

ALSO: Bulge '81



Advanced SL



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GENERAL

★ AVALON HILL

Volume 27, Number 5



★ ★ The AVALON HILL GENERAL

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D-DAY

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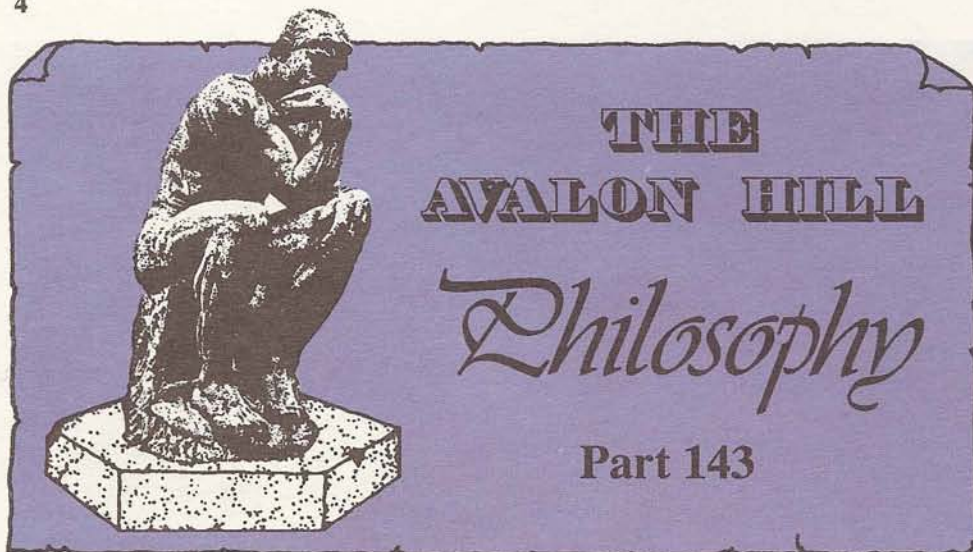


The American History Series

Since 1958, the Avalon Hill Game Company has been producing strategy games for adults. Although we publish over 200 titles, the company is probably best known for its fine line of historical strategy games. Over the years, the popularity of these games caused by their ability to take history from the dusty books its resides in and bring it vividly to life has brought about the formation of an entire hobby - "Wargaming." Although very popular with hobbyists, these types of games are known to others only for their often esoteric subjects, long playing times, and lengthy and detailed rulebooks.

The purpose of the American History series, authenticated by the Smithsonian Institution, is to introduce this fascinating hobby to newcomers to the hobby through smaller, simpler, fast-paced, yet still challenging strategy games that cover well-known episodes in United States' history. In addition to a colorful mapboard and playing pieces, each title in the series contains a short (two-page) "Basic Game" to allow non-hobbyists to quickly master the game system. A lengthy "Battle Manual" in each game provides a detailed, illustrated account of the historical action, plus additional rules for those players wishing a more detailed and complex version of the game.





THE AVALON HILL

Philosophy

Part 143

The following editorial comes from the pen of Kevin Fitzpatrick, owner/manager of the St. Louis shop Games, Crafts, Hobbies & Stuff (which some readers may remember was held up as what I perceive a good game store should be, back in "The Avalon Hill Philosophy #135"). Recently, Kevin took over the reins of GAMA's "Retail Division".

Each issue of *The GENERAL* contains an "Opponents Wanted" column: gamers looking for fellow gamers with which they can share this wonderful hobby. They may be interested in *GETTYSBURG*, *ASL*, *WOODEN SHIPS*, *THIRD REICH* or any of a host of other games from the wide variety produced by Avalon Hill. But one tenet holds true for all these folk; they are looking for someone to play games with them.

The Opponents Wanted column is a wonderful service to the gaming public by Avalon Hill. No doubt countless players have been able to make contact with other hobbyists by using this venue. It is something which we should all thank Avalon Hill for providing to the people that purchase their games. It would be much easier on the part of AH to just "take the money and run", not caring if you or anyone else ever found anyone with which to share our hobby. That is not the case however; Avalon Hill is in this for the long haul, not just the short term, and has obviously made up its corporate mind that helping its customers is the very best way to stay in business. (Something - I might add - that Avalon Hill has managed to do for a long time.)

Opponents Wanted is just one step in the quest of finding someone with which to play a wargame. Another method that might be employed is attending conventions. *The GENERAL* also carries a listing of conventions in each issue that the game player can use to locate gaming activity, hopefully near to his home. Conventions usually offer the player a wide selection of gaming from which to choose. The regional game convention also offers an excellent opportunity to meet with other interested aficionados, that may in many instances live nearby.

The chance to really sample a game you may have been thinking about purchasing but just hadn't decided upon is yet another advantage of attending a wargame convention.

Avalon Hill has recognized the positive benefits that small, local conventions offer for years, and supports many in many different parts of the country. So important is the game convention to the well-being of the hobby that Avalon Hill has taken to organizing its very own; in 1991, *Avalon-Con* was a great success in gathering the people that enjoy the hobby of gaming. The Avalon Hill booth is always a prominent feature at the major conventions; such as *ORIGINS* and *GenCon* each year. And the AH product line is stocked by numerous retailers that attend many of the smaller game cons across the country.

The hobby retailer is another place that offers you a potential source of new gamers. If your area is served by a retail store that sells wargames, there are probably other people besides you that buy them there. The retailer might even have a game room in-store where you and others can gather to enjoy your pastime. If the retailer's floor space doesn't allow for a game room, perhaps they have a bulletin board where you can post a notice that you are looking for opponents. The retailer or some of the store staff may themselves be gamers, and could be willing opponents - or perhaps they know of a game club in the area that might be of assistance to you. If the retailer does not stock wargames heavily (or at all), often they will be willing to take your name and phone number to pass it along to others that they know play your brand of games; or they might be able to direct you to another in-town store that sells the game products in which you are interested.

But, just what can you do if the Opponents Wanted column has no nearby players, no conventions are held in your area, no clubs are around, and the nearest retailer is hundreds of miles away? This type of situation (which is rare) makes enjoying our hobby difficult to be sure; but impossible, certainly not. You may have to

work a bit harder to find and develop a local gaming group, but you can do it.

Over the years I have heard a variety of methods used to find and develop local wargaming opponents. One, of course, is to check with your local educational systems; perhaps there is a game club at the nearby high school or college. Many area businesses (from the laundromat to the grocery store) offer bulletin boards on which to post personal notices free of charge. Hometown newspaper classified ads are usually fairly inexpensive, particularly so when you select suburban or small community papers. Look into the activity schedule of your local community center and library system; they may not have exactly what you are seeking, but the chess club that you find can be a great start in developing some new opponents.

Which leads naturally to a method that I have found particularly successful in my area - but one that does involve a bit of dedication and effort: teaching gaming! A "game class" offered by an individual or group can be an excellent method of finding and/or nurturing new gamers. The class can be formal in nature, or very informal in presentation, and can be offered in a variety of locations from libraries, to church halls, civic centers, area schools, or even at that local retail hobby store. Classes do involve a commitment to a regular schedule, a certain amount of preparation in promoting and executing the class. But the work isn't all that hard, and it is gaming, after all. And it is a wonderful chance to meet new opponents and develop new players.

Committing yourself to a regular schedule will help make your game class a standard in the life of the participants (your students). And this soon leads to a regular evening or weekend of game playing for them. Initial promotion can be as simple as posters at the location of the class, notices posted on bulletin boards, a call to your local schools inviting their chess club members to sit in, or through short press releases mailed to your local media several weeks in advance of the start of your class.

The execution of the teaching is also a fairly simple adventure once you have started. A basic outline of what each session will involve will probably suffice; and many of the products by Avalon Hill through the years are set up in the "programmed instruction" mode, perfect for getting hobby newcomers playing. This method adds new rules as one progresses through the scenarios, so these games are already designed to ease others into the play. There are also now on the market some fine "introductory" wargames, with but one page of rules; again, Avalon Hill is a leader in this effort. (I've found posterized reproductions of the game charts can be very helpful, but are not really necessary.) Should you wonderfully wind up with more participants than you have made your

Continued on Page 55, Column 3

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THE BEAUTY OF THE BULGE

A Player's Look at BULGE '91

By Brien Martin

When Avalon Hill released the new *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* at ORIGINS 1991, my initial reaction after opening the box was, "I've got to write an article about this game!" After mulling over my options, I settled on composing an old-fashioned gamer's review (since I could not possibly play enough to formulate one of those fine strategy articles which I myself read every chance I get). My next step was to ask, "What makes a good review?" After all, one man's treasure is another's excuse to write a nasty letter to Rex Martin. What could I do in my article to let readers "inside" the game without simply recounting the rules verbatim? What comparison to *BULGE '81* could I, or should I, draw? How much beer would I have to consume before I could write coherently on what is fast becoming a favorite of mine? After tossing such questions around, I opted for a straightforward approach. Let me take you from the outside of the box inward, pausing along the way to touch upon the best (and the worst) of *BULGE '91*. This should give you some insights into the newest member of the family, and prepare you for the other articles that follow. I hope, in the process, that you will learn enough to want to go out and add it to your own collection.

To begin, I must tell you what *BULGE '91* is not: It is not hard to learn; it is not complicated (even when using all the Optional Rules); it is not easy to master. It is not *BULGE '81* redone. If you can't get past that basic fact (despite the comparisons I may draw to that now-retired classic), then stop reading now. You'll need an open mind to approach this newcomer.

The Box: From the moment you first see the box, it reaches out and grabs your attention with its bright red color and bold white lettering. Once you check out the superb cover art by George Parrish (who I feel is one of the best in the business), purchasing the game can't be far behind. And the price, in these days of \$50 games, is an added incentive. But for those not swayed by the outer beauty of a game, let's move inside for a closer look.

The Mapboard: The map is a fairly faithful recreation of the old *BULGE '81* art, except that this one is much more compact and the hex scale consequently much larger. Once again, Charlie Kibler has produced a map that is both functional and a pleasure to look at. (Is it just me, or does Charlie actually get better with age?)

The Counters: Most of the counters are of the five-eighth inch variety, with the half-inch counters reserved for use in various optional rules. I must admit that while the counters are the usual high Avalon Hill quality, the colors are a bit drab (especially considering that the game is aimed to get the younger folks into wargaming). Kids love bright colors, and the rich blues and greens found in *BULGE '81* would have satisfied that craving (which is some of the appeal of video games, I suspect). The counters are few in number (194) since they generally depict division-sized units, which will please even the grognards who remember fondly the days when one counter sheet was all any game ever needed.

The Rules Sheet: A single, two-sided sheet of rules is all you'll need to get into the game. It

covers the basics of movement and combat. The format is similar to the one used in *GETTYSBURG '88* (another of Craig Taylor's designs). I'll touch on the rules themselves later.

The Battle Manual: The source book for the game's three scenarios, as well as home for all the Optional Rules and historical background on the battle. A new gamer will find this booklet a treasure trove of information; and the old hands will love the exceptional options offered (which I'll cover later as well).

Also included with the game are two Order of Appearance cards and two ten-sided dice (in my case, one red and one blue). With these, you've everything you need to enjoy a game of *BULGE '91*. You'll find that box is much larger than it needs to be to hold the components. But if you make use of one or two of the Avalon Hill counter trays to hold the pieces, you'll find that it makes a perfect fit. This is a "hidden bonus", one I'm sure the designer hadn't intended.

Now that you've read this far, you are no doubt wondering just what Craig Taylor did to recreate the situation of which wargame fans have grown so fond? Well, he's made some changes for the sake of simplicity, and all are for the better. Without a doubt, Mr. Taylor has become the foremost professional designer of introductory wargames - and he doesn't disappoint here.

Since the hex scale is larger, the individual bridges which were a centerpiece of much of the strategy in *BULGE '81* are no longer. These are now assumed to be inherent in each river

hexside, which can allow any unit to cross a river (although one of the optional rules does allow for river crossings to be "contested" by an opponent). Movement in general is much simplified. Units are classified as either "leg" (factors printed in black) or "mechanized" (factors printed in white). Leg units move in one of three ways: 1) up to their printed movement factor if engaging in combat; 2) one less than that printed on the counter if either entering or leaving a zone-of-control (ZOC) but not entering combat (more on this later); or 3) double its movement factor if it neither enters nor leaves a ZOC and does not engage in combat. Mechanized units enjoy the same three options, but double the factors when entering/leaving ZOCs without combat and triple if neither doing battle nor entering/leaving ZOC. Road movement bonuses are not given for hexes in an enemy ZOC (entering a ZOC costs an extra movement factor).

Stacking has been eliminated (except when using the optional "Task Force/Kampfgruppe" rules). No two units may ever end their Movement Phase stacked together, a radical departure from most traditional wargames. But keep in mind that *BULGE '91* has been designed as an introductory game; as such, this simple rule will keep units visible at all times to avoid confusing the novice player.

Combat follows the proven *GETTYSBURG '88* system, in which the attacker and defender add their combat factors to any modifiers (any values between "0" and "10" resulting), which total is then added to the roll of their ten-sided die. The comparison of the two results quickly shows the players what happens (the higher total being the "winner"). Unlike *GETTYSBURG*, any large-sized counter can take four "losses" (after the first two, the counter is flipped over to its reduced-strength side) before elimination. This retains the flavor of the "bloodless" CRT, while allowing the novice to avoid the "factor counting" which slows down more complex designs which use percentage odds to determine combat results. A player may even commit more factors than the maximum of ten to a battle so that, should he lose, he can take losses from the extra unit instead. In summation, the combat system works very well.

Terrain Effects Modifiers are equally simple to apply, except that players are reminded that for each unit which attacks across a river in a single combat a penalty is attached (rather than just one for the whole attack). Ditto for mechanized units attacking in a woods hex. Each unit which does either suffers a -1 modifier. In addition, a new terrain feature (not found in *BULGE '81* that is) depicting the Siegfried Line gives the German a -3 modifier when attacked in his fortifications.

Another interesting point is that zones-of-control do not behave as in most other games. Entering a ZOC does not require that unit to halt and enter combat. Indeed, the option is open to the players, who may have enough movement remaining for that piece to continue onward. This makes for some interesting tactical play, such as deploying a Task Force into the ZOC of a mechanized unit to deny it the opportunity to claim tripled movement. Or to slip past a thin line, if the enemy and terrain and

your own movement factor allows. I have found this system makes for an excellent game of cat-and-mouse as the Allied player strives to use every trick at his disposal to slow the German steamroller, which can (with the dice on their side) sweep across the board in the early turns.

In addition, mechanized units may use "exploitation" attacks to simulate the old tactics of blitz warfare. In essence, a mechanized unit which wins a combat may enter the hex just vacated by the loser, and then attack that same unit again. After this second battle, the mechanized unit (if it wins) may advance yet again - but may not attack. In my limited experience, such breakthroughs are a vital element of German strategy.

Victory is based on a calculation of towns controlled (each carries a number of VP) and enemy units destroyed or reduced. There are no complicated provisions (ala *BULGE '81*) for specific towns to be occupied for the German player to win. Basically, the German player will look to grab what he can and cause as many casualties as possible, then seek to avoid losses while defending what he has taken in the latter stages of the campaign. For the Allied, the order is reversed.

And that's all there is to *BULGE '91*: a fast-paced game that will prove fun and challenging for all levels of players. But if this isn't enough for the "hard-core", there's more. The Optional Rules add a bit more detail, and many more decision points. Let's look at each of these.

#10: The Initiative Marker. Basically (no pun intended), this rule allows the player holding the marker to ask for a re-roll (whereupon the marker is surrendered to the opponent for his use in some future situation). I prefer not to use this rule, since part of the enjoyment of wargaming is to curse one's luck. But for those who are looking for an even closer match, it will help to even out the bad luck (as shown in the Series Replay of *GETTYSBURG '88* back in Vol. 25, No. 5).

#11: Special German Units. Remember the commandos and paratroopers in *BULGE '81*? Well, they're back - along with the 150th Panzer Brigade - to wreak havoc behind the Allied lines. The commando units have been reduced to just two counters, but Allied units can make a "commando check" only while in the same hex as a commando unit. The paratroopers have a fair chance of landing in this version (60%), although they may come down in such a scattered pattern that the counter just sits on the board until it is eliminated. The 150th Panzer enters on 18 December and, when used with Optional Rule #17 (Opposed River Crossings), acts like a commando unit.

