	1
Endurance:	2
Intelligence:	4
Leadership:	2
Diplomacy:	4
Navigation:	0

Home Planet: *Akubera*

Receives two bonus draws on Coup mission (C) and Summon Sovereign mission (E).

are especially attractive since the "Domino Effect" within the system will help matters along. These systems are worthy of note to both players: 14, 22, 23, 42, 43 and 52. System 44 is also worthy of remark for two reasons; there is a Galactic Event which will tip both 441 and 442 into Rebellion if they are in Unrest, and 441 is already in Dissent.

So which of these systems should the aspiring Rebel in fact attack? That depends on the Strategic Assignment Rota. Second Province is a strong possibility, but the Empire can build up PDBs and local forces on Galactic Turn 2. Fourth Province is the most promising looking, with no less than three target systems and most of the Piorad concentrated there; the Rebel player might even consider going for the Piorad home world (451) if only to draw forces off from the target systems. In view of this, the Empire may want to consider putting Fourth Province on the rota earlier than in the usual "1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, 5-1" sequence that most players favor. It's generally wise to keep the Assignments in step with taxation to give freedom of action in clearing up the province next on the tax schedule. A plausible middle course is to make the first assignments 1-2 and 3-4.

Later in the game, these calculations change as initial political alignments shift. It is worthwhile for both players to review the alignments of all "inaccessible" planets every few turns in order to see where the next battlegrounds are likely to be.

Strategy in the GALAXY

Imperial strategy hinges on two choices: 1) does one give priority to PDBs or military units? and 2) does one concentrate defense on strongpoints or go for an even spread? The rules limit initial PDB expenditure, giving the impression that the designer believed that heavy PDB investment might be a winning strategy. If so, he was wrong. Overinvestment in PDBs is, indeed, one of the few strategic errors

Table 1: Initial Political Alignment of Planets

	Patriotic	Loyal	Neutral	Dissent	Unrest
Province 1	11	2	1	0	0
Province 2	4	3	1	0	0
Province 3	3	4	2	1	0
Province 4	3	4	1	1	0
Province 5	4	4	2	0	0
Total	25	17	7	2	0

sufficiently serious to risk losing the game for the Imperial player. PDBs on their own are ineffective. One needs a unit with a decent space rating—preferably an Elite Navy unit (But a Veteran isn't a bad alternative)—to shift left on the detection table and trigger the deadly fleet detachments. For example, if the Imperial player spends 17 of his 35 Third Province income on PDBs, he will need to spread a mere 18 points' worth of units across ten planets, allowing him a single Elite Army and nine militia units. With just one or two mobile units, the Rebel player will be able to make an excellent guess at their value and he can avoid them with ease (or go for rebellions and local victories before reinforcements arrive—this is definitely possible in the "Balanced Variant"). Later in the game, the Empire can build more military units, but the Rebel will then have the Scanner and Scrambler to negate the PDB when it really matters. The clinching argument is that one can put PDBs *Up* all over the board every Galactic Turn, so wasting the initial builds on doing so is really unnecessary.

So the Imperial player should concentrate on military strength, with a few decent PDBs in the target systems and a couple of key Secret worlds. The best military builds are probably Veterans, since they are nearly of Elite quality but cost no upkeep. The Imperial player will, however, want some Elite units too, plus a few Patrols to make up the numbers and confuse the enemy. Line units are neither very cheap nor very mobile and should normally go to the back of the queue for purchase. The "glamorous" Atrocity units are a bad early buy. In due course, one *will* want the Stabilizer to knock off the Secret Base or a lone planet in Rebel Control: the "Domino Effect" of rubbing out a planet is not usually as dreadful as you might expect! I have never found the other atrocity units to be useful enough often enough to justify their expense. Suicide Squads are always worthwhile, though. One should sit on the Clone World as soon as there are a few dead Rebels, while the other Suicide troop should stalk from province to province on the trail of the enemy. If enemy characters are captured, a Suicide Squad makes a useful part of the welcoming force for would-be rescuers.

What about the balance of forces? In the standard game, the imbalance to the Empire makes it good policy to play conservatively, keeping forces evenly distributed with leaders in each province. Let the Rebel try to upset the odds by making mad gambles! If one particularly wants to defend a planet (say a two-race world or an important secret), it is best to simply put a good mobile unit in orbit with the PDB *Up* rather than rely on bluffs like leaving the Clone World unguarded; why take chances? Rebellions should always be squashed before they lead to rebel control, usually by shooting down the PDB. Mobile units should *all* start in inaccessible worlds—one can always move to the accessible worlds if necessary.

In the "Balanced Variant", it is harder to be sure of local military superiority and harder to prevent Rebel control, so it may be wiser to leave isolated planets like 551 virtually undefended (one militia, PDB Down) throughout the game, concentrating the Imperial defense on the prime targets. This variant makes Capital worlds much more vulnerable, to the extent that it may be necessary to allow local rebellions to succeed rather than strip the capital of its garrison.

Rebel strategy is also heavily influenced by whether my variant rules are in play. In the standard game, a long Rebel campaign is unlikely to succeed against competent play, so—contrary to the advice in the rules—it may be best to go for quick success. The main chances here are a general uprising in Fourth Province followed by a drive on Second Province (which has several domino links to the Fourth), or an immediate attempt to capture the capital of Third Province before the third Galactic

Table 2: Missions and Events

Mission	Code	Frequency			Notes
		Urban	Special	Wild	
Assassination**	A	2	1	1	A real gamble outside Urban
Rebel Camp	B	3	4	5	
Coup**	C	5	4.5*	4	May be safer in Wild
Diplomacy	D	4	3	2.5*	
Summon Sovereign	E	3	3	3	
Free Prisoners	F	5	6	5	
Gain Characters	G	5	4	4	
Steal Resources	H	3	2.5*	3	
Gather Intelligence	I	4	3	3	
Spaceship Quest	J	(3)	(3)	(3)	Environ Irrelevant
Scavenge Possessions	P	3.5*	4	5	
Question Prisoners	Q	(3)	(3)	(3)	Environ Irrelevant
Rebellion	R	4	5	5	
Sabotage	S	5	5	5	
Subvert Troops**	T	2	2	2	

Event	Frequency			Notes
	Urban	Special	Wild	
Creature	3	4	4	
No Creatures	0	0	1	
Irate Locals	2	1	1	
Enemy Squad	0	1	1	
Detected	1	1	1	
Enemy Search	3	2	2	
Civil War	1	1	1	
Abort Diplomacy	1	1	2	
Difficult Diplomacy	1	1	1	OK if D +2
Abort Mission	1	1	1	
Abort Rebellion	1	1	1	
Abort Coup	3	3	2	Risks death in U/S; capture in W
Abort Subversion	1	1	1	
Atrocity	1	1	1	
Accident	0	1	0	
No Searches	2	3	3	
No Bonus Draws	2	2	2	
Extra Bonus Draw	3	2	2	
Local Raid Enemy	2	1	1	
Population Goes Wild	2	2	2	

Notes:

*One favorable outcome in this environ has been downgraded to a half rating since it is accompanied by the event "Enemy Agent reveals Mission", making it less than likely that the outcome will take place (depending on the number of missions and the proportion of bonus draws to pre-bonus draws).

** Risk to characters if Mission fails.

Turn.

If the Rebel player decides on the long-haul strategy (or if the quickshot approach fails), there are three main objectives:

- 1) getting a planet or two under control, to avoid losing outright when the Secret Base is revealed;
- 2) stopping Imperial income somewhere with a Capital rebellion; and
- 3) building up the Secret Base total.

It is important to note the vital role played in military combat by the two best leaders (Derban for ground battles and Mantok in space) and two possessions, Cervac and the Helian Drug. These possessions will upset the carefully-planned attacks of the enemy, and in the middle game it is vital to have all possessions in play, so that a group on the Casino World can keep redrawing the Drug as fast as Mantok drinks it (with a good pilot to fly it off to Mantok for his next battle).

In the "Balanced Variant", the medium-term objective is a province victory, which with reasonable luck should be feasible by Galactic Turn 4 or 5. After selecting initial targets, the Rebel player should add Mission G and Mission P to his routine Mission D to reach the full mix of characters and possessions as soon as possible. A full-blooded

diplomatic campaign in several environs should then shift the most patriotic of planets.

The Rebel must beware of being caught on the ground by a Mobile unit in orbit supporting an *Up* PDB; sitting without a spaceship is especially dangerous at the end of the second player turn unless the next Assignment is known to be between other provinces. One also needs to bear in mind the Imperial ability to improve PDBs in First Province and the current province on the galactic turn—seeing the stout defenses sprout over the head of one's best men is a depressing experience. It is worth having a "crack team" with the Stellar Courier or S-XIII, Scanner, Scrambler and a good pilot; these will be able to penetrate the strongest planets while the Solar merchant potters around the soft options. Semi-permanent partnerships of complimentary characters should also be formed early on (e.g., Woada and Latac, whose special abilities make them 100% safe from both local and sentry robots and therefore useful in creature-free environs without risk despite their feeble strength).

Given success in the early and middle game, can one hope for a rebel military victory? No—but then, it's not necessary. Line up the total force pools and it becomes clear that the full Imperial Space Navy (which should be deployed by Turn 12 or so) cannot possibly be defeated in battle. However, a large Rebel army can neutralize the

Table 3: Racial Survey

Race	Home Planet	Inaccessible Planets	Accessible Planets
Kayns	111	551	121, 212*
Piorads	451(L)	141(N), 232(L), 432(L), 433(N), 442(L)*	None
Rhones	None	142(L), 231, 342, 421(L), 523	112, 151, 161, 162, 241, 311, 323, 411, 542
Saurians	321(L)	143*, 221(L)*, 331(N)*	121, 151, 152, 163, 352(L)*
Segundians	122(L)	131*, 232(L), 421(L), 521(L)*	None
Suvans	351(L)	341*, 342	113*, 241
Xanthons	513(L)	143*, 522(L)*, 531(L)*	None
Yesters	211(L)	222(N)*, 223, 231	112, 312(D)*

Italicized entries indicate that the planet has two races.

*—Planet has a secret.

All planets are Patriotic except where indicated as L(oyal), N(eutral), or D(issent).

enemy forces, who are the linch-pin of the Imperial hold on the galaxy. Meanwhile, diplomatic teams get on with subverting the high-scoring Capital and Racial home worlds. The main point of the rebel Base is to produce the eight 4-4s, which will go a long way to accomplishing this neutralization. Accordingly, once the Rebel has 64 points in the bag, it is time to start thinking about revealing the base, assuming he has control of two planets (one is not enough—remember the Stabilizer!). Note that putting IPOC in revolt to reveal the enemy forces is useful but not essential—the main enemy concentrations are usually known once general battle commences anyway.

Overall, as has been said, the rebels are facing a steep uphill struggle in the standard game. But, frankly, I unequivocally recommend this fine game (even without my "Balanced Variant"). You may indeed lose, but you'll have an awfully good time doing so.

Planetary Privateer



Cannons/Shields:	3/2
Maneuver:	3
Max Passengers:	6

Owned by **Bocanegra**.

Rules for the BALANCED VARIANT

The following rules, in my opinion, lead to a better balanced game:

7.22 (amendment): Once inspected, mobile units are left face up.

15.52 (amendment): The state of the PDB is irrelevant to the conversion of Rebellion to Rebel Control; if there are only legal Rebel military units on the planet at the end of an Imperial Player-Turn, that planet becomes Rebel controlled.

23.2 (amendment): A planet *may* be placed into or out of rebellion as a result of the "Domino Effect" of starting or stopping a rebellion.

35.31 (amendment): Imperial units may *never* cross province boundaries in violation of a current Assignment, even if the target planet is in rebellion. This restriction no longer applies once the Secret Base is revealed. Note that units *within* the province may still be moved to planets in rebellion from the local capital.

38.53 (amendment): The Imperial player *cannot* win merely by eliminating all Rebel Control after the Secret base has been revealed.

The main effect of these rules is to make local Rebel victories easier and to eliminate the danger of a quick knockout if a captured Rebel character reveals the secret Base location under torture early in the game. It should not be supposed that winning with the Rebels is now a lesser task, but the Empire is forced to give much more thought to the division of his troops between the different provinces. The Rebel player may well be able to now establish a "liberated area" in an outlying province to disrupt tax revenues and provide a base for further campaigns.

RETAIL OUTLETS

Daily the offices of Avalon Hill receive requests from gamers for the location of the nearest retail outlet in their locale. Unfortunately, the Avalon Hill Game Company deals through wholesale distributors exclusively; no comprehensive listing of retail stores which offer our fine line is maintained. Until now we have met such requests with the suggestion that the gamer check the yellow pages for the better hobby and bookstores of his region, many of which carry Avalon Hill titles. However, the editors have managed to compile a *partial* listing of retail outlets offering the best of adult games. Look for Avalon Hill games at the following fine stores:

Alaska—Anchorage: Spenard Hobby Shop

Alberta—Calgary: Ahead of the Game, Catch The Wind, Chess & Games Galore, Den For Men, Sentry Box, Shopette Ltd., T.D. Imports, W.H. Smith Ltd.; Edmonton: Den For Men, Kites & Other Delights, Shopette Ltd.; Lethbridge: Model World; St. Albert: Den For Men

Arizona—Flagstaff: Toy Chalet; Little Rock: House of Hobbies; Phoenix: Happiness House; The Hobby Bench; Tempe: Flying Buffalo Games; Tucson: Things for Thinkers

British Columbia—Richmond: Den For Men; Surrey: Den For Men

California—Arcadia: Macabob Toys; Burlingame: Games & Glass; Campbell: D&J Hobby & Crafts; Chico: Toy Depot; Corte Madera: Toy World; Costa Mesa: Toys International; Eureka: Bill Beasley's; Hollywood: Valley Plaza Hobbies; La Habra: Toys International; Larkspur: Games & Things; Los Angeles: Hollywood Toys Inc.; Toys International; Merced: Hobby Castle; Monterey: Toys, Etc.; Mountain View: Norney's; Palo Alto: Games & Things, Norney's; Pasadena: Macabob Toys; Pleasant Hill: Light Brigade Hobbies; Rohnert Park: Toy & Model Inc.; Sacramento: The Toy Shop; Salinas: Koch's Toys Galore; San Francisco: G.E.T. Toys & Hobbies; San Marino: Macabob Toys; San Mateo: Games & Things; Talbot's Toyland; Santa Ana: Gamesmanship; Santa Cruz: Game-Allot; Santa Rosa: Toy & Model Inc.; Sunnyvale: Norney's; Ukiah: Toy & Model Inc.; Walnut Creek: Centurion Military Hobbies

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Hawaii—Ala Moana: JC Penney, Sears Roebuck & Company; Hilo: Seredipity Book Shop; Honolulu: The Hobby Company; Kailua: Wellers Hobbycraft; Kaneohe: Sears Roebuck & Company; Kauai: High As A Kite; Kona: High As A Kite; Oahu: Wellers Hobbycraft; Pearl Harbor: Navy Exchange Pearl Harbor; Pearlridge: Chairman of the Board, Daiei Third Floor, Sears Roebuck & Company

Idaho—Boise: Ralphs Toys & Hobbies; Lewiston: Book & Game Company; Nampa: Ralphs Toys & Hobbies

Montana—Butte: Hia's Toys; Helena: King's Toys & Hobbies; Kalispell: Wheatons Cycle & Toy Shop; Missoula: Treasure Chest

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Oregon—Astoria: Len's Hobby Center; Beaverton: Tammies Hobbies, Terrys Toys; Clackamas: Endgames; Corvallis: DJ's Hobbies, McGregors; Eugene: Eugene Toy & Hobby; Gresham: House of Fantasy; Klamath Falls: Als Toys House, Young Town; Lincoln City: Hobby N' Craft Corner; Medford: Name of the Game, The Toy House; North Bend: Young Town; Oregon City: Danielson Super Center; Portland: Endgames, Daleen's Toyland, Military Corner, Our Toys, Toy Chest, Aero Sports; Salem: ABC Toy & Hobby, Toys Etc.; Tillamook: McGregors; Yachats: The Three Swans

Utah—Bountiful: Hammond Tots & Toys; Holladay: Hammond Hobby; Midvale: Hammond Tots & Toys; Salt Lake City: Hammond Tots & Toys; Sugarhouse: Hammond Tots & Toys; West Valley City: Hammond Tots & Toys

Washington—Bellevue: Bartell Drug Company, Fred Meyers, Lake Hills Toys & Gifts, Newport Hills Drug, Pay N Save, The Triple Alliance, Thompson Drug; Bellingham: Grahams Hobby Hive; Bothell: Ostrom Drug; Bremerton: Payless Drug; Edmonds: Edmonds Pharmacy; Everett: Everett Hobbycraft; Federal Way: Hobby Headquarters; Ilwaco: Ben Franklin, Thinker Toys; Kenmore: Ostrom Drugs; Kirkland: Fred Meyers, Pay N Save; Lynnwood: Fred Meyers, Hobbyland; Mercer Island: Pay N Save; Oak Harbor: Oak Harbor Hobbies, Teds Toy Shop; Redmond: Hobbyland, Pay N Save; Renton: Pay N Save; Seattle: Campus Hobby, Fred Meyers, Hobby House, JC Penny, Pay N Save, Sabtec Corporation, University Book Store; Spokane: Book & Game Company, Merlyn's; Tacoma: B&I Fantasy World, Payless Drug, Stadium Toy & Craft; Union Gap: Clover Leaf; Vancouver: Toy Chest; Woodinville: Pay N Save

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Excerpts from The GALACTIC GUIDE

Compiled by Rex A. Martin

The peoples of the Galaxy are bewildering in their diversity, and the characters of FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY often equally so to the players of this grand space opera. For those not familiar with the game, there follows a number of jottings from the "Galactic Guide" (which is devoted to the history, folk and objects of our imaginative Empire).

Star-Faring Races

The eight important races in the galaxy are those that have developed the technology to travel through interplanetary and interstellar space, enabling them to settle worlds other than that on which they evolved. The following entries, describing the general characteristics of each race and providing the players with a list of the planets occupied by each race, are especially useful when implementing the Domino Effect on a planet occupied by one of these races. In each list, the race's home planet appears first, followed by the other planets that the race has colonized.

Kayns. Home Planet: *Mimulus (111); Kalgar (121), Etreg (212), and Niconi (551).*

The Kayns are a humanoid race with dog-like facial features. Steeped in tradition, a Kayn will remain totally loyal to whomever or whatever he has been brought up to serve. Their society is very military in structure and has provided the Empire with many of its best soldiers. Not all Kayns have been raised under the wing of the Empire, however, and many become free-lance mercenaries or bodyguards for any person or cause that inspires their devotion.

Piorads. Home Planet: *Ayod (451); Ownex (141), Lysenda (232), Solvia (432), Cercis (433), and Tartio (442).*

Organized in a hierarchy of tribe, the Piorads have two seemingly opposing racial traits; they originated and still live for the most part in huge, artificial, underground halls, and large segments of the population roam the spaceways, raiding cargo transports and wandering from opportunity to opportunity. They are a wealthy race, loathe to share their riches with other races, yielding just enough to the Empire to avoid retaliation. Piorad star-wanderers are among the galaxy's best spacecraft handlers and fighters.

Rhones. No Home Planet; *Margro (112), Adare (142), Jura (151), Diomas (152), Liomax (161), Orlog (162), Pronox (231), Orning (241), Chim (311), Tsipa (323), Akubera (342), Troliso (411), Lonica (421), Adrax (523), and Trov (542).*

The race from which the founders of the Empire hailed, the Rhones are still the ruling race in the galaxy and the most numerous by far (it was not always thus). With records of mass colonization dating back far before the founding of the current Imperial system, the Rhones' place of origin is not known; although many suggest that they came from a distant corner of the galaxy or another one altogether, long before the Interstellar Concordance was formed.

Saurians. Home Planet: *Unarpha (321); Kalgar (121), Mitrith (143), Jura (151), Icid (163), Quibron (221), Squamot (331), and Kelta (352).*

A reptilian race with humanoid bodies, the Saurians adapt easily to most planet conditions. Before the Empire increased the oppressive nature of its rule, the Saurians governed themselves with a strong parliamentary system that kept good order among their many colonized planets. Strong,

stealthy, and intelligent, a Saurian soldier is a welcome addition to any army.

Segundens. Home Planet: *Bajukai (122); Tiglyf (131), Lysenda (232), Lonica (421), and Aras (521).*

The Segundens are a dark-skinned humanoid race possessing great intelligence. Never very interested in quick expansion and conquests, the Segundens have limited their influence to a few planets which they have developed to a technological level far beyond that of most other planets in the galaxy. Although they pay all necessary tributes to the Empire, they have great personal integrity and pride, having made the decision to meet the Empire's demands only after extensive calculations showed that, although they could defeat the Empire in open war, the cost in resources and lives would be even greater than that of peaceful submission.

Suvans. Home Planet: *Mrane (351); Fliad (113), Orning (241), Midest (341), and Akubera (342).*

The Suvans are an amphibious race that thrive in mineral-rich water. They have developed sophisticated techniques for extracting everything imaginable from their life-giving liquid, and, when not wandering through the oceans of the planets they inhabit, they live on wide pavilions constructed just beneath the water's surface. Somewhat adaptable to breathing outside of their natural habitat, many Suvans live in dry cities and towns near the water's edge, although they are much weaker physically out of water.

Xanths. Home Planet: *Xan (513); Mitrith (143), Capilax (522), and Scythia (531).*

The latest addition to the interstellar community are the Xanths, a race possessing incredible strength and viciousness in hot environments. In temperate areas, Xanths are weak and docile; in cold areas, they cannot survive. Technologically behind the other star-faring races, the Xanths have little of worth to surrender to the Empire and thus are little involved in galactic politics.

Yesters. Home Planet: *Cieson (211); Magro (112), Angoff (222), Charkhan (223), Pronox (231), and Tamset (312).*

This bird-like race thrives in the clouds and wind currents of any hydrogen-rich atmosphere. With their high intuitive intelligence and curious nature, they learned the secrets of spaceflight long ago from other races and have colonized the skies of many planets in their beautiful stellar-sail spacecraft.

Sovereigns

Ascaill, a Rhone dictator, exerts tyrannical control over the inhabitants of the industrial megalopolis on the planet Pronox. Backed by powerful Imperial support, with which he squeezes profitable production rates out of his Rhone subjects, Ascaill provides the Empire with numerous weapons and communication devices.

Balgar dove into politics on the planet Mrane at a young age and came up a winner, pushing a program of scientific development that saved the Suvaas' home world from natural disaster. His department prevented the freezing of much of the planet's habitable water when their sun, Luine, cooled unexpectedly and—luckily—only temporarily. Leading a fleet of Mrane's militia, Balgar directed the artificial heating of critical hydro-areas on the planet and re-ignited the requisite combustion rate on Luine.

Treb Eyro is a charismatic politician, decorated extensively for his services as an Imperial star





soldier. After returning to his home planet, Eteg, he quickly captured the loyalty of the Ultracks, a highly advanced race living in the labyrinthine cities there. Commissioner Eyro handles the Ultracks' major industry, synthetic drugs; and controls all traffic, legal and illegal, of these substances. He receives considerable financial reward from the Emperor when the traffic flows toward Orlog.

Xela Grebb is the beloved king of the Calmas, a toad-like race that dwells in the dank, underground caverns of the planet Suti. He, and the Calmas in general, stay out of Imperial politics, content to pay occasional tribute in exchange for subterranean land rights. King Xfela's son, however, *Drakir Grebb*, is not so easily appeased, and has run off to join a roving band of Rebels; an action that his father disapproves of strongly, more out of concern for the prince's safety than out of political beliefs.

Odel Hobar, an Imperial loyalist of long standing, is the king of the Leonids, a feline-like race with a strong military society in the jungles of the planet Heliax. The pride of King Odel's army have taken part in the Empire's greatest campaigns, but his son, *Odene Hobar*, who looked to be developing into a fine starsoldier, could not take any more of the Empire's methods of conquest. When his father was unmoved by his pleas for the Rebel cause, Odene fled Heliax in disgust.

Inzenzia III is the head of a theocratic council that governs the deeply ritualistic Jopers on the planet Barak. Inzenzia and his followers secretly oppose the Empire, who at first discouraged, and now openly ban, many Joperian religious customs.

Nam Nhuk once commanded the most feared fleet of Piorad raiders in the galaxy. Finally hunted down and destroyed by the Empire at great expense, Nam Nhuk retreated with a few survivors to the subterranean cities of Ownex, where, under a new guise, he wrested control of the planet from a corrupt Piorad-Imperial puppet and returned the rulership to the resident Piorads. So grateful were the newly freed citizens that they declared Nam Nhuk their leader; an arrangement of the Empire reluctantly agreed to in exchange for a promise from the now-revealed leader that he would never again raid the spaceways.

Tensok Phi singlehandedly founded the newest Segunden colony on Aras when he was but a young explorer and oversaw its development into a prosperous, urbanized society within his lifetime, a feat of technology that holds him forever dear to his fellow colonists. Unconcerned with interstellar affairs, Phi has not openly opposed the Empire, with which he carries on healthy trade, nor has he discredited the Rebels.

Darb Selesh, the warrior king of the Cavalkus, is nonetheless a populist, constantly touring his planet of Anell on gilded wing. The Selesh line has ruled the Cavalkus since the dawn of their recorded history, differentiated from their airborne subjects by the sheen of their golden feathers. Although sympathetic to the rumored plight of those on other planets, the king and his people are much more concerned with battling the local races of semi-intelligent creatures.

Megda Sheels, Queen of Charkhan, rules its native race with an iron wall. A strikingly beautiful regent, the amorous legends of her court make up the favorite tales of the Egrix System. For a brief while in her youth, she had but one partner, a Charkhanese noble named *Saytar*. He could not contain her wandering affection, however. Heartbroken, he joined the Imperial military service as a junior officer.

Shirofune, the Grand Prince of the planet Tamset, leads the native race of Kirts. An excellent warrior, Shirofune achieved his local prominence through his prowess in ceremonial combat. Appalled



at the Empire's lack of decorum in matters of warfare, Shirofune and his followers will eagerly embrace any honest opposition to the barbaric methods of the Emperor.

Yaldor was recently named by the Theshians on the planet Rhexia as their leader, despite Imperial disapproval. A highly sophisticated and advanced society, the Theshians have provided the Empire with many of its most skilled technicians and scientists. However, the Theshian work force has been reduced to a trickle recently, as their trained professionals (including *Yarro Latac*) have declined, in increasing numbers, to accept assignments at Imperial research and development centers. Yaldor is attempting to lead the Theshians to a totally self-sustained state, within the Imperial sphere of influence.

Characters

Barca. Like all Kayns, Barca has a fierce loyalty for his friends and little mercy toward his enemies. For 40 years, Barca has been the Grand Marshal of the Imperial Army, both on planet and in space. His remarkable military prowess and ability to handle tactical and strategic combat situations is at the disposal of the Empire, as Barca's loyalties remain fixed to the Imperial throne and whoever sits upon it.

Emperor Coreguya. Coreguya was chosen to be the next Emperor by Maxtross II, who is believed in turn to have been influenced by Redjac, who wanted a weak Emperor on the Imperial throne. If so, Redjac could not have made a better choice. Despite the immense power wielded by one who sits on the throne at Orlog, Coreguya has remained content to indulge in the luxuries of the Imperial Palace while allowing all decisions to fall on Redjac's shoulders.

Senator Dermond. The Imperial Senate would be little more than a joke were it not for Dermond, the only Imperial politician to have any influence on the Emperor at all. Dermond is the only person in the Imperial government who listens to the voices of the peoples of the galaxy, and is very popular in consequence. But although he does not care for the current Imperial policies, he is in favor of slow change and is as anti-Rebel as any hardened Imperial commander.

Thysa Kymbo. Daughter of the current Emperor Coreguya, the princess has spent most of her adult life waiting for her father to die, so that she may ascend to the throne. Because she has spent most of her life pampered in the Imperial Court, she is unaware that Redjac may have other plans for the throne that do not involve succession. The princess became the bitter enemy of Zina Adora when she learned that Rayner Derban was more attracted to Zina than to herself.

Redjac. By making charges that the former Most Senior of the Imperial Knights was guilty of treason, Redjac became the Leader of the Imperial Knights. From the time of his youth on the planet Magro, and his rise through the Imperial ranks on Diomas, Redjac's life has been one of ambition, plotting and taking. It is believed by many that Redjac's next conquest will be the Imperial throne itself.

Saytar. As a sub-commander of the Imperial armed forces, Saytar holds a rank just under Barca's in importance. Dedicated to the causes of battle and the Imperium (in that order) with a fervor beyond that which is normal for even a man in such a position, many believe Saytar will soon receive total control of the military, if he does not have it *de facto* already. Others feel his blind ambition will be his downfall.



A PLAY-BY-MAIL SYSTEM FOR STARSHIP TROOPERS

By Doug Lientz

The intricate sets of rules that have inundated the game market have, in many cases, rendered play-by-mail competition virtually impossible. While such has been the case with STARSHIP TROOPERS, a few innovations in technique make it possible to remedy this situation. And this can but be happy news to the aficionados of the book, and the game, of future tactical warfare. Mr. Lientz introduces his innovations below.

STARSHIP TROOPERS is a superb game, requiring careful planning as well as the flexibility to react to a rapid shift in the situation on the board. It is truly unfortunate that, all too often, one cannot find others who equally enjoy, and have the skill to play well, the give-and-take of this fast-paced game. Like so many of the games on my shelves, I cannot play STARSHIP TROOPERS by mail—nor savor the challenge such long-distance play brings. So, I sat down to overcome this lamentable state of affairs.

The continuous interaction required of the players is the major obstacle to a workable play-by-mail system. Demolition attacks during one's opponent's turn, use of inverted counters by the alien forces, and Terran searching for—and moving in—the Arachnid tunnel complexes demand the active participation of both players. It would prove difficult to accomplish these interchanges without an interminable series of letters. However, two original techniques and use of standard play-by-mail methods can surmount this problem. The new methods institute a system of "action by doctrine" and an overlay format to resolve attacks during the movement phase. Use of an exchange of sealed envelopes committing players to the secret portion of their move completes the system. This method was described in "Play-By-Mail The Hard Way" (Vol. 12, No. 4) for handling indirect fire in PANZER LEADER.

Action by doctrine requires each player to decide in advance what steps will be taken to cope with specified contingencies. It will be used for cases where the player taking the action lacks sufficient information for a final decision at the time of writing out his move and/or where an advance commitment is essential to preclude undue selectivity. The first, for example, arises when the Terran player moves without knowing which units will be blown up by hidden enemy demolition charges and would therefore be unable to participate in planned attacks. The second is also exemplified by the demolition attacks during this hypothetical movement phase; several units may pass over the same demolition charge—unless the Arachnid player has been forced to make a decision in advance, he receives an excessive opportunity to select his victim. Requiring the players to state the policy under which their units will act in such cases corrects these difficulties; and, placing the advance decision in a sealed envelope prevents undue forewarning of the other player.

This technique is quite in keeping with the spirit of the novel on which the game is based. In the book, considerable stress was laid on the Mobile Infantry training to take the initiative based on doctrine rather than yell for instructions and sit around waiting for orders. Be warned; the assortment of oddities engendered by this adds a distinctive flavor to the play. A more forethoughtful style of play is necessitated to cover the unexpected, while the distracting emphasis on exact factor

distribution is rendered impractical. Yet, the limits of the Mobile Infantry communication system are accurately simulated.

The overlay system is intended to reduce the tedium otherwise associated with checking the movement of the many Terran units hex by hex to determine which ones stepped on demolition charges. Working out the move of every unit from a written list could easily take hours, and such a detailed clerical chore is very boring. If not eliminated, playing the game by mail is tedious, if not totally impractical. The ranged weapon rules in STARSHIP TROOPERS hold the stacking of units by the Terran player to a minimum, however, just as area fire techniques keep infantry spread out on contemporary battlefields. It is therefore practical to plot the tracks of movement on a sheet from the Alien Control Pad. It is also relatively simple for the alien player to trace the locations of his demolition charges on one of the clear plastic composition covers which are readily available these days. When the map sheet containing the Terran move is placed under the resulting overlay, a rapid inspection by the Alien player can determine which units have entered a targeted hex.

The use of sealed envelopes for secret commitments is handled in a fairly straightforward manner. As each player prepares his move, he keeps two sets of notes. One contains the information which his opponent will be permitted to read; the other is a listing of the various commitments which he may be required to make but is permitted to keep secret from his opponent until called for. This second list is sealed in an envelope upon completion of the move and forwarded to his opponent. The opponent marks the envelope for identification and returns it. Upon conclusion of the game, the accumulated envelopes are again sent to the opponent to be opened and inspected. This provides a check on the honesty of all involved.

Implementation of this system requires a fairly high degree of care on the part of the players, but this is true in the play-by-mail competition of much less complex games. Observations are included in the text which follows on those factors where care is essential to avoid ambiguity and confusion.

Prior to the beginning of the game, the Terran player is required to allocate his assorted special weapons and equipment to various units and set the time and intended landing location for all infantry initial drops and Retrieval Boat landings. A copy of this information would be sent to his opponent in a sealed envelope with the first mailing once sides are selected. This commitment is handled in the same manner as in face-to-face play.

The initial drop procedure can be rapidly completed using a map sheet and an arbitrary assignment of stocks to the landing units. The Terran player plots the intended drop hex for each unit on a sheet from the control pad. He sends this, with a single stock selection and closing transactions date, to his opponent. The other player uses the named stock to determine the direction of the drop. For the scattering of each individual unit, the first nine stocks beginning with the letters "A" through "F" are used. The first seven stocks in each group are applied to the marauders in the squad of that letter; the eighth is used for the scout and the ninth for the leader dropping with that squad. This method saves the time required to make up a list of fifty-four stocks for one player and the necessity of hunting for those specific stocks in the pages of the local newspaper for the other. When the Alien player has completed the "scatter procedure", he checks to see which units have landed on demo charges.

During his Special Functions Phase, the Terran player loads and unloads his air cars, conducts engineer demolition emplacement, swaps equipment between units and conducts searches using the listening devices and special talent units. The air car actions, the fact of demolition emplacement and the searches are noted on the open move sheet. The type of demolition used and the equipment swaps are noted for the sealed envelope.

The searches for tunnels are best announced at the end of the move before they occur. This permits the Arachnid player to send the results with his move, saving considerable time. In the case of the listening devices, however, this procedure may give an undue advantage to the Arachnid player. Therefore, the Terran player is allowed to send an extra mailing for his searches the first time a specific listening device is used. This may be done again if a subsequent possible swap and separation of units has rendered the location of the device uncertain. The Terran player may also elect to inquire on the turn the search takes place and allow the Arachnid player to reply with his next move as a means to save time.

Illustration 1: When the overlay on which the locations of the Arachnid demolition charges have been recorded is matched with the map sheet on which the tracks of Terran movement are plotted, the result is as appears below. From it, one rapidly sees that A1 passes over a demo charge on hex AA16, A2 passes over one in CC15 and the one at AA16 and yet a third in X15, A3 and A4 cross the one in BB17, and the platoon leader passes over charges in Z13 and again in AA16. If these units moved in the order here listed, and if the Arachnid doctrine calls for attacking the first Terran unit to cross a charge: A1 would be stopped in AA16, A2 in CC15, A3 in BB17 and the platoon leader in Z13. A4 would come through unharmed because A3 set off the charge before he moved; the charges in Y19 and X15 remain unexploded.



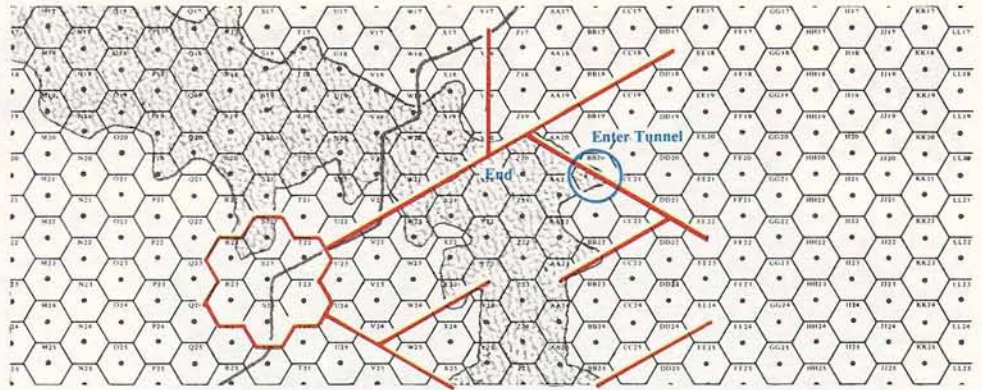
In cases where the Arachnid player attacks a unit making a search, he should put the result of each possibly interrupted search in a *separate*, marked sealed envelope. The Terran player returns the envelopes for any prevented searches and opens those for which the search was successfully carried out. Of course, the movement restrictions on units making searches still apply.

Terran movement (as noted above) is plotted on a sheet from the Alien Control Pad. This should begin with a notation of the unit's identification in the hex where it commences the turn. From this, a line is drawn hex by hex to the place it stops for the combat phases. In this hex, the line should continue to the final hex of movement for that turn, terminating with an arrowhead pointing at the repeated identification of the unit. Unit identification should be in the form "A3", "PL", "PS", "ASLI", "CEng", "Esct", "#AC" or "ST". Various colors could be used to plot the paths of units whose tracks intersect to avoid confusion.

The Arachnid player has constructed an overlay to match against the Terran plot map using a transparent plastic composition cover. The map sheet on which his tunnel complex is plotted is placed inside the cover with the left edge aligned with the left edge of the cover and the top butted into the fold. The locations of any demolition charges which may be exploded during the Terran Movement Phases are traced on the plastic using either a grease pencil or felt-tipped pen. While the quality of the control pads printed by Avalon Hill make it unnecessary, it is prudent to trace two separate terrain features from the control pad itself onto the clear overlay to use in assuring proper registration of the Terran map sheet. The sheet containing the Terran movements is put in the place of the one with the Arachnid complex each turn. From this, it is simple to determine which units passed over demolition charges.

The only additional information the Terran player must send is a listing of the order in which his units are to move, the name of a single stock and a closing transaction date. To resolve the move, the Arachnid player lists the Terran units passing over demolition charges. He then numbers them in the order in which they have moved on the basis of the list provided and ascertains the order in which units moving over more than one charge passed over them. Starting with the first unit to both move and pass over a demo charge, he applies his pre-stated attack doctrine to determine if an attack occurs, and resolves the attack using the stock and date provided. If the resulting attack causes damage calling for a die roll to determine extent, the stock directly below the one listed is used. The Arachnid player continues checking through the list and resolving such attacks, using stocks in sequence in the published listing, until all attacks are resolved.

The requirement for the Arachnid player to have a pre-stated attack doctrine is necessitated by the unjustified advantage he otherwise accrues of being able to select the most valuable unit passing over a demo charge on a given turn. For example, if first a scout with no special weapons goes over a charge followed by a leader with some of everything, the ability to wait for the leader is a distinct advantage. To prevent this, the Arachnid player is forced to state in advance which charges he will use during the movement phase and what units he would consider acceptable targets. This information is sent to the Terran player a turn in advance and may be changed as the game progresses. The only restriction on its formulation is that it must unambiguously determine whether a given unit passing over a demo charge will trigger an attack. While there are limits to the advantages complexity can bring, the player may make the doctrine as complex as he wishes so long as the intent is clear. (Illustration 1 incorporates the above points in an example of a single Terran Movement Phase.)



The Terran Attack Phase is complicated by the events of the Movement Phase. While many units may have been sent to attack a given hex, a lesser number may arrive due to demo charges. In addition, the alien units in hex may be inverted, making it impossible to allocate the exact attacks to be made in advance. To cope with this situation, the Terran player must formulate a doctrine for determining how the available factors will be assigned to the available targets. It is best phrased in terms of priorities. For example, such a doctrine could call for attacking heavy weapons with up to 3-1 odds, followed by warriors at up to 3-1 odds. One distinction to make clear is whether all units of a type are to be hit by equal odds or whether some are to be hit by heavier fire before the attacks on the next unit start. When several units of one type are in the same hex, attacks shall be in priority by the order the Arachnid player has listed them on his move. The Terran player should list one stock per unit in the target hex. If one attack hits two or more units when the attack doctrine is applied, the stock for the units having first priority should be used. Care should be taken to make the doctrine clear and definitive, as the Arachnid player is the one who will have to apply it. There are no other restrictions on the Terran player's options.

Normal movement in the Extended Jump Phase has already been covered. The handling of the Retrieval Boat landing has been passed over, however. On the appropriate turn, the Terran player need only list the intended landing hex and two stocks. The alien resolution of this action should present no undue problems.

Tunnel movement for the Terran player is another facet of the game for which "action by doctrine" would be required. When the Terran player enters a tunnel, he must list the priority of choice for the direction of tunnel movement. Provision must also be made for decision when inter-sections are encountered. If the Terran player has obtained some knowledge of the tunnel system, he might frame his doctrine in terms of going one direction for a given distance, then turning in another. The sole requirement is that the doctrine lead to a clear course of action. In cases where it does not, movement should be presumed to stop while the units involved dither. (Illustration 2 shows how such a policy would be applied by the Arachnid player.)

Before leaving the Terran player's turn, it should be noted that the demolition charge procedure lends itself to a quite natural expansion of the rules to "delayed-action" charges. The Terran, when placing them, could easily note the locations in the sealed envelope rather than on the open move sheet. Resolution of any resulting attacks would be handled in the same manner as the Arachnid demolition charges are handled. Such a variation would add interest to the game, and put a crimp in the standard Arachnid tactic of "pop up, shoot and scoot". This addition should be regarded as an optional rule, however, to be implemented only by mutual consent.

Illustration 2: Terran units enter the tunnel through the breach at BB20. At this point, the movement doctrine set by the Terran player is applied by the Arachnid player to the choices available to determine the actual direction of movement. Assume the doctrine establishes a precedence of directions 5-6-4-3-1-2 (based on the scatter diagram printed on the mapboard). The tunnel runs in directions 3 and 6 from the breach, so the Terran units move in direction 6. In hex Z19, the tunnel they are following meets another; their choice is now between directions 2, 3 and 5. If there is no different doctrine stated to apply to such a contingency, the units would then turn in direction 5. The Terran player may have specified a different set of priorities, however, if his knowledge of the tunnel system made it seem advisable.

The Alien player's move presents less obstacles to play-by-mail implementation than does the Terran move; a brief review of it is necessary, however, in the interests of comprehensiveness.

In the Special Functions Phase, breaches and movement to and from the surface should be noted. Where units would be inverted, only the number of counters should be given on the open sheet, while the exact unit identifications should be placed in the sealed envelope. Tunnel construction and repair, together with movement of engineer units should also be indicated in the sealed envelope. Any explosion of demolition charges during this phase can be simply handled, with stocks listed for each unit attacked, as in other pbm games. Ranged weapon combat is also relatively straightforward.

In the Movement Phase, noting the exact path of movement would be necessary if the hidden "delayed-action" charge variation described above were used. The limited movement factor of Arachnid warriors makes the tunnel movement doctrine required of the Terran player unnecessary, unless road movement is used. In such cases, the Arachnid player should state a doctrine for movement as a precaution. If the variation is not used, the Arachnid player should send a stock each time he is foolish enough to move a unit onto a marked mine. For Remote Control charges, the Terran should prepare an attack doctrine as the Arachnid did.

The Humanoid units present no new problems for our play-by-mail methods. The system described above can be easily applied to their activities. It would be simple to allow them to conceal units stationed in strong points completely, however, and they need every break they can get. This should be treated as an optional rule by the players.

This system makes it possible to play *STARSHIP TROOPERS* by mail without undue paperwork or loss of the detailed texture of the game. The use of "action by doctrine" method pushes the decisions for some types of actions back to the preparation stage and introduces chances of unusual events, but this is logically in keeping with the idea that the player is a unit commander. He must establish his tactics in advance of the action and cope with the occurrences on the battlefield thus engendered.

I have skimmed somewhat in my detailing of the various doctrines players could establish for certain actions. To go into greater detail on this would require even more print with slim chance of being definitive, while a less complete discussion would omit too much.





THE LORDS OF SAESTOR

Praise of a Simple Game

By A. Haythornthwaite



Being a self-confessed addict of the sophisticated simulations such as *THIRD REICH* and *SQUAD LEADER*, I understand the reader's immediate reaction to this topic quite well. However, there are times (as I am sure there are for you) when my mind simply is not capable of recalling the close assault procedure or how many units the Axis can supply in Libya and I do not wish to thumb through a rulebook every five minutes. Then I reach for my copy of *AMOEBEA WARS*, an anodyne to my aching brain. If my young son or wife wish to take part, there is no equal choice in the AH line; on many a rainy afternoon, the favorite activity for my family is a quick game or two of this favorite. Though simple enough to be grasped by a child, it has that rare and excellent mix of play balance and strategic options that make a challenging competition between adults. Any veteran gamer should relish its simplicity or rules and wide range of strategies.

The First Decision

The counters represent five classes of starships, space amoebas and superdreadnoughts; these are uniformly attractive and functional, all information necessary being found on each piece. Printed on each spaceship counter are two important facts—the ship's value and the ship's fighting strength in battles with enemy ships and the dreaded *Doomsday Machine*. The four section mapboard depicts a section of a galaxy, with each hex covering one of some 43 solar systems. Outermost are the six home systems from which the Space Lords begin their campaign to capture the center system—*Saestor*. The artwork is pleasant, and the color-coding of similar sized systems makes combat easy to resolve. The player aid cards supply quick reference to the Power Cards and resolution of the various types of combat.

By dice throw, the order of selection of home systems is decided—and the first critical decision faces the player. To evaluate the initial positions, it is helpful to consider each home system as a defensible "wedge", delivering twelve production points. Notice, however, that some of these production groups have more planets than others. All have four or five planet systems at the outermost corner; but some wedges have four or five planet inner systems while others have only three or four planet systems. Thus, the actual totals are not the same (note the illustration depicting distribution of planets in the possible wedges); these run from a high value of "27" to a low value of "24". The most desirable system wedges have only three and four planet systems in the inner rank and a one or two planet system adjacent to the home system. Understandably, it is also wise to be as far away from the other Lords as possible in order to avoid ship to ship clashes and concentrate on building strength and expansion. More on these wedges later.

In the early expansion to establish a viable production base in your wedge, the presence of the amoebas may be either a handicap or an advantage—depending on your ability and immediate goals. A die is rolled and each amoeba in a system with a number of planets equal to the number rolled will attack all adjacent systems not already containing amoeba. Four amoeba attacks at the beginning of the game assure a steady supply of amoebas throughout the next few turns—interfering with all players. Amoebas in planetless systems do not attack (note the location of the planetless systems in the illustration). In general, it makes fine sense to

remove amoebas whenever the opportunity presents itself. However, there may well be instances where they provide a buffer between you and other Lords, or between a rival Space Lord and Saestor. At these moments, they may be your only allies in this game.

The Power Cards

A successful Space Lord must learn the skillful use of power cards in order to gain the upper hand. The tenets of good card play affect the flow of the game greatly—making each play of *AMOEBEA WARS* unique. The cards have a double function, deciding the order of play in each game turn and causing different actions—from amoeba attacks to reinforcements. The high card player may play all cards on the table in order and then continue with the rest of his turn. He then discards his own card. The next highest player then plays all remaining cards, makes his move and discards his own. And so forth. By playing a low card while holding a high card, it is possible for a player to run two turns in a row. This can allow a lightning campaign to seize the necessary inner systems, followed by reinforcement with the considerable production capacity just secured to face the inevitable counterattack by the other Lords. It is conceivable that one could storm Saestor in this method, winning the game before your antagonists can intervene.

And it pays to hold a high card to frustrate this attempt by another Space Lord. Cutting his lines of communication so that he cannot reinforce his newest gains is certainly the cheapest and easiest means to buy time and allow for the other Lords to

gather their strength and halt his further progress. (As is noted later, the laser cards are excellent for disposing of his lone scouts in key communication hexes.) Adjacent garrisons of communication hexes are an important consolidation move by any competent commander.

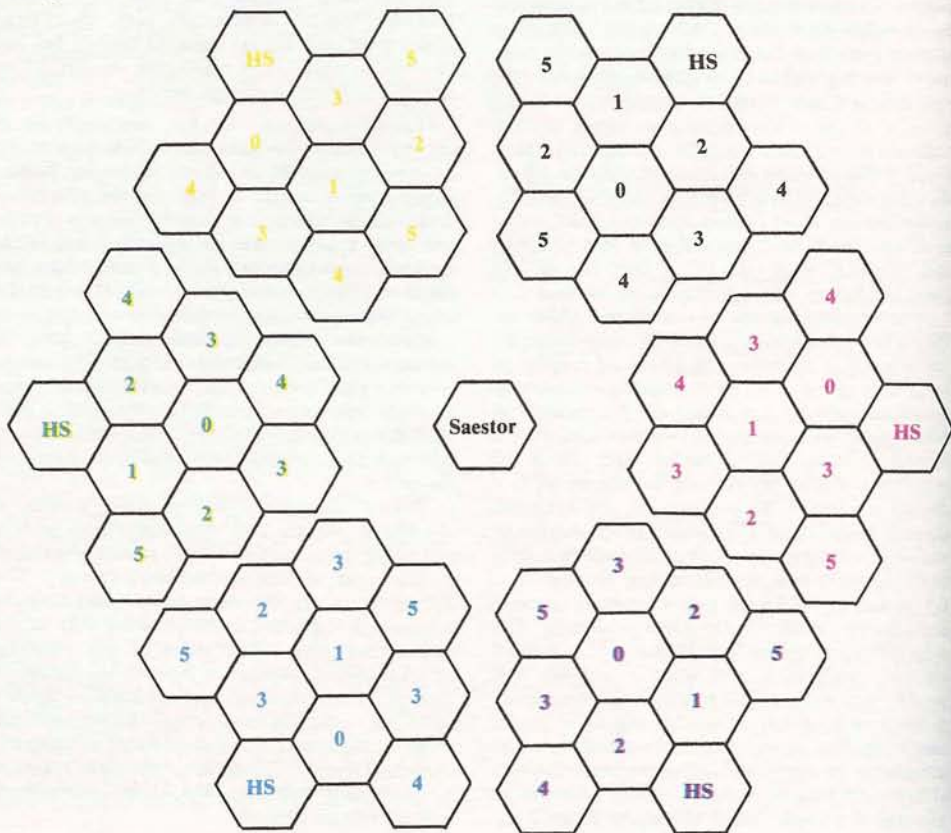
There follows a review of these 45 cards, each critical and unique. Optimum play of these cards is the heart of strategy in *AMOEBEA WARS*. Every card can be a dangerous double-edged sword that can cut both ways—particularly if an opponent should play a higher numbered card and turn yours against you in his turn. It is a very good idea to keep a count of those cards which have been played (mentally, of course). The cards then:

#44 "Next Power Play, All Power Cards Must be Revealed Simultaneously PLUS Production Strike, You Lose All of Your Production Points for This Turn." One would have to be desperate indeed to go first to play this card, as well as having next to no production capacity in the upcoming turn. Under most circumstances, it is best to simply hold onto this card and refrain from implementing it. (This is a "Must Use" card once it has been played down—as are all cards numbered 38 through 44.)

#43 "Double Amoeba Attack." This card is useful if one wishes to go first and gain use of all lower cards; however, it is hazardous since it can so easily backfire on you, resulting in amoebas eating up your own forces and taking over the systems you've struggled to hold.

#42 "Berserk Doomsday Machine." Again, this may allow you to move first and is a fine play if you do not currently occupy any inner systems; other-

Figure 1 The Natural Wedge. The figures in each hex indicate distribution of planets. Note that the outer rows of these wedges overlap.



wise you are taking the same risk of damage that the other players face from the Doomsday.

#41-#38 “Amoeba Attack.” This is the play that could lead to *big* trouble all over the board, especially if more than one player has played such a card—resulting in multiple amoeba attacks, and usually their proliferation into everyone’s territory. Several turns may be spent recovering from such an outbreak.

#37-#35 “Provoke an Amoeba.” These are excellent for disrupting your opponent without risk of combat. But keep in mind that, if he plays a higher card, stand by for a little pre-emptive disruption yourself. Remember that the rest of the cards from #37 down need not be employed by any player if he chooses not to, even though they have been placed face down.

#34-#31 “Activate Doomsday Machine.” Playing these will allow you to guide the machine into your rivals’ inner systems. But if someone else lays down a higher card, he can negate the threat or even turn the Doomsday against your systems. These nasties move only by the instruction of the cards. They cannot coexist with space ships and, so, if moved into the same solar system with one or more will fight to the death.

#30-#28 “Successful Ambush by an Amoeba.” It is best to use this card to disrupt an opponent’s lines of communication, thus preventing forward reinforcement. To best protect yourself from this card, it is wise to have at least two ships in each hex.

#27-#26 “Zap an Amoeba (Outer System).” Playing this card generally makes everyone happy and is your momentary friend.

#25-#22 “Laser Beam Attack (+2 to Die Roll).” As with the amoeba ambush, these are used to disrupt communications and destroy production capacity where one enemy ship is on a lone patrol. Sometimes it is wise to pass this one once down to avoid unnecessary antagonism. Too, it can easily be turned back on you.

#21-#18 “Hyperjump 7 (6-5-4) Points Worth of Space Ships.” These are all excellent to launch your fleets into a new system for extra production capacity in the upcoming turn or for raiding enemy communication lines.

#17-#13 “Acquire One Cruiser.” These are safe cards to play when there is no pressure to go first. It is generally wise to play any “acquire a ship” when a “jammer” card has been placed down.

#12-#9 “Acquire One Dreadnought.” As above.

#8-#6 “Acquire Two Cruisers.” As above.

#5-#3 “Acquire Two Dreadnoughts.” As above. If able to be implemented, this is an appreciable increase in your forces.

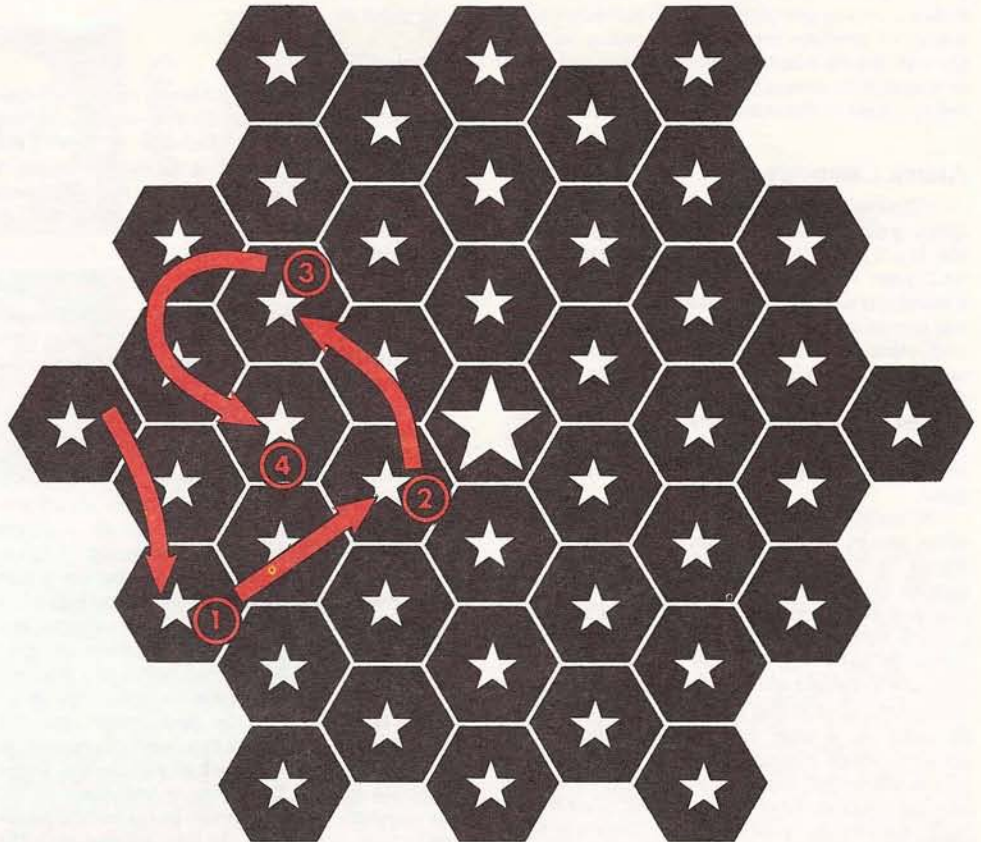
#2 “Each Space Lord Uses Only the Card He Played *PLUS* Acquire One Battle Star and One Dreadnought or Acquire Two Dreadnoughts.” Speaks for itself.

#1 “Each Space Lord Uses Only the Card He Played *PLUS* Acquire Two Battle Stars.”

#0 “Each Space Lord Uses Only the Card He Played *PLUS* Acquire One Monitor Which May Be Placed in ANY Friendly Solar System.” This card, as with the above two, provides powerful reinforcements if you don’t mind going last. Collectively, these three cards are the “jammer” cards, allowing standard play by all.

There are eight special Power Cards which are optional for an even more free-wheeling game. Drawn at the beginning of the game and on display for all to take into account, these convey certain advantages to the bearer. By using these special cards judiciously, a clever player can make a strong power play or perhaps rescue himself from an untenable position.

Figure 2 Initial moves for one player in sequence.



“Amoebas Eat Only One of Your Ships in Battle.” Any time your forces are to lose ships to a space amoeba, only one ship falls instead of the normal two. The advantage is obvious—you need only maintain two ships in any system in order to survive a single amoeba attack.

“You May Use Up to 6 Ships to Attack Space Amoebas and Empty Solar Systems.” Normally five ships are the maximum which can attack amoebas and empty systems. This card improves the odds when trying to expand since it increases your modifier to +6.

“You May Hyperjump Any Three of Your Ships Free Each Turn.” An extremely powerful card for play on the mapboard, it can be combined with any other hyperjump card in your power play. Otherwise it must be used as the first play of your turn. This allows you to spring ahead to secure more production capacity or to stage lightning raids on your enemy’s rear systems cutting off supplies.

“You May Place Your Power Card Down at Any Time.” The player may choose to skip his turn to play a Power Card; instead he may reveal it at any time that he wishes—in most cases after all other cards have been seen. If, as a result of #44, all players are required to reveal their cards, yours must also be shown; this is the only case in which this special power is negated.

“Send Ships Lost in Battle Against You or Your Power Play to Time Warp.” All enemy ships which are removed in combat against you are not returned to the owning players. It will now cost an opponent the ship’s value plus an additional production point for him to return it to play from limbo. Worse, a ship cannot be produced until all of the same class have been removed from the Time Warp. Other players will tend to keep out of the path of the Space Lord with this power, since it means that ships must be retrieved at high cost. This can be crippling in a long campaign.

“You May Place Reinforcements in Any Friendly Solar Systems.” Normally, new ships must be placed in the home system. Now, you are freed from this restriction, allowing you to be less concerned with lines of communication and your rear areas. Too, since you will always be able to place new ships whether you control a home system or not, you can only be eliminated from the game only if *all* your space ships are cleared from the board.

“You Have Special Monitors Which Can Move and Attack Just Like Other Types of Space Ships.” Your monitors, normally immobile, can now move and attack—the most powerful piece on the mapboard. Any number of your monitors may occupy the same solar system. Shades of the “Death Star”. The die rolling edge this gives you can decimate an unsuspecting and unprepared neighbor if you engineer a double turn.

Production

The Space Lord tallies his current production points from the systems he controls and buys the ships of his choice (to the limit of his budget, usually). Early in the game, when conquering systems and coping with many amoebas, the player will find it wise to take mostly scout ships; this provides the maximum number of ships to engage in battle with and the minimum costs to bear as losses. However, later he will find himself engaged with other Space Lords, and therefore larger ships desirable for combat with them. But, when the final assault on Saestor is launched, you will find that scouts will be useful in order to best withstand a bad run of poor die rolls before the victorious final move.

A trap looms for the spendthrift in this game. Take, for example, the monitors. Once an inner system is taken, as soon as feasible, a suitably placed monitor can guarantee that you will not lose your extra Power Card (awarded to those who hold an inner system). The considerable expense of the monitors prohibits their deployment in many

systems. It would be unwise to tie up your entire production allowance in what are in reality only immobile, orbiting gun platforms. All purchases are a matter of carefully considered planning; as with any war, it is inadvisable to allow some of your fleet to languish as unsuitable for current aims, while you are short of the most useful ship classes.

Attack Campaign

Initial expansion must be largely aimed at increasing your production base as quickly as possible. It is a good policy to stop before you over extend your forces. Otherwise, a player will find himself spread over many systems and left with only one ship to occupy each, making him vulnerable to both other players and the amoebas. It is not impossible for a player in such straits to be virtually eliminated from the game in a single turn. Obviously, it is best to expand aggressively, but carefully, sparing some attention to consolidating systems in thrall in order to keep production high throughout the game.

A sensible first move might be to take one of the other nearby two production point systems (see Figure 2). Obviously, the system with the least number of planets is the easiest to gain. A cardinal rule is to avoid combat with other Lords unless absolutely necessary. The Lords that dissipate their forces in early fighting will inevitably lose. A second move might well take your forces into an inner system, thus giving you an extra Power Card. However, it is wise to consider eliminating all amoebas which currently threaten your planets—they could destroy in one turn all you have worked to accumulate in the succeeding turns. Once driven back, amoebas have difficulty multiplying in your space.

The "wedge" mentioned earlier should be the initial objective. This would give the player a twelve-point base. However, neighboring Space Lords may wish to interfere, desiring to build on the same wedge side as you. Try negotiations or strike out in another direction. Indeed, cooperation has many benefits—at least early in the game. If amoebas are becoming overly plentiful and aggressive, some players may agree to pursue the eradication of protoplasm for a turn or two, as well as putting a voluntary prohibition on amoeba attack cards. If you have already cleared your own sector, however, you are not likely to support this plan since amoebas in someone else's base are your silent allies. Therefore, take great pleasure in playing the double amoeba attack card and watching your rival(s) lose ships and systems.

Your free move is limited to a single redeployment of an unlimited number of ships from a single system to another. It may not be split in any manner. It is advisable to use the free move to concentrate forces in a system for future use—guarding against possible attack or dispersing forces more evenly to maintain communication between the home system and the leading edge of conquest. You may even telegraph your intentions (or mislead the opposition) by massing for an offensive move next turn. The best redeployment varies with every situation—though when in doubt, consolidate. If reinforcements cannot reach a given system in the production turn it is of little use as a forward base.

To sum up, one must concentrate forces in one system during the attack campaign for a sustained campaign. Take the path of least resistance (least planets or least enemy ships) as well as allowing for maximum accumulation of production points. Avoid early and unnecessary combat with other Lords. Work towards consolidating a wedge before trying for the center (you need the solid production base to sustain your efforts). When on the march, remember to leave behind adequate reinforcements as you have only one free redeployment to stabilize your lines of communication each turn. If threatened

by amoebas, three ships are necessary; otherwise, two will suffice. Never over extend yourself, or all your gains go for naught.

Variant Rules

In playing the game, I have devised and introduced a few additional rules and sequences which improve the pace and challenge of *AMOEBEA WARS* without complicating the elegant system. I offer them here. They are: *Production Planning*, *Industrial Development*, and *Command Lag*.

Production Planning

Future production must now be planned one turn in advance. This is to more accurately simulate the lag time between ordering new ships and their completion in the yards (or wherever space ships are built). At the end of each turn the player must write down the types of ships he wishes to have built and the number of each. He bases his order on the production points available to him at that time. In his next turn he must take the ships as written in the order they appear on the list, up to the actual production capacity. Of course, the production base may have shrunk due to combat losses. (For example—a player may have eight production points at the end of his turn. Based on this he makes his decision and orders four scouts and two cruisers. On his next turn he has lost one system to an opponent and therefore has only six points left. He must then take the items which appear first on his list up to six points namely the four scouts and one cruiser.) After each turn a new order can be devised and you need not refer back to past orders. Large ships can now be built over several turns in the home system. A record should be kept of the points spent; upon completion the ship is deployed in the normal manner. Ships that are half-complete (due to loss of production points) are also considered to be under construction in the home system. (For example—a player has written a production order for two battlestars expecting eight points but loses

two points in the interim. He will then take one battlestar and record the other with two points spent against its completion in the home system. He can designate two more points necessary for its completion in a later turn.) If the home system is lost in combat all ships under construction are considered destroyed.

The only exception to the production planning is production capacity which is seized by hyperjump just prior to new construction. This can be immediately utilized in the present turn as war spoils without advance planning. It is obviously most wise to mark down your ship order carefully, placing the most important ships first in the event of losses which reduce your capacity. Do not get carried away constructing large ships in the home system; the ships you have on the board are still the most important ingredient for rapid expansion and victory. Do not bankrupt your treasury with grandiose schemes for a navy of giant ships.

Industrial Development

This aspect allows for the diversion of production points to the increasing of overall production capacity of friendly planetary systems up to the limit of the number of planets in a system. For any turn, two production points can be expended in order to increase the production of your system by one point in the following turns. However, if control of any of these systems is lost the excess capacity is also lost to all players. The player must realize that deferring points does mean less ships on the board in the short term to defend this new industrial might. Probably the home system is the only place where such expenditure is justified.

Command Lag

This third variant represents the problems of communications over vast interstellar distances. Command instructions cannot reach your forces more than two systems from home system. Beyond this, written commands must be carried by specially designated ships from two systems out to the for-

Continued on Page 26, Column 1

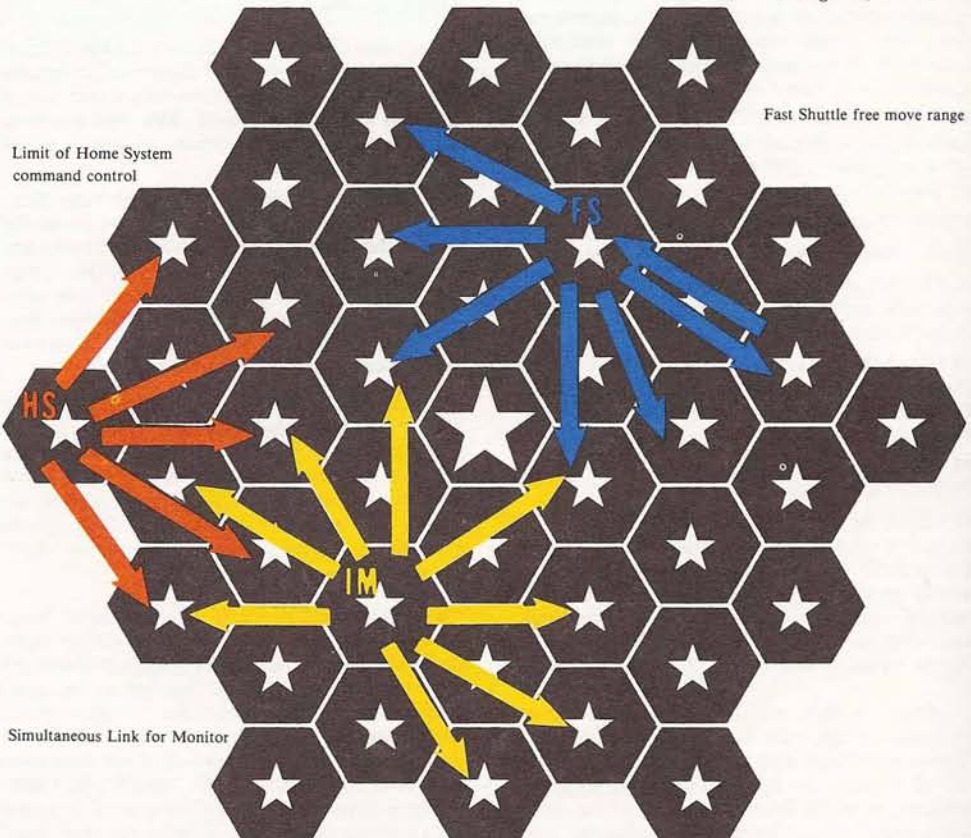


Figure 3 Illustration of use of fast scouts and imperial monitor for command. Two shuttling fast scouts allow continuous command at the front line. Each turn one moves up with orders as the other returns for new orders for the next turn. This also shows an excellent location for an imperial monitor—safe from attack, yet able to direct attacks from all the hexes indicated.

ARRAKIS BY AIRMAIL



PBM DUNE

By Tom Swider

Today's postal hobby has been greatly enriched by neutral moderators (or "GameMasters"), which allow for the play of the proliferation of multiplayer games. Notable postal games with a GameMaster (GM for short) are found now for *DIPLOMACY*, *KINGMAKER*, *WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN*, *CONQUISTADOR*. Roy Henricks, publisher of the well-respected amateur zine *Envoy* is currently running pbm games of *RAIL BARON* and *MAGIC REALM*, which serves to prove that anything is possible in the postal hobby. But, there seems to be little available to fans of SF. [Hopefully, this issue will set that aright.] Indeed, considering the trend toward sf/fantasy titles and the seeming popularity of *DUNE*, it is surprising that it has not been absorbed by the postal hobby. With this in mind, I offer rules for moderated postal play which maintain much of the game's distinct flavor.

Pre-game Activities

Upon start of a game of postal *DUNE*, a neutral party must be chosen (or volunteer) to act as GameMaster. He will present final starting positions and faction assignments (taking the players' preference lists into account), the board position, adjudicate all players' orders, maintain the Spice and Treachery decks and record or disseminate any private information (for example, the cards held by each player, movement of storms, Bene Gesserit prediction, etc.). The GM will also act as final arbitrator for all arguments and rules interpretations.

Players submit the following when starting the game: 1) a preference list (a listing of all factions in the order the player would prefer to play them), 2) initial placement positions for the Fremmen and Bene Gesserit tokens (in case he is assigned either of these to play), 3) a prediction for the Bene Gesserit (in case called upon to take that role). After the GM has received all this information, he will issue the faction assignments along with the names and addresses of all players. Each should receive the following information:

- 1) Four leaders to choose among as traitors;
- 2) Starting locations for Bene Gesserit and Fremmen tokens;
- 3) Storm location;
- 4) Spice locations;
- 5) Treachery cards dealt to the individual.

In addition, the Fremmen player is secretly informed of the Turn 2 storm movement and the Atreides player is secretly informed of the types of Treachery

cards up for bid (but not necessarily in the correct order) and the location of the Turn 2 spice blow.

With his first set of orders, each player must inform the GM which of the leaders he drew will be in his play. If any player should fail to do so, the GM will select one randomly amongst those leaders not in his faction and inform him of the fact.

The GM will also assign a deadline date by which time all players must have their orders for Turn 1 on file with the GM; failure to do so results in loss of a turn (all units of the offender remaining in place)—there are special rules for failure to submit a battleplan in the section on combat below. Between the time the players receive the notice from the GM and the deadline, they are free to negotiate with their fellows.

Orders

When movement orders are due, the players should send the GM the following information:

- 1) Treachery card bids;
- 2) Revival, shipping and movement orders; and
- 3) the play of non-combat Treachery cards.

Further, the Bene Gesserit player should specify where he is hostile and where willing to land advisors should the opportunity arise.

When combat orders are due, each involved player should submit a battleplan for each combat, and indicate whether he will call "treachery" should the opportunity arise.

Feedback from the GM

After receiving movement orders from the players, the GM should send out a report to the players, including the following:

- 1) Storm round results;
- 2) Spice blow results;
- 3) Bid round results;
- 4) Movement round results;
- 5) Combats to be resolved and order of battle resolution;
- 6) A listing of where the BG are hostile this turn; and
- 7) Next turn's storm round and spice blow.

Should by accident members of the same alliance attempt moves which would result in joint occupation of a territory, the fraction moving in with the greatest number of tokens occupies it while the other player(s) are left back at the point immediately prior to entering the province. (For example: The Atreides and Guild players are allied.

Atreides orders nine tokens to ship down to Carthag and moves these same tokens to the Imperial Basin. The Guild meanwhile moves ten tokens in the Polar Sink to the Imperial Basin. The GM would report that there are ten Guild tokens in the Imperial Basin and nine Atreides tokens in Carthag. If the Atreides attempted to ship troops directly to the Imperial Basin or if Carthag is occupied by Guild forces, the Atreides tokens would remain in reserve.) Should there be a tie for the greatest number of tokens, the faction with the greatest amount of spice moves in; if a tie still exists, the position goes to the faction with the strongest remaining leader. (Remaining ties are broken by a random number).

So that the players and GM may make themselves as clear as possible on mapboard positions, the map's sectors are labeled with a number. Starting with the "Start Storm" sector and proceeding in the direction of the storm, label the sectors "1" through "18". Unless otherwise instructed, the GM will assume that any tokens moved are placed in the sector currently furthest from the storm.

X. Battles

If there are any combats, the GM will notify the players involved of the deadline by which battleplans are due. Players should list the number dialed, amount of spice payed, leader(s) and any attack/defense card(s). Players with "Karama" or "Truthtrace" cards and/or special combat advantages must inform the GM of the actions or questions to be made, and how these will affect their battleplans. A player may automatically use any character advantages he enjoys, along with any gained through an alliance.

If there is more than one battle to be resolved, the GM will determine the order in which battles are to be fought by random number. This will resolve any difficulties arising from one player being involved in more than one combat in a turn.

For PBM *DUNE*, the aggressor is termed as the player who occupied the battle site first. Tokens present at the beginning of the turn are given first priority, and are always considered the aggressor if involved in combat. (Note that if the BG player comes out of a state of co-existence, the other player is the aggressor if the BG occupied the territory with that power and was previously in co-existence.) Tokens which were shipped to the battle site have second priority, followed by tokens which moved there by planetary movement. Ties in the lowest priority are resolved in favor of the faction

moving the least number of spaces to arrive there. (All other ties are resolved by random number.)

If there are more than two opposing sides occupying a territory, combat must be continued until there is only one faction left, as per the normal rules. All occupants of the contested territory must submit combat orders; the aggressor must also state which player he wishes to fight first. The remaining players submit battleplans in case he is chosen to fight first. The GM will appoint appropriate deadlines for each battle to be fought.

If the Guild chooses to move before everybody else, he is automatically the aggressor. On the other hand, if he chooses to move after all other players, then all other factions are the aggressor when facing his tokens in combat.

Players must state if they will *not* call treachery into play if a leader in their play appears in the battle. The GM will assume they will unless otherwise instructed and take all appropriate measures.

Missing a battle turn: should a player fail to submit a battleplan by the declared deadline, he is assumed to have dialed a number equal to his token value minus one-half, zero spice, sent in his weakest leader (or a cheap hero/heroine if available) and utilized no treachery cards.

XII. Alliances

Players may automatically utilize any advantages gained from their ally (Exception: in a BG/Guild alliance, BG troops ship at half rates, and the Guild troops may "voice" their opponents). In the case of using the Harkonnen's power, "treachery" will always be called when a Harkonnen ally meets one of the Harkonnen's traitors in battle.

It is strongly suggested that alliances not be allowed to win. It is this player's opinion that alliance wins in *DUNE* are against the spirit of the game, although they can be formed temporarily to aid positions or stop another faction. This restriction will also bring the Guild and Fremmen endgame advantages into play more often.

Should there be no combats to be resolved, play proceeds to the next turn's movement. If there are combats to be resolved, the GM must set a short-term deadline by which time players must submit battleplans. After receiving these, he gives another report to all players, including all the following:

- 1) Combat results;
- 2) Collection round results;
- 3) A listing of all player's current spice holdings;
- 4) The number of cards up for bid next bid round;
- 5) A listing of final board positions; and
- 6) Any secret information due the Atreides and/or Fremmen players.

Should there be no combats, the information listed above (except item 1) should be included along with his movement report to players.

Modifications for Postal Play

It is axiomatic that play by mail will require some slight adjustments to the game rules. These have been kept to a minimum. The following are the comprehensive rules changes; unless otherwise noted, all rules remain in force.

VII. Spice Blow

When a worm appears, any alliances must be declared by the next movement deadline. Players may submit only one alliance choice; if players of a proposed alliance list identical alliance choices, the alliance is considered formally formed. (Example: Emperor proposes a E/BG alliance; Bene Gesserit propose a BG/E alliance. The GM would then notify the players that such an alliance does in fact exist. However, if the Emperor had proposed a

E/BG/H coalition, no alliance would have been formed since the Bene Gesserit did not list the Harkonnen. Too, since the Harkonnen player did not bother to submit any alliance proposal, the diplomacy of the Emperor would fail.)

When worms appear, if the Fremmen are able to take an action as a result, the Fremmen player must inform the GM of such actions in his next set of movement orders.

VIII. Bidding Round

Bidding is done simultaneously. Players may make their bids conditional upon the results of prior bids, but must try to be as clear as possible as to their intent. The GM is not responsible for problems caused due to a set of ambiguous orders. Players may specify that they will attempt to outbid a specific faction(s), where upon he will pay one more spice than the highest bid. Should two or more players attempt to outbid each other, the player with the most spice pays the amount necessary to outbid everyone else trying to outbid him (ties broken by a random number). Each card goes to the highest bidder; ties are passed to the faction with the most spice in hand (further ties are resolved by random number).

Players normally bid on a card by its numeric rank. For example, the Guild bids four Spice for the first through third cards, two Spice for the fourth and fifth cards, and attempts to outbid all other players for the sixth card. The Atreides player must bid by referring to a specific card (for example: "Bid 5 Spice on the Lasegun, and 2 Spice on each poison weapon"). The Atreides player may bestow his special bidding advantage to other players (see above for alliances) in his faction.

Bids which are illegal at their time of execution are automatically cancelled. This occurs whenever a player does not have sufficient spice to meet his bid, or has a full hand.

Note: If a player has acquired Family Atomics or Weather Control, and intends to play it, he must notify the GM a turn ahead in order to warn him of possible adjustments. For the next two turns, the GM will set a deadline for the player to notify him of whether the option will be exercised. Normally this will be the same day in which battleplans are due. The player may make play of the card conditional upon combat results, if he so desires. Otherwise, this due date should be approximately nine days after the postmark on the GM adjudication of combat. If not exercised, the player loses the option to utilize the card until the GM is again informed of its potential.

Note: Karama cards are played normally during movement or combat. The player may make the play of the Karama card conditional upon the actions of other players. (For example: The Guild player states, "I will play my Karama if, and only if, the Emperor attempts to ship to Tuek's Sietch.")

IX. Movement

Movement is considered simultaneous, in the normal order listed in the rules: revival, shipment and on planet movement.

Should movement result in the violation of Rule IX.C.2.f (occupation of Strongholds), units arriving by shipment take priority over forces arriving overland. If this method does not resolve the violation, the largest force (numerically) has priority over smaller forces (ties are resolved by random number).

XIII. Bribery

When players would like to make a spice deal, all involved parties must sign a contract (an index card is recommended) with the terms of the deal written on the card. The GM will make this deal known to the public, and has the right to adjust a player's orders by aborting certain moves if they

would break the terms of the spice deal. In the case where the player agrees to make a certain move, the GM may write or place a collect call to the player concerned to receive a change in orders to rectify the problem. If this proves impossible, the GM will change orders to meet the terms of the deal. A spice deal should be closely monitored to insure that players follow through on the deal. In the rare cases where the GM can't do anything to rectify orders which break a spice deal, nothing happens; however, the player who did follow through with the deal and has an opponent who was not able to meet his end of the bargain may either declare the deal null and void, or force the player to meet the terms of the deal as soon as possible.

Advanced and Optional Rules

The following rules may be used in PBM *DUNE* with little change: Additional Character Advantages, Additional Karama Powers, Weather, Increased Spice Flow, Spice Blow, and Advanced Combat. The GM should be able to implement these without trouble by applying the precepts displayed above.