#12: Variable Weather. Unlike previously, the weather is not pre-determined by date. Instead, this option allows you to get stuck in any one of five types of weather: sunny, gloomy, snow, wet and storm. Each affects ground and air operations to a certain extent. For example, under "sunny" conditions, the movement costs to enter a rough or forest hex is altered from "2" to "1"; while under "storm", road movement bonuses are negated and both players denied the use of close air support and air drops.

#13: Air Operations. This is the best variant of the bunch. Why? Because it presents the Allied player with even more options and decisions, though neither side can be sure it will receive air support on any given day. In fact, there may be some days when the Germans will rule the skies, causing the enemy great discomfort. The actual rule is quite simple, another great feature. When rolling for the weather (#13 must be used in conjunction with #12), you will find an Allied and a German "air modifier" listed next to the result. Add or subtract these as indicated from a die roll by each player. The end result indicates the number of missions each has available. There are four mission types:

1) Air Superiority: the side with the most air missions may assign any or all of these to this option; for every two such missions, the enemy player loses one of his own missions.

2) Air Drop: allows the Allied player (only) to remove one "Unsupplied" marker currently on the board for every two missions assigned.

3) Interdiction: allows the Allied player (again, only) to choose an enemy unit he will attempt to interdict with each such mission; by winning a die roll, an interdicted unit now becomes "out of supply" (which means it cannot move until the next turn - unless it is by then placed out of supply by ground units as well). Although there has been some debate over this, I personally like the effect, since it removes a unit from play rather than just slows it down. There will be many a German whose plans are derailed when key units are pinned down for a turn.

4) Close Support: cannot be used to support a mechanized exploitation attack, but otherwise adds a die roll modifier to an attack of choice.

#14: Supply. This is almost identical in theory to that of *BULGE '81*, except that one can trace supply through a ZOC if that hex is occupied by friendly troops. Supply is not traced along roads, but along any length of connected hexes that lead back to the appropriate colored hexes boarding the map (black for Allies, gray for German). Supply for both sides is determined at the end of each half-turn.

#15: German Fuel Supplies. This has the earmarks of a classic. The extra burden of planning how to use the fuel available may just make *BULGE '91* a hit with gamers. The German player starts the game with 25 fuel factors, and receives five additional each turn. But it costs one fuel factor to "activate" a number of leg units or mechanized units each turn. Units which are not activated may not move. The number of combat units each fuel factor activates decreases as German units move farther away from the friendly edge of the board. It is not uncommon for the Germans to spend eight fuel factors per turn, but this "5 forward, 8 back" approach will lead to a dwindling fuel supply by the middle of the game.

Which is why it's vital for the German player to capture as many of the six Allied fuel depots located around the mapboard as possible. Each depot varies in fuel factors it grants from one to

eight (the 8-factor and 4-factor dumps are placed where the Stavelot and EE9 dumps were in *BULGE '81*). Of course, the Allied player may destroy the dumps, but only when the Germans are within two hexes of it (and not on it). In addition, the Allies may attempt to blow only one dump per turn, which gives the German a fair chance to capture at least one.

#16: Task Forces & Kampfgruppen: The most "complex" of the Optional Rules, this allows either side to create "mini-units" from larger units, allowing a wider range of activity. The process is simple enough, but requires each player to record just which unit has broken down into which mini-units. Stacking is allowed by these mini-units, either with their parent or with others from the same parent unit. Frankly, I found this option too involved for the novice, and too tedious for the accomplished player (the combat factor of all mini-units is "1", reducing their role to that of garrison units). Of course, these mini-units can later be recombined with their parent if needed.

#17: Movement Options: This final rule presents a number of individual options that may be incorporated as players see fit:

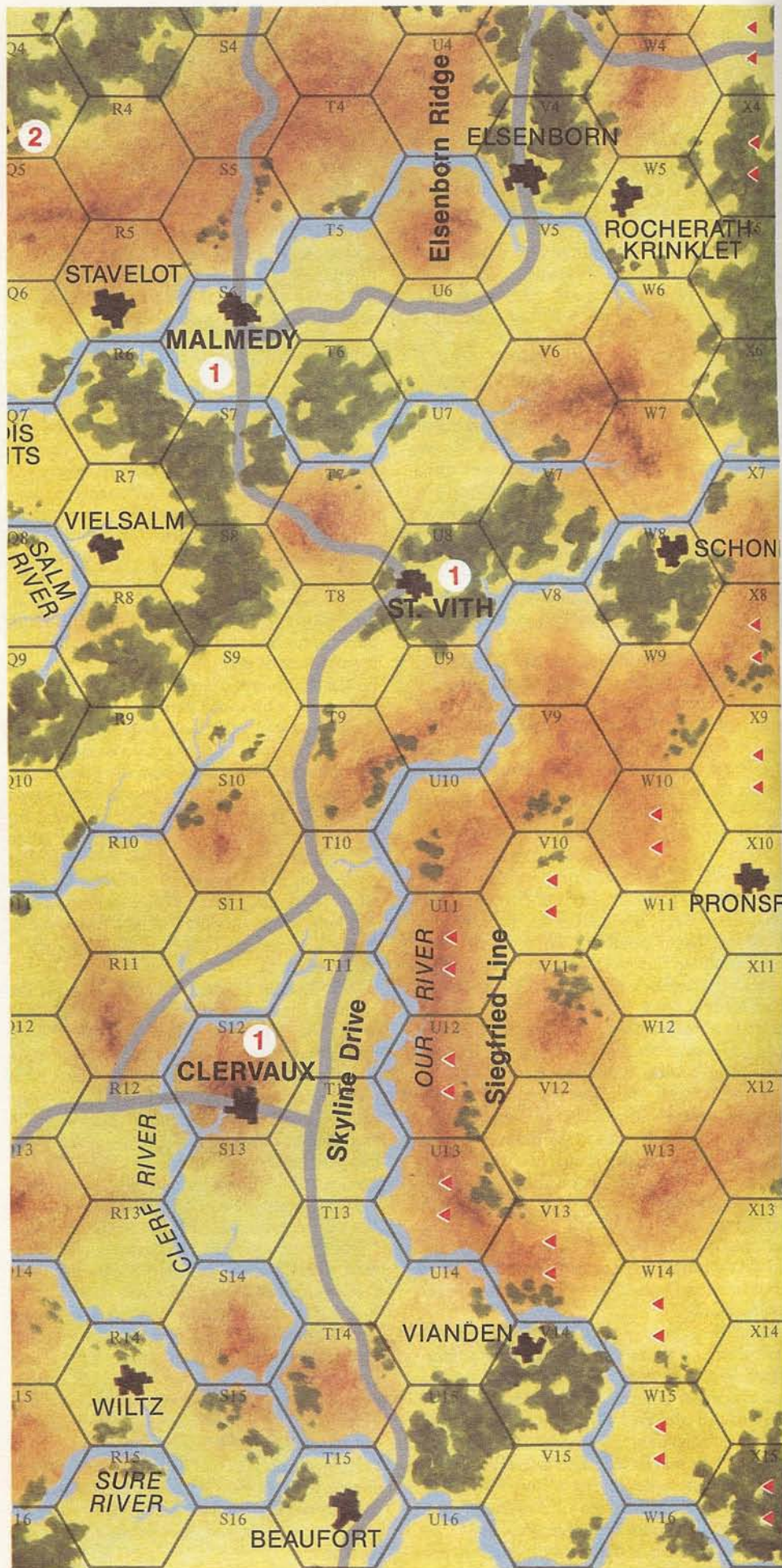
17a deals with River Crossings. Since the individual bridges which have sprinkled other Bulge designs are absent, this rule goes so far as to force any unit which attempts to cross a river hexside and enter an enemy ZOC to pass an immediate die roll, which represents the enemy's attempts to blow or block the inherent bridges. If the moving unit has, however, begun the turn in the hex bordering the river, it is assumed to have prevented such demolition.

17b covers Prepared Positions/Entrenchments. Simply put, any unit which does not move may build a Prepared Position in the hex. If a previous Prepared Position is built upon again, it becomes an Entrenchment. The modifiers for each are located conveniently upon the counter.

17c limits British unit attack capability to the area west and north of the Meuse, although they may move and defend anywhere, unless surrounded by German ground units.

Finally, 17d allows each player the option of setting up his starting units in different hexes than those specified by the Order of Appearance cards. The catch is that you must still place a unit in each hex listed, although that unit may be different than the one specified. The Allied player, as expected, sets up first.

What Craig Taylor has done in melding the elementary and elegant system of *GETTYSBURG '88* with the best of the popular *BULGE '81* should earn him some kind of award. Despite its low complexity, *BULGE '91* provides experienced players with enough options to keep it engaging even for them. It is a game I believe is destined to become a "classic" in its own right. If, like me, you'll accept the new introductory games from The Hill as a frontier to be tamed, and used to bring others into (or at least explain to them the joys of) our hobby, new challenges will open for you. As for me, I leave for Bastogne again in the morning, via *BATTLE OF THE BULGE '91*. Hope to meet you there.



CROSSING THE LINE

Considerations for the German Player of BULGE '91

By Brien Martin

When the German forces broke from the Siegfried Line on the morning of 16 December 1944, they crossed a line drawn by desperation - a line which would mark the beginning of the end of Hitler's Third Reich. Once you have elected to take the German role in Craig Taylor's *BATTLE OF THE BULGE '91*, you too face an incredible task: to win what many historians consider to be a "no-win" situation. With dwindling fuel supplies, little or no air support, and units thrown together without regard for quality or equipment, you must be both tactician and juggler, trying to keep the delicate balance between aggressive advance and conservation of precious supplies. And in trying to walk this tightrope, you will face an enemy who daily grows more powerful as Allied reserves are rushed to the sector.

But it can be done in *BULGE '91*, with a combination of speed and power in the opening turns. Have an appreciation of when to use finesse and when to use force, and you can roll into Namur and Dinant victorious. Note that the following comments refer to Scenario Three, "The Ardennes Offensive", unless otherwise indicated.

Your Allied opponent will suffer from a dreadfully low number of units on the battle front at first, and even starts the game with two units already at reduced strength. If you fail to exploit this initial weakness, you will find the going tough. The experienced Allied player will use his wealth of arriving reinforcements and air power to plug the holes, hold back your advance, and eventually win back lost territory.

As the German player, how does one keep this from happening? By following some basic guidelines. I will avoid the more prosaic listings of "best" opening moves, simply because the game's "Battle Manual" already offers a sound example (see 9b therein). While there are certain refinements I might make, generally Mr. Taylor's offering of a German opening is suitable. Though the combat results may vary widely (part of the charm of this system), using this opening should crack the initial Allied line, and pin your opponent on the edge of desperation you want him to feel throughout this game.

But what next? What should you do to mitigate that onslaught of Allied reinforcements and keep the momentum gained in this first turn? What should you be concerned with?

The first, and most obvious, item on your checklist is to become familiar with the Allied "Order of Appearance" card. It will tell you both when and where his reinforcements can be expected. Armed with this foreknowledge, you can plan your attack in such a way that you can cover potential entry points with enough force to either delay the entry of those enemy forces or hinder their movement to critical areas of the map. But be careful! In the old *BULGE '81*, I once became so pre-occupied with stopping Patton's entry onto the board that I neglected to press my own attack in other areas. (Needless to

say, I lost that game.) As the German commander, you must avoid falling into the trap of over-caution and forgetting that you are on the attack.

Next, you must pay close attention to your fuel reserves, which you have been forced to use freely on the first three turns as you break through the Allied line and look to gain large chunks of territory. This concern can lead the unwary into another trap, especially if your opponent seems to be willing to freely give ground up to your advance. Remember that one fuel factor will allow the movement of either five leg units or two mechanized ones - so long as you haven't reached row N. If you want to make gains beyond row N, make certain that you do so with no less than the minimum number of units one fuel factor can activate (even if you don't use the full potential of a factor, you must still expend it). Unless you have managed to overrun a few fuel depots along the way, you haven't the fuel to waste.

In the games I've played recently, the Germans can be at row N by December 21. During the advance, they will have had no less than four chances to capture a fuel dump. To be effective, you need to threaten two depots at once, since the Allied player can only attempt to destroy one depot per turn, and only if German units are one or two hexes away. Once you have moved forces onto the depot, it is yours if you can remain in place until the start of your next turn. Obviously, threatening two is the minimum to give you a good chance at capturing one.

If you can't get at least one 3-factor dump (or better), you'd best start considering how to rein in most of your forces to conserve fuel. Your calculations on how to gain a victory have become much more complicated, and with every turn - as the bulk of your forces lurk along hexrow N - you are forced to make some hard decisions. This simple rule on fuel usage (destined for entry into the "Rules Hall of Fame") makes this new game a winner in terms of tactical and logistical planning. Once you have mastered the methods of conserving fuel, you are well on your way to becoming an expert in *BULGE '91*.

While I am exploring the topic of gaining ground, another consideration arises. How much is too much? The answer will depend on a variety of variables, including your own temperament. Too, you must take account of the fuel reserves remaining, German casualties, and so forth. My general rule of thumb is to be aware of the victory conditions for the scenario being played, and then grab as many cities as possible while trying not to be caught off-balance by a surprise counter-attack. When the Allied attack comes (and it most surely will), you can afford then to give up some of these cities - making the enemy pay for them, of course, so that you make up for the territorial losses by accumulating Allied casualties as you

fall back. Most of the ground you gain on the way out will likely be lost on the way back. But, if you have gained enough Allied casualty points in the process of both, you win.

While this bit of advice may seem vague, keep in mind that I could ramble on for pages on this point. Unlike the rather prosaic problems of fuel conservation and expenditure, the capture of sufficient territory to accomplish this fall-back defense varies greatly from game to game, and from opponent to opponent. I have, for instance, been known to thrust two or three units out towards the Meuse, grabbing what they could so long as I could keep a supply line open. I have also, against another opponent with a differing temperament and style, pulled up at Bastogne for a protracted battle of attrition.

Having determined, very briefly, that the German player must be aware of the arrival of Allied reinforcements, the amount of fuel he has available, and the amount of territory he wants to grab, we can move on to some tactical considerations.

The new zone-of-control (ZOC) rules allow the Allied player to slip into your ZOCs without forcing combat. A shrewd opponent will do this as much as possible, for it accomplishes two important things: it automatically denies you the highest number of movement factors, and it forces you to decide whether to fight on your coming turn or try to bypass the unit(s) in your way. In either case, the Germans lose valuable time trying to get where they need to go. If you make use of the "Task Force/Kampfgruppe" rules (16.), the situation is more common; be prepared for the Allies to break down some larger units into pesky "mini-units" which can greatly impede your progress. Keep in mind that he wants to slow you down until massive reinforcements arrive, then strike back at you with great force. To face that coming storm, the Germans need to press forward as much as possible as fast as possible in order to have ground to trade for casualties. And, you can't even counter this Allied tactic by creating your own "mini-units" because they tend to dissipate your attacking strength, and you can ill afford that.

Allied supremacy in the air will also cause you troubles to no end. Most Allied players I have faced attempt to interdict my biggest units whenever possible, since a successful one will place that unit out of supply until the end of the turn. If you face this, and if you have the fuel to spare, one counter-measure is to activate one or two extra units which you have no intention of moving (ones close to key Allied positions work well). The Allied opponent will be forced to make a choice, and hopefully interdict the "wrong" unit . . . or gamble that you were bluffing. If he does ignore your decoy, move it. And try to plan your critical attacks so that two or three units are close enough that they can be substituted in the case of an emergency. There

will be times (rare though they may be) when *you* will have the upper hand in the skies. If you can, use your Air Superiority to limit Allied options; otherwise, devote all German air power to Close Support missions (every "+1" modifier you can get is worth its weight in gold).

Contesting each river crossing will be yet another Allied tactic of which you will soon tire. Even though the individual bridges which were printed on the old *BULGE '81* are no longer visible, they still exist as an inherent feature of the river hexside. To combat the Allied tactic limiting you to a 20% chance of crossing, move into the hex bordered by the river but do not cross it. By starting the next turn in this hex, the unit will not be subject to passing a die roll (which equates to the old rule in which players couldn't blow up a bridge occupied by the enemy). As a bonus, you will create an "all clear" crossing for subsequent units to use.