Special Character Powers

Atreides: The player must make his battleplan conditional upon the results of prescience. He may bestow his bidding advantage upon other players as he chooses. This allows them to bid on cards by name as opposed to numeric rank. Other players should submit orders conditional upon whether the Atreides allows them, at his whim, to bid in this manner or not. To do so, the Atreides player must inform his "ally" what the card is for bid. There are two possible outcomes. The Atreides player may indeed allow him to bid on the card as is, or attempt to "trick" him. (As an example: The Atreides informs player B that he can bid on the LASEGUN. The Atreides player then instructs the GM, "I allow player B to bid on the LASEGUN". However, if he wishes to betray player B, he informs the GM that "I am telling player B that BALISET is LASEGUN." Player B could state, however, that he will bid normally or in the Atreides manner, if allowed. If player B made a bid on a card which Atreides wasn't allowing him to bid on, the bid is simply ignored.)

Bene Gesserit: The player must specify exactly where he is hostile during the upcoming turn. Other players should list alternative card plays in case of "voicing" actions, if they exist.

Emperor, Fremmen: these players must denote their special tokens with an "*" when submitting orders.

Guild: The player may, instead of moving simultaneously, move either before or after everybody else. If moved first, his forces always arrive at their destination first and will always be considered the aggressor. Should he choose to move last, all of his orders may be made conditional upon the moves of any or all other players, but any enemies faced will automatically gain the aggressor status.

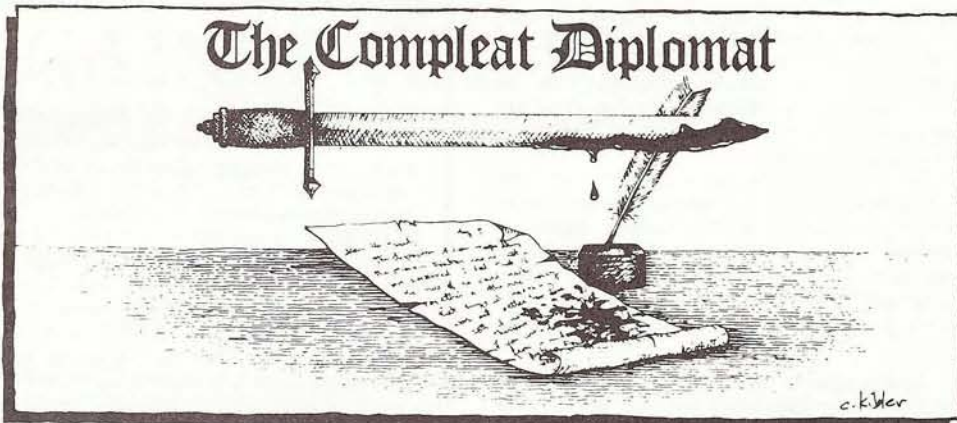
Harkonnen: When submitting the battleplan, he must give a list from the opposing faction's leaders of which ones he wishes to hold should they be captured, and which ones will be killed for the two Spice bounty. If this is overlooked, the GM will assume that all leaders captured are intended for execution for the bounty.

Miscellaneous

When it comes to playing cards and selecting battleplans, players should make their orders conditional upon possible results. Players are warned to make their orders crystal clear; should any doubt arise in the mind of the GM as to intentions, his rulings are final. It is suggested that no action occurs in cases of ambiguous orders.

The GM has final ruling on all rule interpretations and the manner in which the game is conducted. Should a player wish to make a complaint, he should notify the GM of the problem. But . . . the GM is final arbitrator (although he may reconsider the problem to protect his integrity and the interests of all players).

Any questions about this pbm system will gladly be answered by the author, provided a SASE is enclosed. Available also, with a SASE, are materials to moderate PBM *DUNE*; these aid in keeping track of players' cards, order of cards in deck, traitors, copy of the map, and guidelines on adjudicating special cases. Send all comments or questions to: Tom Swider, 1183 Robinson Hill Road, Endwell, NY 13760.



DIPLOMACY . . . With a Difference

By Rod Walker

CONVENTION CALENDAR

THE GENERAL will list any gaming convention in this space free of charge on a space available basis provided that we are notified at least four months in advance of the convention date. Each listing must include the name, date, site, and contact address of the convention. Additional information of interest to Avalon Hill gamers such as tournaments or events utilizing AH games is solicited and will be printed if made available.

Avalon Hill does not necessarily attend or endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that events using AH games will be held. Readers are urged to contact the listed sources for further information before making plans to attend.

JANUARY 13-14-15

CRUSADER CON III, Denver, Colorado
Contact: Stephen Stein, Auraria Gamers Club, Metropolitan State College, 1006 11th Street, BOX #39, Denver, CO 80204.

NOTE: Tournament events will include *DIPLOMACY*, *KINGMAKER*, *SQUAD LEADER* and *CIVILIZATION* among other Avalon Hill titles.

JANUARY 14-15

CHIWAUKEE CAMPAIGN '84, Kenosha, Wisconsin
Contact: Thomas A. Beach, 1465A Sheridan Road #2, Kenosha, WI 53140.

NOTE: Tournaments include *WS&M*, *SQUAD LEADER*, *GLADIATOR*, *STORM OVER ARNHEM* and *STARSHIP TROOPERS* among many others.

JANUARY 15

PANDEMONIUM OF WINTER GAMES, Toronto, Ontario
Contact: Walter Hnatiw, P.O. Box 67, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M2Y 2L4. (416) 924-1989.

NOTE: Tournaments include *WIZARD'S QUEST*, *SQUAD LEADER*, *PANZER LEADER*, *PANZERBLITZ*, *DIPLOMACY* and *TITAN*.

MARCH 3-4

GOLD-CON II, Pompano Beach, Florida
Contact: John Dunn, Library, Broward Community College North, 1000 Coconut Creek Blvd., Pompano Beach, FL 33066. (305) 428-8832.

MARCH 16-18

TRI-CON II, Raleigh, North Carolina
Contact: James Moyland, North Carolina State Gaming Society, P.O. Box 37122, Raleigh, NC 27627.

MARCH 17-18

CENTCON 84, New Britain, Connecticut
Contact: Ronald Vincent, 471 Commonwealth Avenue, New Britain, CT 06053. (203) 225-0763.

Now, I know that there are a few of you readers out there who do not *Believe*. Still, you cling to the notion that *DIPLOMACY* is not *THE GAME*. I know you're out there . . . I've seen you with your duodecahedral dice, your six foot by eight foot boards, your hand-painted panzers, your callipers, sextants, micromanipulators, metric conversion tables, astrological forecasts, portable computers, and satchels full of little cardboard squares. I've seen you out in the gaming rooms at 6 AM, trying to get one of your games set up so that it will be ready to play at 3 PM. I've seen you arguing over the Volume III, Section 152, Paragraph 86, Subsection x(12)(m)(VII) exception to the rules. And I've seen you at auctions, trying to unload games which everybody was playing last year and nobody is playing this year.

"Sure," people will say, "*Diplomacy* is simple, easy to learn, easy to set up, and likely to remain popular after twenty-five years. But look at this neat game of *Tyrannosauruxs Rex!* It has EIGHT different scenarios! Wow, eight . . . twelve . . . twenty . . . fifty scenarios! It's not the same game every time." Well, that is an advantage, I'll admit; and everybody knows that *DIPLOMACY* has only one, right?

DIPLOMACY has, in fact, over 700 known scenarios, and the number is rising every year. These scenarios are called "variants", and they are all designed by fans of the game on an amateur basis. But don't let that tag "amateur" fool you, gentle readers . . . some of these people also design games professionally and many others are highly respected for their variant savvy within the hobby.

There are *DIPLOMACY* variants for almost every taste, interest, and number of players (from two to, theoretically, an infinite number). There are many variants which use the same playing board and pieces; these simply alter the rules, a little or a lot. Such games include economic factors, or new types of units (air power, for instance, or submarines), or perhaps only something as simple as negotiating initial placement of units before the game starts. Some variants make some changes in the mapboard (for which I recommend that the players could use a plastic overlay and grease pencil). A good party variant is one in which the board itself changes randomly in various ways during the game (again, the plastic overlay).

Many other variants exist with totally new playing mapboards (usually with many new rules to go with them). Whatever the reader is interested in, there is probably a variant that caters to it. There are numerous variants which add part or all of the rest of the world—the most popular of these being the "Youngstown" variant which adds China, India and Japan to the Great Powers and makes the

mapboard a cylinder. Subvariants of the "Youngstown" also add Africa; and one, YV XII, even adds the New World. There are many, many other global variants.

If the reader doesn't care for the period of 1901 . . . what then? Well . . . name the period. My own "2001" [\$2.00 directly from Rod if you're interested] is a global polar-projection variant, requiring three to ten players, with multiple subvariants of its own ranging from 1920 to the 21st Century. Games such as "Imperialism VII", "1939" and "Zeus" take *DIPLOMACY* into the ever-popular Second World War. And there are Napoleonic, Early Modern, and Medieval variants. The ancient world (both Roman and pre-Roman) is well represented. Too, one can find Colonial America, ancient India or China, feudal Japan, and numerous other eras and areas. Is *KINGMAKER* a bit complicated; try "Warwick", a *DIPLOMACY* variant of the period. Do you find *MACHIAVELLI* a bit too long to play; try "City State". Does *A Mighty Fortress* put you off; try "Excommunication".

Nor are the science fiction or fantasy fans neglected. Many Middle-Earth variants exist, including two ("War of the Great Jewels" and "Beleriand") set in the First Age! Barsoom, Dalarna, Earthsea, the Hyborian Age, Witch World, the Young Kingdoms, Kregen, the Foundations, and the Federation are all represented . . . not to mention many more generalized galactic and interstellar variants.

One can, literally, play *DIPLOMACY* set almost anywhere in the universe and in any age. The system is infinitely adaptable (one of the marks of a classic). All you need are the relevant rules and a map. Be warned however; amateur variants *do not* repeat the standard *DIPLOMACY* rules, nor do they reprint the standard mapboard (if that is what they utilize). Rules are written only as *exceptions* to the existing AH rulebook. Therefore, in order to play the variants, one must have the game.

But once you have that, what then? How does one have access to these wonderful variants? You could, of course, make up your own. That's how these all got started. (And, if there is an expression of interest from you readers out there, we might print some simple variant rules in this column some day.) Beyond this, there is a repository for this type of material. It is known as the *North American Variant Bank*, and our files include over 500 of the known variants. The *NAVVB Catalogue* is \$1.00 (and is available from Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas CA 92024). The Catalogue will list the game variants available, indicate how many players are required, and list how much each costs to order. Furthermore, there are two fine booklets

on *DIPLOMACY* variants. One is professionally printed in England, *Diplomacy Games and Variants* by Lew Pulsipher. Mr. Pulsipher has also authored a semipro American collection—*Science Fiction and Fantasy Variant Package*. These are both excellent for those looking for a touch of something different.

Now, the next time you are tempted to think *DIPLOMACY* has only one scenario and you're tempted to drag out that turkey, *Battle of Dnepropavlovsk* instead—stop. Think "variant". And then find some friends. (And if you should design one of your own, would you let me know? The Variant Bank would like a copy for its files.)

Rod Walker is the editor of *DIPLOMACY WORLD* and author of Avalon Hill's *THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY*. *DIPLOMACY WORLD* is a quarterly publication featuring articles on the game, hobby news, ratings, a demonstration game and numerous other tidbits. It has been the central *DIPLOMACY* hobby publication since its founding in 1974. Subscriptions are \$8.00 per year; a sample issue, \$2.50. Order by contacting Mr. Walker, 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024. Rod also edits a monthly publication, *PONTEVEDRIA*, which lists postal Gamemasters who have openings for play-by-mail *DIPLOMACY*. To obtain a copy at any time, merely dispatch a request to Mr. Walker along with a self-addressed and stamped envelope. *THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY* is available for \$4.50 plus the usual handling fees from the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214.



THE WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY

Containing thirty-six pages of the best of *THE GENERAL* articles on the game plus previously unpublished material as well, this guide is a must for every fan of the game. Several official rules changes update the game and erase its few minor flaws. A tribute to one of the hobby's eldest citizens that has never needed a major revision. A game which has grown old gracefully, maturing by getting better.

Almost all of the reprinted articles are from unavailable issues of *THE GENERAL*, many from volume 9 or earlier. Included is the first major variant, "Leyte Gulf", and the most in-depth article on the game to date "The MIDWAY Thesis" by two of the game's experts, Harold Totten and Donald Greenwood. "The Pacific Theatre Via MIDWAY", the other major variant that spawned the MIDWAY Variant Kit, has been expanded to include many more optional rules (some applicable to the MIDWAY game as well) and an additional scenario. "The Battle For Australia", a previously unpublished article adds the ultimate with a hypothetical monster scenario using the components of both the game and the variant kit. Other articles deal with strategy, analysis, variants, and other hypothetical situations. The best of three Series Replays that have appeared in *THE GENERAL* is also reprinted, useful in itself as a fine example of the subtle strategies involved when experienced players meet.

THE WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY sells for \$4.50 plus 10% postage and handling charges, and is available from our mail order dept. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax.

CONTEST 116

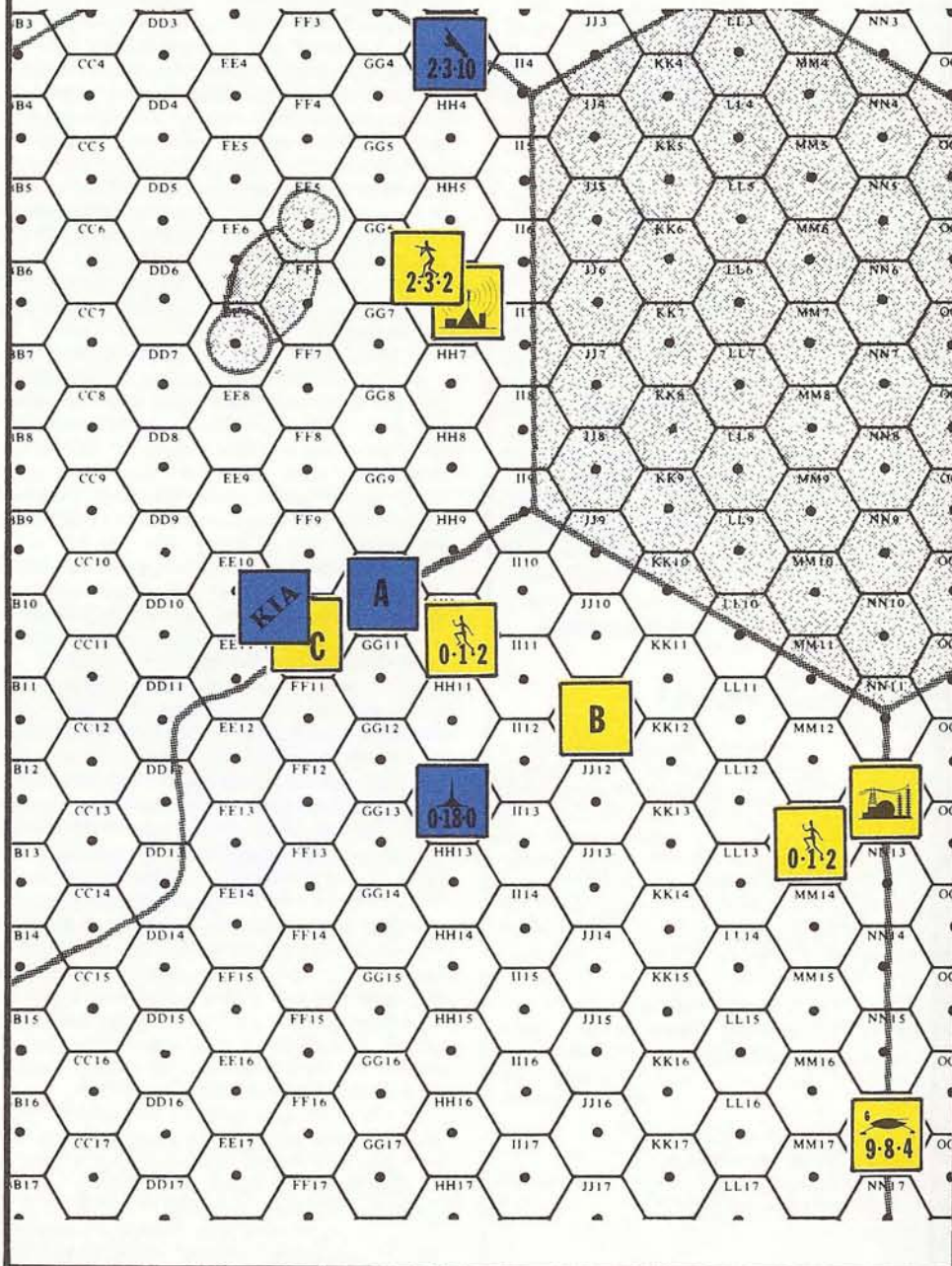
It is Turn 12 of a very tough game of Scenario Three: *Invasion of Skinny-5* in *STARSHIP TROOPERS*. The retrieval boat must lift off this turn. You, as the Terran commander, must think fast to secure a victory. Your forces have already suffered 20 points of casualties, but they have eliminated all Skinny units and installations not shown. All Terran units not shown are loaded aboard the boat (in hex HH-12). Only a few stalwart troopers remain on the ground—A/4 (KIA) in FF-10; PS (with one NUC), A/1 (with HVY damage), A/2 (with 1 DAR) and A/3 (WIA) in hex GG-10; and A/S (with three DAP and one NUC) in HH-3. Using all the rules through Scenario Seven (including the Scenario Addenda for Scenario Three), can you guarantee a win? On the entry form, record all actions taken—in order—by each of your troopers this turn. Remember, you *must* guarantee a victory; in the Mobile Infantry, bad luck is no excuse for failure to complete a mission!

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive AH merchandise credits. To be valid, an entry must be received prior to the mailing or the next issue of *The GENERAL* and include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole, as well as listing the three best articles. The solution to Contest #116 will appear in Vol. 20, No. 5 and a listing of winners in Vol. 20, No. 6 of *The GENERAL*.

Group A—Hex GG10—P/S, A/1, A/2, A/3

Group B—Hex JJ11—1 Humanoid Worker,
1 Humanoid Warrior,
1 Humanoid Missile

Group C—Hex FF10—2 Humanoid Warriors



ALONE AGAINST THE BUGS

A Solitaire System for STARSHIP TROOPERS

By Rick Mathews

What with all the discussion on solitaire play recently, it was inevitable that a few articles concerning such come across my desk. As sceptical as I am, I gritted my teeth and played every one. Surprisingly, in terms of the game system, Mr. Mathews' solitaire version of SST can be quite enjoyable. And he's right—it is tough to beat the bugs.

Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention. It is simply not always possible to find an opponent to play a good competitive game whenever I desire. For this reason, I set about designing solitaire systems for some of the games I own. With the expectation that other wargamers find themselves in a situation similar to mine, this article will attempt to share the results of my efforts to design a solitaire system for Avalon Hill's *STARSHIP TROOPERS*. Using this system, the player as the futuristically armed Terrans may battle the subterranean Arachnids without making any decisions for the opposition. The system is competitive—it has beaten me more often than not.

Before this system is explained, perhaps a few words about *STARSHIP TROOPERS* and why it was chosen for solitaire treatment would be in order. Gamers generally interested in historically based wargames often turn up their noses at *STARSHIP TROOPERS*, regarding it as little more than a fantasy "trip" undeserving of a second look. They are making a mistake. First, *SST* is in many ways a very conventional wargame. Second, and more important, *SST* captures like few other games on the market the intensity and elusive "feel" of individual soldiers locked in desperate, raging combat. This is partly because the game is most often a wild melee with no static fronts. Also, each counter represents but one man and not an "abstract" group. While playing, one can easily imagine oneself as the lone trooper standing on a desolate future battlefield with awesome blasts exploding in too-close proximity, deadly energy beams flashing overhead, and hideous giant spiders boiling out of their holes and madly charging without regard for the handflamer cutting down their companions.

At first glance, *STARSHIP TROOPERS* may seem to be one of the least likely to lend itself to solitaire play. The Arachnid hidden movement system looks to require a live opponent. It is this very hidden movement, however, which makes a solitaire system possible for it. In a two-player game, a good Arachnid will try to appear as random as possible to his Terran opponent. A predictable Bug is a dead Bug. Consequently, it is possible to design a system whereby the Arachnids really do move and fight semi-randomly, while the solitaire player controls the Terrans.

In the following system, it is assumed that since the Arachnids would have little knowledge of the Terran mission, they will react in basically the same manner to any Terran invasion. Thus, they will try to maintain access to the surface, protect their hive, and kill Terran troopers. Even though the Terran player may choose from three possible missions, only one set of rules is needed to control the Arachnids. They are, after all, alien and their thoughts beyond our ken. This results in a very playable system.

All regular rules for *STARSHIP TROOPERS* are in effect unless amended by the following:

Battling the Bugs

1. The sequence of play is somewhat altered. Refer to the game tables for the revised *Sequence of Play*. The rules in this section generally follow that sequence. *Steps one through four are ignored on the first game turn.* In addition, note that there are no inverted alien counters in Solitaire *SST*.

2. The mapboard is divided into six sectors defined by the mapfold and the board partitions. Each of these sectors (except one in each game) will contain an Arachnid "hive" consisting of one, and only one, combat brain cell. There are no queens nor master brains here. These cells and their corresponding tunnel complexes are *not* drawn on the Alien Control Pad prior to play. They are simply assumed to be there, and their actual location must be discovered by the Terran using the following rules.

3. To begin each game, the Terrans must drop to the planet surface using the initial drop procedure, except that only *one* squad may initially be placed in each sector. After the initial drop, Terran troops are free to move out of their sector. When the drop has been made, five sectors are randomly chosen by assigning each an arbitrary number (1-6) and making die rolls. Each of these sectors contains an Arachnid one-cell "hive". Place a counter for each hive, labelled A through E, in these individual sectors as a reminder. Each hive begins with the usual compliment of units attached (i.e., five warriors, 5 Workers, one Beam Weapon).

4. At the beginning of each turn (except the first), the Terran must determine where new breaches will be created. A new breach will appear in each sector where a die roll yields a number equal to or less than the number of Arachnid *workers* surviving in that sector. To find the location of the new breach, the player must randomly choose a vertical row in that sector, and then randomly choose an actual number hex within that row where the breach will be placed. This can conveniently be done with numbered chits (1-17) or with a twenty-sided die (available at any game shop). When a breach is placed, a worker is also placed in the same hex. It is assumed to be underground. Workers *never* come to the surface nor are used in any way other than this in Solitaire *SST*. At the end of the next Terran player segment, all surviving workers are removed from the board and are available for subsequent breaching on the next game turn. There are no "engineers". Instead, the workers perform a semi-engineer function as described.

5. The Terran now rolls two dice for each sector containing a hive. If the roll is equal to or greater than the current *turn* number, an Arachnid demolition *may* explode in that sector. Roll two dice for each hex in that sector occupied by a functional Terran. On a roll of three or less, the hex will receive a demo attack. Roll one die on the *Arachnid Demo Table* to determine the exact demo type. The player must roll for possible demos as long as the combat brain in that sector is alive and on-planet (even if captured).

6. Surviving, underground Arachnid *beam weapons* will now move to the surface; and all beam

weapons will attack if any targets are available. If more than one target is available, use the *Beam Fire Priority Table*. Beams will *not* fire at WIA Terrans, unless the same hex contains another non-WIA Terran. After firing, beam weapons will move onto any WIA Terran (if one is available) and remain there until destroyed, firing normally in the meantime. Failing this, they will remain in their initial breach hex until no targets are available, at which time they will descend underground. The Terran must roll for beam weapon attacks as long as the combat brain in that sector is alive and on-planet (even if captured).

7. The player must now check for Arachnid *warrior* attacks in each sector. If a Terran unit or units on the surface can be reached and attacked by warriors during the current game turn, the warriors will attack on a die roll equal to or less than the surviving number of warriors in that sector. The same die roll is used to determine the actual number of warriors attacking. These warriors will issue from the nearest breach to the Terran target. Any warriors still underground will always attack underground targets (no die roll is necessary), *unless* the potential target hex contains heavy nerve gas.

For either surface or subterranean warrior attacks, if the warriors are presented with multiple targets, roll one die for each sector to determine which targets are actually attacked and at what odds:

1-3 Warriors will attack at the highest possible odds (up to six against one!), even if this means that some potential targets must remain unattacked.

4-6 Warriors will attack as many targets as possible, with the highest odds being but a secondary concern.

If, after using this method, there is still a question as to which targets will be attacked, choose between the targets randomly by assigning each a die roll number.

Like beam weapons, warriors will not attack a WIA Terran. Once on the surface and unengaged, warriors will move toward and attack any new targets which present themselves, using the same system described above for actual target determination. When warriors no longer have potential targets, they will move onto any WIA Terran available; failing that, they will move as quickly as possible underground. Warriors will *never* move through radiation areas.

8. The Terran player now conducts his player segment according to the rules. At the conclusion of this segment, the Terran must remove surviving Arachnid workers from the mapboard and record accumulated Arachnid defense points.

Terrans and Tunnels

1. In Solitaire *STARSHIP TROOPERS*, no one taught the Bugs how to dig straight tunnels. When Terrans descend below ground, roll one die for each tunnel *hex* entered (beginning with the first breach hex entered) and consult the scatter diagram printed on the board. The tunnel will exit the currently occupied hex through the corresponding hexside. Use the Alien Control Pad to keep track of tunnels explored.

2. If the number rolled while mapping indicates the hexside *last* passed through, the hex currently occupied is the brain cell for this sector. After the brain cell is found in a sector, subsequent rolls of this result simply indicate a dead end.

3. If the Terran is searching for prisoners, he may roll one die for each tunnel hex entered. On a roll of six, a prisoner cell may be drawn in the appropriate adjacent hex.

4. If mapping die rolls would cause a tunnel to run off the mapboard, or to intersect a previously mapped non-breach tunnel hex, simply roll again.

5. When a Special Talent is activated use the same procedure described above for mapping any tunnels within range. Simply choose any breach and begin. A Special Talent may also map from more than one breach simultaneously.

6. Listening devices may be used to locate tunnel hexes (most likely for subsequent CE breaching or demolitions). When a LD is activated, roll on the scatter diagram. A tunnel will exist in the indicated direction at a range from the LD determined by a second die roll. If this second roll is five or six, however, no tunnel exists.

7. A combat Engineer demo charge detonated in a non-breach tunnel hex will seal off the breach nearest the detonation hex, as well as any subsequent breaches which may be placed nearer (do not even place these later breaches on the mapboard since no units can issue from them). Arachnids do not receive defense points for sealed-off breaches. Breaches may also be sealed off by using Heavy Nerve Gas or a CE demo in the actual breach hex, or by placing a radiation area there. DAP and DAR charges do *not* seal off breaches, but they can affect units underneath them (i.e.: workers).

Defense and Casualty Points

1. Defense points are tallied for the Arachnid for the following:

- a. 1 point per turn for each functional breach
- b. 3 points per turn for each functional warrior on the surface
- c. 6 points per turn for each functional beam on the surface

Victory points are no longer awarded for breaches when all warriors and beam weapons have been destroyed in a sector (although points accumulated by the Arachnid up to that point are valid). Bugs must be undisrupted to be considered functional. Defense points are awarded at the end of each Terran player segment and must be recorded.

2. Casualty points are tallied for the Terran for the following items used in accomplishment of his mission(s). Points for support weapons and equipment are only calculated if that item is either expended in combat or lost. Unretrieved non-KIA Terrans are worth *three* times their KIA point value listed below. Casualty points are not totalled until the end of the game.

Each trooper HVY: 2	DAP: 2
Each trooper WIA: 4	DAR: 3
Each trooper KIA: 6	HNG: 4
CE Lost: 8	HE Demo: 5
ST Lost: 50	NUC Demo: 10
HE Launcher: 2	Aircar Lost: 15
NUC Rocket (each): 6	LD Lost: 1
	Boat Lost: 75

Help From the Humanoids

1. The Terran may use Humanoid allies, who revolt against the Bugs in conjunction with the Terran invasion, if he so desires. For each sector where they will be used, the Terran must choose the specific force before play starts and predesignate

the turn of arrival. On that turn, the Humanoids may enter via any exterior board edge of their designated arrival sector. The Terran may cancel the entry of any group at any point prior to their arrival.

2. The Terran must add casualty points for any Humanoids concluding the game on the mapboard but outside of a strong point, unless their specific sector has been cleared of Arachnid warriors and beam weapons. Humanoids may not go underground, and may not be retrieved via landing boat. Casualty points are charged to the Terran for Humanoid losses:

- Worker Lost: 1
- Warrior Lost: 2
- Beam Weapon Lost: 6
- Missile Weapon Lost: 12

3. Strongpoints may be built as follows: two workers must commence their player turn in the construction hex; here they are inverted. On the next game turn, they are turned right-side up, and a strongpoint is placed over them. Terran units may not use Humanoid strongpoints.

The Missions

Solitaire *STARSHIP TROOPERS* is not meant to be used with the scenarios provided in the game. Instead, prior to play the player must choose from the three missions below for each sector; alternately, use a die roll to randomly determine which of the missions is to be attempted in each sector. These need not be identical; a different mission can be chosen for each sector landed in. Each game is twelve turns in length. At the end of the game,

GAME TABLES

Sequence of Play

1. Check for and emplace new breaches and Arachnid workers.
2. Check for and resolve Arachnid demo attacks.
3. Check for and resolve Arachnid beam attacks.
4. Check for and resolve Arachnid warrior attacks.
5. Conduct Terran player segment.
6. Remove surviving, non-disrupted Arachnid workers.
7. Record Arachnid defense points accumulated during the turn.

Arachnid Demolitions

1-2	HE
3	Scale 1
4-5	Scale 3
6	Scale 6

Beam Fire Priority

1. Humanoid Installation
2. Special Talent
3. Combat Engineer
4. Landing Boat
5. Scout
6. Commander
7. Marauder
8. Empty Aircar
9. Humanoid Missile Launcher
10. Humanoid Beam Weapon
11. Humanoid Warrior
12. Humanoid Worker

Warrior Attack Priority

- 1-3 Highest Possible Odds
- 4-6 Largest Number of Targets

Arachnid defense points and Terran casualty points are added together and divided by the number of sector initially occupied by Arachnid hives to find the average point value. The Terran wins if he is able to accomplish his mission objectives in a *majority* of sectors without having the average point value exceed 100 points.

The Terran must use initial drop procedure for all but his Combat Engineers and Special Talents—which must enter via soft landing. The player may use as many landing boats as desired so long as no more than two are on planet at any one time. He need not predesignate turns of arrival nor hexes for rocket beacons.

Note that the Terran may play as large or as small a game as he desires. If he chooses to drop less than a full platoon, he will only battle as many hives as he has squads. When he does drop a full platoon, the squad landing in the unoccupied sector may assist any other squad in the accomplishment of their mission.

The Missions:

(Quotations from Robert Heinlein's fine novel, *Starship Troopers*)

The missions are arranged in order of increasing difficulty. It is generally easier to destroy the contents of a hive (usually by destroying the combat brain itself) than to retrieve a prisoner.

Mission One: "Burn 'em Down!"

*Bugs, Mr. Rico! Zillions of 'em!
I'm a-burning 'em down!*

Your Objective: Destroy every beam and warrior in this sector.

Mission Two: "Get 'em Alive!"

He had captured a brain Bug and was using its bloated body as a shield. He could not get out, but they could not attack him without (quite literally) committing suicide by hitting their own brain.

Your Objective: Capture the brain in this sector, and transfer him off-planet via landing boat. (Yes, Bugs will fire at a Terran carrying a brain, once that brain is *on* the surface. If hit, the brain is not hurt.)

Mission Three: "Bring 'em Back!"

Those who are still alive are waiting, knowing that we will show up. And here we are. Now we go get 'em.

Your Objective: Retrieve at least one prisoner from this sector, and transfer him off-planet via landing boat.

Concluding Remarks

Basically, the Terran must do what every good commander must: accomplish his mission with a minimum of loss—but against a strategy totally alien, and hence seemingly random. This fact will influence his choices from the outset. Heavily-armed Terran troopers will certainly kill Bugs, but they are also prone to higher casualty ratios. On the planet surface, the Terran is confronted with many tasks and several difficult decisions in a short space of time. He must blast surface threats, chase down worker units, and invariably go underground in order to accomplish his mission. He will find it difficult to do all of this and retrieve his boys inside the twelve-turn limit. If he does go underground before blasting most of the beams, warriors and even lowly workers in a sector, he may find himself not only fighting at a disadvantage in the tunnels, but will also watch helplessly as Arachnid breach points mount. If he goes underground too late, he may never get off the planet. All in all it is a tense contest. The solitary trooper will not find it easy standing alone against the Bugs.



GETTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Learning the Squad Leader System

By Bob Medrow

As I write this, it's been some six years since my involvement with SL began. Through revisions of the original rules and the introduction of the three expansion gamettes, the original system has been both modified and expanded until the whole business now occupies a unique position in board wargaming. What we now have is, without a doubt, the most comprehensive treatment of WWII tactical combat to ever appear in our hobby.

There's both good news and bad news inherent in that simple observation. The good news is that the system offers incredible variety; it's truly a lifetime game. Its systems work well together, and the maps, counters and scenarios provide what is clearly the most varied range of play opportunities to be found in a game today. The bad news is that there's a lot to learn and, what's worse, some things to unlearn as one progresses from gamette to gamette.

Many (but not all) of the practical difficulties with the system will be solved when the single, revised, rule book appears. Until then, however, the problem of knowing what constitutes the last word in a particular rules area remains. One of my objectives in writing this particular article is to try and provide a reasonably useful guide to just what the current rules set is. Hopefully, this will be of immediate aid to those of us who've fought our way through the system.

But for everyone who has a pretty good handle on the system, my own contacts with gamers suggest that there are many who, while interested in the idea, have been slow to get involved. And that is a matter requiring thought. To reach any real degree of competency with this system will require an investment of a great deal of time. In addition, retaining those skills will be equally time consuming. Thus, a second objective of this article is to offer some suggestions as to just how one might go about testing the waters. Then, for those interested in taking the plunge, there is a suggested list of scenarios to play and the rules to be used.

Because of the ways in which some of the rules sections have been revised and re-revised, it proved necessary to do a *physical* restructuring of the rules booklets in order to prepare what follows. You won't have to do this, but I thought that you might be interested in just what led to this form of presentation.

Method of Preparation

To begin with, two copies of each of the four rules booklets were cut up, column by column. Then, each column was taped to the center of its own piece of paper. The result was a stack of 254 columns of rules, each on its own sheet of paper. Then, section by section, I examined the rules of *SL* itself. Places where material was later altered or added to were marked in the margins provided by the sheets of paper to which the columns were attached. In turn, the sections in, say, *COI* which modified an earlier rule were marked as to where they should go.

In structuring a complete set of rules my general aim was to retain the same order of presentation used in the original rules booklets. We should anticipate that the revised rule book for which we're all waiting will see some structural changes well beyond anything I've undertaken. The ones made here will be mentioned later.

When all of the *SL* changes/additions had been located it was time to move on to *COI*, and, after that, *COD*. Thankfully, the process got easier the further it went. It would appear, however, that some things just never got done right. For example, the artillery rules (63.) of *SL* were entirely scrapped in *COI*. In turn, a portion of 63.9 in *COI* was modified by 134.11 in *COD*. The latter lasted until 145.332 came along in *GI*.

When the last of the pages had been turned, I attacked the stack with a paper cutter and a lot of tape. Revised sections were cut out and the revisions were inserted. As this was being done the pieces were laid out, in order, over an area the size of three ping-pong tables. The rules were then divided according to forty-nine subject headings (see below). In the final step, the pieces within each subject heading were studied and arranged with an eye toward continuity.

The Rules of the Game

Hopefully, the dual numbering system will not cause a lot of trouble. The 49 main headings follow the sequence in which topics of the sort involved were originally presented. For example, my section 22.7 is in the same position relative to the AFV rules as were the panzerfaust and bazooka rules in *SL*. In addition, however, 22.7 also contains all of the other special anti-tank infantry weapons, some of

which did not appear until *COD*.

In the presentation of the rules, the "/" has been used to separate sections which did not appear sequentially in the original rules. For example, *GI*'s 142.312 modifies *SL*'s 12.3. Thus, my section 8.5 shows the following rules for morale: 12.1-12.3/142.312/12.4.

How to Use These Rules

As mentioned earlier, I don't expect you to get extra copies of the rules booklets and start cutting things up. I do think, however, that you should be willing to do some writing in the ones you have. With respect to an example used earlier, *GI*'s 142.312 modifies 12.3. So, after 12.3, draw an arrow and write 142.312. Where a section has been changed, the deleted one should be penciled out and reference made to the appropriate section. For example, under my 8.6 *SL*'s 13.3 has been replaced by 142.5. Cross out 13.3 and write in 142.5. In some cases you'll find that entire major sections of the rules have either been completely rewritten or just dropped entirely. To illustrate, *SL*'s 17. dealt with machine guns. All of this information that still applies, along with everything else you'll ever need to know about MGs, is given in 143.1 to 143.94. So, 17. is no longer needed. *COI*'s rule on HE near misses (100.), on the other hand, has been dropped in its entirety.

Because of duplication or changes it was possible to delete some ten percent of the original rules. Be warned, however, that not all of the out-of-date material has been eliminated in my listing. In some sub-sections I found two important sentences that still applied interspersed among three or four others which represented ideas later dropped or altered. In such cases the entire sub-section was left in unless I could find a place where the two good sentences were later repeated. Where a sub-section containing some incorrect material had to be left in, I've tried to place the correct information as closely as possible. As you read through a rules section, particularly the ones like my 27.2, where there are a number of new rule insertions, be prepared to pencil out anything no longer valid.

Reprogramming the Programmed Instruction

The whole idea of programmed instruction has both friends and foes. Overall, I think it worked

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Unit Counters: 2.1-2.9 | 8.5 Morale: 12.1-12.3/142.312/12.4 |
| 2. The Mapboard | 8.6 Broken Units: 13.1-13.2/142.5/13.4-13.42/142.1/13.43-13.7 |
| 2.1 Basic: 3.1-3.8 | 9. Rally: 14.1-14.7 |
| 2.2 Overlays: 149.1-149.13 | 10. Leadership: 15.1-15.8 |
| 3. Sequence of Play: 4.1-4.9/142.2-142.22 | 11. Defensive Fire Principles: 16.1-16.7 |
| 4. Infantry Movement | 12. Machine Guns: 143.1-143.94 |
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well in *SL* itself. Because of the many options available and the large number of system types considered, the typical player needs to learn them over some period of time. This was made quite clear to me during the playtesting of *SL*. Because of the number of scenarios to be played, I tried "leap-frogging" some of the local players directly from Scenario 3 into the later scenarios. If one just considers pages of rules, that doesn't seem to be an unreasonable thing to try. In truth, it led to a number of unfavorable results. Of these, the most important to me was increased player dissatisfaction with the game. Knowing the rules is one thing; being able to use them to an extent satisfying to a player turned out to be something else. Ultimately, a game isn't worth much to you if you don't have some kind of fun playing it.

Having said that, it's now time to consider just how effective the approach, as presented in *SL* and the three expansion gamettes, is for someone who has encountered the *SL* system for the first time. I, for one, would be intimidated by the idea of having to play 46 scenarios in order to "pass" *SL*. Similarly, if I was currently a player of just *SL* itself, I might well be feeling somewhat frustrated by the existence of two gamettes between me and *GI*.

Suggestions for the Beginner

For anyone who sees himself in such a situation, there is hope. Let's first consider the newcomer to the hobby, or, at least, to *SL*. Should you even get started with this? If you have no strong aversion to WWII games in general and tactical games in particular, I think it's worth it to you to test the waters. Clearly, I'm not a disinterested observer with respect to *SL*. However, my general gaming interests do not center around WWII; and, in many ways, I prefer strategic level games to tactical level ones. What has caused me to stick with *SL* and its children over these six years is the pleasure I've derived from it.

Having, over these six years, talked to many people about the matter, my best advice to the newcomer is to begin by getting a copy of *SL* and then playing the first four scenarios using the *SL* rules. Typically, a half-dozen playings of the first scenario, followed by a couple of tries at each of the other three should be enough. No matter how far you go with the system, everything you'll find fits into and around the basic mechanics presented in those first rules sections. By the time you've experienced what the system has to offer through the first four scenarios you should know whether or not you've got the bug. If it seems to you to be just another game, then you'll save yourself time and money if you decide, at least for the moment, to stay away from the gamettes.

If, on the other hand, you think that this is great stuff, go get *COI* and play Scenario 13 a time or two. The seven pages of *COI* rules you'll need to study are largely given over to what is, barring a few bells and whistles later on, the current set of armor rules. They are an excellent example of just what you can expect to see in terms of maximum complexity throughout the rest of the system. If you can be comfortable with that stuff, you can handle anything else you'll ever see. One of the fortunate things about Scenario 13 is that the only things you'll need from *SL*, beyond what you saw through Scenario 4, are the rules about multi-story buildings, entrenchments and roadblocks. The revised onboard artillery rules with which the *COI* rules begin cover both the AT Gun and the mortar which appear in Scenario 13.

At this point, if you still see this as great stuff, you should give serious thought to getting both *COD* and *GI* right now. Otherwise, the further you go beyond this point, the more, one day, you'll have

to unlearn. And that unlearning process is no fun at all. Realistically, it would require enormous effort to be able to play all of the *SL* scenarios using just *SL* rules, all of the *COI* scenarios using just the *COI* rules, and so forth. You'll be far better off working on the basis that "latest is best". True, the jolt to wallet or purse is not going to be small, but you have to balance that against the value of your own time. Overall, I think it best that, after Scenario 13, one go back to the first scenario and start working the later material in.

For the person who's already involved with *SL*, my suggestions are similar. If Scenario 13 feels good, the previous paragraph applies to you too.

The Reprogrammed Program

All of the major elements of the rules system, and most of the minor ones, can be learned with reasonable comfort in connection with but a dozen scenarios. The selection of these scenarios was made with several considerations in mind. I wanted, as much as possible, to provide chances for review of important sections from time to time. That, for example, is why both Scenarios 13 and 14 are included. Then, too, I felt that it would be best to stick with the same combatants at the outset. For that reason the first seven scenarios involve just the Russians and the Germans in major roles. Finally, I have tried to stay away from the more complicated-to-play scenarios. In general, this involved sticking with scenarios which cover less space and use fewer counters. The entire structure should, I hope, provide a solid basis for passing from these twelve scenarios to any of the others.

Each of the scenarios mentioned below lists the rules sections to be introduced. The section numbers used are those presented earlier in this article. Comments have been included as necessary to clarify my intentions.

Scenario 1—The Guards Counterattack

Rules Introduced: 1.-16. (except for 2.2 and 7.2)

Comments: Almost all of a very detailed infantry versus infantry game is contained within these sections. It would, therefore, be a good idea to play this scenario a few times using just the *SL* rules. Then, mark up the *SL* rules to indicate where, for the most part, the original rules have been expanded without undergoing significant change.

Scenario 2—The Tractor Works

Rules Introduced: 17.-20. and 49.1

Comments: I suggest that you incorporate all of the rules listed at the outset. The introduction of support weapons other than machine guns expands the tactical options considerably.

Scenario 3, part A—The Streets of Stalingrad

Rules Introduced: 21.-22.4 (except for 21.64, 21.65, 21.8, 22.135, 22.136, 22.137, and 22.3) and 22.8 and 22.9

Comments: In the first article I wrote about *SL*, I expressed the idea that perhaps the most complicated area of this game centered about the interaction between armor and infantry. Because of the fact that I still believe that, and because of the elaboration of the pure armor rules, I suggest that you first play this scenario using just the AFVs. In that way you will be able to concentrate on the pure armor mechanics and the basic TO HIT and TO KILL procedures common to most ordnance, mounted and otherwise. The AFV counters needed are found in *COI*: use 3 StuGIIFs, 2 StuGIIG/105s and 4 T34/76As.

Scenario 3, part B—The Streets of Stalingrad again

Rules Introduced: 22.5-22.71

Comments: From the point of view of number of possible play options, this is one of the best scenarios to be found. The action is continuous when you include the infantry as well as the armor.

Scenario 4—The Hedgehog of Piepsk

Rules Introduced: 7.2, 23., 24.1-24.21, 24.41, 24.42, and 25.1-25.3

Comments: After the hustle and bustle of the city it's nice to get out into the country. In looking at the off board artillery rules, note that *COD*'s 107.42 and 107.423 represent an alternative to *SL*'s 45.2. When playing with the *COD* rule use a "normal" ammunition supply.

Scenario 13—The Capture of Balta

Rules Introduced: 22.52, 24.22, 27.1-27.4, 30.1, 33.1-33.4 (except for 33.2), 34., 36.11 and 36.13

Comments: Because the revised armor rules have been dealt with earlier, the scenario allows concentration on multi-level buildings. In particular, line-of-sight rules should be examined very carefully. On board ordnance also makes its appearance.

Scenario 14—The Paw of the Tiger

Rules Introduced: 21.65, 22.135, 22.136, 22.3, 24.23, 24.31 and 35.

Comments: Being the armor-heavy scenario it is, this one should be a good review of that area. The weather rules are also introduced, and, from time to time these rules will have a decisive effect upon play.

Scenario 16—Sowchos 79

Rules Introduced: 21.8, 22.77, 26.1, 26.2 and 26.4

Comments: This is one of the larger map area scenarios in addition to having a considerable range of things to worry about. It was included because it did not require the introduction of many new ideas. After the somewhat more limited earlier scenarios this one shows part of the further potential of the system.

Scenario 21—Battle of the Warta Line

Rules Introduced: 29., 32., 36.25, 43.

Comments: Bypass movement (43.) is something that many players whom I know do not like. From a realism point of view it belongs in the rules set, but it takes practice to get used to it. This scenario is the ideal place to experiment and form your own view on the matter.

Scenario 27—The Dinant Bridgehead

Rules Introduced: 36.23, 40.1, 42.1, 45.-45.2 and 46.1

Comments: I still find myself returning more frequently to the scenarios of *COD* than to those of *COI*. One of the reasons certainly has to do with the introduction of rivers in *COD*. These waterways lead to a fascinating collection of tactical problems. As the rules listed indicate, I suggest that you include the optional reinforcements given in the scenario addenda in the *COD* rule booklet. You may, without destroying the balance of the scenario, introduce the French armor automatically on the second turn. This should lead to your having the closest thing to a land-sea-air battle that the *SL* system can provide at this time.

Scenario 31—Chateau de Quesnoy

Rules Introduced: 24.43, 26.3, 30.2, 31. and 47.

Comments: In connection with WWII, the French always seem to be taking their lumps. Here's a case where that won't necessarily happen. Also, given all those WWII movies I saw while growing up, what would war be without minefields and booby traps?

Scenario 43—Action at Kammerscheidt

Rules Introduced: 2.2, 21.72, 21.73, 24.24, 24.45, 36.27, 42.3, 42.4 and 46.3

Comments: By the time you get this far, this shouldn't be too large a chunk of the rules to bite off. The basic situation has enough similarities to what we've seen before that introduction of the peculiarities of the GIs should not prove too troublesome.

Scenario 46—Operation Varsity**Rules Introduced: 24.32, 27.5, 40.24 and 41.1**

Comments: With the introduction of the paratrooper rules, all of the major areas have been covered. It seems appropriate to end this collection of scenarios with one drawn from the last days of WWII, featuring the last air-borne assault of the war.

The Rest of the Rules

Finally, let's take a moment or two to look at the rules not included in the above set of scenarios. In general, they involve new terrain features or are lengthy scenario special rules. A few are those which I, for one, find a pain. An example of the latter type is Excessive Speed Breakdown. The rule adds realism true, but is a pain in the neck by virtue of the drastic extent to which it slows down play. In a scenario such as 14, the results of its inclusion are terrible to behold. As you play through the listed scenarios, look at the other rules from time to time. Many of them, such as those for wounded leaders, can be included at any point should you so desire.

**Saestor . . . Cont'd from Page 16**

ward areas detailing plans. There are two new classes of ship used for this purpose: a fast scout, which is capable of moving two systems in redeployment and costs two production points, and an "Imperial" monitor, which carries the Space Lord himself (all three command methods are illustrated in Figure 3). A maximum of two fast scouts are allowed and they can be indicated by carefully circling the "1" on a regular scout. Due to their speed, these scouts can decline combat by withdrawing to an adjacent friendly system. However, they cannot avoid amoebas in this manner. Unlike regular monitors, the Imperial monitor can move and should be designated in the same manner as the fast scout. With this ship the Space Lord can move up to direct the battle personally; like the home system, he has a range of two hexes. If it is lost in combat the Space Lord himself is considered killed. In the next turn, his heir starts afresh in the home system—with half the ships he held (fractions rounded down) at the end of the previous turn.

Whether to utilize fast scouts to shuttle orders or the Space Lord himself to personally command the advance is now a tough decision. Fast scouts are cheap but subject to loss. They cannot possibly provide constant command more than four systems removed from the home area. Imperial monitors can move up to the battle area though remaining somewhat safely removed. They are well-defended; however, they are expensive and if lost you will have suffered a disastrous setback in losing your lord and having to begin anew. A nice new problem for the would-be Lord of Saestor.

Using all new rules, the sequence of play is:

- 1) amoeba attack
- 2) power card play
- 3) reinforcement
- 4) attack campaign
- 5) written orders
- 6) free move
- 7) production planning

Conclusion

In summing up, I would like to make a final observation—if one player has seized the necessary inner systems to make a play for Saestor, the other players would be wise to join forces (for a short time

anyway) to frustrate the most successful opponent. A few turns of concentrated attention will cut down even the most powerful player, and possibly eliminate his advantage. If you find yourself ready to attempt capturing Saestor, skillful card play can give you two turns in a row so that no one can block your progress.

**AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 2**

Since *The GENERAL* is, in my own words, "the finest forum on the finest games", it is logical to assume that the games which appear in these pages are often among the most popular in the hobby. Any appearance of any game is seen and read by many fans—giving my look here into the games dealt with in the pages of *The GENERAL* some purpose. Spurred by Mr. Kiczek's recent article (Vol. 20, No. 3), I utilized much of his effort and my own continually updated index of the magazine to devise a "survey" of our contents. Since a brief overview of these AH titles will perhaps answer many people's questions (or provide them with more reason to write) as to the "fairness", logic or diversity of *The GENERAL*'s coverage over the past four volumes, I present it here. Thus, here is the "GENERAL Contents Survey" drawn from the article coverage of this magazine between Vol. 17, No. 1 and Vol. 20, No. 3.

To produce this survey, I based my efforts on the total number of issues in which each game was dealt with during the survey period, not on the number of articles on each game. This was done to avoid the situation in which the number of articles on a game could skyrocket with just one appearance as the featured title, thereby throwing meaningful comparisons with other non-featured games askew. Credit was given to all titles in articles dealing with more than one specific game—with the exception of articles on the SL series. Due to confusion over which game of the series should receive credit for an article, I decided that articles specifically devoted to one gamette would be credited to that title; otherwise, the piece was given to SL. Hence, all "SL Clinics" were marked for SL itself (with the exception of the piece "Origins COD Scenarios"); all miscellaneous SL system pieces ("Blind SL", "SL Survey", "Basic Arms and The Man", etc.) were likewise credited to SL.

With these allocations of *GENERAL* appearances for each game, the survey below is relatively simple. The "Number of Issues" is simply the total number of times a title has appeared in these pages since the first issue of Volume 17. The "Percent of Total" is derived by dividing the number of times a game appeared by the total number of issues (21). Note that titles followed by an asterisk (*) received feature status during the period covered by the survey. The games are ranked by the "Number of Issues" category, with the titles with the greatest number of appearances listed in descending order. When a tie occurs, the titles are placed in alphabetical order.

A number of rather curious findings of this survey spring to the eye. Of the 79 fantasy and wargames currently in print by Avalon Hill in 1983, 57 of them (or 72.15%) have appeared in one or more issues of *The GENERAL*. The figure improves dramatically when we consider that, of these, 14 have been released since ORIGINS '82. An average of seven different games were considered in each issue of the magazine during this period. Only two Leisure Time titles have appeared in the last four volumes, due in part to the vocal nature of those few who write the editor immediately upon any appearance of such. There are five titles which have graced these pages in the past but have not been seen recently—*CH*, *FR*, *JUT*, *OR* and *TAC*. As to concentration upon a particular

facet of our hobby, games devoted to WW2 (some 26) have appeared 84 times—in other terms, 100% of the issues. The next most represented era is comprised of our Napoleonic titles—42.8%. And, for the fantasy and science fiction gamers, our titles on these are found also in some 42.8% (9 issues). In conclusion, it is the humble opinion of this reader-cum-editor that *The GENERAL* has succeeded rather well in covering the wide variety of war and fantasy games while still giving the overwhelmingly popular WW2 games in the AH line their seemingly-justified proper extensive coverage.

The GENERAL Contents Survey

Title	Number of Issues	Percent of Total
Squad Leader	13	61.9%
Third Reich*	10	47.6%
Diplomacy	9	42.9%
Victory in the Pacific*	9	42.9%
Afrika Korps*	5	23.8%
War & Peace*	5	23.8%
Crescendo of Doom*	3	14.3%
Cross of Iron	3	14.3%
The Longest Day	3	14.3%
Magic Realm	3	14.3%
Midway	3	14.3%
Richthofen's War	3	14.3%
Russian Campaign	3	14.3%
1776	3	14.3%
Tobruk	3	14.3%
War At Sea	3	14.3%
Wooden Ships & Iron Men	3	14.3%
Air Force*	2	9.5%
Air Assault on Crete	2	9.5%
Alexander the Great	2	9.5%
Bismarck	2	9.5%
Caesar's Legions	2	9.5%
Circus Maximus*	2	9.5%
Down With the King	2	9.5%
Dune	2	9.5%
Flat Top*	2	9.5%
Fortress Europa*	2	9.5%
Gladiator*	2	9.5%
Guns of August*	2	9.5%
Luftwaffe	2	9.5%
PanzerBlitz	2	9.5%
Panzer Leader	2	9.5%
Stalingrad*	2	9.5%
Storm Over Arnhem*	2	9.5%
Submarine	2	9.5%
Waterloo	2	9.5%
Wizard's Quest	2	9.5%
Arab-Israeli Wars	1	4.8%
Bulge '81*	1	4.8%
Blitzkrieg	1	4.8%
Civilization*	1	4.8%
Conquistador	1	4.8%
D-Day '77	1	4.8%
Frederick the Great*	1	4.8%
Fury in the West*	1	4.8%
G.I.: Anvil of Victory*	1	4.8%
Gunslinger*	1	4.8%
Kingmaker	1	4.8%
Legend of Robin Hood	1	4.8%
Napoleon	1	4.8%
Oh-Wah-Ree	1	4.8%
Source of the Nile	1	4.8%
Starship Troopers	1	4.8%
Struggle of Nations*	1	4.8%
Titan*	1	4.8%
Tirreme	1	4.8%

*—Featured Title in Issue



A NEW LOOK AT AN OLD FRIEND

A Commander's Notebook: BLITZKRIEG

By Robert D. Harmon

Mr. Harmon's piece has been languishing in our files for some time. It struck me as too comprehensive an analysis for long-time BL players, and too excellent an introduction for novices, to remain unseen there.

BLITZKRIEG appeared in 1965, a time when the wargaming hobby was much smaller than today, when board wargames were few and D-elim still ruled the battlefield. Contemporary accounts hailed BLITZKRIEG as unsurpassed in realism—it did introduce partial elimination, one of many innovations. It opened the floodgates to a host of land wargames of increasing complexity and originality. Though many years and wargames separate then and now, BLITZKRIEG doesn't quite fade into the hobby's infancy, for BLITZKRIEG marked its end.

The game has appeal yet. This is partly nostalgia—BLITZKRIEG introduced many to wargaming, and for others—myself included—kindled a life-spanning interest. The game's abstract setting is also appealing, for the map and orders of battle are hypothetical, and players can approach them without preconceptions. Indeed, BLITZKRIEG is the only current wargame (TACTICS II notwithstanding) still presenting a fictional scenario—and combining it with today's art of war. Even the science-fiction and fantasy games don't address that.

Finally, BLITZKRIEG '75 (as now revised) is still one of the best wargame experiences around. The fictional board showcases pure strategy and combined-arms tactics—a textbook presentation. BLITZKRIEG is still one of the few ground-warfare games that address air strategy. The elimination procedure is one of the least cumbersome (note that many later wargames returned to some form of total-elimination). All of the complexities of modern warfare—logistics, air-ground cooperation, amphibious operations, armored breakthrough, vertical envelopment, combined-arms tactics, et al—are presented in a unified, manageable format. Thus, BLITZKRIEG is possibly the largest—or at least, the most comprehensive—of the non-monster wargames.

Finally, the wargamer has freedom of action over a continental area, with fewer restrictions than WAR AND PEACE or THIRD REICH. New fronts and new offensives can be opened with no restrictions—other than those posed by geography and the enemy.

This article will examine BLITZKRIEG '75, which many wargamers will find to be much more dynamic, and much different in play from the 1965 edition that many remember. The discussion is divided into various "Critical Issues"—continuing the "Commander's Notebook" approach. Each Critical Issue, addressing an important event or feature, will review particular considerations in theory and play in bite-size portions.

A note on terminology: Great Blue and Big Red are clearly marked on the map, of course. For brevity, each minor country is similarly named. The large country on Blue's eastern border is Yellow. Yellow shares the Great Koufax Desert with White, to the east. White, of course, borders Big Red—a distinction it shares with Black, to the south. The long, narrow country west of Black is Green, which is between the lake and the sea. The country in the center of the map is Brown. Finally, the peninsula containing the River Sparling is, of course, part of the Great Blue itself.

CRITICAL ISSUE #1: RULE CHANGES

This discussion both introduces BLITZKRIEG '75 to veteran wargamers and serves to spotlight key game procedures for all readers. Most of the rule changes are fundamental.

Attrition Tables: The Basic Game Attrition Table (BGAT) remains the same—using D-elim for novices' sake. The BGAT explanations, however, redefine exchanges as one-unit-per-side elimination. As in RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, the defense no longer loses all units in an exchange, and terrain—especially doubled factoring—no longer applies here. Retreated units still observe stacking restrictions, and cannot retreat through fully-stacked hexes.

The Tournament Game Attrition Table (TGAT) is much the same as in BLITZKRIEG '65. BGAT retreat restrictions are applied to the TGAT. The owning player conducts unit advances and retreats, as usual. Also—a new clarification—advances and retreats must adhere to the movement rules, which involve the new Zone of Control rules (see below) as well.

The terrain table on the BGAT/TGAT card is considerably clarified, and movement effects are conveniently introduced. Terrain effects—movement and combat—are much the same as in the old game, but armor and air assault units now have DOUBLE movement in desert hexes.

BASIC GAME

City Control: BLITZKRIEG '75 now requires that any city is unfriendly unless continuously occupied, except for those in the player's homeland. This is determined at the start of the player's turn, and enemy ZOC must not be present. The supply rules in the Optional rules forbid supply lines through unfriendly cities, so occupation forces will demand consideration.

Movement: Ground movement remains the same in theory, with dramatic changes in rates. One innovation: Doubled desert movement for armor and air assault units. Air transport rules are also changed; Airdropped units can only move *one hex* after landing (not at all if the drop zone was in mountain or forest hexes), instead of the full ground movement once allowed. Air transport of ground units is now restricted to these maximums: Four (division-size) units, 40 hexes' distance, and NO armor or artillery. Air transported units are now required to start the turn in a friendly city.

One critical ambiguity: Rule 9.4 begins, "When being *air transported*, airborne and air-assault units may be airdropped within 20 hexes . . . instead of . . . 40 hexes" (emphasis mine). This implies that this "air transport" must come out of the four-unit maximum, a question not addressed in any Question Box after January 1975. This is realistic, as transport aircraft usually are designed to drop their cargoes, as well as merely carry them. A real-life instance was Soviet use of Antonov transports to supply the Arab powers in the October 1973 conflict—until the airlift was suddenly halted October 23. Washington concluded that an airborne invasion of the war zone was being readied, and a crisis resulted.

Zones of Control: ZOCs still require combat for units stopped therein. However, ZOC movement effects are dramatically alerted, for armor and air assault units may IGNORE any ZOCs—other than those of enemy armor or air assault units—both in the movement phase, and advancing/retreating

after combat. The implications are enormous. Most sectors—indeed, most stacks—are going to require armor close at hand.

A second reform is "engagement." Non-armored units—specifically, airborne, artillery, and infantry—may NOT voluntarily leave ZOCs. This means that (hitherto) mediocre results on the TGAT—i.e., no retreat by either side—may lead to ruination for units so engaged, for combat is still mandatory. A moving player can be given the ugly choice of reinforcing a losing battle or leaving units to their fate, sometimes at less than the 1-6 minimum. Planning for retreats is now a serious challenge.

A new clarification: ZOCs extend into all six surrounding hexes, to include sea hexes.

Stacking: Another major change multiplying the effect of the weakened ZOCs. The 12-factor maximum is gone; instead, the limit is three units (Tournament Game substitute units equalling one-half unit). The effect on tactics is considerable, as six- and eight-factor armored units may now outweigh defending infantry, which still stack as four-factor divisions. Given the poor ZOCs of non-armored (soft) units, attacking armor will face an enemy that will be spread thinly.

The concentrated firepower now allowed places great emphasis on the principle of mass. Further, unit quality—particularly that of elite units such as Marine or Guard divisions—can be fully expressed, now that the 12-factor ceiling is gone.

Finally, armored units now pose a triple threat—their strength, their mobility (enhanced by the ZOC rules), and their ability to tie up adjacent, soft units. Any retreat before armor will degenerate into a rout—unless armor covers the retreat.

Combat: Much the same. Each player ends movement with a combat phase; combat is mandatory for all units in ZOCs as of that phase, including armor; defending stacks must be attacked as one entity; odds below 1-6 are forbidden.

Victory Conditions: Modified. The winner must still eliminate all enemy units, but now must have 14 units left; or, he or she may occupy all enemy home cities, but must now do so for two consecutive turns to win; or, the winner must now hold 35+ city hexes on Turn 15, not 25 cities as before. Anything else is still a stalemate, redefined as a mutual loss comparable to 1918.

BASIC GAME OPTIONAL RULES

Sea Movement: Ground units continue moving at sea on a zone-to-zone basis. However, each side may now have ten units, not 40 factors, at sea. Landing at friendly ports costs one movement factor, but movement inland is otherwise unhindered.

A major new twist is the introduction of inland ports. These reintroduce four cities into the game—VV25 being particularly important as it gives Red access to Sea Zones A and B. Inland ports can, of course, be closed by unfriendly units or ZOCs on their estuaries—however, ANY port can be closed by sea-hex ZOCs as well. For instance, D4 could be closed by a unit on the peninsula to the west, or a unit at G13 or G15 could close the entire west gulf.

Invasions: Few changes. Rule 20.34 refers to elimination of all assaulting units attacking from sea hexes; presumably this means any unit unable to advance into a vacated beach hex, as rule 20.35 indicates. No movement bonus can be used on landing, a clarification but no real change.

Automatic Victory: AVs remain the same (5-1 surrounded or 7-1 outright) and continue to take effect during the movement phase. AVing units advance four hexes after *all* other combat, a slight change from the '65 rules. No mention is made here or later of any AV by air units, a serious development, as any rear-area AVs must now involve air-dropped or amphibious units.

Strategic Movement: An innovation in the '75 rules. A four-movement-factor bonus is allowed, for any units staying out of enemy ZOCs for a given turn. This compensates for armor and artillery units' lack of air transportability, and helps expedite the arrival of reinforcements.

Combat Supply: The *BLITZKRIEG* '75 supply rules are entirely new. The cumbersome 12-factor-per-city-hex ceiling is gone; any home city can supply any number of units as long as the supply lines are unbroken. Occupied cities are conduits, not sources, and must be kept friendly or the roads will be cut.

As before, supply can be traced from the sea through friendly ports; and, in any event, supply routes may leave roads only in the last ten hexes overland. Beach supply is now limited to ten hexes inland, and to ten units maximum (not 40 factors). Beach hexes have to be kept occupied, like cities (unless, presumably, you invaded your own country for some reason).

The most serious change in the supply rules is regarding non-supply which no longer eliminates units. Unsupplied units do lose strategic movement and advance-after-combat; attack factors and movement capabilities are halved. Even then, isolated units have some consolation: the air transport capability can be diverted into supply airlift, one factor to supply each unit (excluding artillery and armor, a plus for the lowly infantry). This can aid a breakout and certainly compel an enemy to reduce pockets—which still defend at full strength.

The new supply rules have an ultimate, strategic effect—since cities no longer have a cumulative effect on supply, wide conquest is no longer needed to support larger armies. Players' offensives can be initially narrow, and escalated at convenience. Further, the need for unbroken contact with the homeland is emphasized, and flanking drives become more threatening.

NOTE: Most of the Basic-Optional Rules were moved from the '65 Tournament Level. A new level of rules is thus added, for ease of transition by new players. The progression to the Tournament Game is less difficult.

TOURNAMENT GAME

Combat: As in *BLITZKRIEG* '65, the TGAT is introduced. However, the TGAT is accompanied by a new and bloody Barrage and Bombardment Table (BBT). The BBT itself is nasty—three artillery divisions (24 factors) could kill from two to ten factors without direct loss to themselves, as there are no attacker losses. Artillery may use the BBT at two hexes' distance—greatly enhancing this combat arm.

The BBT can be used, once per target, prior to a TGAT attack. The possible advance is limited to one hex but the result of this, and increased stacking, is heavy defense losses and a way of breaking bottlenecks like the BB31-EE34 isthmus. This is another lesson in the need for combined arms.

Two further BBT constraints: First, grounded air units also can be attacked by artillery on the BBT prior to ground units in the hex; second, and more important, *the BBT can't achieve AVs*.

Net result: A new mode of attack is provided, an alternative to an armored blitz—less speedy, but no less bloody. This sort of offensive, marked by intense artillery preparation, was and is prominent in Soviet doctrine.

Substitute Units: As in the '65 rules, units are reduced factor by factor, and surviving factors are replaced by same-type brigades (or air squadrons). A new refinement—substitutes are stacked and transported as half units (equalling half a division or wing "unit"). Substitution is limited to the substitute units on hand, and can include smaller, inactivated divisions.

A major limitation, newly introduced, allows substitutes to recombine into larger units only at the end of the movement phase. These units must be in the same hex, must be the same type, and may *not* be in a ZOC or otherwise attacking. (The '65 rules said *anytime*).

Rangers: Rangers are considerably enhanced, and now constitute a true elite. They are no longer subject to the one invasion limit, and may land anywhere regardless of concurrent amphibious or (other) Ranger landings. Rangers can, of course, land in any coastal hex, and may also move to sea from any coastal hex (though not in the same turn), provided enemy ZOCs don't interfere.

The Rangers have been considerably augmented in the 1975 rules, with new capabilities. Rangers may invade any lake hexes, if they start in a lake port. Better yet, Rangers are air-droppable, and can serve as airborne troops.

Replacements: Now pegged at six substitute counters per turn, depending on availability. This is a great improvement over the four-factor rate in the '65 version, and the restrictions have changed considerably. Half the reinforcements on a given turn must be ground troops—not less than one infantry, not more than one airborne or ranger ("elite") substitute. The other half must be air units—though selection is left up to the player. One of these air units can be converted into augmentation of air transport by one half-unit capacity, permanently.

Aircraft replacements are affected by the number of aircraft cities in operation, and must be placed one per city (three are designated for each major power). Since aircraft must constitute half the turn's replacements, ground force replacement is affected by control of these cities, and accumulation of replacements becomes difficult at these rates.

Minor Countries: These resist invaders much the same in the '65 and '75 rules; the Minor City Reduction Table is identical. Some new changes: Minor cities now have an infantry-type ZOC; invading forces lose four factors in ANY turn that all cities of a country aren't garrisoned, and an invading player is defined as an "aggressor" (his opponent is a "liberator" to that country).

The minor country rules now reflect the full impact of partisan warfare. Failure to secure all cities will cause a player to lose four factors inside that country—two due to direct guerrilla action, and two more (according to the rules) as a price for keeping supply lines open. Continual garrisons are vital to prevent this, as the cities are not only loyal to the "liberator," but break supply lines if unoccupied. Further, once the liberator occupies some of that country's cities, the aggressor starts losing more units; logical, as partisan activity will escalate as the Liberation begins. Violated countries will welcome liberation units, including aircraft, whether the cities were reduced or not (another innovation).

Bomber Aircraft: Air units are employed under new rules. Three air units may now stack per city hex, over a maximum of three more ground units. Two air half-units or one full air unit may go to sea beside the ten ground units allowed. Seaborne air units are limited to TAC or FTR, as before. Unsupplied air units may not attack; bomber units attack at DOUBLE factor at half-range or less.

The old Strategic Air Attack table is gone—strategic bombing is done on the BBT (although separately from artillery attacks). The use of the BBT means that attacks are now calculated by attack factors, not odds. AVs are no longer possible;

ground attack after strategic (BBT) bombardment is, under rule 25.3. Tactical bombing is done as before, except that half or better of TGAT attacker losses *must* be aviation. Tactical bombers must now match defender factoring, or river defenses will not be undoubted.

Finally, the new rules omit mention of city-bombing—these missions appear later in the Tournament-Optional Rules. The missions shown in the standard Tournament Game—strategic and tactical—apply to ground units only.

Bombers' greatly enhanced power (courtesy of the BBT), and increased tactical air losses, stand out in the new rules. This helps bring *BLITZKRIEG* forward into the Eighties, from the World War II version seen in the '65 rules. Modern aviation has become much more hard-hitting and flexible, particularly against ground units; lighter, close-support aircraft face greater hazards in turn, due to divisional air-defense artillery and even hand-held missiles.

TOURNAMENT GAME OPTIONAL RULES

Air Combat: Fighters are introduced; instead of mere interception, five different missions are described, to include strafing of airfields and even ground forces. There will be more on this in Critical Issue #8; for now, let's say that the utilization of fighters is vastly improved over the old rules.

Additional Bombing Missions: City-bombing is greatly refined, but meaningless without the Critical Resources Rules. Air interdiction is redefined and is now performed by TAC or FTR, not SAC. Bombers can also selectively attack airbases, ports, and industries. Night bombing can also be used to avoid interception.

A note on air-unit stacking, now that the air rules have been covered: The three-unit maximum means that up to 22 air factors could be based in one city hex. Conversely, breakdown of these units could lead to space problems, as two one-factor squadrons take up as much space as one eight-factor wing. This is less of a problem with TAC and FTR, which can make the transition from four-factor units to two-factor half-units with little stress.

The three-unit stacking allows more use of TAC at the front. As TAC can also perform airfield-bombing and interdiction missions, besides ground support, it is much more useful from land or sea bases.

Weather: Considerably improved and explained. Actual weather is mentioned on the chart, not just the results. Clear weather is now automatic during the first seven turns; provisions are made for weather after Turn 15, indefinitely.

Naval Ascendancy: A new and brilliant innovation. The ability to invade, or trace supplies through sea zones, is now affected by ground forces (and inherent escorts, obviously) at sea, as well as port control, presence of land- and carrier-based air, previous-turn invasions. Thus, the mutual effects of surface escorts, aircraft, nearby naval ports (and the patrol units they would harbor), and amphibious task forces are represented in a neat, abstract format. Further, invasions far from base—particularly in the enemy homeland—are mitigated by control of intervening sea zones. Blue, for instance, would find invasion of Red's east coast to be highly difficult.

Nuclear Capacity: Omitted in *BLITZKRIEG* '75.











Critical Resources: New, and with the aircraft industry rules, constituting "economic" rules for *BLITZKRIEG* '75. In effect, every home country city (and some minor-country cities as well) now have some form of critical industry. Aircraft cities were named and discussed in the standard Tournament Game; this rule assigns petro-chemical, naval, or basic industries to the remainder. The Additional Bombing Missions rule set bomb damage at one

turn maximum (a step down from *BLITZKRIEG* '65), but loss of cities to enemy ground troops is obviously more permanent.

This rule is subtle in its effects, but, in the aggregate, can destroy a major power. The effects take hold as soon as the enemy enters a player's home cities, and effectively replaces the 12-factor-city rule in the old game.

Addendum: One salient feature: The game is now 15 turns long, not open-ended as the Time Record Card still (erroneously) indicates. Players may extend the game beyond that; but with the greatly enhanced power of armored units and the BBT, this extension may not be needed.

Thus, the '75 rules. They not only brought *BLITZKRIEG* equal to state-of-the-art, but also make for a game that is comprehensive and yet manageable—monster-game concepts on a playable level. Finally, the new rules bring *BLITZKRIEG* forward from the Second World War—accurately representing strategy on the deadlier battlefields of the '80s.

- TYPES:**
-  Infantry
 -  Armor
 -  Break-through Artillery
 -  Ranger
 -  Airborne
 -  Air Assault
 -  Strategic Bombers
 -  Medium Bombers
 -  Tactical Bombers
 -  Fighters

CRITICAL ISSUE #2: THE TACTICS OF RETREAT

The new rules have greatly increased *BLITZKRIEG* attrition. Artillery, aircraft, armor, and even minor countries are more deadly, with the Barrage and Bombardment Table contributing to much of the carnage.

The Tournament Game Attrition Table still offers the most potential for bloodshed. To be sure, direct losses on the TGAT still remain light (attackers lose two factors maximum even at 1-6, as against four defending factors max at 6-1). Also, AVs aren't likely against large stacks. But, retreating units are still **TOTALLY ELIMINATED** if retreat is impossible. This was, and remains the deadliest aspect of *BLITZKRIEG*.

Five factors contribute to this:

- First, and newest, factor in retreat tactics is armored immunity to soft-unit ZOCs. Armor can potentially advance through the smallest gaps.
- Second, units can advance over AVs, directly into the rear of other enemy units.
- Third, units can advance after combat and surround units still to be fought. This can also ruin engaged units.
- Fourth, "elite" units (airborne, air assault, Ranger) or a landing force could outflank an enemy by sea and air.
- Fifth, air interdiction could also provide vertical envelopment.

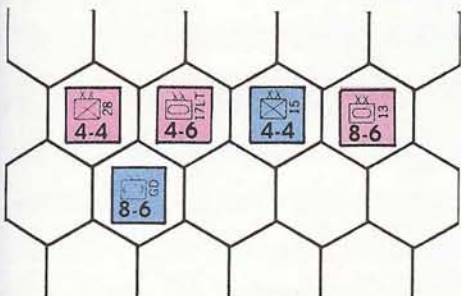


ILLUSTRATION 1: An example of the first factor is shown above. The 15th Infantry has been bypassed, and can't retreat. Should the 13th Armored be attacked in turn, it could retreat past the 15th even if the Guards Division counterattacks from the other side.

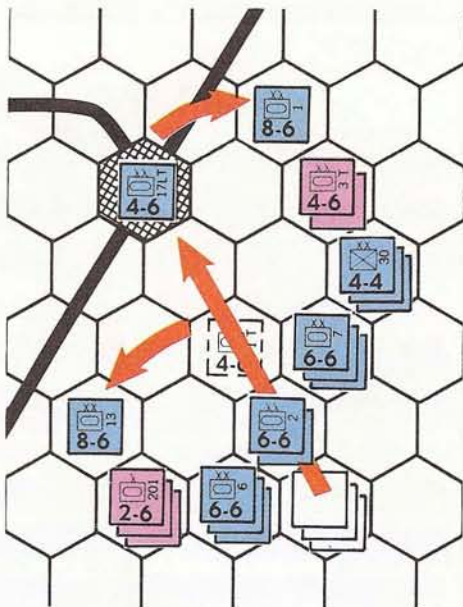


ILLUSTRATION 2: An example of the second possibility—AV—in action. A gap has been torn where a solid line once existed, and the defenders are in trouble.

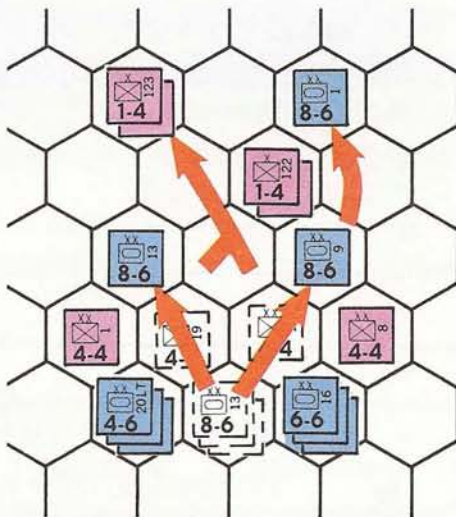


ILLUSTRATION 3: Advance after combat is quite effective with armor, given ZOC considerations, and is at its best if the four hex advance shown took place FIRST. Subsequent battles would now involve surrounded defenders.

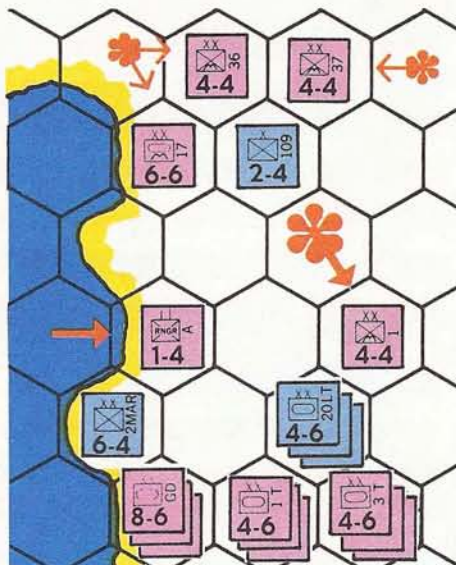


ILLUSTRATION 4: Elite forces demonstrate vertical envelopment, combined with an AV. The enemy security screen is AV'd.

allowing the 1st Airborne to drop in its drop zone untroubled by enemy ZOCs. The defending 20th Light Tank Division could retreat, airborne units have a "soft" ZOC, but any infantry with the 20th must stand or die. Note the landing by the Rangers.

A final note: The AVing units must delay their after-combat advance until the other battles are finished. Though they can't help eliminate the defenders, this turn, they can still redeploy against counterattack, or advance next to the survivors and make them uncomfortable.

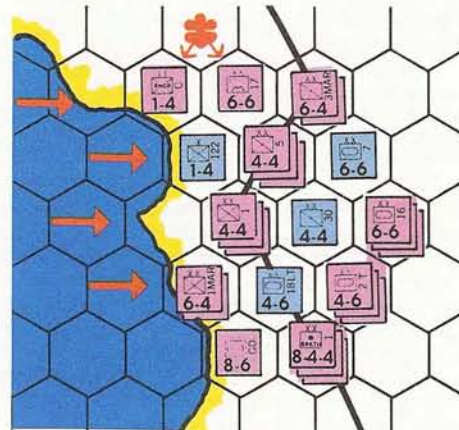


ILLUSTRATION 5: Amphibious forces demonstrate another way of outflanking an enemy. This invasion was not anticipated. Note the AV by airdropped Air Assault and Ranger units, clearing the way for the landing.

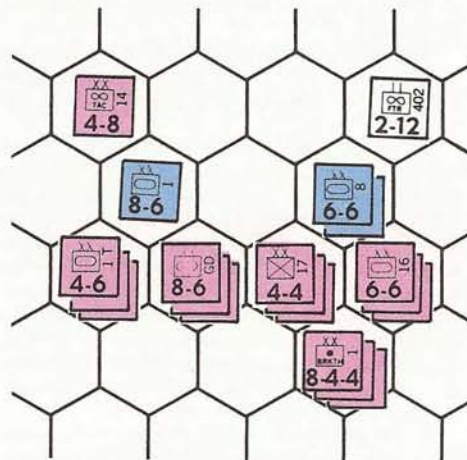


ILLUSTRATION 6: Interdiction is shown to advantage here. For some reason, the enemy didn't intercept, so the Blue 1st Armored is surrounded. The FTR unit does NOT have a ground ZOC—four factors or more are needed—but it still provides an aerial ZOC and can intercept enemy fighters as a patroller.