Needless-to-say, the Allies will use prepared positions and entrenchments to thwart attempts to capture key cities and road junctions. These offer "+1" and "+2" (respectively) modifiers. The only way you can overcome this is by amassing enough combat factors to offset the benefit the defender will enjoy. This won't always be easy, but it's not impossible either. Besides, you have no choice if you really want that spot of ground. Likewise, the Allied player will spend a lot of time at the beginning of the play hiding his units behind rivers and/or in the forests to gain the combat modifiers (the penalty for mechanized attacks into forest hexes is particularly galling, for you've plenty of them). Again, if you want the hex the only choice you have is to mount a massive attack.

As in the battle itself, the German player has immense power at his command, and an initial advantage in mobility (mechanized units). But he will be handcuffed by fuel reserves and enemy air superiority. Taking the German role, you may indeed lose a few games at first, not because of a flaw in strategy, but due to miscalculations in your tactics and in balancing your fuel reserve with the demands placed on it. So, let's briefly look at what you can do with the forces at your disposal.

Use mechanized units whenever you see the opportunity to carry out Exploitation attacks. This will shove the Allies back quickly in the early game, and allow you to grab territory as a buffer against his future counterattack. Don't worry overly about being out-of-supply. The German attack should be so fierce and constant that your opponent will be more concerned with

saving his own units and plugging holes in his line than with trying to isolate your units at this stage. But, if isolating a strong German unit is what he desires, let him; you can readily break it on the next turn if you must. This may slow down your advance a bit, but you will make a bigger gain the following turn I'm sure. Eventually, with some experience, you will be able to devise "isolation-proof" plans that minimize even this slight risk.

Be aggressive! Don't hesitate to use a lot of fuel in the first turns of the game, for you must move quickly and establish a strong position before the Allied reserves come in to stem the tide. Too, rapid advances will bring you nearer to those vital fuel depots you'll need to reach the Meuse. Capturing that 8-factor dump near Stavelot is the same as getting a no-cost turn, and can mean the difference between defeat and victory perhaps. But even the smallest of the Allied dumps can provide you with some margin of surplus. To that end, every advantage you have (such as the optional German Commando units) must be put to use.

On the other hand, don't show your hand too soon. If you only plan to push as far as Bastogne and then defend the bulge with all your force, don't just stop once you get there. Push a bit further, for it will force the Allied player to continually re-adjust his own plans. As with any game, the novice player must learn how to balance the delicate scale between aggressive play and caution; *BULGE '91* is the perfect tool for teaching this admirable ability. Those who can master that balancing properly can usually lay claim to expert status within the wargaming community some day.

Don't forget that you can make use of prepared positions as well. Taking a city and then forgetting to do so is sheer foolishness. Make the Allies pay when they move to take back each city. If they should attack early in the game and you can hold them off, even for one turn, counterattack with whatever forces you can get to the battle site to cause as much damage as possible. Even if you must evacuate the city later, you will have gained maximum benefit from the position.

The chart found below shows the percentage chance of losing a battle (to varying degrees), winning a battle while inflicting no casualties, winning and inflicting one step, and winning while inflicting two steps. The differential in combat totals is computed as the difference between the attacker's total modifiers and those of the defender. Obviously, the vertical columns total 100% (entries have been rounded

to the nearest whole value). As the reader can see, unless one always makes attacks at +9, one can never be certain of avoiding a loss (at least one with no casualties). Indeed, unless you have at least a +1 differential, you can't count on better than 50-50 results.

However, you can increase your chances of inflicting casualties from 21% when fighting an even battle to 72% when fighting with a +6 modifier to your favor. At +7, the battlefield becomes a killing ground for your Germans as you now possess a 55% chance of inflicting two step losses, which can cause a unit to be eliminated altogether. Of course, you want as many outright kills as possible in the early stages. But, flipping units (reducing them by one step) still gains you victory points, so use every opportunity to be aggressive. In desperate straits, you may even take comfort in the low percentages of causing a one-step loss for the negative differentials.

Unlike its predecessors, this new version of "The Bulge" does not allow for "Contact" or "Engagement" results. This means that you (nor, more significantly, the Allied player) can't wage a battle in the hopes of tying down one or more enemy units. Although, some might argue that this is what a draw implies. Obviously, in the early stages, the German player wants to avoid such, so the higher the differential the more chance of progressing forward. At first, you should have little difficulty in attaining at least a +1 differential.

When all is said and done, the best German strategy is one of speed and power. Once that stage comes to an end, the game becomes one of attrition, with the Allies holding a growing manpower edge after December 21st. As the German commander, you must constantly be aware of the arriving Allied reinforcements, how much fuel you have with which to maneuver your units, and what the odds may be in each combat you initiate (and likely results). Playing the German side well demands that one be aware of strategy, logistics and tactics - albeit on a simplified level. It may take practice to gain this ability, but it can be done. And at that point you are ready for more complicated wargames, either on this subject or another.

Speed and overwhelming power applied to a focal point opened the Second World War. And it was the continued insistence by the German High Command that such would always win the day that doomed the Third Reich to its infamous place in the history of warfare. I feel that *BULGE '91* has its own special place in the history of wargaming. ☆

Combat Results:

Differential in Modified Combat Strength for Attacker:

	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9
Lose (2 Steps Lost)	36%	28%	21%	15%	10%	6%	3%	1%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lose (1 Step Lost)	28%	27%	24%	21%	18%	15%	12%	9%	6%	3%	1%	--	--	--	--
Lose (0 Steps Lost)	21%	24%	27%	28%	27%	24%	21%	18%	15%	12%	9%	6%	3%	1%	--
Draw (0 Steps Lost)	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%
Win (0 Steps Lost)	9%	12%	15%	18%	21%	24%	27%	28%	27%	24%	21%	18%	15%	12%	9%
Win (1 Step Lost)	1%	3%	6%	9%	12%	15%	18%	21%	24%	27%	28%	27%	24%	21%	18%
Win (2 Steps Lost)	--	--	--	1%	3%	6%	10%	15%	21%	28%	36%	45%	55%	64%	72%

HOLDING THE LINE

Suggestions for the Allied Player of BULGE '91

By Brien Martin

Just previously in this issue we discussed some considerations which a German player will be faced with in any campaign game of *BULGE '91*, Avalon Hill's newest chapter in wargaming's love affair with this battle. In keeping with the American laws regarding equal time, let me turn now to a brief consideration of some Allied concerns. In some cases, my comments will merely elaborate on points raised in the article on German strategy. In other instances, however, the situation is peculiar to the Allies (much the more difficult role to play well in this game, I feel).

To review, the Allied player begins the campaign in a very tenuous position, one not helped by the fact that two of his units are already at reduced strength. The thin American line will be hard hit on the first turn, as well; those 29 combat factors you begin with may soon be much less. In addition, the German opponent begins with the bulk of his force on the board (71 combat factors, with another 56 arriving as reinforcements). So he seemingly possesses the power necessary to go waltzing across Belgium with little trouble. Or does he?

Let's consider some of the many options you, as the Allied commander, have at your disposal to slow - if not stop - the German advance. As with so many other games, what the designer (or history) gives to one side in terms of power and/or speed, he balances with special circumstances (in the form of special rules), terrain and numbers. One may master the play of one side, yet fail with the other, in a wargame because taking advantage of each demands a certain temperament. Those who can find a way to win under both sets of conditions can usually be found on the AREA Top 50 listing.

To begin, turn to the Order of Appearance cards. Just as the German player must be aware of when and where your reinforcements arrive, so you must be aware of the location and frequency of the German reserves coming on-board. Why? because the Germans have certain units which enter the game only if special conditions are met, usually in terms of the capture of cities or fuel dumps. Knowing that the German player will not receive some back-up troops if he does not attain an objective gives you an advantage, and can be a boost to your sagging morale as he romps across the board in the early turns. Always consider what you can do to deny your opponent those additional units.

Too, you must protect or destroy as many of the fuel dumps as you can. Any weakness of the enemy is to be exploited, and I feel the fuel situation is the greatest one he faces until your growing strength begins to be felt. The procedure to destroy a dump in *BULGE '91* is quite simple on the face of it. You may attempt to do so only once per turn, and only those within one or two hexes of an enemy unit are eligible for demolition. If the enemy unit is actually sitting

atop it, you must first force that unit to retreat. Finally, you must roll 1-4 on a single die, and that roll can be modified by "+1" if a German commando unit occupies the hex.

For the daring Allied commander, it is possible to turn this to your advantage and try to entice the Germans into a little trap. The plan is easy to implement, and may even lead an inexperienced German into thinking you are playing into his hands. In the opening turns, simply give ground, secure in knowing that you have plenty of troops just waiting to enter the board and stem the tide. An overly aggressive German player may send his troops forward en masse, past hexrow N, where the activation costs begin to rise. Each turn of movement may now cost the German 10-11 fuel factors instead of 6-7. As he reaches that line, your opponent has a difficult choice facing him: does he pursue a seemingly disorganized foe, or does he halt the bulk of his forces? If he goes forward with just a few units to conserve fuel, he may put you in position to annihilate the lonely German units near the Meuse. But if he pulls back, he may not have enough city Victory Points at the end.

Which raises the point of VC for the Allied player. Just as the German must be concerned with them, you simply must be aware at the beginning of each of your turns what the German total is, what he still needs to win, and what losses you can suffer and still have a chance for victory. This must be the most important item on your checklist of things to do each turn (even the early ones). It is far too easy to forget in the drama unfolding on the board. I have seen Allied players sacrifice good units to hold a city worth no points; they are simply handing the opponent Victory Points. Remember, VP are awarded for four things in *BULGE '91*: control of given cities (as printed on the mapboard), enemy units eliminated (equal to the full-strength combat factors), units which have been reduced (the difference between full- and half-strength factors), and units under a "Loss" marker. It is especially important for you, as the Allies, not to waste units for anything not absolutely vital. If you can fall back, do so without fail - don't be stubborn.

One of the most unique optional rules allows you to create small units, termed "Task Forces". As I noted earlier, they can be a thorn for the German player (who does not even have the satisfaction of effectively employing them himself). These Task Forces are created from full-sized combat units by flipping that unit over during a friendly game turn; counters equal to the difference between the full and reduced combat strength of the unit are then placed in the same hex as the "parent". There will be some bookkeeping necessary, but it is all worthwhile when you consider what this special rule can mean to the Allied commander.

Once these Task Forces have been generated, you can insert these tiny units into the ZOC of German units, thus denying them the opportu-

nity to make use of their maximum potential movement on any given turn. Since entering the ZOC does not automatically force combat to occur in this game system, you force the enemy to either accept this slow-down or waste a turn attacking the hapless little unit. Further, as with any unit, it can be used to contest a river crossing, perhaps buying yet more precious time. Indeed, except for their size, these gnats have all the capabilities of a full-strength unit. Players wishing to prosper as the Allies will become adept at their use.

Central to the Allied strategy of the now defunct *BULGE '81* was the rule that allowed air units to interdict German ground units; when successful, this could cause problems for the enemy by effectively reducing German movement potential for any one turn. The new *BULGE '91* has a similar rule, one which I feel far better reflects the situation. In the new game, the Allied player may use any of his air missions to interdict German ground forces too, but if successful the unit is represented as being temporarily out-of-supply (which means that it cannot move at all, rather than just being slower than usual). Availability of such air missions is not pre-determined by date or weather as before, but rather is unpredictable (although the Allies have the edge). Some days, the Allies may even find more of the Luftwaffe in the skies than the USAAF or RAF; when outnumbered, you can expect the German to use that temporary superiority to keep your flyboys out of the action.

But, when you have the upper hand, then you need to use your air force as efficiently as possible. Obviously, you want to use your own air superiority to knock out any German close support missions. Next, use whatever you have left to accomplish one of two objectives: air drop supplies to your out-of-supply units and/or interdict any threatening enemy units. If no air drops are feasible, go for as much interdiction as possible, looking to cancel as many potential threats as you can.

To best judge the potential results, look to the accompanying chart. Each air unit committed to a single interdiction mission adds a "+2" to the die roll for effect. When compared to the German roll, the Allied player must have doubled it for the interdiction to be successful. The chart displays the chances for Allied success when using one, two, three or four units to interdict the German. As you can see (and have probably guessed on your own), the more committed to the mission, the better the chances of success. If you interdict as often as possible, you will cause the German opponent great discomfort as his planned attacks do not come off.

However, he does have some tricks to counteract your efforts at interdiction. I have mentioned before the German use of decoys, activating units which he has no intention of moving so as to "soak up" your activities (provided he has the fuel to waste on such deception). If

Chance of a Successful Interdiction:

German Die	Total Allied Air Units/Modifiers			
	1/+2	2/+4	3/+6	4/+8
1	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	90%	100%	100%	100%
3	70%	90%	100%	100%
4	50%	70%	90%	100%
5	30%	50%	70%	90%
6	10%	30%	50%	70%
7	--	10%	30%	50%
8	--	--	10%	30%
9	--	--	--	10%
10	--	--	--	--

he is an experienced and clever player, he will also arrange his forces to make certain that two or more units are capable of carrying out any key attack, again spreading your effort. Interdiction of enemy forces can be a great help, but it is not a certain solution to the problems the Allied player faces. A good German player will do all he can to counter it, with some success, so don't bet the farm.

As the Allied player, you have a vast array of "minor" tactical tricks which can be utilized to slow and upset German plans. By "minor", I refer to the fact that these tend to be forgotten too often by first-time or novice wargamers trying to master the game system. However, experience will bring these to the fore, which is the point of the whole exercise, as *BULGE '91* intrigues the newcomer to our hobby.

The first I wish to call attention to invokes Optional Rule 17a, which deals with the Allied ability to "contest" river crossings. The mechanics are easy enough to understand: if a German unit moves into a hex, crosses its river hexside and attempts to enter an Allied ZOC in the same turn, you may roll one die. On a result of "9" or "10", the enemy has grabbed a bridge to cross safely, which allows him to mark the hexside with the equivalent of an "all clear" marker. Subsequent German units may pass across it without needing to face this die roll. But on any other roll, you have blown the bridges and that unit must stop, thus killing more time to your benefit.

Another tactic, which any Allied player might miss, deals with the use of British units. (If not using Optional Rule 17c, disregard the following for they are not restricted in their usage.) Under 17c, all British units are restricted in their attack; although they can move and defend anywhere on the map, they can only attack to the west and north of the Meuse unless the Germans have surrounded the British unit. What this means is that the best use for your British units is to garrison individual cities, thus freeing American units to counterattack elsewhere. Since the British can defend themselves, and since they can counterattack if isolated, you won't be sacrificing anything.

Rule 17b goes hand-in-hand with the aforementioned tactic in that you may use prepared positions and entrenchments to help the British defend these cities. Never underestimate the value of those field fortifications; those modi-

fiers can make the difference between a defeat and holding a critical spot for another turn (see the table in the previous article).

Of course, no discussion of the Allies would be complete without touching upon the subject of terrain advantages. Starting with the historical "friend" of the Allies, the rivers, even a novice can readily see that if he keeps the bulk of his forces behind the rivers on the mapboard, he will be rewarded with higher casualties among the Germans (a "+1" modifier for each enemy unit which is attacking across the river). In addition, keeping Allied units behind the rivers will enable the player many opportunities to contest the crossings, which will eventually slow the German advance or make it uneven.

We also find that Allied units which "hide" in the forests get a "+1" to their combat roll for each *mechanized* unit attacking them. Since almost 80% of the German force is mechanized, you would be foolish not to take advantage of this fact.

Finally, we move into the "rough" terrain. Here the defender receives a "+1" as well, which may be all you can muster in key areas of the mapboard. Notice, however, that a great many of the roads pass through rough terrain. If you want to interdict a road, I can think of no better way than by stationing a unit in the rough terrain astride it. While on this topic, I feel it necessary to stress just how important the road-net can be in this "simple" game.

The German player will attempt to use the road network to his advantage to get from place to place as quickly as possible. As mentioned often, he possesses a great many mechanized units and these can literally "fly" all over the board. That is, they can if you allow them. Use protective terrain to hide in while placing road hexes in your ZOCs. This not only slows the enemy down, but will force him to attack you at lower odds than he would like to open his supply lines. Control the roads and you control what the German can do - and when. Study the road net to be sure that you have cut all alternative routes.

As the Allied commander in *BULGE '91*, you will be faced with the task of holding off an enemy that has superior numbers, speed and power. Doing so will demand that you use every trick which the rules have graciously given you - contesting river crossings, garrisoning cities with the British, creating pesky Task Forces, utilizing the air and terrain available to its best advantage.