Critical Issue #2, in discussing retreat tactics, has distilled *BLITZKRIEG* tactics to its essentials. Players will find that most game casualties will be due to blocked retreats, especially now that the supply rules have changed, and tactics will devolve into a struggle for encirclement.

CRITICAL ISSUE #3: TURN ONE—BLUE

GREAT BLUE, Imperial Federation of. One of two Great Powers on its continent, Blue is primarily bounded by West and South Gulfs, with a separate province on the Northwest Peninsula. Blue possesses a large coastline and a maritime-based economy, and is equal to Big Red in population, despite its smaller land area. Blue now has a marginal lead in the recent arms race, prompted by the rise of popular, revanchist sentiment and a military-backed Regency . . .

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 5

Blue's options on the first turn are somewhat limited, due solely to geography. Yellow is the only minor country that borders Blue; further, Yellow is the largest of the minors, with some cities barely accessible. Green is the only other country, after Yellow, with invasion beaches on minor-country

soil—putting all other minor countries out of Blue's reach.

Blue has an additional problem in that it is a non-contiguous, i.e., two-part, state—like pre-1939 Germany or pre-1971 Pakistan, or the continental U.S., with Alaska. The province containing the River Sparling becomes vulnerable if Yellow isn't annexed, for Red could get access to that sea zone through VV25. So, an invasion of Yellow is almost inevitable.

Further, Yellow is vital to Blue offensively, as well as defensively. From the pivotal city of EE25, Blue can directly threaten Green, Brown, and the desert.

With this in mind, five strategies become apparent. First, a word on air force deployment—without Yellow, Great Blue has only two airbases close to the critical theaters around the lake. Of the two—S25 and V33, only the latter is convenient to Green and, as a port, provides clout under the Naval Ascendancy rule. Putting three wings of FTR into V33 (and a fourth in Sea Zone C) will cover the area under the Naval Ascendancy and Air Combat rules—but air units in S25 and the capital would see little action in most cases. Thus, the deployment shown in many of the strategies below. Diversion of MDM and TAC to Q16 is a way of providing Turn One action for the bomber forces and, coincidentally, ties up Sea Zone B under the Naval Ascendancy rule. These units can, of course, stage into Yellow on Turn Two well in time for combat with the Red Air Force.

Five strategic options are apparent to Blue, as italicized. I provide setups for most of them, to illustrate their potential and limitations. The options are:

1. *Invalidate Yellow.* This is a standard Blue opening. Chart 1 illustrates one method of subduing Yellow in one turn. Since armored units can ignore city ZOCs, and stacks of three units per hex are allowed, capture of EE25 is easier than in *BLITZ-KRIEG '65*. Blue will have units left over, after the needed 24 factors are allotted to each city, so as much armor as possible should deploy forward to EE25. Such a mass, backed by infantry at V20, would permit a second-turn offensive in Green or Brown. This would catch Red off-balance, especially if Red invaded Green on Turn One.

2. *Invalidate Yellow and Green.* Chart 2 shows one way. Other than an extreme-range armored drive past X27, the invasion of Green will require sea and air landings. This will require all ten amphibious divisions and every jump-trained soldier in Great Blue, including the Rangers, who take up room for two divisions at sea and must fly in, instead. Note that CC15 can be reached by armor, just barely. The Yellow-Green option, regardless of tactics, will scatter Blue forces over half the map, and weakens the V33 garrison. The invasion had better succeed. The limited reach into the Green interior leaves the entire Blue bridgehead open to counterattack, no matter how well set up. Attacks on ten cities will entail large losses, of course. Finally, Red can counterattack directly—across the South Lawrence—or indirectly, through Brown or the desert, throwing Blue off-balance.

This option has slight advantages—Red will be surprised, and may not be able to retaliate effectively unless he is massed in force around NN48. Further, NN48 itself could be bombed by Blue SAC units from V33, without violating Black neutrality; the raid need not be a night mission, either, if Red fighters aren't at NN48 by some fluke. Finally, Blue can confront Red on the S. Lawrence, not the isthmus, and can eventually enter Black. Finally, successful invasion of Green will help secure Sea Zone C, which would screen the Blue homeland from amphibious assault. All this, of course, is contingent on the survival of the Blue forces in Green.

3. *Invalidate Green.* Refer to Chart 2, the invasion force will be the same as with the Yellow-Green op-

CHART 1. GREAT BLUE: THE YELLOW OPTION

DIVISION TYPE	START HEX	END HEX	MISSION
3 Marine	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Standby
1 Infantry	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Standby
4 Ranger Bn	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Standby
1 FTR	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Standby
2 Infantry	P29	Sea Zone C	Standby
3 Infantry (detachments), 24 factors total			
2 factors: C20/D31/P29			Static Garrison
1 factor: P15/P16/D7/L19/G4/H33**			Static Garrison
4 Infantry	Sea Zone A	BB14/DD16	Attack CC15
2 Airborne	S25	CC16	Attack CC15*
1 Hvy Arm	Q16	EE24	Attack EE25
2 Armor			
1 Hvy Arm	P15	DD24	Attack EE25*
2 Armor			
3 Lt Tank	P17	CC23	Standby
1 LT, 2 Arm	P16	DD23	Standby
2 Infantry	V33	W27	X27: Attack*
3 Infantry	R20	V21	Attack V20
3 Infantry	P18	V19	Attack V20
Air Asslt	V33	V33	Standby
1 BA, 2 Inf	L11	N14	Attack M14*
2 BA	S22	W26	Attack X27*
3 FTR	V33	V33	Cover Sea Zone C
2 TAC	P16	P16	Attack M14
2 MDM	P15	P15	Attack U11
1 FA, 1 Inf	L6	T11	Attack U11*
2 SAC	P29	P29	Standby

BA—Breakthrough Artillery

LT—Light Tank

Hvy Arm—Heavy Armor (8-factor)

Inf—Infantry

*—advance after combat

**—P15/P16 garrisons start in L19.

NOTE: Abbreviations remain the same for subsequent invasion charts.

CHART 2. GREAT BLUE: THE YELLOW-GREEN OPTION

DIVISION TYPE	START HEX	END HEX	MISSION
1 Inf	P29	V33	Garrison
3 Inf	detachments—see Yellow option (garrison duties)		
2 MDM	P15	P15	Attack U11
2 TAC	P16	P16	Attack U11
1 Hvy Arm	L6	BB15	Attack CC15
2 Armored			
3 Inf	K6	T11	Attack U11*
1 LT, 1 BA,	L11	N14	Attack M14
1 Inf			
	Sea Zone C:		
2 Inf	AA35	BB38	Attack CC39*
2 Inf	AA36	CC38	Attack CC39*
2 Inf	AA37	BB39	Attack CC39*
1 Inf	BB32	BB32	Attack BB31
3 Mar	AA33	EE33	Attack EE34*
1 FTR	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Interception
3 FTR	V33	Green	Patrol/Intercept
1 Hvy Arm	U26	BB30	Attack BB31*
2 Armored			
3 Inf	V27	W27	Attack X27
1 FA, 1 Inf	T25	W26	Attack X27*
2 BA	S22	V21	Attack V20*
2 Inf	P16	V19	Attack V20*
3 LT	Q16	EE24	Attack EE25
2 Arm	P15	DD24	Attack EE25*
2 SAC	Capital	Capital	Bomb NN48
2 Airborne	S25	AA41	Attack AA42
1 Air Aslt	V33	BB42	Attack AA42
2 Rgr Bn	V33	AA43	Attack AA42*

CHART 3. BIG RED: THE BLACK & GREEN OPTION

DIVISION TYPE	START HEX	END HEX	MISSION
3 Marine	BB32**	BB32	Attack BB31***
2 Inf	AA33**	DD33	Attack EE34***
1 Marine	AA33**	CC32	Attack BB31
1 Inf	Z33**	BB34	Security
1 Inf	AA37**	BB38	Attack CC39
2 Airborne	YY43	EE33	Attack EE34*
1 Air Assault	YY43	EE35	Attack EE34
1 Airborne	NN48	AA43	Attack AA42*
1 Inf	NN48	JJ39	Attack JJ38
3 BA	SS45	OO41	Attack OO40*
1 Inf	TT45	PP41	Attack OO40*
1 BA, 2 Inf	ZZ48	WW42	Attack VV42*
1 Tank, 2 Inf	QQ50	JJ45	Attack JJ46***
2 Hvy Arm	NN49	BB42	Attack AA42
1 Armored			
3 Armored	OO50	II38	Attack JJ38*
3 Armored	PP50	DD40	Attack CC39*
1 Inf	Four 1-factor garrisons: RRR39/RRR54/JJJ56/BBB54		
1 Inf	RR50	NN48	Garrison
1 Inf	RR50	NN49	Garrison
2 TAC	YY43	YY43	Attack VV42
2 MDM	NN48	NN48	Attack JJ46
1 SAC	NN48	NN48	Standby
1 SAC	YY43	YY43	Standby
3 FTR	NN49	NN49	Intercept/Patrol
1 FTR	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Intercept
1 Inf	YY43	YY43	Garrison
4 Rgr Bn	BBB54	Sea Zone D	Reserve
2 Inf	BBB54	Sea Zone D	Reserve

*—Advance after combat.
**—Invasion; starts in Sea Zone C.
***—Advance one unit.

CHART 4. BIG RED: PLAN WHITE OPTION

DIVISION TYPE	START HEX	END HEX	MISSION
4 Marine,	Sea Zone A	Sea Zone A?	Standby or
4 Ranger Bn,	Sea Zone A	Sea Zone A?	Invasion:
4 Infantry	Sea Zone A	Sea Zone A?	CC15, G4
2 Hvy Arm,	CCC29	OO23	Invade Yellow
1 Armored			
3 Armored	DDD29	PP24	Invade Yellow
2 Armored	EEE30	QQ24	Invade Yellow
1 Armored	BBB33	PP26 via ZZ30	Security
1 Tank	BBB33	PP27	Security
3 Airborne	FFF30	UU24	Attack VV25*
1 BA, 1 Inf	GGG31	WW26	Attack VV25*
1 BA, 1 Inf	CCC34	XX32	Attack WW32*
1 Air Asslt	ZZ48	VV32	Attack WW32*
2 BA, 1 Inf	ZZ41	VV38	Attack UU37*
1 Inf	NN48	NN48	Garrison
1 Inf	NN49	NN49	Garrison
2 Inf	BBB54	BBB54	Garrison
1 Inf	RRR40	RRR40	Garrison
1 Inf	RRR54	RRR54	Garrison
2 Inf (detached): 6 factors—ZZ48			Garrison
1 factor—JJJ56			Garrison
1 factor—YY43			Garrison
2 MDM	YY43	YY43	Attack UU37
2 SAC, 1 Inf	FFF30	FFF30/BBB33	Standby
2 TAC	BBB33	BBB33	Attack WW32
3 FTR	NN48/49	NN48/49	Secure Zone/Intercept
1 FTR	Sea Zone A	Sea Zone A	Intercept/Interdict

tion, less the overland armored drive, of course. The difference would have to be made up with MDM and TAC units from east Blue. A sealift of ten armored divisions could enter Sea Zone C hoping that at least one port is functioning on the second turn; this sealift would be the second wave of a war backed solely by sea and air power. Once the first and second waves have been deployed to their bases and ports, the remaining ground forces can be poised along the Yellow border. This feint must look convincing, or Red will prepare a severe counterattack from NN48.

This plan uses Yellow neutrality as a shield, closing off much of the board. Red would escalate the war into the north and center only by entering Yellow as an aggressor, with all the disadvantages that entails. Blue, however, would not be directly threatened, but would be fighting a remote war on Red's doorstep, with an advance into Black and southern Red intended. Of course, air and naval superiority over Sea Zone C is essential if this option is to be more than a pipe-dream.

The risks of a Green-only option are manifest—but God help Red if it succeeds!

A final note on Options 2 and 3: Blue may be going a gulf too far. Observant players will spot the obvious: Red forces from NN48 will cross the South Lawrence like a jealous husband. Armored forces will surround and destroy much of the first wave, south of the isthmus, and Blue's only antidote is the piecemeal deployment of the 12th Air Assault Division along the river. The resulting tangle of AVs may slow the Red juggernaut somewhat, if the late 12th Air Assault is well deployed.

Certainly, the Option 2 and 3 attacks will be fallible because of the inherent weak spots in southern Greece—AND holding it—with ten amphibious and four airborne divisions (counting the Rangers among the latter). Even in later turns, a Blue invasion of Green will still have trouble getting armor as far as DD33, leaving the rest of the country insecure.

I do not highly recommend these two options, but maybe there's a solution to this puzzle. If we can put a man on the moon, Great Blue can certainly put a few across Sea Zone C.

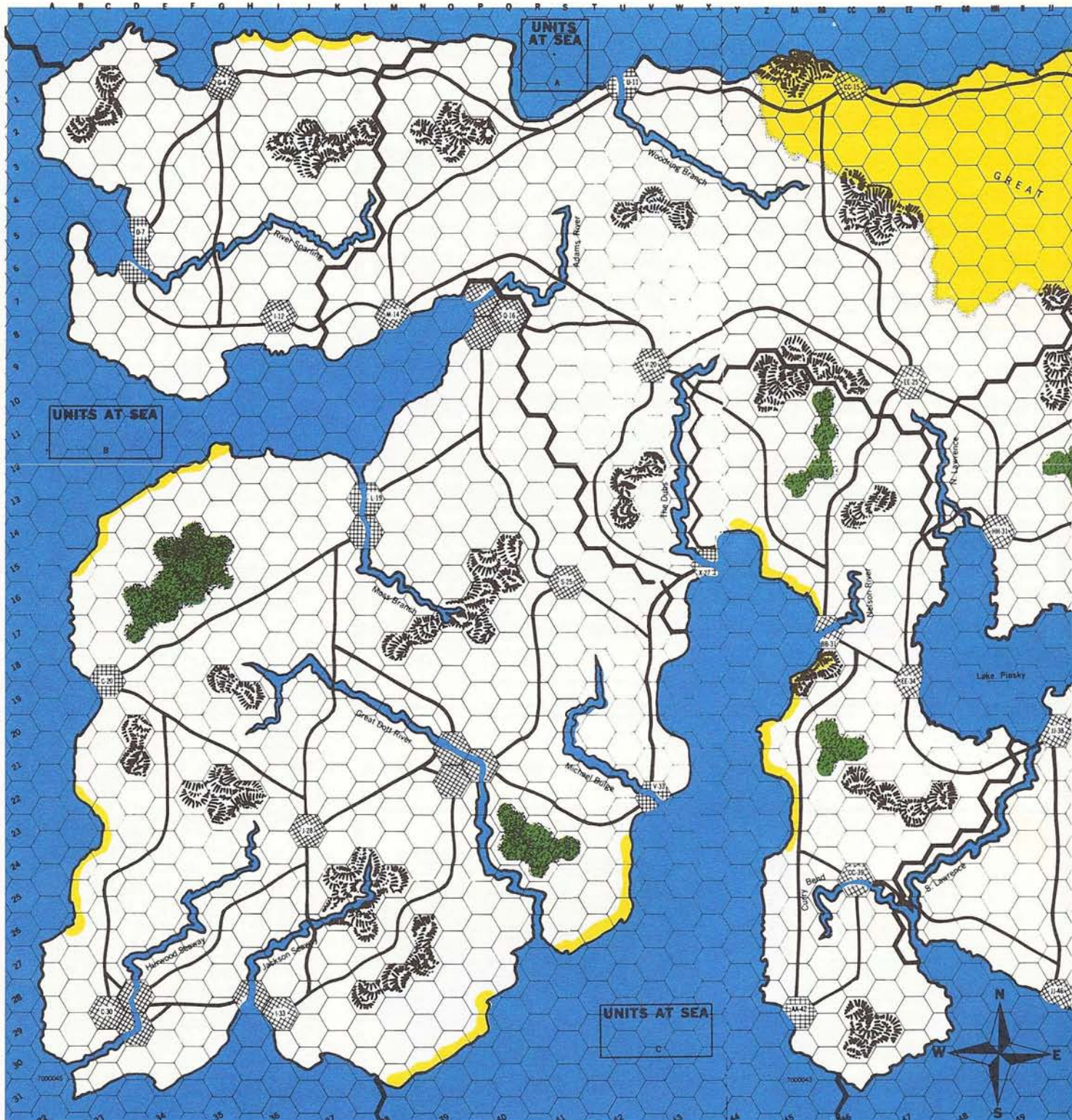
Some other object lessons:

4. *Sit Tight.* In short, wait for Red to come and enter Yellow aggressively. This would make central Yellow the main battleground. This is a possible strategic option, after all, with the faint advantage of getting Red strung out. However, this option would concede much of the victory conditions.

5. *Other Options, Turn One.* Blue will find, quickly enough, that the minor country rules pretty much compel unilateral invasion of neutral countries—nothing piecemeal. That leaves few options, other than the ones described so far. What else is left—invade Red directly? That would be foolhardy under the Naval Ascendancy rules. Invade any other minor country, with or without invading Yellow? Impossible, if only due to sheer distance and lack of coastline.

Thus, Blue's possible options on the first turn, viable and otherwise. Of the first three options, only the first—direct invasion of Yellow—allows Blue any initiative on the second turn. The conquest of Yellow is challenging enough, but Blue can still mass around EE25 and at sea, if there are no sideshows.

Any invasion of Green, as discussed in Options 2 and 3, will require Blue recovery on Turn Two, consolidation of conquered territory, establishment of defenses, the regathering of a strategic reserve. Though Options 2-5 are presented mainly as object lessons, the invasion of Green is not to be wholly condemned. The risks, and rewards, are merely increased. Blue players should consider some way of balancing their geographical disadvantage because despite Blue's first-move advantage, Red may easily capture the strategic initiative.



CRITICAL ISSUE #4: TURN ONE—RED

RED, Corporate State of, usually referred to as "Big Red." Largest Continental nation, with several western cities, acquired during the First War, bordering directly on its neighbors. Increasingly hostile to all Continental governments since the advent of the Monolithic Party—with the possible exception of the military junta in Yellow . . .

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 14

Red's first turn options actually include the setup phase. Blue's frontier and sea dispositions may indicate an invasion other than Yellow, and a Red counter can be devised from a massed, mobile force around NN48.

Red has six options, and many involve possible counterstrokes to radical Blue openings. Since White and Black cities are within an easy march of Red frontiers, many options can be explained without charts, bearing in mind that 24 factors should be assigned to each minor city. Any minor country should be subdued on the turn of invasion, of course.

The options:

1. *Invalidate Black.* A safe, conservative option. Mass at NN48 and YY43, especially the former; attack all four cities with 24+ factors each, massing the (armored) excess around JJ38; have eight infantry divisions and four Ranger battalions in Sea Zone C, with airborne reserves well in hand at NN48; and, leave White neutral as a buffer, Blue

will find it nearly impossible to conquer.

This option allows Red an immediate second-turn invasion of Brown or Green; without breaking stride, the Red Army will have walked into Blue's front yard. Further, Red would be able to lacerate any Blue invasion of Green. Finally, Red will be able to keep seaborne and airborne reserves uncommitted—a high-visibility, highly-mobile threat.

2. *Invalidate Black and Green.* A daring option, which can easily shift to a counteroffensive if Blue invades Green first. Chart 3 illustrates a means of taking both countries, assuming a Blue invasion of Yellow only, first turn.

Unlike Blue attempts at Green, Red can introduce large armored forces from the NN48 area, able to reach CC39 and AA42. This means that am-

later.

4. *Invalidate White.* An overture to a desert war, possible and even inviting under the 1975 rules, as 1) supply is no longer such a problem, 2) armor gets double-movement in the desert, and 3) VV25 is now a port.

Essentially, Red strikes into White with all available force, less 48 factors in southern White and strong garrisons on the Red south coast. The main drive will cross northern White and proceed into the desert (assuming Blue has already violated Yellow). A maximum force in Sea Zone A is essential.

A possible use of this option is shown on Chart 4. Note that ten armored divisions drive immediately into Yellow, with airborne forces available behind them. In forces at sea, provided Blue doesn't invade near CC15, can liberate that city on Turn Two, or: a) cut supplies to the Blue desert forces by landing along the beach road, or b) invade Blue near G4.

A note on desert air forces: Air bases are limited, especially for Red. The setup shows some air units on the south coast, put to alternative use securing Sea Zone D. What the Chart 4 setup doesn't show is the second-turn staging. The Red Air Force should reassemble thus: VV25—two SAC and one FTR wing; WW32—two FTR, one TAC; BBB33—one TAC and two MDM (optional). The SAC units are needed against enemy troops and to bomb the enemy supply line at CC15. The FTR units are needed, if nothing else, to protect the supply line and port at VV25. Other missions can include interdiction and interception of paratroop drops, with the TAC units helpful in the former role. The MDM units may not be too useful unless Blue forces approach White—a better use of the BBB33 units may be on the south coast, securing Sea Zones D or E. The MDM can be staged into Yellow later if all goes well.

The war can be limited to the desert. Of the three avenues of attack in the center board, the desert is the widest and most volatile. A successful offensive by Red could prevent an escalation of the war into Brown (a drive on EE25 will stop that). The tactical fine points discussed in Critical Issue #2 will realize their fullest potential there in the desert. Finally, Red will find that the second- and third-turn reinforcements, which include seven more armored divisions, will fit in nicely.

This option is the most radical. It can succeed, but Red should reevaluate it if Blue is threatening Green with a first-turn invasion. If so, Red may want to setup a Black-only option and plan to counterattack. A march into the desert could unbalance a Blue invasion of Green, but both players will face a risky game, with the neutrality of Black and Yellow being key issues. A successful desert war will depend on Black neutrality—and Red's status as liberator of Yellow.

5. *Invalidate White, Black, and Brown.* Once Brown becomes a first-turn objective, other countries become involved in the planning. Since the most direct route is across southern White, that country will have to be violated. Since the war is being fought south of the mountains, Black will have to be invaded sooner or later, or why bother? Besides, the most direct road from Red to Brown runs through White AND Black (YY43 to VV42, then into White at UU37, then on to NN33).

Thus, the crux of the invasion. Seven Black and White cities would require 84 factors. Three armored divisions could follow the "direct" road from YY43 to NN33, violating three countries at once, and reinforcing 22 airborne factors in Brown, which is all that can reach. Without the armored forces, the airborne couldn't both take Brown and defend it—thus, the three-country invasion.

The resulting mess is illustrated by Chart 5, showing the possibilities and risks of this offensive. Chart 5 makes the (questionable) assumption that Red airdrop and air-transport capabilities are

somehow independent, so SIX units (each Ranger battalion equalling one-half unit) drop into Brown. Even so, the attack will entail high losses to minor country resistance, particularly in the low-odds attacks in Brown. Airborne losses will be particularly bad, even if Blue doesn't counterattack for some reason.

Red will be scattered badly, and will spend the second turn consolidating and reorganizing. The second turn will also be for staging aircraft—preferably forward into Brown. A third-turn offensive to the west will preclude an invasion of Green or occupied White.

The advantage of this option is that Red is into Brown on the first turn, right in Blue's lap. Furthermore, the attack on Brown can be called off, and it had better be if Blue invades Green first. Red's forfeiture of the initiative is offset by the fact that a second-turn invasion of Brown would be considered anyway.

Unfortunately, Blue would get away with a second-turn invasion of Green, with Red off-balance. Further, Blue has the option of closing off western Brown, between the mountains and the lake. This done, Blue could then escalate the war into Green or the desert.

This option is possible, even plausible, but not recommended.

6. *Other Options.* A Black-Brown or Brown-White invasion were already ruled out, as direct supply and reinforcement would be difficult because of the peculiar road-net in southern White and northeast Black. Further, a Brown-White invasion would make Brown a sideshow to the desert war, with Blue able to undermine it all with a drive through Brown into southern White.

Finally, a Green-only or Blue-only invasion, on the first turn, would be patently absurd. Other options are too fantastic even to consider; thus, Red's

many options have been described. Red is fortunate in that setup and movement are performed after Blue's. Further, Red is more flexible than Blue on the first turn, if only because of Red's longer land frontiers.

CRITICAL ISSUE #5: TURN TWO

"If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all."

—Hamlet, Act V, Scene II

The second turn, although largely guided by the first turn's offensives, is critical in its own right. This is the turn that Red and Blue will confront each other directly, and the first meeting engagements will often occur then.

Continental geography will determine much of the planning at the first turn's end. Unless Blue is already committed to Green, that player will see three avenues from EE25; south into Green, southeast into Brown, and northeast into the Great Koufax Desert. A fourth option, a massing at EE25 for a crushing third-turn counteroffensive, would trade the initiative for a tactical advantage over the Red vanguard.

Red will be more constrained, as Red forces will already have been deployed in the north or south. Red's sphere of interest is split by a great range of forests and mountains running from EE25 to Lake Frederick—a divide that Blue will not yet have reached. Red will have been committed north or south of the Divide on Turn One. Few players would, or should, fight a three-front war.

If Red is committed to the desert, as Critical Issue #4 showed, the war will be largely fought there. Strategy will narrow to the desert's confines, and is dealt with in Critical Issue #6.

CHART 5. BIG RED: THE WHITE-BROWN-BLACK OPTION

DIVISION TYPE	START HEX	END HEX	MISSION
2 Hvy Arm.	YY43	OO34 via	Attack NN33*
1 Armored		VV42, UU37 areas	
4 Ranger Bn	ZZ48	1 ea at JJ28 and JJ30	Screen
		2 ea at II31	Attack HH31
1 Air Assault	ZZ48	3 factors ea: II32 OO31	Attack HH31 Attack OO30
1 Airborne	BBB33	II32	Attack HH31*
1 Airborne	BBB33	NN29	Attack OO30
1 Airborne	BBB33	OO31	Attack OO30*
1 BA, 1 Inf	CCC29	WW26	Attack VV25*
2 MDM	FFF30	FFF30	Attack VV25
1 BA, 2 Inf	CCC34	XX32	Attack WW32*
2 TAC	BBB33	BBB33	Attack WW32
2 BA, 1 Inf	ZZ41	VV38	Attack UU37*
1 Tank	ZZ42	UU38	Attack UU37
3 Infantry	NN48	JJ39	Attack JJ38*
2 Armored	NN49	KK39	Attack JJ38
3 Marine	Sea Zone C	JJ45	Land, Attack JJ46
1 Marine	Sea Zone C	KK46	Land, Attack JJ46*
1 Infantry	RR50	NN48	Garrison
1 Infantry	ZZ51	YY43	Garrison
2 Armored	PP47	OO41	Attack OO40*
3 Infantry	SS45	PP41	Attack OO40
2 Armored	WW47	UU42	Attack VV42
3 Infantry	ZZ48	WW43	Attack VV42*
1 FTR	Sea Zone C	Sea Zone C	Interception
3 FTR	NN48	NN48	Patrol or Intercept
2 SAC	YY43	YY43	Bomb EE25 road
2 Infantry	3 factors—BBB54		Garrison
	2 factors—RRR39		Garrison
	2 factors—RRR54		Garrison
	1 factor—JJJ56		Garrison

A Red drive in the traditional area, south of the Divide, will pose two choices on the second turn: Attack north or south of Lake Pinsky. Waiting at JJ38 is not a realistic choice, for Red should not allow Blue the initiative, or access to the Zocchi-South Lawrence line.

Much of the preplanning for Turn Two is described in Critical Issues #3 and #4. Players will find that a follow-through strategy is best, if only to be prepared for the Turn Two challenge. A weak offensive on that turn, due to poor planning or weak forces, will be crushed before reinforcements can arrive.

The actual theaters of battle, and the tactics used once a player enters them, are addressed, one by one, in Critical Issue #6.

Chart 6 shows the balance of forces during the reinforcement turns, before the players fall back on replacements. Blue starts the game with a slight advantage in numbers, but this will peak by Turn Three.

Red's parity will improve on the fourth and fifth turns, though the all-armed Turn Three reinforcements puts them ahead of Blue in that category. Blue reinforcements enjoy a surge in the sixth and eighth turns leaving both forces roughly equal in armor and infantry units. A critical problem is Red's advantage in "elite" formations—one additional airborne division for the first two turns, and one additional Marine division for the course of the game.

Still, this picture is an abstract. The actual balance of forces will be determined by the carnage the players will inflict on one another—which will begin in earnest after Turn Two.

CRITICAL ISSUE #6: PRIMARY THEATERS

Two massive terrain features, in the center of the *BLITZKRIEG* board, split the battlefields as dramatically as the Pripet Marsh or the Thuringerwald (between the Hof and Fulda gaps). The *BLITZKRIEG* features, Lake Pinsky and the Divide (particularly the Koufax Mountains in Brown and west-central White), effectively create three avenues, theaters where Red and Blue will meet in decisive battle.

GREAT KOUFAX DESERT. Arid region north of the Koufax Mountains characterized by barren tracts and low winter temperatures. Scene of some First War actions, and the subsequent (and bloody) Great Koufax War between Yellow and White. The Koufax has proven to have large oil deposits—the sole industry and export of both countries. The Koufax is thought to be suitable for armored warfare, though maintenance will be a problem in a protracted war

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 8

BLITZKRIEG '75 introduces players to a dramatic new field of battle: the Koufax. Supply constraints, other than line of supply, have been removed, and armored movement is now doubled. The result is an area where any breakthrough will have major consequences.

The Koufax is easily the widest front. The doubled armor movement, the enhanced armor ZOCs and stacking, and the exposed supply line will allow turbulent, game-winning offensives. Finesse will be well-rewarded; casualties will be large because the featureless terrain affords no refuge. Obviously the only possible defense will be the counterattack.

Oddly, terrain isn't a tactical factor. The desert has no forests, rivers, mountains, or cities to break it up and impede movement (except at the edges). Pure, abstract tactics can be utilized, as illustrated in Critical Issue #2. Thus, the desert is a clear, sanded arena for the protagonists.

Some unique disadvantages persist, however. Both sides will find the lack of airbases a problem. Only four cities lie at either end: CC15 and EE25 in the west; VV25 and WW32 in the east. However,

any player possessing Brown will find an ideal site for airbases—particularly OO30, three hexes from the Koufax, and shielded by mountains. Thus, escalation into Brown will be tempting if the desert war is protracted.

Another disadvantage is the supply line. An army proceeding past the halfway point will find that supplies must follow the coast road—an umbilical cord easily cut by sea or air landings. Strategic bombing of CC15 or VV25 will also cut the road, and fighter deployment at either end is crucial if for no other reason.

The Koufax has three primary exits: West past CC15, southwest toward EE25, and east into White. Two minor exits should not be overlooked: Southeast past WW32, and south through hex NN28. The latter is particularly valuable as it provides access to Brown, at the cost of only a slight delay—the mountains narrow to only one hex there. Armies emerging from any exit will find enemy airbases more numerous, with friendly air support initially lacking.

The secondary exits are of local interest; the primary exits are critical, and the objects of the desert war. Red forces emerging from the west end of the Koufax will be in a position to liberate Yellow and divide Blue in two pieces at the Adams River.

Red forces moving southwest through EE25 can easily cut off Blue armies in Brown and Green. Blue forces, on their part, emerge from the eastern Koufax directly into the Red heartland.

In summary: Neither army, once committed to the Koufax, dares falter. Defeat on this one front will lead directly to final blackout.

BROWN, Kingdom of. As small as White in population (though not quite as poor); smallest minor country in size. Brown has the fortune of natural obstacles on virtually all sides—the Koufax Mountains, Lake Pinsky, and two rivers. The capital is deep in rough country; fortunate, as Brown has had to rely on its traditional neutrality, as its days of feudal power have long since . . .

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 3

Brown is analogous to real-life Belgium—the opposing forces will find it a useful stepping-stone to outflank the other fronts, especially Green. Further, Brown narrows at its east and west ends, and an invader will easily defend it against counter-attack, especially if Green, White, or Black are neutral. West Brown can be defended along a line from the mountains to the lake (five hexes, or four if Green is neutral). Blue can hold east Brown along the River Zocchi—half its length will suffice if either White or Black are neutral.

CHART 6. THE BALANCE OF FORCES

TYPE OF DIVISION	TURN	Blue (Red)						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Infantry	21	24	27	31	31	34	34	37
4-4	(17)	(20)	(20)	(24)	(27)	(31)	(31)	(35)
Marine	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
6-4	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)
Artillery	4	5	6	7	7	7	7	7
8-4-4	(4)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(6)	(6)	(6)	(6)
Armored	6	8	9	10	10	11	11	12
6-6	(7)	(9)	(11)	(11)	(13)	(13)	(13)	(13)
Tank/Lt Tank	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4-6	(1)	(1)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Hvy Armor	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
8-6	(2)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Airborne	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
4-4	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)

Air Assault Divisions remain in the same at one each.
Aviation Wings remain equal at six bomber and four fighter wings each.

CHART 8. BOMBER UTILITY CHART

Mission	Unit SAC	MDM	TAC	FTR	Uses Chart
Ground Attack:					
Strategic	X	X			BBT
Tactical		X	X		TGAT
Strafe:					
Ground Units			X	X	ACT
Air Bases				X	ACT
Bomb:					
Air Base		X	X		BBT
Port	X	X			BBT*
City-Road	X	X			BBT*
Industry	X	X			BBT*
Night	X	X			BBT**
Interdict			X	X	***
Naval		X	X	X	n/a
Ascendancy					

*—any result other than no-effect succeeds
**—as in port, road, or industrial mission
***—see Strafe, above (on occasion) per 33.7

The advantages of seizing Brown first are manifest: Airbases convenient to both the desert and the Green isthmus, a means of cutting off enemies in Green, direct access to the enemy's front yard, and, for Red, a chance to turn the flank of armies in the western desert. Defensive advantages are enhanced by Brown's lack of seacoast, negating all but the occasional Ranger raid.

An invasion of Brown usually occurs on the third or fourth turn, to outflank an adjoining theater. Brown can be invaded first, i.e., on Turn Two, but the enemy can defend at the far end of this one front, and both players will face a critical decision: Where to escalate next, and when?

GREEN, Mercantile League of. Long, narrow country bordering much of South Gulf, with two major ports. Topography—particularly the lake, the border rivers, and the rough country in the north and south—serve to protect Green somewhat. Green's independence is primarily due to the lack of land borders with any Great Power. Great Blue's air force and Red naval presence in the Gulf continue to threaten Green's pursuit of prosperity. Green is the most industrialized minor nation, with a GNP of . . .

—Domesday Encyclopedia, v. 7

Green is the most tactically dangerous theater. Two beaches pose a continual threat from seaward. Great Blue airbases are close by; conversely, Red air forces in Green can threaten Blue cities in turn. The two northern cities are astride an isthmus that can easily be blocked, which will end the armored threat—but instead start a round of artillery and air bombardment that will make Verdun look like a musical comedy.

Green is difficult to pass by, however. Three of its four cities have critical industries. Further, one-turn conquest will put an army deep in enemy territory. Blue invaders will reach a (risky) springboard into Black at the South Lawrence. Red, if first in, will have two ports on Sea Zone C, air bases for raids into Blue, and a possible threat to southern Yellow and western Brown. However, Blue can usually counter a Red invasion by closing off the isthmus at the north end, making Red's advantages on this front more subtle than direct.

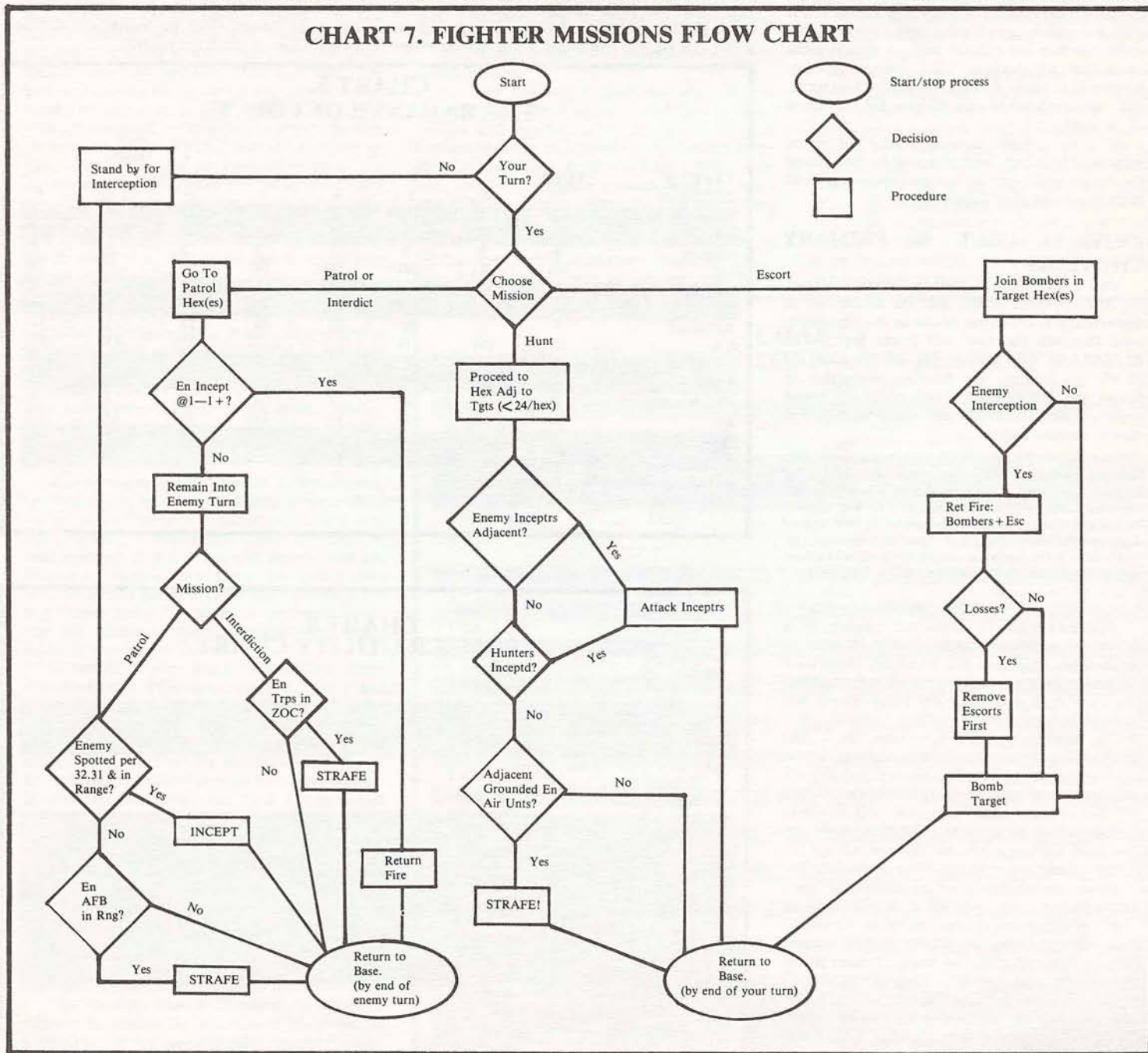
The rough country in central Green is critical during invasions. Of the beach hexes, BB32 is only useful for attacking Township BB31; AA32 is mountainous and prevents further movement. The

forest to the south will limit access to Township EE34—only beach hex AA33 is within four hexes of the city, so only three seaborne units can reach. The remainder of the southern beach is useful only for attacking CC39 and establishing defenses in the mountain and forest hexes. Blue may not be able to establish a line on the South Lawrence unless paratroops are diverted, and AA42 will still have to be taken. Overland access to Green, of course, is from far to the north, from occupied Yellow.

The result of a Blue seizure of a Blue invasion of Green, on Turn One or whenever, is one of two evils—seizure of only the northern two cities, with the partisan activity that will result; or, an attempt to take the whole country, with the inherent risks, as discussed in Critical Issue #3. Any Blue invasion from the north and/or west will have, at best, weak screening forces along the South Lawrence, and Red armored forces could retake central and southern Green in short order. So, Blue may not find aggression worthwhile in Green, if Blue still has the initiative at that time.

Green will benefit Red mostly. Blue should figure on winning there only with a counterinvasion

CHART 7. FIGHTER MISSIONS FLOW CHART



later, or in a war of attrition. Blue will probably have to win the war, offensively, in Brown.

CRITICAL ISSUE #7: SECONDARY THEATERS

Some examination of the remaining minor countries is in order, partly due to first-turn problems of conquest, partly due to possible action later. Major nations' topography will not be discussed—by the time the war reaches into a player's home country, a defeat is near.

YELLOW, Republic of. Recreated at end of First Continental War, largely out of Green and Great Blue territory; annexed desert province from White later. Largely rural economy; unable to compete with Great Blue rearmament. Yellow is the largest minor country; much of its unique political geography is indefensible. Separatist movements on both sides of the Yellow-Blue frontier continue to threaten Continental peace . . .

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 23

Eastern Yellow, the desert, has already been mentioned. The remainder of Yellow bears discussion. Yellow is squarely in Blue's way, and separates the two halves of Great Blue, leaving that player with little alternative to immediate invasion.

Yellow is not only the largest minor country in size, but in cities as well—six of them, far more than the three-to-four-city norm. The eastern-most cities are difficult for Blue to reach. Still, three armored divisions can reach CC15 along the coast road, going from hex L6 to BB15. Other armored units can reach EE25 and Q16, bypassing V20 along the way. Blue's Option 1, as discussed in Critical Issue #3, concentrates armor at EE25—leaving CC15 to airborne and amphibious assault; the result is a large armored concentration on the Brown frontier at the end of Turn One, poised and ready.

Thus, Township EE25 is the fulcrum with which Blue can move the game. EE25 can serve as a springboard into Brown, as infantry can airlift into the city and follow the armored forces. EE25 can also serve as a doorway into Green. Other Blue forces could have massed at V20 during the first turn, ready to assist. Finally, EE25 is a convenient base for deployment into the Koufax, given the desert movement bonus.

First-turn seizure of Yellow will require 24 factors against each city, if losses are to be minimized, and capture guaranteed. To keep Blue forces forward for the second turn, the remote cities (M14, U11, X27) can be taken with the aid of tactical air and artillery.

Blue air units will find few eastern bases initially, for V33 is the only forward base in east Blue, S25 is in an awkward spot, and X27 is neutral at start. Basing TAC and MDM back in Q16, as an alternative, will not only allow them to strike at most of Yellow, but affords control over Sea Zone B under the Naval Ascendancy rules. Conquest of Yellow will allow the air units to stage into Yellow on Turn Two, into the excellent forward airbases at X27 and EE25.

Some supply considerations: three cities, as road junctions, form choke-points for the Blue war effort. Bombardment or seizure of EE25 in particular would cut off supplies to the main fronts around Lake Pinsky, especially in Brown. The junction at V20 is another obvious bottleneck, controlling all access to the Blue mainland. All supplies to the eastern desert, of course, must pass through CC15. All three cities (EE25, V20, and CC15) are thus particularly important targets for Red bombers, as roads can be cut by bombing city road nets, and loss of EE25 and one of the other two would be serious. Red, with access to a better roadnet in Black, is not as vulnerable.

Yellow's four ports border on no less than three sea zones. X27 is particularly valuable as a sea and air base, nicely supporting V33. The absence of a road from X27 into Green is not as advantageous,

CHART 9. ECONOMICS CHART

Nation	INDUSTRY					TOTALS	
	Air-craft	Naval Stores	Petro-chem	Basic Indus.	None	Cities	City Hexes
BLUE	3	3	3	3	0	12	21
RED	3	3	3	3	0	12	21
Yellow	0	0	1	0	5	6	6
Green	0	1	1	1	1	4	4
Brown	0	0	0	1	2	3	3
White	0	0	1	0	2	3	3
Black	0	0	0	0	4	4	4

but blue reinforcements can be introduced to the fronts through V20.

A note on garrisons: All cities as vulnerable to some form of sea or air attack. EE25, V20, CC15, and especially X27 should elicit concern in this regard, if only because of the reason discussed above.

Finally, Yellow has 23 mountain hexes, more than any other minor country. These are well-scattered throughout Yellow, and make excellent strongpoints.

WHITE, Free State of. Northern half desert; southern half largely rough terrain; the whole undesirable to conquerors historically. The new port and refinery complex on the River Szekeley has provided White with an improved economy, although the land is still too impoverished to compete in the arms race. Competition with Red refineries upriver, and controversy over North Sea container trade, has been a source of some Red-White discord . . .

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 20

The entire northern half of White, being desert, was addressed in the preceding Critical Issue. With two Red cities on or near the border, any Blue invasion from the desert would threaten Red's very survival.

A key geographic factor is that White is split across the middle by considerable mountain and forest terrain, making access from Brown difficult. Movement from the north is well-nigh impossible if the central pass is defended. Thus, a guarantor of White neutrality, at least from Blue's standpoint.

For this reason, Red has a compelling reason to keep White neutral, if a desert campaign is declined. A Blue invasion, even if launched from the Yellow border, will not reach UU37 unless Blue already possesses Brown. In the event, Red could enter White as a liberator, and Blue will lose four factors per turn, guaranteed.

A neutral White will also allow Red to have a secure right flank, as the Red Army drives through Black and Brown. Escalation of the fighting into White can come at Red's leisure. If Brown falls to Blue, Red can defend the lower Zocchi and invade White later, using it to turn Blue's flank.

BLACK, Democratic People's Republic of. Comparable to Green in population and urban development, but without any major industry. Largely flat, with a transverse belt of forests and hills, Black is the most heavily forested of the minor powers. Black shares a long border with Big Red, a disadvantage since the recent ideological rift. The Witz River is still regarded as a protection against Red, though not tested during this century . . .

—*Domesday Encyclopedia*, v. 2

Black is usually fated to be Big Red's doormat. Red forces can reach all cities without resorting to airborne or sea forces—even infantry can get from NN48 to the lake port at JJ38, providing an alternative to armor losses. The lake port provides an outstanding air base, and is convenient to invasion of either Green or Brown. The other three cities are also useful as air bases to a varying degree; JJ46 can additionally serve as a port. Ranger operations can be mounted from JJ38.

All cities in Green and Brown are one turn's march from the Black frontiers, especially the Black lakeshore area. A Red concentration at NN48 can easily proceed on into Green, especially as a means of counterinvasion.

Blue will find access to Black to be difficult. Overland approaches to Black must cross one of two major rivers. Black has no beach anywhere near, and Blue will have no port in that sea zone until most of Black has fallen. Further, Red can use the curve of cities, forest, and hills from JJ46 to UU37 as a defensive line.

CRITICAL ISSUE #8: AVIATION

The Tournament Game adds a new dimension to the game—players will have to use air power, and not merely exploit an abstract, as in *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN*. Actual air strategy and tactics will come into play, particularly on the interaction of various air and ground units.

Players who remember *BLITZKRIEG '65* should study the air rules with particular care. Little of the old game is recognizable. Bombardment of cities is less effective than before; all other aviation capabilities have been amplified and diversified. Ground troops and supply lines suffer particular damage, a trend in real life as well as in revised *BLITZKRIEG*.

Abstracts of air unit capabilities are found in Charts 7 and 8. SAC and MDM units are particularly effective against ground units; TAC and FTR units excel at interdiction and anti-air missions. Interdiction is particularly disruptive to the ground war.

Bombing of cities should be selective, as the effects are of short duration. The proximity of NN48 and V33 to the fighting fronts means that Red naval and Blue air industries are vulnerable to harassment, especially as no minor country has aircraft plants. The best means of attack is against the city road net, as this would have the most dramatic effect. The war, after all, will have to be won on the ground.

Fighters will find two missions possible, with Patrol or Interdiction missions being the only ones carried over into an enemy turn. The Patrol missions are critical to interception, as the rules require some sort of early warning if interception is to occur. In short, the radius of action of interceptors is limited to how far the enemy flew after passing friendly air or ground ZOCs (electronic countermeasures must be neutralizing ground radar under these rules—not implausible these days).

Escort missions will be of some importance. Even a token escort will mean that all units therein can return fire, and the intercepting force is doubled, not tripled, in firepower. Besides, bombers intercepted without escort will bomb at half-effectiveness.

Even a token escort can be backed by a Hunt mission, which is more potent. If more than one bombing mission can be arranged adjacent to a hunt mission, the hunt is that much more effective. Players will find that the subtleties of hunt, escort,

and patrol missions will be as attractive as the more dramatic interception and patrol sorties. Indeed, a balance of all five missions is best.

Finally, a note on bases. Fighters should be furthest forward, for ease of deployment, and the fact that "interceptors" can avoid any pre-emptive attacks. V33 and the three lake ports are particularly well-sited fighter bases, as is OO40 for central and desert operations.

**CHART 10.
PORT CHART**

Nation	Port	Inland Port	Lake Port
BLUE	6	2	0
RED	4	1	1
Yellow	4	0	0
Green	2	0	1
Brown	0	0	1
White	0	1	0
Black	1	0	1

CRITICAL ISSUE #9: THE HOME FRONT

Some economic statistics may be useful, as illustrated by Chart 9. Blue and Red start the game with the *minimum* number of each industry, be it aircraft, petrochemical, or whatever. The naval-stores and basic-industry cities are particularly resistant to bombing, in that they possess two and three hexes each, not one. However, acquisition of minor-country industries will be necessary to provide a cushion.

Minor countries possess six critical-resource cities. Of these, three are in Green; the remainder are divided among Yellow, White, and Brown; Black has no critical resources. The remaining 14 minor-country cities are useful mainly for transport purposes: air bases, road/supply links, and, in a few cases, as ports (unlike *BLITZKRIEG '65*, minor country cities are no longer sources of supply).

Port facilities are of passing interest; Chart 10 clarifies the picture. Red is distinguished by fewer ports, a factor pertinent mainly to naval ascendancy. Of the minor-country ports, Green provides Red with access to Sea Zone C. White provides Red access to Sea Zone A and can be used by Blue for seaborne reinforcements, slightly faster than overland. The port at VV25 serves as an alternate, seaborne supply link to the desert front, distinct from the road net.

As noted, a player can be damaged by loss of critical-resource cities which make up ALL of the home-country cities. A direct invasion of a player's homeland, fortunately, must maintain supply lines through intervening sea zones, (players are urged to use the Naval Ascendancy rules). Indeed, the first countermeasure to such an invasion should be to introduce aircraft to an intervening sea zone. Thus, a large air presence in, say, V33 or JJ46 will both aid the main effort and defend the homeland, indirectly.

This is just as well, for a city such as G4 could be hit by as many as nine units (44 factors), ignoring Rangers, from three beach hexes. Marine divisions are particularly potent in stacks of three, and are the largest amphibious units available. So, a city close to a beach in Sea Zone C, the likeliest invasion site, should have not less than an eight-factor garrison if it (and its aircraft) is to avoid destruction.

Other coastal cities, those not directly threatened, should not be that well-garrisoned as a rule, as there would be few troops left for the front. Since invasions out-of-zone are unlikely, given the Naval Ascendancy requirements, coastal defenses should be moved to face enemy task forces, as they move from zone to zone.

A token string of one- and two-factor garrisons will augment your coastal defenses and are a minimum requirement to keep the Rangers out. If a Ranger battalion were to enter an unguarded port, eight or nine divisions could follow by sea, plus four airlifted divisions, all in one turn. Naval ascendancy or not, a token garrison should hold all ports, including those away from beaches like M14.

Invasions deep in an enemy country are not advisable, if for no other reason than this: Such efforts do not contribute to the land war, where the game is won or lost. Invasions are best, and likeliest, immediately in the rear of a fighting front (such as in Green or the desert) or close enough to contribute (such as V33). Blue would be well-advised to keep paratroops at the vital V33 base whenever they are on standby—even an unsuccessful Red attempt at V33 would be no fun.

All of this coastal defense discussion runs counter to what older players remember of *BLITZKRIEG*, even to what I wrote in "Blitzkrieg Invasion Possibilities" (Mar-Apr '74, Vol. 10 No. 6). The change in stacking rules means that greater concentration is possible and this is important to invaders coming off a beach to attack a nearby city. Stripping forces from the main fronts won't guarantee a secure home front. However, an invasion can only succeed if supplies can be traced from friendly ports and control of the sea will determine this. The best defense of one's homeland is careful attention to the Naval Ascendancy rule, particularly in deployment of aircraft.

A final reminder: The critical resources rule, including the aircraft industry, will be the undoing of a player forced into the last ditch. Once the enemy crosses the border, a reversal of fortunes will become increasingly unreachable.



WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO PANZERBLITZ

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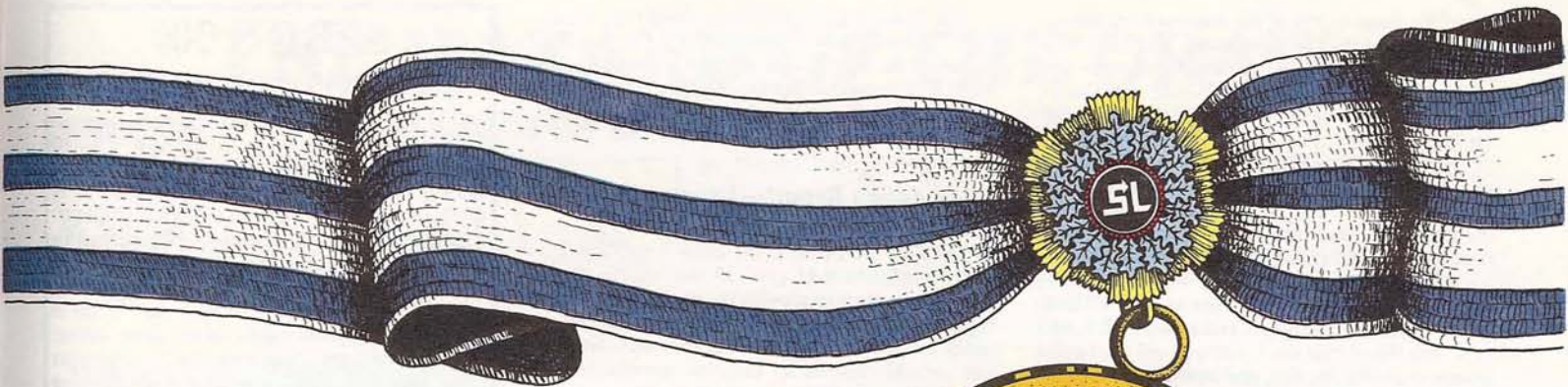
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26.	M. Simonitch	5	1875CEF	24
27.	R. Beyma	10	1836CDE	28
28.	J. Sunde	10	1830KKS	32
29.	B. Downing	24	1830FHL	29
30.	J. Anderson	11	1830DDF	31
31.	S. Martin	28	1828GIL	30
32.	B. Salvatore	3	1827EJN	34
33.	C. Wannall	11	1825HKP	33
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44.	N. Cromartie	20	1776GGN	44
45.	D. Kopp	7	1770EHL	46
46.	J. White	2	1769DFI	48
47.	E. Miller	21	1764GIP	49
48.	R. Shurdut	1	1760CDI	—
49.	F. Sebastian	1	1758FHN	—
50.	P. Devolpi	1	1758CED	—

MEET THE 50 . . .

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Favorite Game: THIRD REICH
AREA Rated Games: DD, TRC, 3R, AZ, AF, SUB, FE, MD
AREA W-L Record: 180-14-10 % Time PBM: 20%
Gaming Time/Week: 12 hrs. **Play Preference:** FTF
Hobbies: Bowling, Hiking, Hunting, Bicycling
Pet Peeve: Opponents who confuse skill with luck

"The most significant advance in hobby support for the gamer must be the creation of the AREA. Back in 1973, I did not have a lot of FTF opponents and was forced to find PBM games, which usually ended with many of my opponents simply suspending play. Then AREA was created. Its contribution to FTF play is as significant as that to the PBM aspect. Now people will play a wargame seriously and with pride. AREA became even more refined when the Code of Conduct was introduced in March of 1980. Now, misunderstandings are nearly nonexistent because all differences, rules, variants, and such are worked out in writing long before play starts. Overall, AREA has been an important and vital contribution to the wargaming hobby and I hope that it continues to grow and prosper with the hobby."



Squad Leader Clinic



CONCENTRATION OF FORCE

By Jon Mishcon

My concentration on concentration deals with two distinct issues. The first is the relatively simple matter of localizing your power in one geographic area. The second is the principle of placing the greatest portion of your strength against the weakest fraction of your opponent's. As such, the tactical concept of concentration is one of relative strength. Gathering all your troops in one small area is surely concentration of your force. However, if in doing so you allow the enemy to exert his full strength against you, then the spirit of the law is broken. A good example of this on a strategic scale would be the invasions of Sicily and Italy. The attack on Sicily drew Axis forces to the "underbelly" of Europe, displaced Mussolini, and created a grave threat to Italy's continuation. But the actual invasion of Italy drew far more heavily on Allied resources than German while creating no new threats. Thus, the Sicilian invasion was a good example of relative concentration of force; the invasion of Italy was not.

In *SQUAD LEADER* concentrating your strength against a diffused antagonist is important because the potency of a given unit changes synergistically with its support. This is true for two reasons. First, any given unit may break its opposing equivalent. However, if one force had a preponderance of local strength, its broken unit will be given time to rally while the enemy's broken unit may be repeatedly broken—and thus eliminated. Second, larger firegroups have a greater chance of obtaining a KIA. Therefore, the reasoning behind an attempt to gain concentration advantage is to give your locally superior forces greater chances of killing the enemy and improve the potential for rallying after they themselves break.

When should a player consider attempting to gain concentration of force benefits? Generally speaking, this is best done when your opponent has a wide zone of responsibility. This might be multiple buildings in a town to defend or guarding an entire board edge. When there is only one key position to victory—for example killing units or holding a bridge—any attempts to "go round" will in all likelihood hurt your cause more than aid it.

The mechanisms for attaining relative concentration of force all revolve around threats to do something terrible. The actual presence of any strength is unimportant. Offboard pieces whose point or turn of entry may be unknown, units moving toward a flank, and even a shift in the location of a key leader all place burdens on your opponent. How much strength should he transfer and where must it be placed? The very potency of these moves creates the gravest danger to those seeking relative advantage in concentration of force. It becomes all too easy to squander one's own power by sending little "penny packets" to one place or another as you attempt to draw your enemy further and further apart. Mastery of the principle of concentration revolves around forcing your enemy to spread further afield than you.

The foundations of successful implementation of tactical concentration are initiative and mobility. Initiative need not be solely the province of the attacker. If your movement forces a countermove then you have the initiative. The initiative aids your concentration in two ways. First it allows you to move "before" the enemy (no matter who moves first in the turn) and thus he must cover a variety of potential next moves by your units. Second, if your opponent misjudges the threat either by swinging

too much power to bear (aiding your concentration advantage elsewhere) or too little (thus allowing the threat to develop into a reality), it is the player with the initiative who decides how to followup. Mobility aids your ability to concentrate by making the potential placement of your force the next turn that much tougher to guess. If you consider your unit to be at the center of a circle with the radius being the potential movement of the unit, it is worthwhile to recall that the area of the circle (representing the potential next turn positions) increases by the *square* of the radius. Rather impressive. Both initiative and mobility work towards increasing your concentration of force by posing the largest possible number of "next turn" threats to your foe.

The final key to ascendancy in concentration of force is the player's ability to assess terrain in the context of the given tactical problem. Concentration, with its attendant advantages in combat, does no good if the ground for which you fight is not crucial to the outcome of the scenario. Concentration of force wins battles only in so far as it insures dominance at the key point of the terrain. [*Terrain evaluation is, however, to be discussed in a later SL Clinic.*]

Let us turn to a review of the use of concentration of force in a few existing scenarios:

In *Scenario 4* (assuming that players agree that the German setup must be hidden), committing between one to three Russian squads to advance along the road of Board 2 and Hill 621 may induce the German player to place one of his squads in a blocking position on Board 2. Even if the Russian squads do nothing else but keep that German squad on guard duty on Board 2, this is a significant suc-

cess. The threat of 9% of the Russian force has occupied 12% of the German troops. Without a Russian leader, combat against a hidden opponent who might have automatic weapons is risky. Combat is, in fact, unnecessary. Note here it is the threat that counts.

Scenario 11 provides the American with a host of possibilities. I feel the strongest attack can be generated by first assaulting Board 1. Then, once the Americans have established good flank positions for their .50 calibres, make a smaller secondary landing at either the junction of Boards 1 and 2 or of Boards 3 and 4. Lastly I like to hold off landing three squads, one MMG and a leader till Turn 5 or 6. The threat that the US player will use landed troops to isolate, by fire, one board may force the German to hold troops in place until they are immaterial while the last landing group can be thrust in at any critical point.

A variant approach to *Scenario 21* has possibilities for increased German concentration. Consider using the crew to manhandle the 75* Inf gun onto the board. If the halftrack, carrying a squad with leader and a MMG, is then used to follow the tanks along the opposite flank from the main advance, the Polish player is torn between concentrating his own troops to meet the main thrust or allowing a modified MMG to set up behind his lines. It is the loaded, vulnerable, halftrack that holds Polish squads guarding hilltops across the board. Should the Pole cling tightly to these offside hexes, then the halftrack can swing quickly back across the board to reinforce the main effort.

Scenario 29, provides unique options for concentration of force by both players. The French player will have little chance to redeploy, so he must decide if he wishes to try and hold both bridges in equal strength or "load" one side. The game is hopefully balanced so that, if the German throws his full weight against an evenly divided foe, the German will almost always win (barring a blown bridge). Can the German player be induced to strike against the more heavily defended bridge? The threat must be posed by the three exposed French counters. I like to place a squad and MMG in 2R2 and one squad adjacent to a bridge exit. The exposed squad may be placed on the strongly defended side depending on my knowledge of how my opponent normally plays. The German player is, I feel, forced to commit his infantry in one great lump. The key question of which bridge to assault can only be answered by the use of the armored cars on Turn 1 or 2.

The Germans in *Scenario 33*, "A Belated Christmas", have both the initiative (even though they move second) and the mobility advantage. The initiative falls to the German as occupant of the dominant heights and the ability to set up after the US player. The mobility of those two halftracks should allow the Germans to pick the range and the flank they wish to threaten. A good case can be made for having the American forces not spread out, but then the game can be lost to the US player solely on the basis of lousy rolls (in Special Scenario Rule 33.2). Assuming the American player tries to cover all bets, I like as the German to place 12 squads on one flank, five squads on the other, load both halftracks with squads and keep one squad on the heights for "rotation" with the HMG. The five squads on the "off" flank need only advance far enough forward to bring landing gliders under fire. Here again we see the threat concept in action. If the US player makes a bid to advance far enough forward to dislodge the weaker German flank, the halftracks can quickly shift across the mapboard to catch them in the open. If the US player fails to advance, the stronger German flank will attempt to control one half of Board 4 while the offside units attempt to destroy gliders by forcing them to crash.

The *SQUAD LEADER* system faithfully reproduces all the pitfalls of attacking or defending in a piecemeal fashion. A new scenario is found on the insert of this issue to permit players to experiment with the ideas discussed.

After Action Report—Faugh a'Ballagh

This note continues the series of commentaries in the Clinic pertaining to the scenario published in a previous *GENERAL* (Vol. 19, No. 6). The intent of these reports is to provide the player with one of numerous possibilities for defensive setup, attacker initial position and basic tactical approach. Having had several months to examine your own approaches to our Clinic scenario, the reader can now compare his findings with our summation.

GERMAN: Place the 8-1 leader and a squad with LMG and PF '43 in Y10; another squad with LMG and PF in hex V7; a squad with PF in U6; the 9-1, squad, LMG and PF in hex U3; squad and PF in U1. The JagdPz IVG goes in either U7 or U4 depending on the roadblocks produced by rubble.

IRISH: Enter infantry in single column on hex L10. Move the tanks in on either K10 or J10.

ATTACKER'S TACTICS: Move the infantry rapidly to the R6, R7, Q7 building group. There establish a fire base to open holes in the German infantry screen. Drive the Valentines through the hole into the rear of the German infantry. Try to resist the temptation to go for the JagdPz. If you cutoff the German infantry retreat routes either the JagdPz will fall to infantry assault or the assault gun will be forced to try and attack the tanks. Play this scenario as an infantry game with armor support.

DEFENDER'S TACTICS: Use infantry as a screen to hold back the Irish. Rarely fire in the Prep Fire Phase; rather, move out of buildings in movement and then back in in the Advance Phase. As the screen weakens, pull back the surviving squads and the JagdPz to hex row W and repeat the process. Always screen the flank of the JagdPz with at least one squad with a PF. Whenever possible, try to draw the attacker onto the assault gun's covered arc; both infantry and the British AFVs are vulnerable to the lethal gun/MG combination.



THE AVALON HILL GENERAL & COMPANY INDEX

After dozens of requests for it, we've finally compiled an index for *THE GENERAL*. But what an index! Virtually everything that has appeared in the first 16 volumes of *THE GENERAL* is referenced and cross referenced ad infinitum.

The main subject matter is, of course, a chronological listing of gaming articles by subject matter with specific author, volume, and page references. There is, however, much more including indices for contests, RBGs, philosophies, covers, letters, and miscellaneous articles.

The index also includes a running commentary on the development of the Avalon Hill Game Co. from 1952 to the present. This "Time Line" is a wealth of information for the trivia buff or serious AH devotee and includes a complete listing of Avalon Hill titles in the order of their publication, complete with design/development credit and miscellaneous information.

This 20 page, 8" x 11" booklet is yours for \$4.00 plus the usual postage charges direct from Avalon Hill at 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

SERIES 300 G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY SCENARIOS

SERIES 300 is a pad of ten scenarios for *G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY* printed on the same index stock and in the same style used for both *SQUAD LEADER* and all its gamettes. These scenarios were designed by the team of Jon Mishcon and Joe Suchar and playtested by several of the *SL* playtest groups who play so important a role in the continuing development of the game system. For those players disdaining the "design your own" approach, here is your chance to experience more *GI* scenarios which have been tested for balance and constitute top quality playing aids. Here is the chance to employ more of those special US armor units provided with *GI* in scenarios based on the final death throes of the Thousand Year Reich, as the wounded but still dangerous German military machine strives with its last resources to defend the Fatherland.

The ten scenarios comprising *SERIES 300* are titled as follows: *TRIAL BY COMBAT* (1945), *THE CLEARING* (1944), *STAND FAST* (1944), *THRUST AND PARRY* (1945), *RIPOSTE* (1945), *THE DUEL* (1945), *THE RAG TAG CIRCUS* (1945), *POINT D'APPUI* (1944), *HAN-SUR-NEID* (1944), and *THE ROER BRIDGEHEAD* (1945).

SERIES 300 is available by mail order only from the Avalon Hill Game Company for \$5.00 plus usual postage charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed 84 Total Responses: 473

Rank:	Title	Pub	Rank Times		
			Last	On	Freq.
			Time	List	Ratio
1.	Titan	AH	—	1	4.3
2.	Squad Leader	AH	2	17	3.4
3.	Third Reich	AH	4	17	3.0
4.	G.I.	AH	1	7	2.3
5.	Civilization	AH	—	1	1.8
6.	Cross of Iron	AH	5	17	1.7
7.	Russian Campaign	AH	6	17	1.5
8.	Gunslinger	AH	15	4	1.4
9.	Up Front	AH	20	2	1.4
10.	Flat Top	AH	14	3	1.3
11.	VITP	AH	8	3	1.3
12.	Diplomacy	AH	9	5	1.2
13.	COD	AH	3	17	1.2
14.	Panzer Leader	AH	17	2	1.2
15.	Kingmaker	AH	—	1	1.1
16.	Magic Realm	AH	—	1	1.1
17.	WS&IM	AH	11	2	1.1
18.	Afrika Korps	AH	—	1	1.0
19.	Storm Over Arnhem	AH	18	3	1.0
20.	War & Peace	AH	7	17	1.0

Once again, some dramatic reshuffling. Bolstered by its handling in Vol. 20, No. 2 of *THE GENERAL*, *TITAN* surges to the top of the listing of player preferences. Indeed, among the top ten are four favorites released in 1982—*CIVILIZATION* and *GUNSLINGER* and *G.I.* as well as *TITAN*—and one released in 1983, *UP FRONT*. This would indicate an interest and satisfaction with our newer releases. Meanwhile, our attention is directed to some neglected elder titles—*KINGMAKER*, *MAGIC REALM* and *AFRIKA KORPS*. A number of titles barely missed being on the list, including *STRUGGLE OF NATIONS*, *BULGE '81*, *Dungeons & Dragons*, *PANZERBLITZ* and *THE LONGEST DAY*—all of which appeared on the last list. Curiously, as an item of passing interest, eight of the titles on this seventeenth list are concerned with non-WW2 topics.

THE HAZARD OF THE DRAW

New Options and Events for KINGMAKER

By Tim Williams



We play quite a few wargames here in the rural vales of Northwest Arkansas. Considering that our only other source of evening entertainment is to sit out on the patio and watch the automatic backyard security light come on, this is not difficult to understand. And of all the 200 or so choices we have available to us now, we return more often to *KINGMAKER* than to any of the others. *KINGMAKER* probably embodies more than any other wargame the spirit of its age; for excitement, color, and pure enjoyment, it has no peer among board games.

It doesn't take many such knavery-sessions around the spectacular heraldic map of England to find that *KINGMAKER* lends itself more easily than most games to variation and expansion. The game's admittedly unhistorical approach allows players to toy with various additions and deletions within the game's framework without throwing a monkeywrench into the game system or creating an absurdly ahistorical situation. The variants that follow will add even more unpredictability to your *KINGMAKER* outings while adding little if anything to the game's complexity.

New Optional Rules

1. SMASHING PREDICTABILITY

A. *The Events Deck*: The variant rules provided in *The GENERAL* (Vol. 14, No. 2) suggest that each time an "Embassy" event card is drawn, the Crown deck should be reshuffled. A very good idea, which should also be extended to the Events deck. I am fervently opposed to "card counting" as a method of strategy. This will discourage the practice of skulking around inside nearby castles while waiting for the larger cities' "Plague" cards to pass, and then flying into those fastnesses for what are often very long periods of relative safety.

B. *Initial Placement of Royal Heirs*: Personally, I get extremely weary of seeing the faction lucky enough to be initially dealt the Constable of the Tower and/or the Archbishop of York walk away with the senior heirs on the first turn of every game. The fixed initial placement of these all-important pieces probably contributes more to game stereotyping than any other factor, and the Lancastrian heirs are much too close together, in any event. Players wishing to eliminate this situation may use the following placement system. After the initial set-up of the factions' nobles, roll one die for each heir and consult the following table:

Random Heir Placement Table

Heir	Die Range = Location
King Henry VI	1-3 = London, 4-5 = Windsor, 6 = Bristol
Margaret of Anjou	1-2 = Coventry, 3-4 = Newark, 5-6 = Conway
Edward of Lancaster	1-2 = Kenilworth, 3-4 = Lancaster, 5-6 = Bamburgh
Richard of York	1-3 = York, 4-5 = Fotheringhay, 6 = Shrewsbury
Edward of March	1-2 = Harlech, 3-4 = Plymouth, 5-6 = Carisbrooke
Edmund of Rutland	1-2 = Ireland, 3-4 = Baumaris, 5-6 = Dover
George of Clarence	1-2 = Cardigan, 3-4 = Norwich, 5-6 = Newcastle (town)
Richard of Gloucester	1-2 = Calais, 3-4 = Carlisle, 5-6 = Swansea

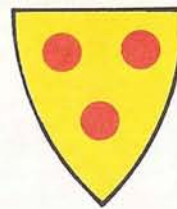


2. IRELAND

A. *Refuge*: When using the Refuge rules first expounded in *The GENERAL* (Vol. 14, No. 2), it is my belief that Ireland should be exempted from the various restrictions thereof. There was no local authority in Ireland (such as there was in Scotland or on the Continent) to prevent nobles from galloping freely about the countryside. The only fear a faction should have in Ireland is the possibility of a confrontation with the Lieutenant on his home ground.

B. *Dublin*: One of the worst problems in the game associated with being in Ireland is that there is no place to hide. This is a needless abstraction, as there were plenty of fortified locations in medieval Ireland. To remedy this deficiency, add Dublin, a major city with a permanent garrison of 300 which is also a port. This does not affect the port capabilities of the rest of Ireland. If Edmund of Rutland sets up in Ireland, he is placed in Dublin. Parliament may not be called in Dublin.

C. *Irish Reinforcements*: The blank Crown card provided in every game can be used to represent the mustering of additional Irish Kern troops for use in England. This card is very similar to a mercenary card and has a strength of 50 troops. Like the French Mercenary card, it is not shuffled into the crown deck until after the initial deal. Whenever this card is eventually drawn, the player drawing it sets the card aside and draws again. From the moment the Irish card is drawn, these troops are considered available in Ireland. Use of these troops is restricted to the faction which includes the Lieutenant of Ireland, and only the Lieutenant himself may possess the card. He must be sent to Ireland in person to get them, and sufficient shipping must be available to transport the Irish. It is very important to note that these troops have no combat strength in Ireland, being considered part of the Lieutenant's extra complement of 200 troops in that area. These troops will remain in play as long as the Lieutenant does and will only be returned to the Crown Deck under either of two circumstances: A) the Lieutenant is killed, or B) the "Revolt in Ireland" event occurs. In the latter case, the Irish card is returned to the Crown Deck as soon as the Lieutenant is placed in Ireland. If the Irish troops were "available" but not yet picked up, the card is returned to the Crown Deck and the troops are no longer available. If for some reason the Lieutenant is unable to respond to the Revolt, and has the Irish card, the Irish are not removed. Once discarded, the Irish may become available once again in a subsequent chance phase.



New Event Cards

The best (and mechanically safest) means of broadening *KINGMAKER*'s horizons is through the introduction of new event cards. The blank cards provided in both the game itself and the variant deck available from Avalon Hill encourage players to "roll their own." The non-historical premise of the game allows a certain amount of flexibility in this; but while Turkish Invasions of Ireland and Embassies from Venus are intriguing ideas, neither falls into the realm of historical credibility. Any new events added should be relevant to late-15th Century England (or to Western European society at the broadest). Any or all of the 17 following suggested events may be used; none depends upon another for its application. The suggested number of each card to be inserted into the Events Deck is listed in parentheses.

The first two cards are functional cards to be added to the others of their particular type already present in the deck:

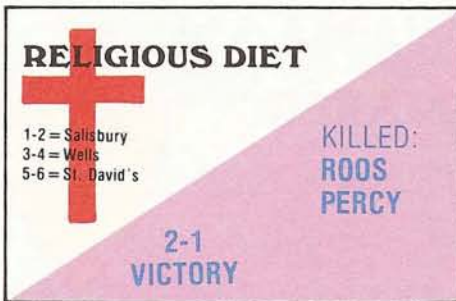


PLAGUE IN DUBLIN (1): This card is only necessary if the above optional rules adding that city are used.



MERCENARIES GO HOME—SAXONS (1): I still haven't figured out why one of these wasn't included in the game originally. Surely Saxons got just as bored chasing around the English countryside as did any of their peers from Burgundy, Flanders or Scotland. If the other "Go Home" cards are used, so too should this one.

Considering the importance of religion in medieval times, it is a little odd that religious offices have no more responsibilities in the game than they do (coronations, answering revolts, extra troop strength). The following four cards abstractly represent the importance of religious matters in English society of the day:



RELIGIOUS DIET (1): A meeting of the English clergy is convened. All extant religious offices normally able to respond must immediately be placed at the appointed location. Roll one die to determine the site of the Diet: 1-2 = Salisbury, 3-4 = Wells, 5-6 = St. David's. No combat is allowed in the square of the location for one full turn after the diet is convened.



HERESY (1): The first phantoms of the coming Reformation begin to manifest themselves. All extant religious offices normally able to respond must immediately be moved to their home dioceses. If a rival faction controls the office's home town, the noble holding the office need only be placed in the open outside the town.



PAPAL DIET (1): The Pope convenes a general diet of the European clergy. All extant religious offices *must* be moved to the Continent. No ships are necessary to *get* to the diet, but will be necessary to *get back*. Even religious offices normally unable to respond to a call must go, and if besieged, the besiegers must allow them to leave. (The rationale here is that the besiegers would not wish to risk excommunication by interfering with Papal business.) No refuge card need be played for bishops to remain on the Continent.



EXCOMMUNICATION (1): The faction drawing the card has ran afoul of His Eminence, and is declared Excommunicate and Damned. All religious offices and town cards held by that faction are removed and returned to the Crown Deck. As long as the faction remains Excommunicate, any religious offices or town cards normally gained through combat are immediately returned to the Crown Deck. No noble of that faction may enter a city or town containing a cathedral or be considered "in town" in the squares containing Salisbury, Wells, or St. David's. Excommunication is considered lifted as soon as a new religious office or town card is drawn by the Excommunicate faction during the Chance Phase.

Of all the events currently in use, only the Embassies provide for any independent movement on the part of any of the historically capricious Royal Heirs. The following four cards would inject a greater degree of mobility for certain of these pieces:



ROYAL VISIT (1): The sole King is moved immediately to Ireland. Any nobles stacked with him may accompany. If the optional Dublin rules set forth earlier in this article are in force, the King must go into that city if possible.

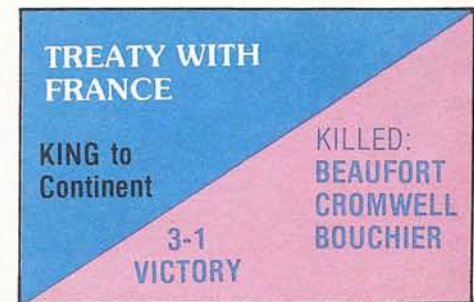


ROYAL HUNT (1): The King is seized with the desire to go a'hunting and is immediately moved to the forest square containing half of the small town of Rotherham (one square west of Audley's Tickhill Castle). If there are two Kings in play, roll one die: 1-2 = Lancastrian King goes, 3-4 = Yorkist King goes, 5 = both Kings go, 6 = it rains, and nobody goes. Combat is allowed in the square.



ROYAL HEIR ESCAPES (2): The lowest-ranking Royal Heir by the drawing faction escapes to the nearest neutral town, city or Royal Castle. This may be on an island. The heir will not escape if A) he is

already King, or B) he is the senior surviving heir of his house. This event postulates that the less likely the chances are of coronation, the more chance an heir will weary of endless years of following a faction around England.

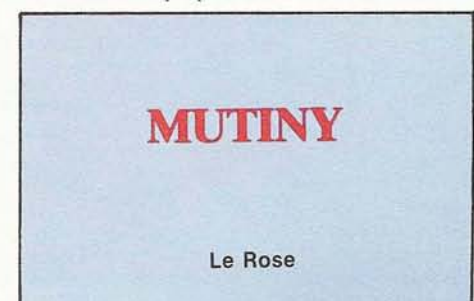


TREATY WITH FRANCE (1): The sole King is moved immediately to the Continent. As soon as this is done, a treaty with France is in effect. The card is laid aside in plain view to indicate this. As long as the treaty is in effect, Calais as an English city is inviolable by the "French Siege" card, and this card is ignored if subsequently drawn. The city is under English sovereignty—under control of the faction in possession of the sole King (Calais becomes neutral, if no one controls the King when it is restored to England). The treaty with France lasts until one of the following events occurs: A) the King who signed the treaty dies in any manner, B) A "French Raid" event is drawn, C) a "War in Europe" (see below) event is drawn, or D) a "Scots Invasion" (see below) event is drawn. Following any one of these events the treaty is considered broken, and the treaty card is returned to the discard pile. Subsequent treaties are possible.