In reality, the Germans did cross the line drawn by the Allies in the snow of the Ardennes. But they were thrown back. That must be your goal as well. Those who do not lose heart will find their tenacity pays off as the Germans slow, their fuel reserves dry up, and they begin to take serious casualties. *BULGE '91* is not for the timid player, but for the aggressive - regardless of which side you play. Finally, learn from your mistakes, and you will come to play the game in the same league as the long-time wargamers you see at every convention. Perhaps some day you will regard it as a "classic", the game which got you started in our hobby - just as some do *AK*, *DD* and *WAT* today.



AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	78	2583YOW	1
2.	D. Burdick	77	2338HHQ	2
3.	J. Kreuz	5	2197IGR	3
4.	B. Sinigaglio	63	2179GIJ	4
5.	D. Barker	5	2119GHN	5
6.	P. Flory	54	2109EHL	6
7.	E. O'Conner	37	2081GIP	8
8.	P. Siragusa	72	2079FIL	9
9.	P. Landry	52	2054HJO	10
10.	D. Mattson	20	2050MKY	11
11.	J. Beard	4	2035JIT	12
12.	T. Deane	30	2029GGB	13
13.	C. Corn	27	2017FEB	15
14.	S. Sutton	44	2016GHO	16
15.	J. Noel	31	2015EEK	14
16.	R. Beyma	53	2014DDG	17
17.	L. Barlow	25	2009KLV	9
18.	D. Garbutt	76	2006HIQ	18
19.	B. Remsburg	61	2005HIR	19
20.	I. Bjorum	12	2000EFF	20
21.	R. Berger	18	1996EGG	22
22.	M. Sincavage	5	1984FFK	21
23.	J. Spontak	22	1963DCE	23
24.	J. Fuqua	2	1956CFF	24
25.	R. Shurdut	23	1954GHM	25
26.	J. Ingersoll	5	1940CEH	26
27.	D. Kopp	23	1932GIP	28
28.	H. Newby	43	1923VKQ	29
29.	D. Greenwood	13	1917HHN	31
30.	M. Mitchell	15	1915GIO	27
31.	W. Scott	75	1912NLW	32
32.	F. Reese	58	1911JJD	30
33.	W. King	4	1907BDG	33
34.	T. Oleson	87	1906ZZZ	34
35.	P. DeVolpe	15	1892DFE	35
36.	B. Schoose	17	1891GIM	36
37.	M. Crowe	6	1890CCH	37
38.	J. Eliason	26	1879GJO	38
39.	M. Frisk	32	1866DFJ	40
40.	M. Gutfreund	9	1863EEM	41
41.	S. Goehring	2	1861GHM	50
42.	J. Campbell	15	1856FFD	39
43.	F. Preissle	75	1850MOZ	42
44.	K. McCarthy	32	1842DFJ	43
45.	B. Sutton	3	1841DFE	44
46.	E. Alexis	9	1837JNV	45
47.	R. Schillb	2	1829GIN	46
48.	K. Kinsel	11	1819HHI	47
49.	E. Miller	25	1812HKR	48
50.	G. Smith	4	1810GHO	49



AK RANKINGS

Replacing the "Meet the Fifty" section of our AREA report will be the AREA Specific listing for a select game each issue (in this instance, *AFRIKA KORPS*). Shown is the member's name, his hometown, and his Specific rating (V = verified; P = provisional). Note that this does not match the general AREA rating, for Specific AREA reflects only the results of rated play of the title indicated.

Rank	Name	Hometown	Rating
1.	R. Heller	Croton, CT	V1766
2.	R. Eastep	Potomac, MD	P1725
3.	T. Delancy	Glendale, NY	V1695
4.	J. Grant, Jr.	Stamford, CT	P1675
5.	M. Gutfreund	Cincinnati, OH	P1640
6.	G. Smith	Sewickley, PA	P1510
7.	M. Crowe	Springfield, VA	P1505
8.	B. Smith	Wappinger, NY	P1435
9.	J. Beard	Portland, OR	P1390
10.	P. Jordan	Flushing, NY	P1335

WACHT AM RHEIN REVERSED

The Reduction of the Ardennes Salient

By Arnold Blumberg

By 27 December 1945, the initiative in the battle in the Ardennes was slipping from the hands of the German Wehrmacht. With the northern and southern shoulders of the "Bulge" holding and the western tip blocked by American armor, the scales were clearly tipping in favor of the Allies. It appeared at this date that the time for a full-blown counterattack was the next logical step for the Western Powers to take.

US generals Patton, Bradley and Ridgway urged this course on the Commander-in-Chief, Eisenhower - an attack from the shoulders of the salient would pocket every German in the Ardennes west of the Siegfried Line and most likely end the war within a few months (at least by their way of thinking). But British Field Marshal Montgomery and US First Army commander Hodges felt that this "get-up and charge" strategy was too risky. They were concerned about the poor weather conditions that might limit tactical air support, the even worse road conditions in the area of operations, and the possibility that the Germans may have more armored units available not yet committed to the battle.

General Eisenhower - having been caught by surprise by the enemy onslaught of mid-December - choose to play a cautious game and attack not from the bulge's flanks but further to the west. However, even this timid plan would have to wait; the Germans opened heavy attacks of their own throughout the salient, with particular emphasis on Bastogne, first.

Hitler's reaction to the relief of the American garrison at Bastogne had been both violent and predictable. On the 26th, he ordered all the SS panzer divisions, the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division and the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade pulled out of the line and sent to take the town as quickly as possible. To the German leader, the American defense at Bastogne was the main reason why *Wacht am Rhein* failed to reach the Meuse River. As a result, the capture of the crossroads town would have to be accomplished in order to save face and give Germany some sort of victory in return for all the losses thus far sustained in the Ardennes.

As the panzers slipped and skidded on the icy roads to Bastogne, other German formations kept up the pretense that the Nazi offensive was not over. The 62nd Volksgrenadier Division attacked just east of Trois Ponts, but was repulsed by the US 82nd Airborne Division. Between the Salm and Ourthe rivers, 12th SS Panzer Division made some headway, while to its right the 2nd SS Panzer Division battled the US 3rd Armored Division to a standstill. Further to the east, the 9th SS Panzer Division was pushed back by the 82nd Airborne. And at the tip of the bulge, leading elements of the 2nd and 9th Panzer divisions, after initiating some probing attacks, pulled back to Rochefort in the face of determined resistance from the US 2nd Armored Division.

December 27th saw the Americans retake the town of Sibret with elements of the newly arrived Combat Command A of the 9th Armored Division. This town, located southwest of Bastogne, was on the Neufchateau-Bastogne road, and its loss by the 26th Volksgrenadier opened another supply lifeline to that vital American position. Reacting to the loss of Sibret, the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade was ordered to attack the Arlon-Bastogne corridor on the evening of the 28th. This attack, poorly coordinated, was easily beaten back.

Hitler was furious; his new orders were that, upon arrival of more forces, Bastogne was to be taken at all costs. But the Germans were not the only ones rushing men and material to the Bastogne front. The US 35th Infantry, 6th Armored and 11th Armored divisions were at the same time moving to Bastogne to counter the enemy threat in that area.

The next two days saw great pressure applied to the German Seventh Army holding the southern shoulder of the Bulge. Seventh Army was merely to defend in place what they had won after the German offensive started in mid-December. But the attacks of the US 26th Infantry Division, just east of Bastogne against the 5th Fallschirmjager and the 9th Volksgrenadier divisions (and the Fuhrer Grenadier Brigade) were barely held. Meanwhile, south of the town of Wiltz, the US 80th Infantry Division fought off the continuous assaults of reinforced 79th Volksgrenadier Division. Further to the east, on Seventh Army's left flank, the 5th US Infantry Division was inflicting, and receiving in turn, heavy losses on the opposition to its front, the 276th and 212th Volksgrenadier divisions.

On the north face of the salient, dawn of the 28th saw a concerted effort by the 246th and 12th Volksgrenadier divisions to gain the Elsenborn Ridge. Their attempt was blown apart by American artillery. Further west, the 62nd Volksgrenadier and 12th SS Panzer divisions lunged to the north, only to be turned back by the 82nd Airborne and parts of the 28th US Infantry Division, respectively.

Meanwhile, on the same day the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade, with elements of the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division, launched an attack against the 4th Armor Division in order to sever the Arlon-Bastogne road and once more isolate Bastogne from the south. But yet again the Germans were turned back in their efforts.

Contributing to the failure of all these German moves (defensive, as well as offensive) during the period 24-27 December was the fact that, after two weeks of miserable weather, a break in the pattern of ice and snow storms and continuous foggy conditions occurred. Allied air power operated over 2770 sorties during the 26th and 27 alone, while the Luftwaffe was able to muster a mere 415 during the same period. But on the 28th a blinding snow storm shut down the recent Allied air blitz against the

enemy in the bulge (after the preceding four days saw the British and Americans conduct over 10000 sorties which claimed the destruction of 2323 German trucks, 207 tanks, 45 trains and seven bridges). Yet such logistical losses to the Wehrmacht could not be replaced and so resulted in significant supply and movement inhibitions that further reduced the fighting power of their formations struggling in the salient.

Three days before the end of December, commanders on both sides reconsidered their options in the Ardennes. With the German advance there apparently stopped, Eisenhower urged his subordinates to prepare to cut the German penetration in half by way of a drive from both sides of the salient aimed for a juncture at the town of Houffalize. Not only would this reduce the bulge in the Allied lines, but would also relieve the continuing pressure on the US troops at Bastogne. Montgomery protested. It was his contention that the Germans had both plenty of fight and men left to make such an operation a gamble at best. It was finally agreed that if the enemy had not launched any new attacks on the north side of the bulge by the turn of the new year, the US First Army would initiate an assault of its own by January 3rd.

On the other side of the hill, Hitler finally admitted that the Ardennes offensive had failed. By his reckoning the causes were poor roads (causing severe traffic congestion) and plain bad luck. The Fuhrer's generals had realized that the Ardennes attack, as envisioned by their leader, was doomed to fail before it even started. Understanding this from the beginning, they now hoped that the "Small Solution" (i.e., the destruction of all the Allied units east of the Meuse) could be substituted for the original grandiose plan. They also declared that if the Americas were allowed to take the initiative, an attack to cut the western part of the salient would soon be forthcoming.

December 29th saw a period of stalemate descend upon the Ardennes salient, but without any abatement of the heavy fighting that usually accompanies such a condition. On the northern flank of the bulge, between Hotton and Manhay, the 12th SS, 9th SS and 2nd SS Panzer divisions once again attempted to breach the American line held by the 3rd US Armored Division and elements of the 7th Armored and 82nd Airborne. Hard fighting by the tankers and the paratroops, backed-up by some impressive artillery firepower, caused the Germans to quit the contest. This part of the line then went over to the defensive while the 1st SS Panzer Division was pulled out of the sector and headed for the Bastogne battle.

The same day saw the Fifth Panzer Army stand on the defensive east of Marche with the 9th and 116th Panzer Divisions. An assault by the US 83rd Infantry Division into Rochefort

was barely thrown back by the 2nd Panzer Division. So precarious was the Nazi position in that part of the salient that by nightfall the town was evacuated.

Meanwhile, further to the east, the British continued to expand their efforts around the Meuse River crossings. The 53rd and 6th Airborne divisions crossed that river between Givet and Dinant and helped the US 83rd Infantry relieve the US 2nd Armor Division (destined for employment to the east). At the same time, the British 29th Armored Brigade patrolled the southern German flank between St. Hubert and Rochefort. And up near Huy and Liege, the 51st (Highland) Division guarded the most threatened Meuse crossings.

The 29th was spent by the German Fifth Army in an attempt to gather the forces needed to carry out Hitler's order to eliminate the American block at the village of Bastogne. Toward that end, all forces designated for the attack on Bastogne were put under the command of General Heinrich von Luttwitz and his 47th Panzer Corps. But even the energetic Luttwitz could not get the attack on Bastogne rolling on the 29th; poor roads and Allied airpower was making it impossible to place the necessary units in position to launch the attack. The 167th Volksgrenadier and 1st SS Panzer Divisions were having a particularly bad time in getting to their jump-off positions.

If the day saw frustration for the Germans, it was matched no less on the American side. Patton, having offensive plans of his own, sent the green 11th US Armored Division forward southwest of Bastogne. The result was that the Amis were pushed back. To the east of Bastogne, the US 35th Infantry fought toe-to-toe with parts of the 5th Fallschirmjäger Division. The Americans made little headway against the paratroopers' resolute stand. In the Echternach sector little fighting was reported between the US 6th and 4th Infantry Divisions and the German 276th and 212th Volksgrenadier Divisions. But that was not the case when the US 26th Infantry continued its thrust for Wiltz. A counterattack by the defending Fuhrer Grenadier Brigade and the 9th Volksgrenadier Division (sent to relieve those exhausted grenadiers) threw the attacking Americans back in confusion.

As the German forces were repositioning themselves south in preparation for a concerted attack against Bastogne, they were impeded in their movement by deep snow and lack of fuel. The afternoon of the 29th saw the return of clear weather, and with it a total of 2600 sorties by the Allied air forces. The German Luftwaffe could respond with only a pitiful 130 of their own.

On 30 December a few minor attacks were made by the Americans along the northern shoulder of the salient. One of these was conducted by elements of the US 30th Infantry Division near Malmedy, and was readily repulsed by the 18th Volksgrenadier Division. The 83rd Division struck the 9th Panzer at the tip of the bulge and forced it back slightly. As a result, the nearby Panzer Lehr Division also retreated further to the east of Rochefort. The aforementioned combats were duly noted in the logs of the units involved and the After Action

reports of their parent formations . . . but the eyes and ears of everyone in the salient was turned to the fighting that developed that morning at Bastogne.

Starting with a sharp barrage using over 321 guns and 300 nebelwerfers, the Germans opened their pincer assault on the cross roads town. While the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade and 3rd and 15th Panzergrenadier divisions struck west towards Sibret, the 1st SS Panzer Division, in company with 167th Volksgrenadier Division, headed in the same direction to cut the Bastogne-Arlon road. The plan was to meet south of the town.

Half of 1st SS Panzer's tanks moved south and overwhelmed two infantry companies of the US 35th Infantry Division. The remaining tanks of the division thrust northwest. This column came within a few hundred yards of the Bastogne-Arlon highway, but was halted by concentrated US armor, tank destroyers and fighter-bombers. Another effort, just to the north of 1st SS Panzer by the 167th Volksgrenadier Division was able to reach the contested road, but was also driven back with heavy casualties by the US 4th Armored Division.

Meanwhile, the untested 11th US Armored Division, with the 87th US Infantry Division on its left, entered its first full-blown battle southwest of Bastogne. Heading in a northeast direction, the inexperienced tankers stumbled into the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade in the mist of the early morning. After losing seven Sherman tanks, the advance elements of the American armored division pulled back. Although the 11th Armored performance was not encouraging, it did cause the enemy advance on Sibret to halt, its commanders fearful of a renewed attack on the German assault column's flank.

To the west, in the other prong of Patton's attack, the 87th Infantry Division supported by some 11th Armor Division tanks drove hard for the area between Bastogne and St. Hubert. This thrust was met by the Panzer Lehr and a battle group from the 15th Panzergrenadier Division. The Americans took a few villages as a result of their initial rush, but were soon driven back to whence they came.

Further to the east and on the southern shoulder of the salient, the 26th US Division, preceded by friendly armor, struck out toward Wiltz. Once again they were stopped by desperate counterattacks conducted by the 9th Volksgrenadier Division.

With misty and overcast weather on the 30th, Allied air support for their ground forces was minimal. But the weather did not prevent the German pilots from intervening in the land battle. A 73-plane raid hit Bastogne that night as an aid to the forthcoming attack on the town. The raid caused fires to rage out of control throughout the night.

On New Year's Day, both the American and German plans to defeat the other at Bastogne met in a hail of fire and death. The Allied scheme was to launch the 6th Armored, with the 35th and 26th Infantry divisions in support, in a drive to the northeast out of the Bastogne corridor. The German offensive operation consisted of an attack from east to west south of the

town by 1st SS Panzer Division and the 167th Volksgrenadier Division. Both maneuvers had to contend with snow squalls, treacherous roads and increasing enemy fire.

The German attack gained very little ground; as a result of this disappointment, OKW decided to reinforce the attack with the 340th Volksgrenadier, 9th SS Panzer and 12th SS Panzer divisions. As for American progress on that day, little was found to cheer about. The 6th Armored Division won the long-contested town of Magaret, only to lose it once more to a German counterattack. The 35th Infantry Division advanced a little that day, but by sundown was engaged with the 1st SS Panzer Division in a terrible struggle that would last for a number of days to come.

The 4th Armored Division continued to hold open the Bastogne-Arlon line of communications against very heavy pressure exerted by the enemy. To the east, the 26th Infantry still found its way along the Wiltz-Bastogne road barred by the ever-aggressive 9th Volksgrenadier Division. West of Bastogne, the 11th US Armored and the 87th US Infantry divisions took heavy losses in return for minimal gains. And near Neufchateau, the newly arrived US 17th Airborne Division was assembling to support the Bastogne battle.

The first day of 1945 also brought another surprise German offensive - this time in Alsace. Operation *Nordwind* struck, with six divisions stepping off in the early morning hours, with the aim of taking Strasbourg. This new blow was preceded by the last major German air operation of the war (Operation *Bodenplatte*). With over 1000 Messerschmitt 109s and Focke-Wulf 190s committed, dozens of Allied airfields were hit in Belgium, resulting in the destruction of hundreds of planes and the disruption of Allied air operations for a number of weeks thereafter. The cost to the attackers was about 300 aircraft and 200 irreplaceable German pilots.

By January 2nd, the German build-up for the last attack on Bastogne was nearly complete. Sixth Panzer Army in the north suspended all offensive operations. Both sides in that part of the salient were tired out. American strength continued to shift eastward in order to be ready for the strike south for Houffalize. In support, the British 53rd Infantry Division took over the Marche-Hotton line from the Americans.

To the south, around Bastogne itself, the conflict never abated. During 1-8 January, both sides gathered large amounts of artillery around the Bastogne corridor in order to support their forces. The result was one of the great artillery duels of the war; the German aim to cut the Bastogne-to-Arlon road, while the Americans strove to prevent it.

Advances by the 11th US Armored, 87th Infantry, and parts of the 9th and 10th US Armored divisions west of Bastogne caused the Germans to give up on that route of attack against the troublesome town. Instead, new attacks to re-encircle Bastogne would be made from the northeast where the ground appeared to provide better tank country. The 9th and 12th SS Panzer Divisions, with the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade, would be used as the strike-force.

With the renewed assault on Bastogne ready to open, Manteuffel, the commander of the German Fifth Panzer Army, argued against any attacks at all. He foresaw the American design for the capture of Houffalize, and he wanted to pull back out of the impending trap as soon as possible. He was told that no retreat was to be made and to launch his final blow at Bastogne. But another crisis on the bulge's southern flank would delay the mandated attack. Tanks from the 12th SS Panzer had to be diverted to the area of Wardin, east of Bastogne, when armor from the US 6th Armored penetrated too near that town. Even with this thrust by the Amis stopped, the threat to the 5th Fallschirmjager Division (and to the entire German Seventh Army front) remained acute.

More trouble for the Germans, this time on the northern front, erupted on 3 January with an attack by the US First Army. The Allied plan for that side of the bulge was to strike the enemy on a 25-mile front while the British 53rd Infantry and 6th Airborne divisions took on the Germans at the tip of the salient. The objective was a link-up with Patton's forces in the vicinity of Houffalize, thus cutting off the major portion of the German Fifth Panzer Army.

The American attackers, consisting of the 2nd and 3rd Armored divisions, and the 83rd and 84th Infantry divisions, moved off into the bitter cold weather, waist-deep snow and icy roads, only to be held to a snail's pace by the determined efforts of the 12th and 560th Volksgrenadier and 2nd SS Panzer divisions, all of which were a mere shell of their former strength. Hilly terrain restricted the movement of the American armor; no dramatic tank breakthroughs would occur. The battle degenerated into one where the tanks could not move and the infantry fought small combats reminiscent of World War I. Meanwhile, the British attack on the tip of the Bulge met the determined resistance of the 9th and 116th Panzer divisions; but in reality it was the weather, snow storms and freezing rain, that stalled their advance to such an extent that no ground was gained.

At last, on January 3rd, the 12th SS and 9th SS Panzer divisions (numbering a total of 56 tanks and assault guns) attacked Bastogne from the northwest. In very bitter fighting, the US 101st Airborne Division drove the attackers back from the early gains the Germans made against the town's perimeter.

On the 4th, the US offensive in the north was stopped in the face of blinding snow storms and impossible road conditions. West of Bastogne, the green 17th US Airborne Division was badly bloodied by the Fuhrrer Begleit Brigade after it attacked and then was counterattacked by that German formation. And northeast of Bastogne after a heavy concentration of artillery and nebelwerfer fire aimed at the American positions, elements of the 12th SS Panzer and 15th Panzergrenadier divisions advanced and took the towns of Margaret and Wardin from the US 6th Armored Division during a blizzard. Hard fighting by the 101st US Airborne threw the panzergrenadiers back, while dense American artillery fire halted the forward movement of the SS troopers.

January 4th marked the last German attempt at the capture of Bastogne, and the last big

offensive assault by the Wehrmacht in the Ardennes. As a sign of such, the 12th SS Panzer was withdrawn from Bastogne on the 6th, while the 9th SS Panzer was hurried to the north.

By January 5th the American attack on the north shoulder of the Bulge had progressed very little. Although woefully under-strength the 2nd SS Panzer, along with the 12th and 560th Volksgrenadier divisions, continued to doggedly hold up the US advance. While the sky was clear in the Ardennes on the 5th, the roads were so bad that the 2nd and 3rd US Armored divisions, leading the attack, nearly ground to a halt. By that evening, the weather had closed-in once more and forced the US Third Army onto the defensive. Violent fighting, combined with miserable weather conditions, made for American advances of only about a mile a day for the next three days.

On January 5th also, the US 17th Airborne fought it out with elements of the German 3rd Panzergrenadier and 9th Panzer divisions for the important crossroads of the Marche-Bastogne highway. The young American paratroopers had to retire by the end of the day, but the Germans were very impressed by their performance. On the same day the 6th US Armored beat off attacks on the Wardin area by the 167th Volksgrenadier Division backed by the 506th Heavy Panzer Battalion. Further to the southeast, the 35th US Infantry Division was stopped short in its advance by the usual fanatic resistance of 1st SS Panzer Division.

What had been foreseen by many of Hitler's generals - that the battle was going to inevitably turn into another Falaise Pocket debacle - was finally seen by the Fuhrrer himself. On January 8th, he ordered the Fifth Panzer Army to fall back from the tip of the Bulge . . . but not as far back as Houffalize as his advisors recommended. The German line now bent to the northeast, but the Nazi leader still insisted on remaining near Bastogne and, at the very least, continuing a defensive battle there. The order to retire to the east was already behind reality

however for the 116th Panzer Division the day before had retreated beyond La Roche. As a result, the British 51st Infantry Division, relieving the British 53rd Infantry Division, made some progress past Hotton.

January 9th was a bitterly cold day with over two feet of snow on the ground; nevertheless, Patton choose it to launch his latest drive to the north with eight divisions. By advancing a mile against a surprised enemy, the 90th and 26th US Infantry divisions flanked the hard-fighting 9th Volksgrenadier Division and caused it to yield some territory. Nearer to Bastogne, the 6th Armored and 35th Infantry divisions struck for Wardin and made slight progress. At the same time, their opponent, the 1st SS Panzer Division, was moving out of the area to re-assemble at St. Vith.

A large German salient southeast of Bastogne was now jutting into the Allied front, with the 5th Fallschirmjager Division at risk of encirclement. A counterattack to relieve this situation by the 9th and 276 Volksgrenadiers and Fuhrrer Grenadier Brigade failed in its purpose when it was repulsed by the US 26th Infantry Division.

The 101st Airborne and 4th Armored divisions were making some progress to the east when Patton suddenly ordered them to halt. The Allied commanders still felt that the Germans might be able to pull off another surprise attack somewhere along the Western Front. They had done it in the Ardennes in mid-December and then in Alsace in January; intelligence information had been coming in that they were about to do it once more south of Trier. As a result of these unwarranted concerns, Patton had been ordered to stop his forward move and send the 4th Armored Division out of the Ardennes to act as a reserve further to the south.

The 10th of the month saw both sides pulling tired and disorganized formations out of the front lines and using them to form reserves. As the Germans pulled back, the Americans found the going becoming easier. On the 12th, the 6th Armored Division entered Wardin. The day

TURN RECORD TRACK

JAN 5	JAN 6	JAN 7	JAN 8	JAN 9	JAN 10	JAN 11	JAN 12
JAN 13	JAN 14	JAN 15	JAN 16	JAN 17	JAN 18	JAN 19	JAN 20
JAN 21	JAN 22	JAN 23	JAN 24	JAN 25	JAN 26	JAN 27	JAN 28

Notes:

- On JAN 6, 90th US Division enters play.
- On JAN 10, 4th US Armored Division (or substitute) withdraws from game.
- On JAN 14, all British units (or substitutes) withdraw from game.
- On JAN 16, check for Automatic German Victory (as per 6f5).
- On JAN 17, 101st US Airborne Division (or substitute) withdraws from game.
- On JAN 22, all SS Panzer, FB and FG armored units withdraw from game.

before 1000 men from the 5th Fallschirmjager Division were cut off by a move to the east of Bastogne by the US 90th Infantry Division. A counterattack by the 1st SS Panzer Division to rescue their comrades failed, but the violent tank battles that the attempt initiated lasted for days.

On 12 January 1945 the Red Army went on the offensive against the thin German line facing east. Hitler, in an attempt to shift troops from the Western to the Eastern Front, authorized a further pull-back in the Ardennes to shorten the lines there. He ordered Sixth Panzer Army out of the Ardennes entirely; they were to be replenished preparatory to being sent east. Panzer Lehr, 2nd Panzer and the 9th Panzer divisions were moved east of the tip of the bulge to prevent their encirclement. Throughout the region, the Germans were slowly withdrawing along the Salm River to Houffalize.

On the northern side of the bulge, the Americans planned to use the US 7th Armored Division (coming from the Ambleve area) to take St. Vith. During the 13th and 14th, the US 30th and 75th Infantry divisions attempted to clear the way for 7th Armored, but did not make much progress.

In the south, Patton's reduced forces continued their push to the north. January 13th saw the German defenders standing solid against Third Army after two days of withdrawal. Over the next three days, after slight gains the US 87th Infantry and 11th Armored divisions would be halted in their drive by the 2nd Panzer and 116th Panzer divisions, respectively.

North of Bastogne, the 101st Airborne fought it out with the 340th Volksgrenadier Division and gained the village of Noville after bitter fighting on the 16th. Meanwhile, the 6th Armored and 35th Infantry divisions fought SS rearguards on their advance to Longvilly. The British started moving their forces out of the Ardennes to form a reserve for 12th Army Group.

On the 15th the US 2nd Armored Division flanked the 116th Panzer Division, acting as the rearguard in this sector, and closed in on Houffalize. Meanwhile, the 75th US Infantry Division crossed the Salm River but was halted by the customary well-executed counterattack that the Germans always seemed to deliver even in the most desperate of situations. The Fifteenth US Corps started its drive south for St. Vith on 15 January as well, joining the steady advance of the US 7th Armored, 1st and 2nd US Infantry divisions.

With the morning of the 16th, the First and Third US armies at last linked up when elements of the First's 84th Infantry and the Third's 11th Armored met in Houffalize. The pincers had cut the bulge by almost a half. But the achievement was a hollow victory; the bad weather, combined with the determined fighting of the German units in the salient, had been enough to allow the vast majority of the Wehrmacht formations to escape the Allied trap.

From the 17th to the 20th, the Wehrmacht struggled to retrace its steps back to Germany. All the while the Americans relentlessly applied pressure on all sides of the dwindling bulge. During this juncture in the battle, the

Germans did whatever was necessary to hold St. Vith and its vital road network and, even more importantly, the Skyline Drive which ran west of the Our River. Without this commanding highway and the bridges over the Clerf and Our Rivers, the retreating army in the southern part of the salient would be in jeopardy.

On the 21st the American 80th, 5th and 4th Infantry divisions at the southern base of the Bulge, drove for the village of Hoscheid, a hamlet situated on a commanding hill astride Skyline Drive. Rushing what little reserves were left, the German Seventh Army halted this very dangerous enemy advance. In the meantime, as if to underscore the importance of the southern face of the salient, the 2nd Panzer, Panzer Lehr and 9th Volksgrenadier divisions were placed under Seventh Army command and shifted to the southern base of the Bulge.

On 22 January, the sky cleared and allowed the Allied air forces to pummel the long lines of German traffic attempting to get back to the West Wall. (The German Sixth Panzer Army had already passed that point on its way to the Eastern Front.) On the 23rd, the 7th US Armored Division entered St. Vith, while Patton's men were clearing the ground east of the Our River. The German Army continued its movement eastward, with the last of the SS units departing for the Russian Front the next day.

The 25th saw an acceleration of the American drive to the Our. The US 6th Armored Division made good progress along the St. Vith-to-Clerf highway, while the 26th Infantry Division took the town of Clervaux (only a few miles from the German starting point of December 16). The next three days saw the Americans complete the liberation of Belgium and Luxembourg, some of this task being accomplished only after some severe house-to-house fighting in many of the villages near the Our River. By the 28th of January, from north to south, the American front ran along the line they had occupied at the start of the great German offensive which had broken upon them so suddenly the December before.

Front	Setup On Board (S)	Back
V2		
F9		
G15		
Y16		

Front	Setup On Board (S)	Back
U5		
X15		
	Enter January 6	

New Scenarios for BULGE '91

The following scenarios attempt to recreate the Allied efforts to reduce, and then eliminate, the Ardennes salient created by the surprise German attack of December 1944. The map-board, rules and most of the game counters of the new *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* are used for these two scenarios. All of the Basic, and most of the Optional, rules are recommended. A few new counters are necessary for play (see above). Revised Victory Conditions, Turn Record Track and schedule of reinforcements and withdrawals are provided as needed.



6e) SCENARIO FOUR - "The Bulge Reduced": This scenario covers the period of 5-16 January 1945 when the Allies were finally able to mount a significant counterattack and push the Germans back in the Ardennes. It is recommended that at least options 12, 13, 14 and 17a, 17b and 17c be used when playing this scenario.

6e1) Starting Information:

Starting Turn: The scenario starts with the January 5 Turn. The Allies move first in each game-turn.

Starting German Fuel Reserves: 10.

6e2) Objective Hexes: Only those on the map listed below count towards Victory Points; disregard all others.

German Held Objective Hexes: S12 (Clervaux), I9 (Marche), P10 (Houffalize), U8 (St. Vith), U1 (Rotgen), V2 (Monschau) = 9 objective victory points.

Allied Held Objective Hexes: O14 (Bastogne) and Y17 (Echternach) = 4 objective victory points.

6e3) Units Needed: All units shown as "On Board" (see below), and the 90th US Infantry Division.

Allied Setup:
On Board Units:

NAME	HEX	SIDE UP
8th Infantry Division	V2	Front
78th Infantry Division	V3	Front
9th Infantry Division	U4	Front
99th Infantry Division	T4	Back
2nd Infantry Division	S5	Front (L)
1st Infantry Division	R5	Front
30th Infantry Division	Q6	Front
106th Infantry Division	O6	Back (L)
82nd Airborne Division	N6	Back
83rd Infantry Division	M7	Back
3rd Armored Division	L7	Front
84th Infantry Division	J7	Front
BR 53rd Infantry Division	H8	Front
BR 33rd Armored Brigade	F9	Front
BR 6th Airborne Division	F10	Front
BR 29/11th Brigade	F12	Back
FR 2nd Airborne Regt.	G15	Front
87th Infantry Division	J14	Front
17th Airborne Division	L14	Front (L)
11th Armored Division	M15	Front (L)
10th Armored Division	N14	Back
BR Guards Division	C5	Front
6th Armored Division	N15	Front (L)
4th Armored Division	O16	Front (L)
35th Infantry Division	P16	Front
26th Infantry Division	Q17	Front
80th Infantry Division	R16	Front
5th Infantry Division	T16	Front
4th Infantry Division	V16	Front (L)
2nd Armored Cav Regt.	Y17	Front
5th Armored Division	Q1	Front
7th Armored Division	M3	Front
BR 51st Infantry Division	L2	Front
75th Infantry Division	I4	Front
2nd Armored Division	K6	Front (L)
9th Armored Division	B7	Back
28th Infantry Division	E17	Back (L)
Dug-In Marker*	V16	--
Dug-In Marker*	Y17	--
Entrenchment Marker*	O14	--
"3" Supply Depot**	B3	--
"4" Supply Depot**	R5	--
"5" Supply Depot**	Q5	--
"8" Supply Depot**	M2	--

All units are in supply at start.
*: Only needed if option 17b is used.
**: Only needed if option 15 is used.