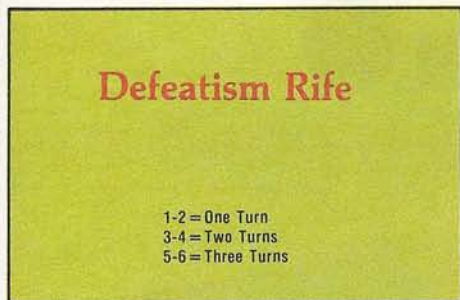
The rest of the new cards suggested here merely represent miscellaneous disasters designed to further aid and/or frustrate even the best-laid plans of potential Warwicks:



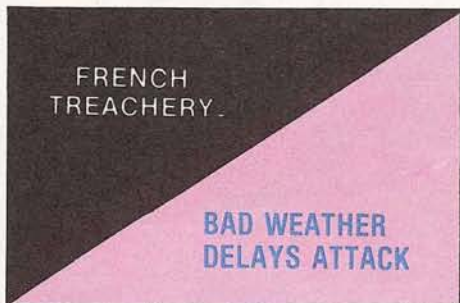
MERCENARY STRIFE (1 or 2): Inter-company or inter-national rivalries between different mercenary groups manifest themselves. In any square where a faction maintains a stack with more than one group of mercenaries extant, the weakest card in troop strength is immediately returned to the Crown Deck. If the only two groups available are the same strength, the player may choose which one to lose. Note that the French will always win out in this case, and the Saxons will always lose. The optional Irish troops are not considered mercenaries for the purposes of this rule.



MUTINY (5): One of these cards should be available for each of the "100-class" ships (Le Nicholas, Le Swan, Le Michael, Le Rose, and Le Lucas). When a ship's mutiny card is drawn, it is immediately removed from the board and its card returned to the Crown Deck. If at sea with passengers at the time of the mutiny, the nobles are put ashore immediately at the nearest open port (Scotland, Ireland or the Continent if at all possible). The ships belonging to the Admiral of England and the Warden of the Cinque Ports never mutiny, due to the greater naval authority of these offices.



DEFEATISM RIFE (1): A pall of doom hangs over the drawing faction in spite of all its strength (or due to the lack of it). Roll one die to determine the length of the period of defeatism: 1-2 = one turn, 3-4 = two turns, 5-6 = three turns. During this gloomy period, movement is the only action available to that faction. It may not attack, ambush, besiege (any sieges currently in progress must be lifted), call parliament, or coronate a new King. If attacked, the faction defends normally.



FRENCH TREACHERY (1): This card only affects play if the French Foot Soldiers Mercenary card is currently in play or held off-map by any faction. If the card is held off-map or is in play on the Continent, an island, or Ireland, then the card is immediately returned to the Crown Deck. If at sea, the card is still removed, and any nobles currently taking advantage of the unlimited French naval transport are returned to the Continent. If the French card is in play in England, then the treacherous swine desert the controlling faction and fall to freebooting. The card is set aside and the French are considered to move on the nearest town or city friendly to their former employers. The ex-controlling faction immediately loses control of the affected city or town, which loses its garrison strength and assumes a strength of 100 to represent the French occupation (the inhabitants wouldn't sympathize with the French, needless to say). The French will remain in the same city or town relentlessly sacking the place until either of two events occurs: the city or town is stricken by the plague or the French are destroyed in battle (at which point the French card is returned to the Crown Deck and the location reverts to control of the player). Until such a time as the French plunderers are destroyed, the faction responsible for their presence in England (i.e., the ex-controlling faction) operates under certain restrictions due to the widespread loss of support at all levels that such an incident would cause. The ex-

controlling faction may not call parliament, attend parliament (no noble of this faction may be "summoned") nor coronate a new King. While any faction may attempt to destroy the French, the ex-controlling faction will naturally have more incentive to do so. As soon as the French are destroyed, all restrictions are lifted and the French Mercenary card may re-enter play normally.

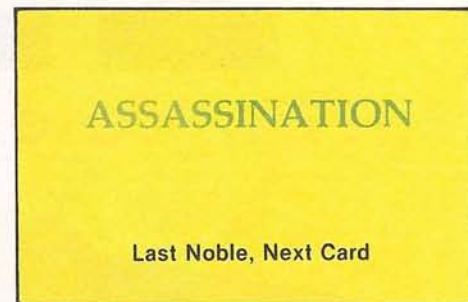


WAR IN EUROPE (1): A general European war involving England erupts. The Marshal of England is immediately placed on the Continent. The Admiral of England is placed on the Continent with two ships. The Captain of Calais is placed in Calais. All mercenary cards currently in play are returned to the Crown Deck, except the French, if sacking an English town or city (see above), and the Irish who are not considered mercenaries for the purposes of this rule. The mercenaries "go home" because they would naturally assume that they could profit far more from a larger-scale European war than from petty dynastic squabbles in England. A War in Europe will immediately cancel an earlier French Treaty result (see above).



SCOTS INVASION (1): The Scots always claimed Berwick, and indeed coveted all of the ancient Pictish territories in Northern England. This event presumes that the Scots take advantage of the turmoil in England to make good their claims and seize these territories. This event affects the Marshal of England and all holders of locations north of the River Tees. The calls are as follows: Marshal to Cheviots; Percy to Cockermouth or Alnwick; Grey to Chillingham; Neville to Raby; Bishop of Carlisle to Carlisle; Bishop of Durham to Durham; Warden of the Northern Marches to Berwick or Bamburgh; possessor of Newcastle to Newcastle (if this town is held by a faction at large, any noble of that faction may respond). If any nobles are unable to respond, do not as yet exist, or are unable to enter the location due to its ownership by a rival faction, the location falls to the Scots. Signify this with any convenient marker. The presence north of Tees of multifaceted nobles will serve to protect every location owned by those nobles (ideally, Percy/Warden/B. Carlisle/B. Durham/Newcastle would serve to defend seven of the nine locations north of Tees). Note that a noble must always respond to the call if able, even if a location originally owned by him is currently controlled by a rival faction. He is placed in the square outside the location, which falls to the Scots anyway, due to a presumed lack of inter-factional coordination. Any location attacked by the Scots which already contained a noble will not

fall. Royal Heirs are unaffected by Scots occupation. Locations taken by the Scots remain Scottish until retaken by siege. As long as at least one location north of Tees falls on the first Scots Invasion, subsequent invasions are possible and continue to attack English-held areas north of Tees. In the event that the first invasion fails to take even a single location, the card is removed from play and no further Scots Invasions are possible. It is extremely doubtful that King James would attempt another such fiasco. A Scots Invasion event immediately cancels an earlier French Treaty result (Scotland was at the time France's close ally).



ASSASSINATION (2): Draw another event card. If in play, the noble listed on the bottom line of the "killed" section is immediately removed with all his holdings, the victim of assassins. This is considered a non-political assassination, perpetrated by injured continentals, angry creditors, or possibly an irate husband.

As an excellent adjunct to an already excellent game, these variants increase *KINGMAKER*'s unpredictability, and consequently its enjoyment. But don't take my word for it, try them out yourself. I think you'll agree at least half the time (that is, the half that the cards are affecting your opponents and not you). So shuffle in the new cards, concentrate your faction, and as your enemies sneer with satisfaction as they close in around you, recall with hope the final words of Lord Hastings: "They smile at me who shortly shall be dead" (*Richard III*, Act III, Scene IV).



TRADE CARDS for CIVILIZATION

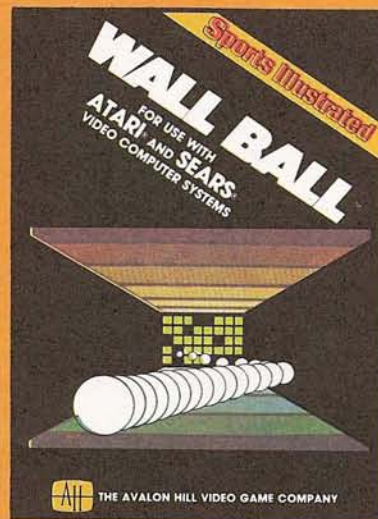
Introduced by Mick Uhl in his article on expanding trade in the popular multi-player game *CIVILIZATION* (The *GENERAL*, Vol. 19, No. 4), these cards are now available from Avalon Hill. The deck of 50 cards, readily incorporated into the Trade Deck in the game without cumbersome variant rules, include new commodities: Timber, Oil, Wine, Silver, Resin, Dye and Ivory. These do affect the fine game in three fundamental ways. First, because of the increased number of cards, calamities will occur with lesser frequency. Second, the increased number of cards in play will mean that empty stacks will occur far less often; players with a large number of cities will not be inadvertently penalized by the exhaustion of the lower value stacks as the other players draw first. Third, it will be more difficult to build up sets of the same card type. For both veterans and novices of this exciting game, the new Trade Cards are an intriguing addition. These may be ordered from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214) for \$4.00 plus the usual 10% shipping and handling (20% Canadian, 30% overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

“AHH!”

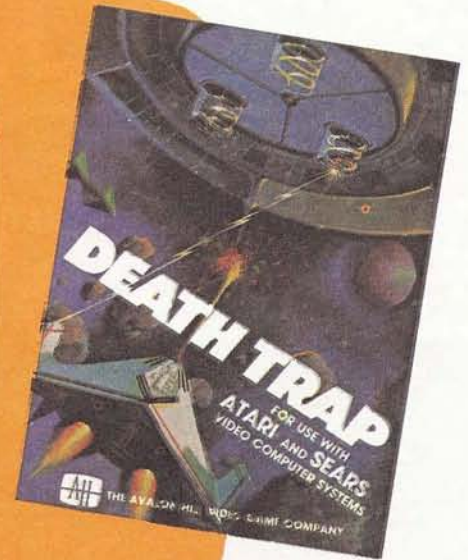
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Letters to the Editor ...

Dear Mr. Martin;

The purpose of this letter is to express my regrets that Alan R. Moon has parted company with Avalon Hill. I was not especially surprised by this development but I, for one, will miss his lighthearted and sometimes zany perspective and philosophy. It would appear that Alan became disenchanted with Avalon Hill after being "passed over" for the position of Managing Editor. (I refer the readers to Vol. 18, No. 4, "The Asylum, No. 16" on page 39. In the very next issue the credits on page 2 list Rex A. Martin as Assistant Editor.) Whatever the reason(s) for his departure, I am sure the majority of the readership will acknowledge our loss and join me in expressing our best wishes to him.

Dave Sindel
Savannah, Georgia

I too miss Alan's peculiar brand of insanity (I'm just glad it wasn't contagious). Note however, that Alan Moon was not "passed over" for the position of editor. He was offered the post and turned it down in order to devote himself to game design and development, which in turn led to the offer of a position by Parker Brothers.

★★★★★

Dear Editor:

In response to John Alsen's attack on the "Squad Leader Clinic" (Vol. 20, No. 1) . . . he seems to have felt that the series overly analyzed the potentials of the game, removing from it a degree of spontaneity. Historically, as part of their training, officers and soldiers of the Wehrmacht were taught solutions to "classic" combat problems. These were problems that had been discovered in WW1 and amplified with the advent of mobile warfare. With a set of combat-proven solutions to many tactical problems and allowing even the junior officers to improvise on these solutions, the Germany Army almost did the impossible. Their example made them a worthy benchmark for all others. The "SL Clinic" does nothing more than what was instituted by the German General Staff. Hopefully, in a "good game of SL", one will not have to sacrifice most of one's units to gain a victory because you have not adequately analyzed beforehand these "classic" combat problems.

Dennis Showman
Chula Vista, California

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

I am writing to offer both praise and a plea concerning Avalon Hill's new game, *UPFRONT*. *UPFRONT* is a truly remarkable game—in fact, it may well prove to be Avalon Hill's biggest blockbuster since *SQUAD LEADER*. It certainly represents the biggest quantum leap in wargame design since *SQUAD LEADER*, and maybe even since *PANZERBLITZ*. Courtney Allen is to be congratulated for devising such an innovative and playable system. Apart from this, the components are first rate, and the graphics are beautiful. And as for realism, many with whom I have played the game agree that it may well be more realistic than even *SQUAD LEADER* itself.

And now for my plea. It is obvious that *UPFRONT* has potential for expansion, much like *SQUAD LEADER*. If the popularity of the game warrants expansion gamettes I would certainly welcome them, but I would make one impassioned request. Please, please do not add any more rules! I realize some rules would be necessary to cover new terrain types and national differences. That is different than adding more rules for the sake of detail and "realism". The real beauty of *UPFRONT* lies in its playability and comparatively simple rules. I would hate to see it go the way of the *SQUAD LEADER* system and become a complicated monster. Though I and my fellow gamers own several copies of the entire *SQUAD LEADER* system, we find we never play any scenario beyond *CROSS OF IRON*, simply because we can't remember all those rules. Furthermore, we play even those less often because we are never sure just what rules we are playing under. The complexity of the later gamettes added confusion to the straightforward playability of the original, with the final result that even basic *SQUAD LEADER* gets played less often. Consequently, in any future expansion of *UPFRONT* components, I for one would request no proportional expansion of the rules.

Congratulations again on *UPFRONT*. If you expand it, I hope you will "keep it simple".

Rich Mathews
Lebanon, Oregon

You will be pleased to hear that we have expanded on UPFRONT—a planned Expansion Kit gamette featuring new cards and counters for the Japanese and British. Furthermore, the only new rules pertain to the play of those two nationalities.

★★★★★

Dear Rex:

"Glass Anvil" and "The G.I. Design Team Replies" were most thought-provoking. Mr. Collier's views as a realism proponent are certainly worthy of serious consideration. Apart from the specific system changes and inclusions he desires, two points about his article are somewhat disconcerting.

His philosophical concern for the future of the SL system is difficult for me to understand. Surely the past and present success of the gamettes indicate that the vast majority of SL gamers find a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment with the efforts made to update and improve the system. I find nothing in the G.I. gamette to detract from the value of *SQUAD LEADER* as a whole. Mr. Greenwood's serious intent to update the rules before updating the counters clearly indicates the priority of the design team with regard to the future direction of *SQUAD LEADER*.

Secondly, I fear Mr. Collier makes his case with too much of a personal attack on the powers that be. Further evidence of this attitude exists in his recent article published in "On All Fronts". Despite the "guts" it takes to be so critically outspoken, the need for such tactics to make his points escapes me. C'mon, it's only a game!

Alan Lipka
Prospect, New York

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

The degree of emotion attributed to me seems consistently exaggerated. This is supposed to be a debate, not a feud. Vituperation is certainly to be avoided. Many—perhaps most—of the wargamers I have encountered have had a strong proclivity for authoritarianism and tend to regard game rules as sacrosanct. Those challenging "the Rules" are heretics. My article was written, rebutted and published as an intellectual exercise in critical analysis as opposed to the purely analytical discussions of Mr. Medrow or Mr. Nixon. The whole enterprise was intended to be controversial and—by necessity—a target for condemnation. It was a publishing adventure similar to printing an article on *OH-WAH-REE*—quite different from the usual *GENERAL* fare. But its purpose was to provoke some fundamental reassessment and reflection on an unusual project.

Unlike the vast majority of wargames, including most of AH's, SL is providing a system with which it is possible to play an indefinite variety of games. The precision and acceptability of SL rules are thus much more important than those of *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* or *DIPLOMACY* because the potential for application is so much greater. Therefore, it seems appropriate that we seek a high degree of satisfaction with our product such that it can well withstand the test of time and frequent application. Challenging some of the game's fundamentals offers a chance to temper their resilience and perfect their shape. Many apparently feel this to be only a destructive or destabilizing exercise. Indeed, the reader who is first privy to these debates may well perceive in the rebuttals insinuations that I am an angry, naive and unlettered playtester who may not be able to play the game well and that my objective may be "revenge" only.

The fact that I remain a playtester today should signify that my relationship with the design team remains collegial if also often adversarial. My opinions are not derived from TV or comic books but from a significant body of historical research. Though my research reveals a number of factual discrepancies with the designers', readers must realize that the major point of difference is that of appropriate application.

Though my desire of the game system is for a realistic simulation, much of my criticism is directed at eliciting a logical consistency in the

rules, both in terms of perspective and of detail. The examples cited in "Glass Anvil" are but representatives whose points were missed by the respondents. The morale challenge issue arises from a bias that SL is fundamentally an infantry-dominant game in which leadership factors are important. Morale challenge was greatly reduced by Mr. Greenwood because the original supposedly exemplified the excessive mechanical burden of too much realistic detail. Yet he shortly after advocates the adoption of the "Gun Duel" provisions, which are similarly complex and probably similarly infrequent in application and reflect a similar level of detail for the armored aspect. To me, this exchange represents a confused and disoriented perspective, and is but one of many such examples.

The second major point of my argument revolves around a realization that there are two categories of realism—detail and outcome—which may at times prove to be mutually exclusive within the frame of reference dictated by the game parameters. Thus, Mr. Greenwood and I both have grounds for accusing each other of absurdities in the execution of the Advance Phase. But, however one may play it, the outcome of the AdvPh is frequently absurd by any standard of measure. The addition of the refined details of Double Timing, Assault Movement and Grounding have made the crude Advance Phase obsolete as a game parameter.

In detailing the design of the US components, the designers have made a number of observations, based on historical research, and thus supposedly realistic in nature. Nevertheless, in my opinion they have made a number of false or untenable assumptions in interjecting those observations into the game system which ultimately yield unrealistic outcomes. The most incriminating evidence is that US scenarios depend on elite components to a much greater extent than those of any other nationality. Mr. Greenwood's disclaimer that he deliberately sought "atypical" tactical situations does not invalidate this criticism, as similar tactical situations involved non-elite US forces with much greater frequency. (Of some 50 divisions committed to the ETO, only three were airborne; yet 40% of the GI scenarios are based on airborne engagements.) The implication is that the design team could not successfully provide scenarios based on the actions of ordinary infantry.

The second major evidence of this is the experience of the playtest. My interpretation is that the US design did not really survive the playtest. The ELR had to be frequently revised upwards, much regular infantry had to be replaced with "elite" infantry and the US leadership had to be increased to parity with the Germans despite stated intentions to do otherwise. The historical engagements simulated represent nine US victories, three draws and only two losses. Yet, as originally designed, based on "realistic" assumptions of the team, in at least nine simulations the US generally lost—a complete reversal of history and too consistent a discrepancy to be explained by a simple need of "fine tuning". My conclusion from these last two observations is that ordinary US SL components cannot expect to win against common German opponents. The simulation outcomes were so much at odds with the historical outcomes that the design assumptions must be questioned.

A further observation is the blatant pro-German bias in the design of components, details and scenarios—despite denials of prejudice. Thus, the US halftrack is always hampered by an early design difficulty—subsequently corrected—while the German HTs (and other vehicles) are almost always free of the influence of insufficient maintenance (brought on by a host of plagues from inadequate production of spares and lubricants to lack of battlefield respite) which often more than negated any inherent design for performance superiority. By the same token, all US infantry are always subject to "greening" while the 1945 German 4-6-7 is as invulnerable as a 1941 4-6-7. All US infantry are induced to caution by lower face Morale Level and fewer leaders while the Germans are freed from their historical profligate suicidal tactical doctrine of frontal attack against withering automatic fire so often noted on the Western Front. Therefore, the US player is forced to adopt more "realistic" (historical) tactics while the German is probably not—with the outcome being decidedly unrealistic.

In sum, there is a lack of evenhanded balance in the design team's choice of realistic details and in its application of those details chosen. The team's balance between liberal abstraction and inflexible realism is shifting, unpredictable, arbitrary and biased. Though a certain degree of liberty must be granted a designer, the current design contains such weaknesses, discrepancies and disproportions as to jeopardize the "lasting power" of SL as players become more adept at playing, and then begin to reach for more accuracy in simulation for continued play. SL will then become as obsolete as *PANZERBLITZ* rather than establishing an indefinitely useful system.

James M. Collier
Lexington, Kentucky

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

I was surprised and pleased to see my *PANZER LEADER* variant ("Para-Leader") in between the covers of the July-August issue of *The GENERAL* (Vol. 20, No. 2). I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for the time and effort put into editing and preparing my ideas for print. The support graphics, scenarios and variant counters came out super. I noted only two things which may or may not (if we're lucky) be mentioned: in Situation 36 the second batch of German reinforcements were miscolored; in Situation 40, the Groesbeek Heights were referenced as being German rather than the Netherlands.

Overall, I was very pleased with your treatment of the article, especially the alterations and changes which clarified my intentions. As it happens, I was on the verge of completing a rewrite of the basic rules and scenarios. The addition of the bibliography especially added much to my efforts. Again, the changes have, from my own brief inspection, improved the beast. Thanks for the terrific work and support.

Oscar Oates
Westlaco, Texas

I'm still not sure quite how we managed to get one batch of reinforcements green and one blue-grey, but can claim full blame for misplacing the Groesbeek Heights. However, another potentially more serious misprint is found in Situation 36 (Gela Sicily)—there should be 19 gliders assigned to the 82nd Airborne force. We overlooked the six MG units (a last minute addition).

★★★★★

Dear Sir:

This letter is to inform you as to the results of the court-martial of Sgt. Thornton, USA. This court finds the defendant guilty of negligence as charged.

A brief summary of our findings are included here for your review.

On or about May-June of contest #113, Sgt. Thornton was in command of two rifle squads located near the town of Insert. His objective, the control of two enemy held buildings, was difficult but not impossible. Rather than send the squad in building 3V3 through hex 3U4 into 3T4, and the squad in W-5 to bypass the 3W4 woods into building 3V3 and stop in 3U4, he sent one squad through the open of 3V5 in the clear line of sight of a German machinegun. The machinegun fire was aided by a full squad and a veteran officer. The resulting fire broke up the attack, allowing the Germans to continue holding one vital building.

For his failure to remember rules #7.1, 43.4, and the last six words of #54.8, we recommend the defendant be demoted to 7-0 and be added to the Russian force of Scenario #23.

Ray Andrews
Kent, Washington

From Jon Mishcon:

Our response to Mr. Andrews' letter: On our board the LOS from 3V5 to 3U2 is clearly, albeit slightly, blocked. We own a total of four complete sets of boards and are aware that board "registration" is not identical on all copies of the "same" terrain. When Mr. Andrews starts to discuss LOS open or closed based on different sighting tool widths I tend to recoil. Lastly, in all future puzzles we will endeavor to insure all LOSs that are blocked are clearly blocked, BUT we reserve the right to say that our one set of boards is the final arbiter. We can't possibly account for all variations that are under one mm in width.

FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY

- 11.2 When a search is conducted, is it necessary to search for characters with (and therefore reveal) all the military units in the environ, or can the Imperial player search with only a few and keep the identity of the remaining units (particularly any suicide squads) secret?
A. All must be used if a military search is conducted at all.
- 13.4 Can an aborted Diplomacy or Coup mission put a planet into rebellion?
A. No.
- 14.12 Can possessions be reassigned ONLY at the beginning of the Rebel Mission Phase?
A. Yes.
- 14.3 Do companions count as characters when determining hiding value?
A. No, only on spaceships.
- 14.51 Can anyone other than the owner pilot a spaceship?
A. No, the owner insists on flying it (insurance requirements you know), but ownership may be transferred as for other possessions.
- 15.6 Can a PDB's level be voluntarily reduced by the owning player?
A. Yes.
- 18.0 Can characters be transferred from one military unit to another while in space?
A. Yes, characters may move with any military unit with whom they start the turn stacked.

THE QUESTION BOX

- 19.6 Must a suicide squad participate in the search for characters to be effective or does it have only to be present in the same environ?
A. No, the SS can work if a character search has succeeded, but see 11.2 above for military searches.
- 20.4 Can the non-phasing player intercept military units which begin in the orbit box and do not move?
A. Yes indeed, staying put and pleading innocence is a non-viable defense in this game.
- 22.0 Can additional forces in the orbit box voluntarily move into the interception stack to improve the odds in that combat? If so, who decides how many forces to commit first?
A. No. This is the problem with interception of the first of several units: if one commits too many interceptors, the rest get away; if one holds some back, they may end up idle.
- 25.15 Can the summoning of a sovereign (or its failure) put a planet into rebellion?
A. No.
- 31.21 Can Professor Mareg or the Advisor Android move into an orbit box, detect the planetary secret, and then decide whether or not to land on the planet or send down other ships in the same turn; or, is the planetary secret revealed

- only after all movement is finished?
A. Only after movement is complete.
- 33.34 Can the Imperial player put "up" or "down" PDB on a planet in a province where the capital planet is lost?
A. No.
- 33.41 If the Imperial player cannot pay maintenance for some of his Elite units, but already has all of his Veteran units in play; are the Elite units replaced with lower value units or are they simply removed?
A. Removed! Ex-elite units are much too proud to be anything but veterans.
- 37.1 Can prisoners heal (allowing them to be tortured repeatedly)? If so, can they be questioned normally while healing or must they be left alone?
A. Prisoners can heal, but it requires peace from questioning (they cannot be on missions... even the opponent's missions).
- IV Can an encounter with the creature "Vrialta" occur after he has been killed in combat?
A. No.
- VI Does the "Scrambler" add four to the owner's hiding value when hiding from several characters?
A. Yes.
- VI What does the "Scanner" do against a level 0 PDB? Does a one level reduction make the PDB effectively "down" for that evasion attempt?
A. Yes, if the PDB is level 0 Down, then the "Scanner" makes it "doubly down" (i.e., ten enemy space strength points are needed to simulate a level 0 Up PDB). If it is level 0 Up, the "Scanner" makes it effectively down.
- VI If the only character on one side of a combat is disabled by the "Cervac MK V"; how are the battle odds determined and the combat resolved?
A. Automatic capture or death (victor's choice).
- VII Must the "Trap" secret be completely removed if it is discovered through the Imperial Archives or can it still be used as a prison to hold prisoners without requiring a guard?
A. Completely removed, no further effect.
- Q. Must units which have just been brought be deployed in an environ, or may they start in orbit?
A. They start in an environ.

- Q. Is Mareg really able to detect Secrets from the invulnerability of orbit?
A. Yes, but tying up a spaceship and important character in this manner may not be the wisest move however.
- Q. Is the Android an Object or a Companion?
A. An Object.

SCENARIO 1000

- 1002.25 & 1025.4 In the Special Rules, British Churchill tanks are mentioned. Are these supposed to be in the Order of Battle, and in what command?
A. A last minute discovery of an obscure OB source showed that the Adv. Detachment had no Churchills, only Shermans. The scenario OB and most references were changed; these two slipped through. There are no Churchills in Scenario 1000.
1020. When adding up the point totals for the Italian Battlefield Integrity, what point value does one use for the Italian crews?
A. Sorry—6 points. I keep forgetting that our readers aren't necessarily aware of the lists of point values we use here.
- 1005.12 & 1005.13 When dropping the two groups of paratroopers is one to use the normal drop procedure outlined in Rule 99.22? If so, and one rolls a "4" or "5", must he choose the other of the two boards selected as per the Special Rules?
A. Yes, all facets of 99.22 are in force; and he may thus choose any board as the landing point (badly scattering his force if not careful).
- 1002.11 & 1002.21 Are the points that are awarded for these building hexes given for each level of each hex, or just for each hex regardless of the number of levels?
A. For each unruled hex.
- 1021.3 Does this Special Rule mean that the fighters are assumed to have drawn a "6" chit as per Rule 139.12?
A. Yes; due to the proximity of airfields and importance of the bridge, the fighters were "over target" for some little time.
- 1002.25 Does the Allied player get any points for exiting Bishops, AECs or Brens?
A. No, but the Axis player gets points for destroying them (1002.18)!
- OB In the Order of Battle for the Italian Garrison, Wire is listed. Is there truly only one Wire counter?
A. Our number fell off on the way to the presses; there should be ten Wire counters.

MYSTIC WOOD **\$11.00**
Avalon Hill's Fantasy Game of Romantic Adventure

It would appear that *MYSTIC WOOD*, inspired by Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and Spenser's *The faerie Queen*, is a touch too esoteric for the taste of our readership. Only 27 responded to our rating survey of this latest fantasy title from Avalon Hill, too few to warrant its inclusion on our ongoing Adventure Game RBG. However, some interesting highlights are thrown on the design by their response when these ratings are compared to those found on the complete RBG (see Vol. 20, No. 2).

A relatively quick-playing and simple game (as shown by the ratings for "Complexity" and "Completeness of Rules" and "Playability"—well below the average in all three), *MYSTIC WOOD* appeals to the romantic in all of us. Too, the game is well balanced and exciting, at least to those who responded. Add to this the additional point that it requires little time—sixth on the list for "Shortest Game Length". However, the remainder of the ratings for this innovative title are but average. Indeed, the "Overall Value" rating is as near to the "norm" (from Vol. 20, No. 2-3.23) as is possible. One must suspect, though, that with a wider familiarity and a wider sample base, these ratings would be substantially different.

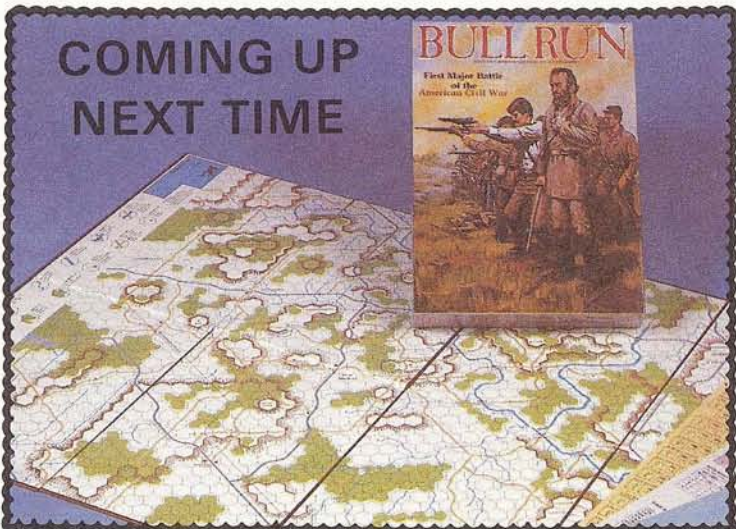
The complete ratings for *MYSTIC WOOD* are as follows:

- Overall Value:** 3.22
Components: 2.83
Map: 3.40
Counters: —
Player's Aids: 2.56
Complexity: 2.80
Completeness of Rules: 2.33
Playability: 1.87
Excitement Level: 2.55
Play Balance: 2.20
Authenticity: 3.67
Game Length
 Shortest: 1 hr., 8 min.
 Longest: 3 hrs., 10 min.
Year: 1983
Sample Base: 27

The following Avalon Hill games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly. Readers are reminded that the Game Length categories are measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus, a rating of "18" equates to three hours).

ADVENTURE GAME RBG

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness of Rules	Playability	Authenticity	Game Length Shortest	Game Length Longest	Year	Sample Base
1. CIV	1.99	2.17	3	2.17	1.96	3.60	18.43	44.52	1982	126
2. TT	2.22	2.26	4	2.45	1.95	3.81	16.54	36.30	1982	53
3. DU	2.27	2.23	3	2.45	2.30	2.32	10.20	16.90	1979	110
4. DIP	2.30	3.18	3	2.41	1.82	4.83	24.46	46.24	1976	117
5. CM	2.44	2.88	3	2.65	1.85	2.54	9.71	18.96	1980	99
6. GSL	2.48	1.95	5	3.04	2.55	2.01	4.97	18.22	1982	86
7. MA	2.76	2.91	4	2.84	2.47	4.40	18.36	45.49	1980	26
8. SOTN	2.85	2.98	5	3.71	2.43	4.35	14.45	40.56	1979	56
9. FG	3.03	2.63	7	3.11	3.83	2.82	12.51	67.38	1981	51
10. KM	3.03	2.65	7	3.60	3.22	3.73	18.66	31.40	1976	147
11. SST	3.21	2.96	5	3.14	3.38	3.20	9.18	28.03	1976	127
12. WQ	3.27	2.70	2	2.67	2.21	3.94	10.91	17.53	1979	88
13. GL	3.31	2.73	4	3.02	2.89	2.88	3.90	11.02	1981	65
14. MR	3.42	2.01	7	6.01	3.91	3.18	9.63	29.02	1979	109
15. AW	3.60	3.48	4	2.48	2.33	5.06	9.82	16.52	1981	50
16. OS	4.35	3.28	3	2.45	2.79	4.24	5.11	11.54	1972	62
17. OR	5.26	3.84	1	2.73	3.96	5.27	9.92	15.42	1971	52



A less-than-overwhelming accolade greeted Vol. 20, No. 2 of *The GENERAL*, indicative again of this readership's response to any subject other than traditional historical conflict simulation. Despite high ratings (as follows) for the individual fantasy-oriented articles, the overall ratings for the issue (3.64) is mediocre—a most curious state of affairs.

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We have been informed of the formation of a wargamer's club in Barcelona, Spain—ARES (which, in Catalan, stands for "Strategy and Simulation Research Association"). Interested in all forms of historical simulation and gaming, their tastes are broad and include miniatures, personal computers, traditional and non-traditional board-games. Closely associated with the respected IPMS society of that country, ARES promises to be a top-notch effort, professional and enjoyable. The officers have extended an invitation to all wargamers, regardless of nationality, to contact them. Write: ARES, C. Ali-Bey 44 Entol 2nd, Barcelona-13 (Catalunya), Spain.

Once again we must inform the readership of the departure of another talented member of our staff—this time Joe Balkoski, editor of our sister publication *ALL-STAR REPLAY* and developer of many of our fine sports titles. Mr. Balkoski has taken a position with Booz Allen & Hamilton, a private consulting firm based in Bethesda, Maryland. With a penchant for statistics and an occasional leprechaunish sense of humor, it is our good fortune that Joe has agreed to continue on a free-lance basis updating a number of the popular titles in the line.

LONDON BLITZ, premier in the line of AH's video games, was chosen as "Video Game of the Month" in December by the editors of *Computer Games*. This is only the latest in a long list of honors for Avalon Hill's Computer Division. AH seems to be making a noticeable impact on the frantic software market, *Creative Computing* (the doyen among periodicals for computer gameplayers) has devoted an entire article to advances made by the programming wizards at Avalon Hill (September '83 issue). If the reader has a home computer and is looking for a challenging change of pace, he should investigate what Avalon Hill has to offer.

Yet more recognition comes to Avalon Hill in the most recent issue of *Games* (Nov. 1983). As they are wont to do annually, the editors of that fine periodical have presented a list of their 100 favorite games. No less than 14 Avalon Hill titles were found on the list. Indeed, of the eight games in the "Historical" category, six are readily recognizable to our readership: *CIVILIZATION*, *DIPLOMACY*, *GETTYSBURG*, *NAPOLEON*, *STORM OVER ARNHEM* and *VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC*. Too, we were most pleased that *Victory Games' Ambush* and *Chaosium's Runequest* (soon due out by Avalon Hill) were both selected. Feeling a justifiable pride at recognition by such a discriminating group, we would like to thank the editors of *Games* for the boost to our ego.

Infiltrator's Report

In the near future, Avalon Hill will be publishing the science fiction classic, *STELLAR CONQUEST*. Mick Uhl needs your help; he has asked that any "conquerors" among our readership that would like to contribute their thoughts on changes, corrections or play balance contact him. Note, this is *not* a playtest call. Rather, this is a chance to see the ideas and expertise of long-time players of an established title utilized by a developer for a change.

From Mr. Gutenkunst comes his offer (no surprise that) of mounted counters for our recent PL variant—"Para-Leader". The largest counter set he has produced to date, it is available for \$2.60 plus a stamped, self-addressed business envelope. These may be ordered from him at his Box 3301, Traffic Station, Minneapolis, MN 55403 address.

PRICE INCREASE

For those observant few among our readership, this "bad" news comes as no shock. For the vast majority who spared only a moment's glance at the cover, it is time that they be made aware of the first price increase for *The GENERAL* since January 1980. This last issue of 1983, and subsequent issues, will bear a cover price of \$3.00. Subscription rates, effective immediately, rise to \$12.00 for a one-year run; \$18.00 for two years.

It is truly unfortunate that this 16% price increase had to occur, but the editors of *The GENERAL* have been aware of the pressure to do so for some time. In cruel honesty, we delayed the inevitable as long as possible. Rising postal rates and printing costs, a sharp jump in the price of paper, increased use of original artwork and color throughout these pages—all have contributed to the intolerable situation of the magazine losing money over the past volume year. It is our inflexible intention that *The GENERAL* not be a charity, but a viable and vital facet of The Avalon Hill Game Company.

A one-year subscription now offers a 33% savings over the cover price. A two-year subscription means a 50% savings over the cover price, and a 25% savings over multiple one-year rates. Postage rates for Canadian and overseas subscribers remain unchanged.

[These same rates will apply to Avalon Hill's newest periodical—*HEROES*, devoted to the role-playing systems of Avalon Hill and *Victory* games. The premier issue of this premier project, under the editorship of Debbie Ritchie, will be out in Spring '84.]

The observant might also note that, effective with this issue, the dates on the cover have been omitted. Do not fear; this was no oversight by our graphics staff, but a conscious effort to boost newstand "shelf life". *The GENERAL* will continue to have mailings near the end of February, April, June, August, October and December. However, retail outlets will no longer suffer from obviously dated material, which in the past has guaranteed a high percentage of returns to our shipping offices—an expensive proposition for this periodical to bear. A minor alteration, a significant savings.

There are many fine amateur publications in this broad-ranging hobby of ours. Now, Mr. Henricks brings us *The 'Zine Register*, a comprehensive listing of this multitude of 'zines—from *Appalling Greed* to *Xenogogic*. Found here too are listings for all the foreign gaming 'zines, a useful and important source for both hobbyists and professionals. Each listing in the Register contains subscription information. And the editor's "Games Cross Reference", a readily read chart indicating the 'zines which consider each game, is an invaluable service. Copies can be obtained for \$2.00 from Mr. Roy Henricks, 128 Deerfield Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

From the Netherlands comes a very worthwhile effort, *Conflict Gazet*, devoted to boardgames of all types in vogue in that country. Recent issues have included pieces on *DIPLOMACY*, reviews of new AH releases, insightful analytic and strategic articles on a broad variety of games. European readers who may be interested in Ducosim's periodical are urged to contact its editor: Teun Spans, R. Feithlaan 167, 2533 Gd Den Haag, Netherlands (070-295545). Subscriptions are available for 30 francs per year.

From Minneapolis comes news of a fledgling organization, the First Minnesota Volunteers, for games of the region. News of the organization is disseminated by *The Herald*, which also carries product reviews and game analyses. Although the club seems to be experiencing "growing pains", it carries the potential for being more than the usual players' "get-together". For those readers in the region interested in contacting the First Minnesota, write Mr. Jerry Corrick, 3430 St. Paul Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55416.

And another "counter cutter" makes his debut (Mr. Gutenkunst may have spawned a new pastime). Mr. Ralph Street offers mounted counters for the Crete/Malta scenarios by Vance Von Borries (Vol. 15, No. 3). His offer is a set for \$2.00 plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Mr. Street plans to concentrate on producing mounted counters for some of the older variants in *The GENERAL*. He has encouraged readers to contact him with suggestions for future projects. The Crete/Malta variant counters may be ordered from Mr. Street, Rte. 1, Box 231, Lebanon, VA 24266.

No one arrived at the same answer for Contest 114 as our team of experts did, each solution offered being plagued with at least minor tactical risks. But several did, in the judgement of our experts, warrant a winner's certificate: Gilbert Benoit, Ottawa, ONT; Michael Brophy, State College, PA; Michael Gilbert, York, PA; Sam Gordon, Baltimore, MD; Gerald Lientz, Charlottesville, VA; Philip Rennet, Fairfax, VA; Donald Simmons, Ruston, LA; A.H. vander Tweel, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Bill Wales, Kitchner, ONT.

The solution to Contest 115 is one for the "rules lawyers". Since the solution precludes any losses in SPs for the Coalition Player, he has little choice but to do—*nothing!* The Prussian player can't attempt to besiege Dresden on Game Turn 8 since he is out of supply, and thus cannot build a depot. Rule 12.12 allows combat units and/or leaders to garrison a fortress hex for victory purposes; but Rule 10.11 states that, in order for a fortress hex to be a source of friendly supply, a *combat* unit SP must be inside it. Hence, since Torgau is not occupied by a Prussian SP, and since the depot in hex 2019 is too distant, no depot for the siege can be built by Game Turn 8. The only other two alternatives—involving either a force march or combat—run a high chance of incurring losses for the Coalition, and are not as *economical* as mere passivity.