Eliminated Units: None.
The Allies get the initiative marker.

6e4) Scenario Special Rules:

1. Allied Reinforcements: The 90th US Infantry Division enters the game at the beginning of the January 6 Turn on any of the following hexes: K17, L17, M17, N17 or O17. The unit is at full strength and in supply initially.

2. Allied Withdrawals: The 4th US Armored Division (or, if eliminated or surrounded by enemy units, any US armored unit of equal strength) leaves the game at the beginning of the January 16 Turn. All British units (or US units of the same type and strength if

German Setup:
On Board Units:

NAME	HEX	SIDE UP
85th Infantry Division	U5	Front
272nd Volksgrenadiers	W2	Back (L)
326th Volksgrenadiers	W3	Front
246th Volksgrenadiers	W4	Front
277th Volksgrenadiers	V4	Back (L)
89th Infantry Division	T5	Front
3rd Fallschirmjagers	S6	Front (L)
18th Volksgrenadiers	R6	Front (L)
62nd Volksgrenadiers	Q7	Front
12th Volksgrenadiers	O7	Front
560th Volksgrenadiers	N7	Front
2nd SS Panzer Division	M8	Front (L)
116th Panzer Division	K9	Front (L)
9th Panzer Division	I9	Front (L)
2nd Panzer Division	H10	Back
Panzer Lehr Division	I13	Back
FB Panzer Brigade	L13	Front
3rd Pz Grenadier Division	M14	Front
15th Pz Grenadier Division	N13	Front
26th Volksgrenadiers	O12	Front (L)
9th SS Panzer Division	O13	Front (L)
12th SS Panzer Division	P13	Front (L)
340th Volksgrenadiers	Q13	Front
167th Volksgrenadiers	P14	Front
5th Fallschirmjagers	O15	Front (L)
1st SS Panzer Division	P15	Front (L)
9th Volksgrenadiers	Q15	Front
FG Panzer Brigade	R14	Front
79th Infantry Division	S15	Front
352nd Volksgrenadiers	T15	Front (L)
212th Volksgrenadiers	U15	Front (L)
276th Volksgrenadiers	V15	Front (L)
999th Infantry Regt.	X15	Front
44th Infantry Regt.	Y16	Front
10th SS Panzer Division	Y1	Front
11th Panzer Division	Y12	Front
Dug-In Marker*	K9	--
Dug-In Marker*	H10	--
Dug-In Marker*	I13	--
Dug-In Marker*	T15	--
Entrenchment Marker*	I9	--
Entrenchment Marker*	X15	--

All units are in supply at start.
*: Only needed if option 17b is used.

Eliminated Units: 150th Panzer Brigade, Peiper Panzer Brigade, Heydt Fallschirmjager Regiment.

eliminated or surrounded) leave the game at the beginning of the January 14 Turn.

3. 10th SS and 11th Panzer Divisions: These two divisions were placed in reserve and not intended for combat, serving to anchor the flanks. The German player must deduct one victory point from his final total for each separate combat one or the other of these units are involved in during the course of the game.

6e5) How to Win: The scenario lasts twelve turns and ends after the January 16 Turn. The German side wins if they have more total vic-

tory points than the Allied side or if the points are equal. The Allied side wins if they have more total victory points than the German side.

6f) SCENARIO FIVE - "The End": This scenario covers the January 1945 period when the Allies eliminated the "Bulge" in violent battles of attrition. It is recommended that at least options 12, 13, 14 and 17a, 17b and 17c be used when playing this scenario.

6f1) Starting Information:

Starting Turn: The scenario starts with the January 5 Turn. The Allies move first in each game-turn.

Starting German Fuel Reserves: 10.

6f2) Objective Hexes: Only those on the map listed below count towards Victory Points; disregard all others.

German Held Objective Hexes: S12 (Clervaux), I9 (Marche), P10 (Houffalize), U8 (St. Vith), U1 (Rotgen), V2 (Monschau) = 9 objective victory points.

Allied Held Objective Hexes: O14 (Bas-togne) and Y17 (Echternach) = 4 objective victory points.

6f3) Units Needed: All units are set up as in Scenario Four above. The Allies get the initiative marker.

6f4) Scenario Special Rules:

1. Allied Reinforcements: The 90th US Infantry Division enters the game at the beginning of the January 6 Turn on any of the following hexes: K17, L17, M17, N17 or O17. The unit is at full strength and in supply initially.

2. Allied Withdrawals: The 4th US Armored Division (or, if eliminated or surrounded by enemy units, any US armored unit of equal strength) leaves the game at the beginning of the January 16 Turn. The 101st US Airborne Division (or, if eliminated or surrounded, any US infantry unit of equal strength) leaves the game at the beginning of January 17. All British units (or US units of the same type and strength if eliminated or surrounded) leave the game at the beginning of the January 14 Turn.

3. German Withdrawals: All German SS Panzer units, as well as the FG and FB Panzer brigades, must leave the game at the end of the January 22 Turn. If any are unable to do so due to being eliminated or surrounded, no unit need be removed as a substitute.

4. 10th and 11th SS Panzer Divisions: The German player must deduct one victory point from his final total for each separate combat one or the other of these units are involved in during the course of the game.

6f5) How to Win: The scenario lasts twenty-four turns and ends after the January 28 Turn. The German side automatically wins at the end of the January 16 Turn if any in-supply German units are on or west of hexrow P. Otherwise, the scenario continues until the end of the January 28 Turn, when the side with the most total victory points wins. If the points are equal, the German side wins.



ONE LAST BULGE

Third Edition BULGE '81

By Bruno Sinigaglio

Hard as it is to believe (how quickly time passes), *BULGE '81* has been in print for ten years. In that decade, *BULGE* players have experimented and perfected their winning strategies, and variants have been published to add new dimensions to the game that some thought were lacking. I have greatly appreciated the many insights and innovations provided by those who have taken an active interest in the game. Now a new design covering the last German offensive in the West is due from Avalon Hill to supplant it. But for those *GENERAL* readers who will continue to play *BULGE '81*, these "Third Edition" rules are offered to give you a few more options to ponder and enjoy. However, if you are not willing to part with the style of play to which you have become accustomed, simply continue to use the official 2nd Edition rules. Note well, this *BULGE '81* 3rd Edition will not be published other than in this issue (nor will Avalon Hill answer questions upon it).

The 3rd Edition Advanced Game is expanded by the mandatory use of most of the Optional Rules from the 2nd Edition. Essentially, there are no Optional Rules in this 3rd Edition. However, it should be noted that the 2nd Edition Optional Rules have undergone a number of changes as they have been translated to the Advanced Game. One Optional Rule ("German Corps Integrity") has been deleted, and a new rule ("Infiltration by Kampfgruppe Peiper") has been added. The 3rd Edition Advanced Game therefore adds the rules listed below:

- 36.0 SS Panzer Commitment on 16AM Turn
- 37.0 British Commitment
- 38.0 Armored Attack Restrictions
- 39.0 Last Minute Demolition
- 40.0 Airdrop - Operation Stoesser
- 41.0 Operation Greif - Panzer Brigade 150
- 42.0 Operation Greif - Einheit Steilau Commandos
- 43.0 Infiltration by Kampfgruppe Peiper
- 44.0 German Artillery Final Protective Fire Support

All other 2nd Edition rules apply except as changed below. Players may wish to make note of these changes in their rulebooks.

17.2 Die Roll Modifications

17.2.1 The die roll used to resolve a battle can be modified. Die roll modifications are cumulative. The positive and negative die roll modifiers are totaled for each battle to determine if the die roll is to be adjusted. Die roll modifications are mandatory and must be applied for each battle in which a defending unit has air defense support, and for each battle in which a defending unit occupies a fort or an improved position.

17.2.2 Attack Initiative: When no defending units in a battle receive air defense support, or

occupy a fort or an improved position, the attacker may apply or ignore negative die roll modifiers. After the die is rolled to resolve combat, the attacker then decides if a particular die roll modifier is to be applied. For example: the Germans have a 4-1 attack with negative die roll modifiers for Air Attack Support and Artillery Support (20 factors); a "6" is rolled to resolve combat. The German player may decide to apply both modifiers (in which case the result is "Exchange") or one modifier (in which case the result is "Contact") or neither modifier (in which case the result is "Engaged").

36.0 SS Panzer Commitment on 16AM Turn

36.2 For all scenarios, the German player determines if the elite First and Twelfth SS Panzer Divisions will be committed on the 16AM turn. (Delete rule 25.4.) It should be noted, however, that if any of the six SS regiments move into an Allied ZOC before the 16PM turn, certain Allied units are released as reinforcements earlier than indicated on the Allied OOB Card:

- The US 1/16 Infantry Regiment is released on the 16PM turn.
- The US 9/47 Infantry Regiment is released on the 16PM turn.
- The US 1/18 Infantry Regiment is released on the 17AM turn.

37.0 British Commitment

37.2 The Allied player determines if the British XXX Corps will be committed. The Allied player must announce on the 25AM Allied turn if British forces will cross the Meuse. If British Commitment is not announced on the 25AM turn, it may not be invoked later. (Delete rule 35.8.) The British 11/29 Armored Brigade is always free to move anywhere on the board.

41.0 Operation Greif - Panzer Brigade 150

41.2 Rather than participating in normal combat, Panzer Brigade 150 (yellow on green counter) may hold back and attempt to slip through Allied lines after the 16AM and/or 16PM German Combat Phases. Movement rules during turns of attempted infiltration are as follows:

41.2.1 On the 16AM turn, the unit starts in the "B" starting area. The unit may move during the 16AM German Movement Phase in accordance with the Movement rules (6.0), the First Turn Surprise rules (25.0) and the Special Movement Restriction (explained in 41.4.3). The unit may not enter an Allied ZOC during the movement phase.

41.2.2 On the 16PM turn, the unit may move during the German Movement Phase in accordance with the Movement rules (6.0) and the

Special Movement Restriction. The unit may not begin in nor enter an Allied ZOC during the movement phase.

41.3 After completion of the 16AM and/or 16PM German Combat Phases, the German player rolls the die to see if Panzer Brigade 150 can advance. On the 16AM turn, the unit may Advance 4 on a die roll of "1". On the 16PM turn, traffic congestion is reduced and the unit may Advance 4 on a die roll of "1" or "2".

41.4 If the unit can advance after the 16AM and/or 16PM German Combat Phase, it may do so immediately by executing an "Attacker Advance 4" combat result before the Allied turn. The first hex of the advance may be to any adjacent hex that the unit may enter legally. It is also subject to the following four conditions:

41.4.1 The unit must obey certain rules for "Advance After Combat". Specifically, rule sections 20.1 through 20.5, and 20.11. References to losing, retreating or eliminated defenders obviously do not apply for this special Advance.

41.4.2 The unit may ignore Allied ZOC for the 16AM or 16PM special Advance, and thus advance right past adjacent Allied units. Or, it may remain adjacent and end its turn, or it may attack Allied units even if they have already been attacked in the preceding German Combat Phase. If the attack is before the Allied 16AM turn, the First Turn Surprise -1 die roll modification applies. Furthermore, if the unit attacks and obtains an "Advance After Combat" result, it may again advance; however, any advance as a result of combat is subject to all the rules for Advance After Combat (section 20.1 through 20.11).

41.4.3 If the unit successfully uses the special Advance on the 16AM or 16PM turn, it may not voluntarily move south of the road that travels XX12-UU12-PP10-Malmedy-Trois Ponts-Werbomont-Huy-Andenne-Namur until the 19AM German Movement Phase. If forced to retreat south of this line before 19AM, the unit is free to then move anywhere.

41.4.4 Isolation status for all units is determined normally during the German supply phases. Infiltration does not exempt a unit from becoming isolated. Isolation does not prevent the unit from infiltrating further on the 16PM turn.

41.5 The German player is not required to attempt infiltration. If the unit enters an enemy ZOC during the 16AM or 16PM German Movement Phase, it must participate in combat that turn, and it forfeits its chance to infiltrate after the Combat Phase.

43.0 Infiltration by Kampfgruppe Peiper

43.1 Prior to the Ardennes Offensive, the commander of the 1st SS Panzer Regiment, Obersturmbannführer Joachim Peiper, conducted training exercises with his regiment.

The emphasis of this training was to avoid combat at the front, bypass Allied strong points, clear the Allied rear without delay, and race for the Meuse bridges. Peiper's efforts were rewarded as KG Peiper managed to slip through the front line and cause havoc in the Allied rear.

43.2 Rather than participating in normal combat, KG Peiper may hold back and attempt to slip through Allied lines after the 16AM and/or 16PM German Combat Phases. Movement rules during turns of attempted infiltration are as follows:

43.2.1 On the 16AM turn, the unit starts in the "B" starting area. The unit may move during the 16AM German Movement Phase in accordance with the Movement rules (6.0), the First Turn Surprise rules (25.0) and the Special Movement Restriction (explained in 43.4.3). The unit may not enter an Allied ZOC during the movement phase.

43.2.2 On the 16PM turn, the unit may move during the German Movement Phase in accordance with the Movement rules (6.0) and the Special Movement Restriction. The unit may not begin in nor enter an Allied ZOC during the movement phase.

43.3 After completion of the 16AM and/or 16PM German Combat Phases, the German player rolls the die to see if KG Peiper can advance. On the 16AM turn, the unit may Advance 4 on a die roll of "1" or "2". On the 16PM turn, traffic congestion is reduced and the unit may Advance 4 on a die roll of "1-4".

43.4 If the unit can advance after the 16AM and/or 16PM German Combat Phase, it may do so immediately by executing an "Attacker Advance 4" combat result before the Allied turn. The first hex of the advance may be to any adjacent hex that the unit may enter legally. It is also subject to the following four conditions:

43.4.1 The unit must obey certain rules for "Advance After Combat". Specifically, rule sections 20.1 through 20.5, and 20.11. References to losing, retreating or eliminated defenders obviously do not apply for this special Advance.

43.4.2 The unit may ignore Allied ZOC for the 16AM or 16PM special Advance, and thus advance right past adjacent Allied units. Or, it may remain adjacent and end its turn, or it may attack Allied units even if they have already been attacked in the preceding German Combat Phase. If the attack is before the Allied 16AM turn, the First Turn Surprise -1 die roll modification applies. Furthermore, if the unit attacks and obtains an "Advance After Combat" result, it may again advance; however, any advance as a result of combat is subject to all the rules for Advance After Combat (section 20.1 through 20.11).

43.4.3 If the unit successfully uses the special Advance on the 16AM or 16PM turn, it may not voluntarily move south of the road that travels XX12-UU12-PP10-Malmedy-Trois Ponts-Werbomont-Huy-Andenne-Namur until the 19AM German Movement Phase. If forced to retreat south of this line before 19AM, the unit is free to then move anywhere.

43.4.4 Isolation status for all units is determined normally during the German supply phases. Infiltration does not exempt a unit from becoming isolated. Isolation does not prevent

the unit from infiltrating further on the 16PM turn.

43.5 The German player is not required to attempt infiltration. If the unit enters an enemy ZOC during the 16AM or 16PM German Movement Phase, it must participate in combat that turn, and it forfeits its chance to infiltrate after the Combat Phase.

43.6 The German player may attempt infiltration with KG Peiper even if the 1st SS and 12th SS Panzer Divisions are not committed on the 16AM turn. However, if the unit enters an Allied ZOC before the 16PM turn, it triggers early release of the three US infantry regiments listed in rule 36.2.

45.0 The German Outbreak Scenario

45.2 This scenario is played using the 3rd Edition Advanced Game rules.

46.0 Wacht Am Rhein - Campaign Scenario

46.3 This scenario is played using the 3rd Edition Advanced Game rules.

46.4 German Strategic Victory Antwerp

46.4.3 The German units that exit the board must be in supply for one German supply phase. This condition cannot be fulfilled until sections 46.4.1 and 46.4.2 have both been fulfilled.

46.5 German Victory Meuse River

This type of victory is attained if there are supplied German combat units in seven of the eight Meuse River cities for two consecutive German supply phases. (See 2nd Edition for complete text.)

46.6 German Victory Liege

This type of victory is attained if there are supplied German combat units in all three Liege hexes for two consecutive German supply phases. (See 2nd Edition for complete text.)

50.0 Designer's Comments

Advanced Game: After ten years, players should have already used all the Optional rules, and therefore should be quite familiar with them. Adding these few twists will, hopefully, instigate some new approaches to strategy and tactics.

Attack Initiative: How many times has your critical attack been ruined because your supposed beneficial die roll modification has changed just the result you needed into something else. Attack initiative will put an end to this unwanted idiosyncrasy. The attacker will no longer be penalized when he has the initiative. In addition, the importance of forts and improved positions will become even more significant, as the attacker will not then be able to chose among a range of combat results just the one he desires.

SS Panzer & British Commitment: Since the game is supposed to give us a chance to second-guess Hitler and Montgomery, I figured it was time to give the players more options in pursuing the what-if situations. Sure, you can have the SS units on 16AM, but you'd better create some havoc quickly.

Panzer Brigade 150: The mechanics for using the Operation *Greif* rule were not consis-

tent with the traffic congestion experienced by the Germans on 16 December. As a result, instead of Panzer Brigade 150 using regular movement, the unit now may attempt an "Advance 4" like any advance after combat. Besides, whenever the old rule was successfully utilized, the German player seemed content to simply grab Roerath-Krinkelt. Now he has more options. Additionally, infiltration may also be attempted on the 16PM turn, which interestingly is when Peiper made his famous breakthrough.

Kampfgruppe Peiper: A logical progression of the above infiltration rule. Of course, Peiper has a greater chance of success; but then again, historically this is precisely what happened. If the German player commits the 1st and 12th SS divisions, but holds back Skorzeny and Peiper for infiltration, the Germans have a half-decent chance of taking Roerath-Krinkelt and knocking the Allies for a loop on 16AM. Not only that, if the Allies are suffering from severe unit shortage, the German can even attempt to send the two units into the rear again on 16PM. Has anyone ever taken Malmedy on the 16PM turn before?

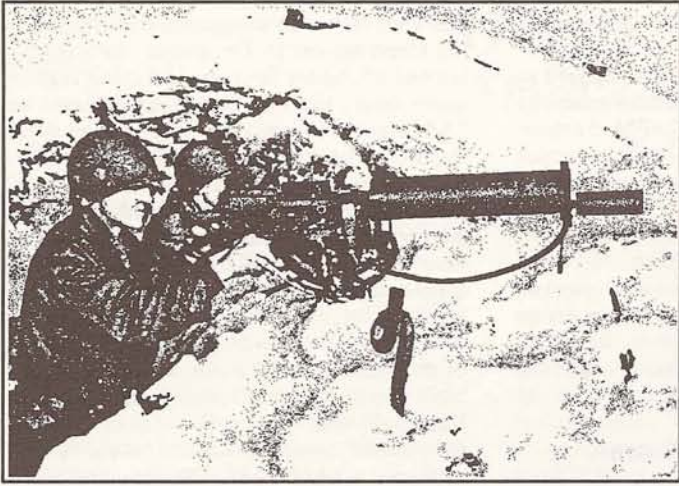
Try an 8-1 (-2) attack versus the 99/394 on 16AM, and then slip Skorzeny and Peiper into the rear. Use the SS Panzer Commitment; it's worth the gamble. German chances are 44% that either Skorzeny or Peiper will advance; however, further success depends on the combat results versus 99/393 and 99/394. On 16PM, your chances of success with one or the other infiltrating is 77%. If your commandos have been able to sidetrack Allied reserves, you just might waltz into Malmedy unopposed. If you get the chance, attack with the German infiltrators, especially on 16AM when you have the choice of using or ignoring the -1 die roll modifier.

Victory Conditions: Regarding 46.4.3, the Germans need only supply a thrust on Antwerp for one turn instead of four. I imagine any impossible thrust in Antwerp would have cost someone his head. The Germans need only guarantee supply for a "Meuse River" or "Liege" victory for two game turns rather than four as before. The Meuse victory condition would be a symbolic German accomplishment; but the Liege victory would be catastrophic for the Allies.



NOTICE

We have been advised by C&P Telephone that, as of November 1991, the Baltimore region has a new Area Code - 410. Until November 1992, however, long-distance calls placed to the offices of Avalon Hill may make use of either the 301 or the 410 prefix; but as of the first of that month, only the 410 Area Code will be valid. All who may have business with Avalon Hill to be conducted by phone may wish to take note of this change. Please, however, no by-phone queries regarding rules questions or AREA ratings. Please make use of surface mail (and be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope) for such.



SEMPER AVANTI Reference Notes for ASL

By Andrew H. Hershey

In recent issues of *The GENERAL*, various "light" combat formations of the United States, Nazi Germany, Great Britain and the Soviet Union during World War Two have been the subject of a series of excellent articles by Steven Swann. My article seeks to continue in that vein by examining one more of the five so-called "light" infantry units employed by the United States during the war: the 10th Mountain Division (hereafter, "10th Mtn." for short). It was the only designated mountain division in the American order-of-battle during the war, and an outfit unique in many other respects.

In the summer of 1942, with the United States engaged in a ground war in the Pacific Theater, the War Department turned its attention to the creation of special mountain and jungle-trained formations, which were deemed necessary in order to fight in such extremes of climate and topography as found there. At that time it was generally held throughout most quarters of the U.S. Army that a standard infantry division's heavy weapons and its dependence upon motorized transport would reduce its effectiveness as a fighting force in areas devoid of roads, densely overgrown and/or mountainous.

Plans were put forward by the War Department in August of 1942 for the formation of two or three mountain and jungle divisions, with each division comprised of about 10000 officers and men. From October of that year through February 1943 very little headway was made with the actual raising of such units, however. They remained "paper divisions". Debate and difficulties had arisen over size and attendant transport problems (one stumbling block being the movement of a large number of mules and horses, which formed a light division's primary source of transport, overseas to the proposed theaters of operation). Eventually, in March 1943, a TO&E figure of 9000 officers and men was settled on. Nearly all the components of a full infantry division were present, but in reduced numbers. The divisions were "lightened" by the elimination of all organic reconnaissance elements (which were later replaced), and by cutting most forms of motorized transport. In addition, the field artillery elements of the new divisions were diminished in firepower. Henceforward, three battalions of 75mm pack howitzers (U.S. Ordnance Note #12 and British Note #9) would make up each

division's artillery compliment instead of the usual three battalions of 105mm and one of 155mm guns.

In June 1943, the War Department finally authorized mobilization, but for only one division - and this solely for test purposes. The division created, rather ironically, was the "89th Light Division (Truck)". This was accomplished by converting the existing 89th Infantry Division. However, upon further reflection two more divisions were given the "go-ahead", though still on an experimental basis only. The new units formed were the "71st Light Division (Pack, Jungle)" and the "10th Light Division (Pack, Alpine)", which eventually became the 10th Mtn. Division. The 10th was based, in large part, from the already existing 87th Infantry Regiment which had undergone some alpine training on Mt. Ranier in Washington and had taken part in the invasion of Kiska. Fresh recruits were directed to the new Mountain Training Center at Camp Hale (Colorado), located just outside Leadville at an altitude of 11000 feet. The new arrivals would eventually form the basis for the division's two other regiments, the 85th and 86th.

Like the 1st Special Service Force (see the *ASL Annual '90*), the 10th Mtn. was made up of experienced outdoorsmen: guides, hunters, trappers, cowboys, forest rangers, mountaineers and skiers - lots of very good skiers. A third of the division troops were already what we might call "hard-core skiers"; still a further half were proficient before training began, while the remainder learned quickly at Camp Hale. Proficiency at skiing formed the trademark of the unit because of a rather unique recruiting system. The National Ski Patrol, founded by Minot Dole in 1940, acted as a conduit channelling recruits to Camp Hale. Eventually over 10000 already qualified skiers were passed on by the patrol to the 10th Mtn. Division. Once at Camp Hale under the guidance of professional pre-war climbers (the 10th Mtn. had several renowned Swiss and Austrian climbers in its ranks), the men underwent extensive training in mountaineering, both in summer and winter conditions. Special artificial glaciers were built to better simulate European Alpine conditions. Needless-to-say, in winter, skiing was a daily routine (now turned into drudgery by the Army as the 10th Mtn.'s divisional song immortalizes "90 pounds of

ruck-sack on my back"). Snow-shoeing and alpine survival skills (such as snow cave construction) were also stressed.

Another important factor which made the 10th Mtn. unique was that the intelligence level of all its ranks was well above the Army's divisional average. Nearly all the division's members had a high school diploma, with a goodly proportion either being college students/graduates or successful applicants for Officers Candidate School (OCS). Eight-six per cent of the division passed the required OCS exams. As a result of this some men turned down commissions or refused OCS offers altogether in order to remain with the 10th Mtn. In those cases where enlisted men were commissioned, most were able to return to the 10th Mtn.; a few, however, were eventually transferred (some to the FSSF). Both the physical nature of the training and the mental aptitude of the men engendered a great deal of unit cohesion and *esprit de corps*. Officers and enlisted men in the 10th Mtn. were on very close terms with one another. In recognition of the unique qualities of the 10th Mtn., when in the course of 1944 the War Department was forced to "strip" non-active divisions of personnel in order to replace losses in front-line units, it was one of only two divisions exempted from this process.

Having undergone their training, the next stage in the life of the experimental "light" divisions was a rigorous set of field tests and maneuvers. From February 1943 through April 1944, the new divisions were put through their paces. In California, the 89th and 71st Divisions sparred with each other in the Hunter Liggett Military Reservation. In the mountains around Leadville and Aspen, meanwhile, elements of the 10th Mtn. engaged in mock winter combat at 12000 feet or more. The results of the tests were poor. The 89th and 71st Divisions were found to have used a third (and sometimes half) of their manpower to build roads and trails or to simply man-haul supplies. Review boards recommended disbanding the two; higher authorities agreed and the divisions were re-converted to standard infantry divisions. In the case of the 10th Mtn., the trials were equally as unsatisfactory, poor results in part caused by ill-suited equipment and clothing and the choice of exercise area. However, unlike the other two divisions, the 10th Mtn. was given a reprieve. Despite the War Department's dislike for spe-

cialized troops at the time, the unique nature of the skills possessed by the men of the 10th Mtn. ensured their survival as a unit (skiing in the 1940s was not a popular recreational pastime). Sanctioned with the official designation "mountain division", the 10th boarded ship for Italy in December of 1944 with an expanded compliment of 14101 officers and men (roughly the size of a regular division), 6000 beloved mules and horses, plus several tons of specially-produced alpine equipment (packs, goose-down sleeping bags, boots, parkas, rifle-slings and climbing gear). Also bound for Italy with the division was a consignment of M-29 "Weasels". The Weasel was a specially designed tracked vehicle for use in the snow, the precursor of today's "snow-cats" (there is as yet no *ASL* piece which depicts the M-29, as there was in *G.I., ANVIL OF VICTORY*).

In February 1945 the 10th Mtn., under the command of Major-General George P. Hays, entered the Fifth Army's IV Corps sector and was assigned a position just west of Highway 64 in the Reno River valley. The mountains in the area, while rugged, were well below the 11000-12000 foot heights on which the division had trained. As the only fresh unit available, and more importantly because of its special skills, the 10th Mtn. was immediately selected by IV Corps HQ to spearhead the planned spring offensive. This attack was designed to break out of the Apennines, in which the Germans had held the Allies for some time, sweep through the Po valley west of Bologna, where the preponderance of U.S. armor could be used to best advantage, and then race to capture the passes which lead through the Italian Alps to Austria. If successful, the plan would trap several German armies. Once the offensive was underway, the 10th Mtn. was to form the vanguard of IV Corps' drive to the Alps (which is how it came by its motto *Semper Avanti* - "Always In Front").

However, as a preliminary to the final offensive, it was vital that the peaks surrounding Highway 64 be captured, especially a long ridge line (the Sarassica-Campania) strongly held by the enemy. Lying to the west of the highway, the promontory comprised four central peaks and was dubbed "Riva Ridge" by the men of the 10th Mtn. (A familiar name, perhaps, to those of you who may have skied the "Black Diamond" run at Vail, named in honor of the division's exploits on the ridge.) To take the heights would require a vertical climb of 1500 feet, a move which could only be done at night due to the cross-fire from nearby hills. On the night of 18 February, the reinforced 1st battalion of the 86th Regiment, which had been hidden in houses and barns at the base of the ridge throughout the day, began the climb. Meanwhile, to the east the 1st and 3rd battalions of the 85th Regiment and 1st and 2nd battalions of the 87th Regiment prepared to launch an attack on a separate set of dominating peaks - Mount Belvedere and Mount Gorgolesco - once the ridge was in hand.

At 1930 hours the men started up the side of "Riva". In the darkness the ascent was greatly aided by the fact that special path-finding teams of volunteers had reconnoitered routes and pre-fixed nylon ropes to the cliff. This measure

enabled the reinforced companies of 200 men to climb with even the heaviest of support weapons. Most elements of the battalion were atop by 0230. The German sentries were caught off guard; they did not believe the Americans capable of such an alpine-style assault. By 0545, all four peaks were secured after a series of brief and bloody engagements with the enemy. Only in one instance were desperate measures called forth. Having ordered his men to construct snow caves, a young Lieutenant Loose called down artillery on his own position in order to stave off a German counter-attack which threatened to push his unit off the ridge. The survival skills put to a unique test worked well; protected by the snow and ice blocks, the lieutenant and his men weathered the barrage and held their position until relieved the next morning.

With the ridge secure, the way was now clear for the two battalions of 85th Regiment and those from the 87th Regiment to launch their own attacks on the other peaks astride the highway. Thankfully, this time no climb was required. On the night of the 19 February, having foregone artillery preparations in the hopes of achieving tactical surprise a second time, the two regiments attacked the German hilltop outposts. Once again success was swift, and by daybreak the two peaks were secured. Both units then pressed north-eastwards in the direction of Mount Torraccia. Here however, German resistance stiffened considerably. For the next several days, heavy fighting ensued. Eventually, allied fighter-bombers had to be directed on to the enemy positions. Over 400 sorties were flown in support of the 10th. Finally on the 23rd, the 3rd battalion of the 86th Regiment, committed from reserve, broke the German's hold on the heights. Mount Torraccia fell, and the path to the Po was open.

In order to re-supply the attacking units atop the Apennine peaks, which in some areas jut out from the valley floor like volcanic islands from the seabed, the engineers of the 10th Mtn. Division (126th Mountain Engineer Regiment) erected an ingenious system of aerial tramways. These 8'x4' pallets attached to overhead cables enabled those on the summit to be re-supplied in a matter of minutes instead of the several hours required to hike up by man and mule. Likewise, the wounded could be quickly evacuated on the tram's return journey. By early March, in bold attacks in the face of stiff opposition, the 10th Mtn. had captured the remaining peaks along Highway 64. In so doing, Hays had successfully maneuvered IV Corps into position for its spring offensive. This was not done without a heavy cost; the division suffered 1349 casualties (309 KIA).

On April 14th, after a pause to refit and a further delay caused by bad weather, the primary offensive commenced. The 10th Mtn. was once again chosen "to carry the ball." So began what became known in IV Corps' history as the "19 Days" as, with the 10th Mtn. leading the way, the corps went from the Apennines to the Alps - an advance for the 10th Mtn. of over 140 miles. On the morning of the 14th, after a heavy air and artillery preparation lasting nearly 90 minutes, the 10th Mtn. moved forward into the Pra del Bianco, a bowl-shaped basin just ahead

of Rocca Roffeno (the divisional object for the day). Capture of the massif and its nearby road junction would not only allow direct road access into the Po valley, but would also turn the left flank of the German 94th Infantry Division.