OPPONENTS WANTED

The Huntsville Gaming Club is looking for wargamers in the Huntsville area. Meetings every two weeks. For more information contact: Dudley Kidd, 2421 Redmont Rd., Huntsville, AL 35810, (205) 859-1581

Where's all the Huntsville players at? Will play fif in GOA, SL and COI. Will consider pbm for above and PL. Am aver. gamer. Barry Maynard, 3605 Williamsburg Dr., Huntsville, AL 35810, 859-5608

Adult seeks fif in west L.A. area. Play weekends; rated or non-rated. Play most any operational or strategic level games. Ty Bomba, 4051 Jackson Ave., #2, Culver City, CA 90230, (213) 558-8653

Fif in Long Beach area 3R, Conquistador, WAS, RB, 1776, and others. Tony Strong, 1027 E. 7th St., #5, Long Beach, CA 90811, (213) 591-4022

Beginner new to area seeks rated or unrated games of BB'81 and TRC. Unrated 3R and SL. Pbm systems needed. Ron Galbraith, 223 Norton Ave., #D, National City, CA 92050

Fif or Pbm opponents wanted for CAE, COI, SL, FE, KM, NP, TRC, SST, SOA, 3R, TT, SON, I, AM, willing to learn others. James Edision, 1522 E. Brockton, Redlands, CA 92373, 794-5603

21 yr. old gamer seeks fif opponents of all ages for TLD scenarios and especially campaign game. Also GI, SST, Tom Cardozo, 2956 Taper Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95051, (408) 296-7966

Pbm only. Monster player needs mature competition for long term play. TLD, 3R, FT. All replies answered. Gary J. Goyton, 6107 Astel Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401

Wanted: Opponents for pbm TRC, LW, PL, NEU system for TRC, PL. Unrated. You pick scenario and side. All letters answered. Any games in Northglenn? Chris Churchwell, 2088 E. 114 Ave., Northglenn, Colorado 80231, (303) 452-1114

Still waiting for WWI or WWII scenarios for WAS or VITP. Any ideas out there? Michael Knausz, 1501 E. Park Ave., Apt. W-5, Valdosta, GA 31602

13 yr. old gamer has played 2 yrs., needs pbm system, or fif for 3R. John Ceffalio, 15638 Baintree Way, Mishawaka, IN 46545, 255-2356

AREA rated 1300+ seeks rated pbm with 1300+ opponent. Tournament BL 75 ed. All opponents Amended. Fighter Rules. Dan Dimmore, RR4 Box 291, Nashville, TN 37248, (615) 988-4961

AREA 1400+ seeks fif, pbm opponents for PB, PL, LW, Have 3R, will pbm. (Need pbm system). All letters answered. Dennis Lydick, 3015 South East Parkway, Richmond, IN 47374, (317) 966-8714

Fif play in this area wanted. Also pbm of VITP using rules in Vol. 19, No. 6 of the General. Mike Sanchez, 112 E. Marions, South Bend, IN 46601, 232-2119

AF/DL players wanted to try a different, easy movement and combat pbm method. 1 like Africa, East Front, Pacific scenarios. Bill Retoff, RR 2 Box 6, Mineola, IL 61760, (815) 432-1145

If you have a pbm system for 3R, CIV, or CAE, let's play! Out for fun and experience not blood! John Tammes, 4935 Crofton Dr., Rockford, IL 61111, (815) 877-1201

Veteran gamer new in town seeking friendly opposition. AH Civil War and naval game a specialty. Will play others too. Paul Trandell, 120 W. Traube St., Westmont, IL 60559, (312) 964-6960

Adult gamer seeks pbm competition in MD, PL, FT, BIS, VITP, TAC. Need pbm systems. For fun only. Honor roll. Bill Nixon, P.O. Box 688, Richmond, KY 40475, (606) 623-3154

Wanted pbm opponents AREA or non-AREA for BB'81, Wat, DD, AK, Grad. Prefer 21 yrs. or older. Roger Gerezicki, P.O. Box 9265, Balto., MD 21222, 473-3880

Wanted: Mature, adult opponents for FredG, 1776, Rail Baron, KM, DIP, and NAP. Tim Tilton, 12C Saddlepost Ct., Cockeysville, MD 21030

Adult fif for CAE, Titan, 1776, FITW, Victory Games' Civil War, "Classics" History Oriented. Bill Morgal, 5201 Alderney Place, Temple Hills, MD 20748, (301) 449-7443

Would like very much to GM, FT, pbm as per the Burnst article, G9. 19-6. Also SL, COI, COD, GI, 3R, fif in Midland Co. A.R. Mohowick, 1850 Diana Dr., Sanford, MI 48657, (517) 867-5478

20 yr. old experienced gamer seeking veteran opponents for SL, COI, COD, GI, TRC 40-FR, VITP. Prefer fif but willing to try pbm. Dan Heuberg, 8349 Fillmore St., N.E., Mpls., MN 55412, (612) 784-8953

Unrated 14 yr. old desires play of 1776, FITG, WSIM, VITP. Play latter two pbm. Also interested in pbm DIF, Jay Ouzts, 811 S. Court, Cleveland, MS 38732, 443-4838

AREA 1200 prov. needs rated pbm TRC, VITP (S-move), AOC, MD, 3R (need system). Fif also. Honor system or Random number table (Gen. 1946). Randy Shilb, 2508 Brookside Ct., Columbia, MO 65201, (417) 449-5034

Jersey wargamers meet first and third Fridays, first and third Sundays each month. For info: Days, Bob Wiegand (201) 241-9664, Evenings, Bob Hahn, 596 Brookside Place, Cranford, NJ 07016, (201) 276-3553

AREA rated approx. 1700+ verified seeks mature pbm opponents in TRC and SST. Prefer playing against 1600+ opponents who will play two game matches. Marc Dultz, 69-11A 215th St., Bayside, New York 11304, (212) 229-8391

Novice player looking for opponents for WSIM, GOA, SST, fif or pbm. Also am good GSI player, play for system. James A. Becker, 40 Shepherd Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11208, (212) 927-4304

Wanted fif Southern Tier, 10 yrs. exp. SL, COI, GI, 3R, BB, DIP, AK, TAC, TRC or willing to travel. Neil Kierulff, 108 Humphry Rd., Great Valley, NJ 14741, (716) 945-2002

Multi-player 3R and W&P. Reliable, respected pbm since publishing for seven years. Samples 50K, Mark Matsuchak, 549 W. 113th St., #4L, New York, NY 10025, (212) 663-8951

Adult pbm BB'81 2nd edition. AREA? Advanced Optional #42 1LMBD. You pick side. SASE list opponents I can't play. Albert Thomas, 210 Kimberly Dr. W., Syracuse, NY 13219, (315) 488-1943

Adult gamer seeks any opponents. Fif COD, FR40, SST, Pbm BB'81, TRC etc. Seeking to start Phila. area game club/wins. Please reply, I'm ready. David Cashel, 502 Walnut St., Collingdale, PA 19023, 237-8365

Pgh., east suburbs, experienced adult, seeks fif advanced WWII games. COI thru GI, FE, PK, TLD, PL, PB. Ed Ljwyak, 235 Grant St., Greensburg, PA 15601, (412) 832-9278

Wargamers—experienced with both fif & pbm, would like to pbm GE. Best way to really learn a game. Call or write: Michael Brophy, 914 University Dr., State College, PA 16801, (814) 238-5259

Opponents wanted, Greater Cincinnati area. Serious but casual experienced gamer seeks fif SL, COI, COD, GI. Like DYO also. Steve Laughlin, 1561 Pleasant Run, Cincinnati, OH 45240, (513) 742-0353

Fif opponents for AZ, BIS, SL, COI, GE, PL, RW, 3R in Columbus area. Also interested in any club. Kenneth Good, Jr., 2065 Sious Dr., Circleville, OH 43131, (614) 474-8457

AREA 900 player desperately needs rated pbm game of WSIM using honor system. Prefer shorter scenarios. Also, anyone for LRH. Jonathan Barlow, 1711 Rockycade Rd., Cave Jct., OR 97323, 592-3617

Squad Leaders, the Boardgamers Assoc. of Portland is opening up Mondays for SL, COI, COD, GI. We're also open on Friday nights. So call us. Scott Payne, 7625 S.W. 91st Ave., Portland, OR 97223, 244-0660

Anyone for SL? DIPP! R.I. residents for these games call me. I'm a beginner but I'll surprise you! Local players: Brian Mahony, 3416 West Shore Rd., Warwick, RI 02886, 738-7094

Where are R.I. wargamers? 16yr. old veteran needs opponents for SL, COI, COD, GI, and 3R. Am interested in starting a group in the area. Mike Pandera, 619 Weeskapung Rd., Westerly, RI 02891, (401) 322-8898

Any gamers out here? Fif or pbm SL, COI, COD, AF, DL, FT, WSIM, TR, VITP. Tom O'Neill, Box 445, Simi, SD 57061, (605) 826-4147

AREA rated 900 looking for pbm opponents for PB, SL, and WSIM. Want to play all scenarios. Ed Ibbell, 2104 Tampico, Carrollton, TX 75006

Any wargamers in Dahlgren area? SL especially. Steve Broughall, 822 Boughter Rd., NSWC, Dahlgren, VA 22448, (703) 663-3212

29 yr. old gamer seeking fif gaming; especially with an established club in the area. Major interest are war games. Stefan, 5405 Melvin Court, Dale City, VA 22193, (703) 590-8949

Interested in established club sponsoring pbm tournaments, panoramas, and diplomacy games with a monthly magazine? Send SASE for further info. Randy Heller, 2175 N. Heritage Way, Oak Harbor, WA 98277, (206) 875-1657

Experienced gamer seeks pbm opponents for AK, BIS, LW, PB, PL, TRC, WSIM. Prefer honor system. All letters answered. Jeff Hawkins, 1630 E. Broad, S. Pokane, WA 99207, (509) 489-7778

Opponents wanted for fif, pbm, SL, COI, COD, GI. Have good system for pbm. Area rated or not. I. Sadowski, 2-162 Klonow St., Wunnspe, Man-RZH022, (204) 235-0475

Prov. rated 1500 player wants rated, unrated games of 3R, SL, COI, COD, GI, TLD, FT, Runquest. Peter Serrador, 109 The Country Way, Kitchener, Ontario N2E 2K3, 376-3752

Pbm adult opponent wanted for TRC. Pbm wanted AREA rated 700-1300. R. Antiviale, Via Bergognone 13, Milano, Italy

OPPONENTS WANTED

COLLECTORS CORNER

Past Hef Mack wanna see a terrific newsletter (for players of the Squad Leader Series)? Special offer 6 issues \$5. Sample issue \$3 plus SASE. "On All Fronts", P.O. Box 265, Marshall, AR 72650

Sale: Games and books, many out of print. Bids welcome. Please send SASE. Lee Lasky, P.O. Box 5643, Mesa, AZ 85201, (602) 833-1698

For sale: Mini set of Generals, with all inserts, from Vol. 8, No. 1 to present, plus 5 binders. Sold as set only. John Broughton, 1945 Berkeley Way, Apt. 325, Berkeley, CA 94704

For sale: Out of print AH, 3M Battle line games. Send SASE for complete list. Scott Hampsey, 1513 Huntington St., Huntington Beach, CA 92648, (714) 536-6164

For sale: BIS'62 \$30, TAC'58 \$15, Oh Wah Kee (GM) \$15. Send SASE for list and more info. Tony Strong, 1027 E. 7th St. #5, Long Beach, CA 90813, (213) 591-0423

For sale: '1914' mint condition. Plus other discom. AH games. Rob Ellis, 5090 Village Elm Dr., Sacto., CA 95832

For sale: Four original Air Force Dauntless explosion kits. Red boxes still plastic sealed. \$45.00 each ppd. Louis Berry, 2259 N. Marster Ct., Simi Valley, CA 93065, (805) 583-3599

Buy, sell, trade classic AH games with National Computerized System. Send SASE for details. Game Exchange, c/o John Farewell, 41 Midland Ave., Stamford, CT 06906, (203) 327-0919

For sale: Used wargames. Price \$1.00 to \$5.00. Any defects in games will be explained. Under 18 must bring adult. Kenneth W. Burke, 6 Meadowbrook Rd., W. Hartford, CT 06107, 521-2291

For sale: Generals and other AH out of print games and magazines. Send SASE for list, and your want list. Bill Forrester, 535 N.W. 31st Ave., Gainesville, FL 32601, 378-4173

For sale: Large list of out of print wargames and magazines, also General variants. Send stamp for list. Wally Williams, Jr., 611 S.E. 1st Ave., Gainesville, FL 32601, (904) 373-3175

For sale: Many games including Guard 1914 1st Ed., Judgments and 1st Ed. Tobruk. Send for list. Mark A. Weseman, 100-3 Hickory Ridge Apt., Hopkinsville, KY 42240, (502) 885-2454

Help me! College month soon! Many games must go now. 17 titles ready to find new home. Send SASE for complete price list. Dave Maurer, 810 East Ave., Newark, NJ 14511, (315) 331-1374

For sale: Large collection of AH games. Send SASE for list (mostly new condition with extra counters). Don Carlsted, Jr., 30 Old Lane, Towaco, NJ 07082, (201) 335-5059

For sale: AH collector items including Generals Vol. 11, #2, 3 and Vol. 11, #5 thru Vol. 20, #. Sell only as set. Excellent condition. Serious offers only. Kevin Combs, 1125 Old Balto. Pike, Beltsville, MD 20705, (301) 937-2485

Magazines (including some specific General articles from #16-5 onward) for sale/trade. All excellent condition. Send SASE to Rich Cottrell, 6131 N. Dearing Rd., Parma, MI 49269, 784-5231

OPPONENTS WANTED

Available: Over 40 historical scenarios for SL-GI. Includes France, Russia, Italy and more. Send SASE. John Cramsie III, 8704 Greene Ave., Cottage Grove, MN 55016

For sale: Wargame collection since 1961. Numerous out of print AH mags/AH games. Will trade for dispatch CO&BO. Excellent condition. Send SASE. Kit Walchook, 675 Old Canon Rd., Jackson, MS 39211, (601) 957-1813

For sale: very good 1914 only played twice. Original JU \$30 each or best offer. Must sell. Larry Gross, 11303 Fulton Rd., Marshallville, OH 44645, (216) 855-4103

For sale: AH wargames, all in good to mint condition. Includes: 1914. Send SASE for list. Also, some games include variants/articles. Shawn Button, 127 Mack Hall, IUP, Indiana, PA 15705, (412) 357-3526

TRK-80 Color computer game assist programs for Tob and GE. No graphics 32K write for info. Alan Striebel, 29 W. 3rd St., Lewistown, PA 17044

Collectors' games: BIS'62, 3M Thinking Man's Football '69, 3M Pro Football '67. All VG condition. Send SASE with offer. Cpt. Egon Hatfield, P.O. Box 5669, Ft. Hood, TX 76544, (817) 532-3458

For sale: Out of print Generals: Vol. 11, No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 without inserts. Send SASE with offer. Cpt. Egon Hatfield, P.O. Box 5669, Ft. Hood, TX 76544, (817) 532-3458

Wanted: "The Journeys of St. Paul". Must be complete and in like new condition, please. B.L. Carter, 5105 W. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23226

Wanted: Generals Vol. 14 Nos. 1, 5, 6 and Vol. 13 Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 in fair to excellent condition with all inserts. Must have Generals, name your price. James Crawley, Box 697, Bonnyville, Alberta, Canada T0A 0L0, (403) 826-5269

Games for sale. Write for list—includes several out-of-print Generals, AH games. Andrew Webster, 2000 Bloor St. W., #312, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6P 3L2, (416) 767-4425

Wanted: out of print games and mags. Also wanted original Crete/Malta variant counters described in General 13. All letters answered. Ferro Gianpiero, Via Pedemontana, 74/A/2, Soranzen, Italy BL 32030

The "Opponents Wanted" advertisements appearing on this page are intended as a service to the readership of this periodical. This service will continue so long as certain editorial regulations are adhered to strictly. The editors of THE GENERAL reserve the right to excise any part of or an entire advertisement should these not be followed.

Wanted ads will be accepted only when printed on the appropriate form or a reasonable facsimile. Such must be accompanied by the appropriate fee. This may take the form of uncancelled US postage; note that foreign postage is not acceptable. No refunds of this fee will be made, even should the ad not be printed due to failure to conform to AH policies

Please print or type the ad copy. If the ad is not legible, it will not be printed. Too, no dealing with non-AH products will be printed and any mention of such will be excised. Ads are accepted for a single printing only. Should the reader desire that a specific ad enjoy a multiple printing, a separate number of copies equal to the number of times the ad is to be run must be submitted—although only one total payment need be included to cover the printings.

All material in THE GENERAL is protected by copyright and reproduction with intent to sell is strictly forbidden. Advertisers may sell photocopies of particular articles from SOLD OUT back issues NO LONGER in stock (for a listing of those issues still in stock, consult the listing at the bottom of this page), provided that they charge no more for this service than their own expenses. Anyone offering such copies for a profit or distributing copies of back issues still available will be in violation of the copyright laws of the United States.

Finally, due to the pressure of various deadlines, often advertisements submitted weeks before an issue appears will not be printed in that issue. Please be patient; such will be printed in the immediately following issue. Please do not specify a particular issue for an ad to appear; such requests cannot be honored.

GENERAL BACK ISSUES

Only the following GENERAL back issues are still available. Price is \$2.50 per issue plus 10% postage and handling charges (20% to Canada, 30% overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax. GENERAL postage coupons may not be used for this or other non-game orders. Due to the low quantities of some back issues we request that you specify alternate selections should your first choice be unavailable. Below is a listing of each issue by subject matter; game abbreviations are italicized and found in the

Opponents Wanted ad insert in this issue and article types are identified as follows: H—Historical Background, DN—Designer's Notes, V—Variant, SR—Series Replay (sample game), S—Strategy, Q—Questions, P—PBM (postal) systems, Sc—Scenarios, A—Analysis. The largest (feature) articles are always the first one listed in each issue. Those issue numbers printed in red indicate one-color reprints of previously out-of-print issues.



- 12-2: TB—H, DN; BB—V; BL—V; PB—SR; PL—DN; STAL—S; AZ—Q
- 14-3: AIW—H, DN, S, Q; TRC—S; 3R—S; STAL—SR; WAS—V; PB—SQ
- 14-5: SL—H, A, DN, Q; WS&M—A; TRC—S; MD—S; SST—S; 3R—S
- 15-2: PL—V; Sc; STAL—V; 3R—V; DD—DN; RB—S; VITP—S
- 15-3: AOC—S, A, DN, Sc; TRC—V; 3R—V; SL—V; WAS—V
- 15-6: COI—A, DN, S, Sc; Q; WAS—V; AIW—S; SST—Sc; PL—V
- 16-1: AZ—Sc, S, DN; 3R—S; NP—S; PB—SR; 1776—S; DIP—S
- 16-2: BIS—A, Sc, H, DN, Q; PB—SR; AK—S; 1776—S; WS&M—S
- 16-3: PL—A, S; WAS—S, H; TB—Sc; COI—SR; 1776—S; MD—V
- 16-4: MR—A, V, DN, Q; HOI—Sc; 3R—S; TRC—SR
- 16-5: TRC—S; SUB—Sc; SST—S; WAS—S; PB—V; RB—V; NAP—S; COD—Q
- 16-6: DUNE—A; DIP—V; OS—V; AZ—DN, Sc, SR; PB—A, PBM
- 17-1: W&P—A, DN, V, Q; 3R—S; COI—S; MD—V; COD—A; MR—V; LW—S; WAS—SR
- 17-2: COD—A, Sc, Q; WAT—Sc; VITP—SR
- 17-3: AK—S; 3R—S; COD—S, Q; AF—A, DN; TRC—V; VITP—V; COI—SR
- 17-4: FE—S, P, DN, V; MD—V, Q; COI—SR; VITP—S; 1776—Sc; WQ—A; SST—V; NAP—S
- 17-5: CM—S, V, Q; RW—V; SL—V; STAL—V; PL—S; 3R—S; CAE—V; KM—S; MR—S
- 17-6: STAL—S; WS&M—V, Sc; WAS—V; 3R—SR; SL—S; TLD—Q; CL—S; TRC—S
- 18-1: FITW—A, Q; BIS—S; SL—S; DUNE—V; DIP—S; AK—A; PB—SR; AL—S; W&P—S
- 18-2: AIW—A, Sc, Q; AK—V; 3R—DN; TB—V; SL—S; AIW—V; VITP—S; DIP—S; DD—S
- 18-3: GOA—S, DN, V, Q; AOC—V, Sc; AK—S; VITP—S; SL—S; Sc; WS&M—SR; P; DIP—S
- 18-4: GL—H, V, A, Q; SL—Sc, A; LW—V; W&P—SR; AOC—S, P; FE—V; WAS—S; AK—S
- 18-5: 3R—S, A, V, DN, Q; SL—S, A, Sc; TRC—V; TB—V; RW—V; CL—A; DUNE—V
- 18-6: FT—A, Sc, V, DN; VITP—V, Q; MD—S, Q; SOTN—A, Q; SUB—Sc; BL—V
- 19-1: SOA—A, V, DN, SR, Q; TLD—A, Q; 3R—S, Q; DWTX—DN; TB—A
- 19-2: BB—H, Sc, S, DN; TLD—A, Q; SL—V; 3R—S; SOA—SR
- 19-3: GSI—A, Sc, V, SR, Q; DIP—A; RW—Sc; GE—V; 1776—Sc; LRT—V, Q; SL—A
- 19-4: CIV—A, V, DN; CM—V; DIP—A; GL—V; AL—V; TR—Sc; WQ—Sc; SL—A; 3R—S, Q
- 19-5: SON—A, S, H, A; W&P—S, Q; DIP—A; W&P—S; WS&M—Sc; SL—A
- 19-6: VITP—PBM, SR; 3R—V, Q; DIP—A; FT—V; BIS—V; NW—A; SL—A, Sc; SUB—V, Sc
- 20-1: GI—S, A, DN, V, Q; VITP—SR
- 20-2: TT—A, DN, S, Q; MR—V; LRH—A; SL—Sc; W&P—V; GOA—S, Q; DIP—A; PL—V
- 20-3: FRED—S, V, Sc, Q; PB—A; 1776—Sc; DWTX—S, V, Q; DIP—A; CON—V, S

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are seemingly always in vogue these days. Whether the subject is books on the Best Seller List, television's Nielsen ratings, or even games, the public never seems to tire of seeing how their individual favorites stack up numerically against the competition. Our preoccupation with this national pastime is almost akin to routing the home team on to victory every Sunday. So to further cater to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity) we unveil *THE GENERAL's* version of the gamer's TOP TEN.

We won't ask you to objectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or less) games which you've spent the most time with *since* you received your last issue of *THE GENERAL*. With this we can generate a consensus list of what's being played . . . not just what is being bought. The degree of correlation between the Best Selling Lists and the Most Played List should prove interesting.

Feel free to list any game regardless of manufacturer. There will be a built-in Avalon Hill bias to the survey because you all play Avalon Hill games to some extent but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other magazines with a special interest-based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's discretion.

The games I've spent the most time playing during the past two months are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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INSTRUCTIONS:

Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate space to the right (1 equating "excellent"; 5, "average"; 9, "terrible"). **EXCEPTION:** Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes necessary to play the game, in ten-minute increments. (Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of *FRANCE 1940*, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 19, No. 4. Sub-categories are indicated by italics. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for **Complexity** and **Year of Publishing** have been provided; do not rate these categories.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Overall Value | _____ |
| 2. Components | _____ |
| 2a. Mapboard | _____ |
| 2b. Counters | _____ |
| 2c. Player's Aids | _____ |
| 3. Complexity | _____ 4 _____ |
| 3a. Complexity | _____ |
| 4. Completeness of Rules | _____ |
| 5. Playability | _____ |
| 5a. Excitement Level | _____ |
| 5b. Play Balance | _____ |
| 6. Authenticity | _____ |
| 7. Game Length | _____ |
| 7a. Basic/Shortest | _____ |
| 7b. Advanced/Longest | _____ |
| 8. Year of Publication | _____ 1983 _____ |

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5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed within our limited space, we request that you use official state and game abbreviations. Don't list your entire collection, list only those you are most interested in locating opponents for.

Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Alexander—AL, Alpha Omega—AO, Amoeba Wars—AW, Anzio—AZ, Arab-Israeli Wars—AIW, Assault On Crete—AOC, Bismarck—BIS, Blitzkrieg—BL, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Caesar Alesia—CAE, Caesar's Legions—CL, Chancellorsville—CH, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, Conquistador—CON, Cross Of Iron—COI, Crescendo Of Doom—COD, Dauntless—DL, D-Day—DD, Diplomacy—DIP, Down With The King—DWTK, Dragonhunt—DH, Flat Top—FT, Fortress Europa—FE, France 40—FR, Frederick the Great—FRED, Freedom in the Galaxy—FG, Fury In The West—FITW, Gettysburg—GE, G.I.: Anvil of Victory—GI, Gladiator—GL, Guns Of August—GOA, Gunslinger—GSL, Jutland—JU, Kingmaker—KM, Legend of Robin Hood—LRH, The Longest Day—TLD, Little Round Top—LRT, Luftwaffe—LW, Machiavelli—MA, Magic Realm—MR, Midway—MD, Napoleon—NP, Napoleon at Bay—NAB, Origins—OR, Outdoor Survival—OS, PanzerArmee Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, Panzer Gruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Rail Baron—RB, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Squad Leader—SL, Stalingrad—STAL, Starship Troopers—SST, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Struggle of Nations—SON, Submarine—SUB, Tactics II—TAC, Third Reich—3R, Titan—TT, Tobruk—TB, Trireme—TR, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wizard's Quest—WQ, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CONTEST NO. 116

Indicate, in order, the actions of each remaining trooper in Scenario Three. The outcome of attacks needs not be listed, but the target must be specified.

PS:

A/S: _____

A/1: _____

A/2: _____

A/3: _____

Ten winning entries will receive certificates redeemable for free AH merchandise. To be valid an entry must be received prior to the mailing of the next *GENERAL* and include a numerical rating for the issue as a whole as well as list the best 3 articles. The solution will be announced in the next issue and the winners in the following issue.

Issue as a whole . . . (Rate from 1 to 10, with 1 equating excellent, 10 equating terrible)

Best 3 Articles

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NAME _____

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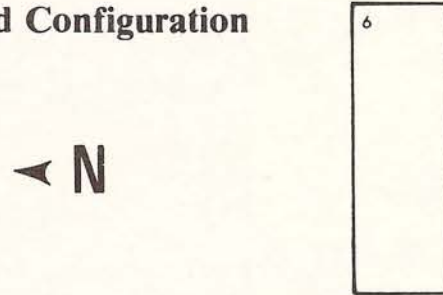
STRAYER'S STRAYS

Scenario O



NORMANDY FRANCE, June 6, 1944: By dawn, Lt. Colonel R.L. Strayer had pieced together a unit composed of men of the 502nd, 506th and 508th Parachute Regiments. Front lines and flanks were meaningless. The officers and men didn't know one another. Radio contact with HQ didn't exist. All Strayer knew was that his objective was the southern causeways. As the sun rose, he drove his patchwork team towards the lower causeways. Almost at once they encountered scattered German resistance.

Board Configuration




VICTORY CONDITIONS






To win the US player must exit five squads off the southern edge of the map. The German player wins by avoiding the US victory conditions.


TURN RECORD CHART


⚔ German sets up first	1	2	3	4	END
☆ U.S. moves first					








Elements of 2nd Battalion, 919th Regiment set up any whole hex on Board 6:


 8-0	 7-0	 4-6-7	 4-4-7	 4-3-6
		4	4	4





Elements of 502nd, 506th and 508th US Parachute Regiments [ELR:5] enter on north edge of Board 6:

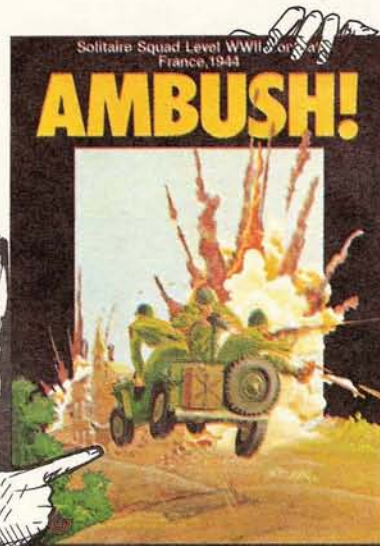
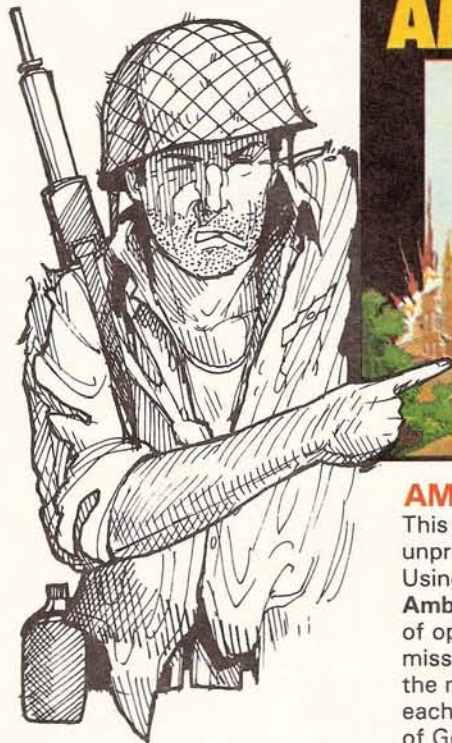
 8-1	 8-0	 7-4-7	 Towie 1-4-9	 MMG 4-12 B12
		8		



SPECIAL RULES

None

AFTERMATH The initially scattered German defenders responded quickly to the presence of the advancing Americans. The paratroopers were able to press through the first line of defenders, but were so delayed that by 1100 they were still north of Causeway 4. In the larger scope, the US troops had already achieved a victory by pulling the German troops away from the beach and forcing them to fight a piecemeal battle for the bridgehead.



AMBUSH: \$24.00

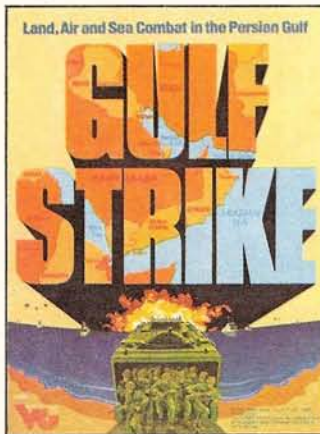
This is solitaire wargaming with guts! It's just you and your squad — against a hidden, unpredictable, and dangerously crafty foe. It's France, 1944, and this is **Ambush!** Using a revolutionary development of the programmed paragraph solitaire system, **Ambush!** confronts you with unexpected events, innumerable tactical options, and lots of opportunities to win medals. After generating your squad, selecting one of the eight missions provided, you send your men onto the map to conduct operations called for in the mission briefing. Soldiers move freely, as far as you want, checking for events each time they move . . . until the sequenced action rounds are triggered by the whine of German bullets! Then it's time to learn what combat is all about!

Sarge sez . . .

I remember the day we rode into this mess — 11 September 1944, outside a little place called Amanvillers — and if you think what's in front of us looks grim, you should've seen what was chasing us! We got through it, though, somehow. We got through all of them, or at least most of us made it. But it isn't over yet. We're about ready to try our luck again today. So get your gear, and let's move it!

Solitaire wargaming was never like this!

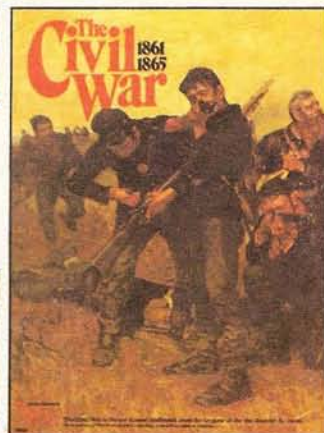
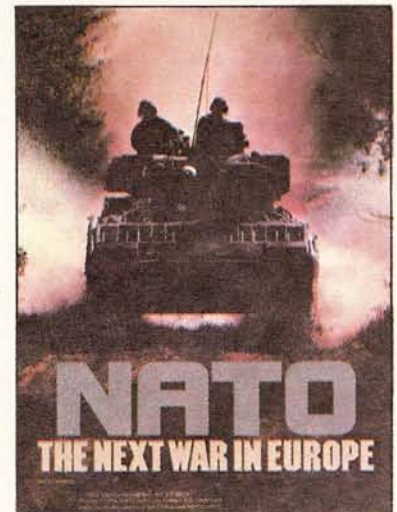
New Missions Available Soon!



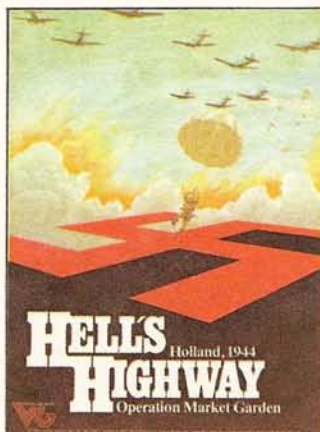
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**ACADEMY OF ADVENTURE GAMING ARTS & DESIGN
OFFICIAL ORIGINS AWARDS NOMINATION BALLOT**

THE GENERAL

*for the year 1983, to be presented at The National Adventure Gaming Convention ORIGINS '84,
July 5 - 8, 1984 in Dallas Texas.
(for information about ORIGINS '84, write ORIGINS '84, P.O. BOX 59899, Dallas, Texas 75229.)*

The Origins Awards, presented at Origins each year, are an international, popular series of awards aimed at recognizing outstanding achievements in Adventure Gaming. They comprise the Charles Roberts Awards for Boardgaming, and the H.G. Wells Awards for Miniatures and Role-Playing Games. An international Awards Committee of 25 hobbyists (some professionals, but primarily independents) directs and administers the awards system. The nomination ballot is open to all interested gamers. YOUR VOTE can make a real difference! A final ballot is prepared by the committee and voted on by members of the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts & Design. Academy membership, \$2/year, is open to active, accomplished hobbyists, both pro and amateur. Membership guidelines are available for a SASE from the addresses given below. Correspondence should be sent to the USA address. Present members may renew by sending their check with this ballot. Canadians may send \$2 Canadian, payable to Mike Girard. UK and European members may send 1 pound sterling payable to Ian Livingstone. US and all others may send US \$2 payable to Bill Somers. Appropriate addresses are listed below. Do not send money unless you are already an Academy member.

The Academy and the Awards Committee as well as the Origins convention itself, function under the overall direction of GAMA, the Game Manufacturers Association. Direct correspondence to Paul R. Banner, P.O. Box 1646 Bloomington, IL 61701.

Instructions. Read Carefully: Print legibly or type your nominations. Ballots that are messy, not filled out correctly, or show attempts at stuffing will not be counted. You may list three nominees per category. It does not matter in what order you list them. To keep the voting as meaningful as possible, do not make selections in unfamiliar categories. **YOU MUST SIGN THE BALLOT!** And include your address. You may vote only once.

Nominations should be for products produced during the calendar year 1983. Exceptions are permitted for older products which gain significant exposure and acclaim during 1983. Miniature figure series nominations should be for product lines which are either new or have been substantially expanded in 1983.

This ballot may be reproduced and circulated by any means available, provided its contents are faithfully copied. Magazine editors and publishers should plan to include the ballot in an issue of their publications due to come out during the interval from December 1983 thru March 1984. Clubs and other organizations should circulate copies among their members shortly after the first of the year.

All adventure gamers are urged to vote.

Deadline: March 31, 1984

**THE H.G. WELLS AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING
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1. Best Historical Figure Series, 1983: _____

2. Best Fantasy/SF Series, 1983: _____

3. Best Vehicular Series, 1983:
(includes any man-made conveyance,
chariots, wagons, cars, trucks, tanks,
ships, aircraft, spacecraft, etc.) _____

4. Best Miniatures Rules, 1983: _____

5. Best Role-Playing Rules, 1983: _____

6. Best Role-Playing Adventure, 1983: _____

7. Best Professional Miniatures
Magazine, 1983: _____

8. Best Professional Role-playing
Magazine, 1983: _____

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BOARDGAMING**

9. Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame,
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10. Best 20th Century Boardgame,
1983: _____

11. Best Science Fiction Boardgame,
1983: _____

12. Best Fantasy Boardgame, 1983: _____

13. Best Professional Boardgaming
Magazine, 1983: _____

14. Best Adventure Game for Home
Computer, 1983: _____

15. Best Amateur Adventure Gaming
Magazine, 1983: _____

16. Adventure Gaming Hall of Fame:
(Previous winners of the Hall of Fame are
Don Turnbull, James F. Dunnigan, Tom
Shaw, REdmund Simonsen, John Hill,
Dave Isby, Gary Gygax, Empire,
Dungeons & Dragons, Marc Miller and
Steve Jackson.) _____

Name: _____ Signature _____

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Send in your ballot by March 31, 1983 to only one of the following addresses:

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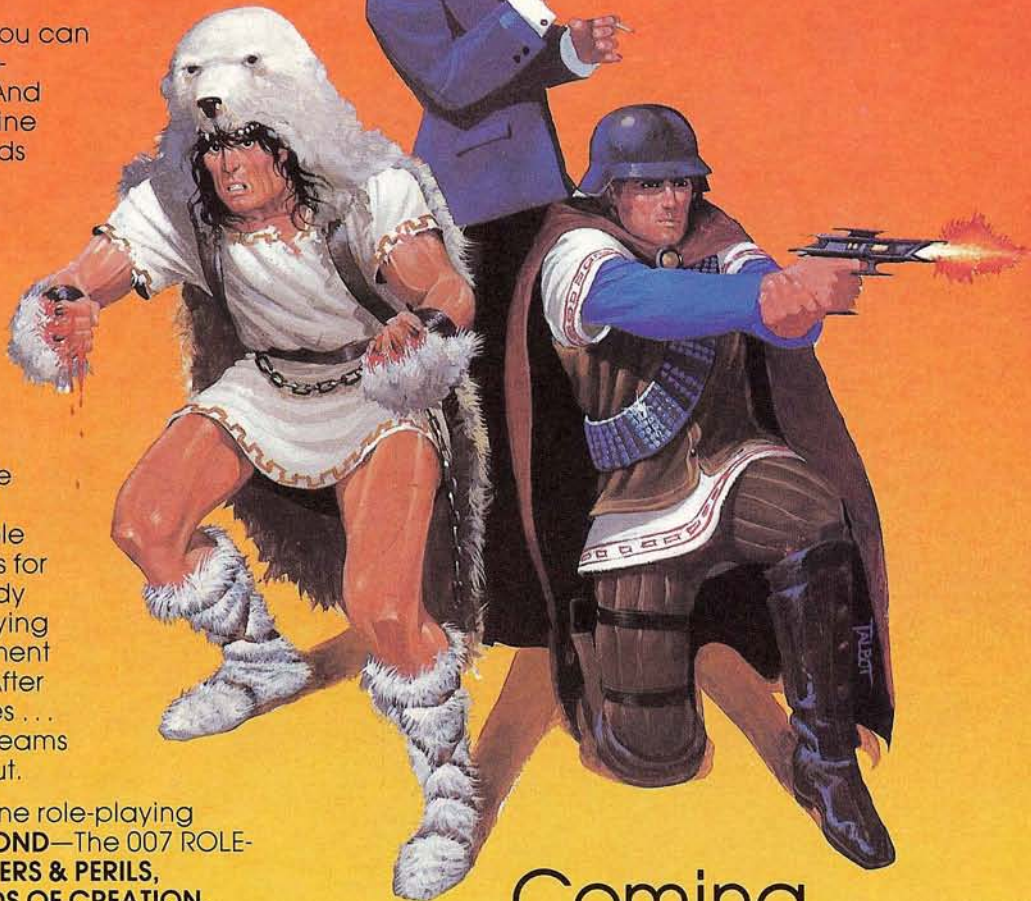
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