As the 85th Regiment entered the Pra del Bianco, however, it ran straight into a series of entrenched and fortified positions which were screened by an extensive network of both anti-personnel and anti-tank minefields. Fortunately these enemy positions were completely manned only at night. The mines, however, slowed the 85th Regiment and forced accompanying tanks and tank destroyers to retire. Alerted to the attack, German reinforcements began to arrive and take up their firing positions in the fortifications. The 85th's attack began to stall. While artillery was being called down, a few enemy positions were silenced at close quarters by the infantrymen of the regiment in bitter fighting. On his own initiative, PFC John D. Magrath of G Company armed only with his rifle cleared one machinegun post. Taking the captured weapon, Magrath went on to knock out three more redoubts, one of which contained two heavy machineguns. But while checking on the wounded men left behind during his heroics, Magrath was himself killed. His actions earned him the Medal of Honor. The efforts of Company G in clearing the basin enabled a battalion of the 86th Regiment to thrust through and take Rocca Roffeno by late afternoon. Despite higher-than-expected casualties, the offensive was still on schedule.

Over the next several days the men of the 10th "island hopped" along the remaining peaks which overlooked the Po valley, capturing in the process over 3000 disheartened German prisoners. Having at last broken out of the Apennines, the race to the Alps was underway in earnest on the 20th of April. On the 23rd, using assault boats and 50 attached DUKWs, the 10th Mtn. was the first IV Corps formation to cross the Po River. In order to maintain its position ahead of IV Corps, now that the mountains were behind them, General Hays formed an *ad-hoc* mobile task force under the command of Colonel William O. Darby of Ranger fame (see *The GENERAL*, Vol. 25, #5). Darby had recently been named assistant divisional commander to the 10th Mtn. when its original divisional officer was wounded by a mine leading his own task force forward to the Po River.

Task Force Darby (TFD), as it was known, consisted of the division's 86th Regiment, the 13th Tank Battalion (taken from the 1st Armored Division), a company of light tanks and tank destroyers and three battalions of self-propelled artillery. While TFD raced forward across the Po plain, the remaining two regiments, the 85th and 87th, mopped up bypassed strong points. On the 25th, just two days after crossing the Po River, TFD advanced 20 miles in one day to Villafranca. There, after a brief firefight, it captured the town's airfield and an intact Focke Wulf 190 (its pilot had landed thinking the airfield was still in German hands). From Villafranca, TFD drove pell-mell some 40 miles northwards to Lake Garda with the objective of seizing a series of tunnels and passes which led north through the Italian Alps

towards Austria. The Germans, aware of their importance to the Allied offensive, had fortified some and prepared others for demolition. As TFD made its way forward, the Germans set off charges at the first series of tunnels, thereby blocking the entrances and bringing down onto the road much of the surrounding cliff-face. Using DUKWs, which had remained with the division, Company G of the 86th Regiment skirted around the blocked tunnels and made an amphibious assault under fire on the remaining tunnel strongpoints. This succeeded in capturing several before the Germans were able to rig them for demolition. Darby then went on to take Torbole, a small town at the head of Lake Garda. It was here on the afternoon of April 30th, while discussing plans with a fellow officer, that the much-decorated Colonel Darby was killed by a lone round from a concealed German 88mm.

Just two days later, all was quiet on the Italian front. Hostilities had ceased - at least in Italy - with a negotiated truce. In 114 days of fighting the 10th Mountain Division had suffered 953 dead and 3134 wounded, one-third of all American casualties in Italy and the heaviest toll taken by any division of its size for that length of time in combat anywhere. This fact serves as a reminder that the 10th Mountain was one of the elite fighting combat units of World War Two, despite its short existence. After returning to the States in August, the division was formally decommissioned in November 1945.

Fitting the 10th Mtn. into ASL

One facet of the division which the preceding has endeavored to convey is that the ranks of the 10th Mtn. were filled with what the Army would call "officer material". Because of this, each platoon leader is entitled to a "-1" modifier, with its respective morale level being determined by a die roll (1-2 = 9-1 SMC; 3-6 = 8-1). While the division contained no more officers than its Table of Organization allowed it to (673), its enlisted ranks were almost to a man potential officers themselves, (recall the 86% figure mentioned above). Thus, in contrast with the FSSF and Rangers, whose officers have been the subject of special consideration in terms of ASL, it is upon the average infantrymen (or in this case the above-average infantrymen) of the 10th Mtn. which we should concentrate.

In order to reflect the unique qualities of these men, I believe that companies and platoons of the division should have a higher compliment of Non-Commissioned Officers (8-0 and 7-0 leader types) than might normally be allotted to them otherwise (see Table 2). In a DYO scenario depicting the 10th Mtn., this can be implemented quite easily. Any fractional surplus left over from the division of friendly Equivalent squads (H1.74) by the Leader Generation (LG) factor enables the player to add one additional 8-0 and one 7-0 leader. If this calculation yields no fractional remainder, add one 8-0 leader automatically. (Remember that

elite squads must have been purchased earlier.) This system also yields improved chances of "trading up" (H1.81) and effectively simulates the better "officer pool" which the division enjoyed.

In addition, because an overwhelming proportion of the division's men qualified for OCS (some even turned down commissions in order to remain with the unit when transfer seemed likely), the *first* and *second* Rally attempts of a player's *own* Rally Phase may be performed as a Self-Rally regardless of normal Self-Rally capability (A18.11). However, each attempt at Self-Rally must take place in a separate Location. All other rules regarding Self-Rally are unchanged, except as modified herein: if one or both of the MMC rolls an original "2" Dice Roll (DR), each is entitled to an additional "-1" die roll modifier (drm) on the ensuing Leader Creation Table (A18.2). This special drm is cumulative with all others listed for Nationality, Morale Level, Status, etc. Likewise, anytime a 10th Mtn. MMC attacking in Close Combat rolls an original "2" DR, it may also apply the special drm (-1) to any Leader Creation attempt (A18.12).

The 10th Mtn. was, for the most part, a standard American infantry division in terms of the composition of a line company (three rifle platoons and one heavy-weapons platoon). The composition of a rifle platoon's squad was 12 men - ten armed with M1 semi-automatic rifles, one with a Browning Automatic Rifle and the twelfth man with a 1903 Springfield bolt-action

TABLE 1: Table of Organization - 10th U.S. Mountain Division

Unit	Manpower	Animals	ASL Equivalent
3 Regiments (each)	128/2739	953**	
3 Battalions (each)	35/825	c.317	
HQ Company	9/112		10-3 SMC 8-1 SMC 2x6-6-7 MMC
3 Line Cos. (each)	6/187		
Company HQ	2/20		9-2 SMC 8-1 SMC 2x6-6-7 MMC MMG
3 Rifle Platoons (each)	1/36		9/8-1 SMC*** 3x6-6-7 MMC
Heavy Weapons Platoon	1/36		8-1 SMC 7x3-4-7 HS 2xMMG 3x60mm MTR BAZ (1945)

* - Officer/Enlisted

** - 9xBell Horse, 51xRiding Horse, 765xPack Mule, 128xRiding Mule

*** - see article for explanation

TABLE 4: 10th Mountain Capabilities

	Feb-March 1945	Apr-May 1945
Morale:	Normal	Normal
ELR:	5	4
SAN:	4	2
Stealth:	No	No
Ski:	Yes	Yes

TABLE 2: Standard 10th Mountain Company OB

This would be the ASL composition of a single 10th Mountain line company. For actions depicting two companies, add one battalion-level 8-1 SMC and a 6-6-7 MMC, plus a 3-4-7 HS and BAZ (1945) from the battalion's Heavy Weapons Company. If three companies are involved, add the 10-3 SMC, plus one Radio (81mm MTR OBA available), a 6-6-7 MMC, and a 3-4-7 HS with HMG.

9-2 SMC
9-1 SMC
4x8-1 SMC
2x7-0 SMC (see article)
11x6-6-7 MMC
7x3-4-7 HS
BAZ (1945)
3xMMG
3xM19 60mm MTR

TABLE 3: Divisional Assets

Unit	ASL Equivalent
3 Field Artillery Battalions	
4 Artillery Batteries (each)	4x2-2-7 Crew 4x75mm Pack Howitzer 4xMule
10th Mountain AT Battalion	
6 AT Platoons (each)	3x2-2-7 Crew 3x57L M1 ATG 3xJeep
10th Recon Troop Mechanized	
3 Recon Platoons (each)	8-1 SMC 7-0 SMC 6x3-4-7 HS 3xM8 AC 4xJeep (with MG) 2xJeep (with dm 60mm MTR)

rifle. This last weapon could be fitted with a telescopic sight for use as a sniper rifle. (In practice, it was often replaced by another M1 for added firepower.) A squad of the 10th Mtn. would best be represented by a 6-6-7. The very nature of the recruits and their training, which instilled a great deal of confidence, self-reliance and unit cohesion, warrants the use of the 6-6-7 and its higher morale level. Both the War Department and the commander of the German forces opposing the 10th Mtn., Field Marshall Kesselring, considered the division an "elite unit". As elite squads, the MMC can make use of all U.S. support weapons without penalty. The morale would not be considered to be underlined, however.

In depicting the first actions of the 10th Mtn. during February and March 1945, their Experience Level Rating (ELR) should be "5". Thereafter, due to the heavy casualties, the ELR would drop to "4" for those actions taking place in April and May of 1945. Since the mountains offered excellent terrain for snipers and the mountain warfare field manual called for their extensive use, the Sniper Activation Number (SAN) should be "4" for those scenarios taking place in February and March 1945. Thereafter, the SAN value should be set at "2" to better reflect the rapid advances in the Po valley, which left little time to set up planned and camouflaged sniper positions.

The "specialty" of the 10th Mtn. was skiing and mountaineering. Therefore, all SMC and MMC of the 10th Mtn. are always assumed to be ski-equipped in scenarios where ground/deep snow is present. Because of their expertise in cross-country skiing, all such SMC and MMC receive a movement bonus of one MF while on skis. This IMF bonus is only applicable if the unit does not change elevation at *anytime* during the course of its Movement Phase (MPh). The additional movement factor awarded by this bonus may also be used to extend the special MF allotment of broken (A10.5)/wounded (A17.2)/berserk (A15.431) units as well. [EXC: This IMF bonus derived for not changing elevation cannot be claimed if the unit must/elects to change elevation during the MPh/RtPh.] All other rules regarding units on skis apply unaltered (E4.3). SMC and MMC of the 10th Mtn. are always considered to be wearing Winter Camouflage (E3.71) in scenarios where any type of snow is present. As a result of their mountaineer training, SMC and MMC are assumed to be Commandos for purposes of climbing and scaling only. (Note: Thus they are not stealthy and their ELR/Morale is still subject to Table 4 on the previous page.)

In contrast with some of the other "light" units already examined, the 10th Mtn. was a division in its own right and so consequently had organic support elements. In terms of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*, three of the divisional assets can be simulated easily: artillery, anti-tank and reconnaissance. The division's three field artillery battalions each had three batteries of four 75mm pack howitzers (M1A1), which instead of being drawn by jeeps were packed by mules (G10.1). Each of these battalions had 347 mules assigned to it to pack the guns, which could be broken down into six pieces each for loading, with ammuni-

tion and other equipment man- or animal-packed. Depending upon the terrain, a mule was capable of carrying 200-300 pounds and it would therefore take between five to six mules to carry one gun. The photographic evidence seems to indicate that a single mule carried between 12-15 rounds of 75mm ammunition. All rules for animal-pack guns should be observed; and in any DYO scenarios, players should allocate enough animal counters for transport.

On the basis that the mountains were not the best environment for tanks, the divisional TO&E allowed for a limited anti-tank capability. The division's AT battalion consisted of 18 57mm (M1) guns towed by jeeps. The guns were formed into six platoons of three guns and three jeeps each.

Originally, the "light" divisions were to be devoid of organic reconnaissance elements. These units, as it was then thought, could be raised on an *ad-hoc* basis from elsewhere when needed. But by 1944 when the 10th Mtn. shipped out for Italy, separate recon elements had been re-inserted after the field trials. The division's reconnaissance troop of five officers and 157 men were initially mounted on horseback; in actual fact, the troop was mechanized (with the horses retained for special situations). The troop was eventually composed of three platoons of three M8 armored cars and six jeeps, all carrying either machineguns or 60mm mortars.

It is hoped that through this article and the accompanying scenario that readers will come away with an appreciation of one of the more unique combat outfits of the Second World War, America's alpine division. As the only U.S. division of its kind, it oftentimes found itself placed "between a rock and a hard place". But it was "Always in Front".



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CONVENTION CALENDAR

The *GENERAL* will list any gaming convention in this column free of charge on a space available basis, provided that we are notified at least six months in advance of the event date. Each listing must include the name, date, site and contact address for the convention. Additional information of interest to our readership, such as tournaments utilizing Avalon Hill games, is solicited and will be printed if made available. The Avalon Hill Game Company does not necessarily attend nor endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that events using our titles will be held. Readers are urged to contact the listed source for further information before making plans to attend.

MARCH 20-22

SPRING OFFENSIVE III, East Peoria, Illinois

Contact: Roy Spencer, Tri-County Gaming Association, 116 Walnut Street, Washington, IL 61571. (309) 444-4640.

Note: Among other boardgames, a tournament devoted to ASL.

APRIL 3-5

PO-CON, Bartonsville, Pennsylvania

Contact: Edward Dowgiallo, Pocono Gaming Group, P.O. Box 390, Effort, PA 18330. (717) 629-7218.

APRIL 4-5

WINDS OF WAR '92, Greensboro, North Carolina

Contact: Raymond Woloszyn, 7162 Maplewood Lane, Kernersville, NC 27284. (919) 996-5677.

Note: Fourth annual ASL "theme" tournament.

APRIL 24-26

TEXASL 1992, Arlington, Texas

Contact: Gary Fortenberry, P.O. Box 191108, Arlington, TX 76019. (817) 447-2850.

Note: An AREA-rated, Swiss-style ASL tournament.

MAY 15-17

HEXACON VI, Braubach, Germany

Contact: Ulrich Blennemann, Rosenthal 76, D-4320 Hattingen, Germany. 02324/2-40-49.

Note: Among other events, competition in *UP FRONT* (using the "501" system).

MAY 15-17

CONWEST IV, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Contact: H. Mortimer, Weregamer's Guild, SAC Box 48 Sub, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131. (505) 277-3083.

Note: Competition in *ASL*, *UF*, *DIP* and *NAVAL WAR*.

MAY 15-17

SPRING FEVER II, Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Contact: Carl Noguiera, 45 Jenkins Street, New Bedford, MA 02740.

Note: As before, a balanced mixture of board and miniatures games covering a variety of periods.



ROOM RESERVATIONS

July 30- August 2, 1992

Complete this form or a facsimile and return it with the required deposit to: Penn Harris Hotel, P.O. Box 839, Camp Hill, PA 17001. Or call 1-800-345-PENN. We suggest you make your room reservations promptly, as we cannot guarantee availability or equivalent alternate lodging after July 16, 1992. Once the Penn Harris is sold out, lodging requests will be referred to the nearest available hotel honoring the AVALONCON room rate. Be sure to fill out the form carefully, as the Penn Harris will honor only those reservations received with complete information and deposit or guarantee.

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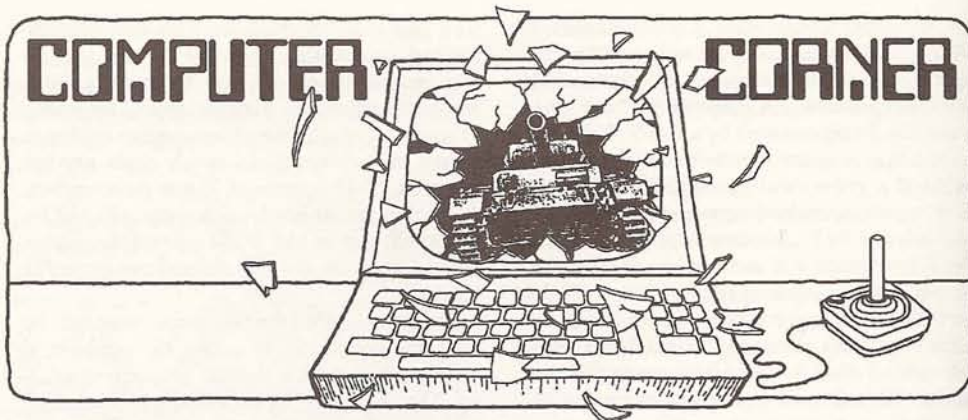
Name: _____

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Registration and Open Gaming will begin Thursday, July 30th at noon. Official tournaments will not start before 6 PM that evening.



Computer DIPLOMACY

By John Huff

With the imminent release of the new *Computer DIPLOMACY*, I thought I would take this opportunity to bring you up to date. Many readers may remember the original *DIPLOMACY* for the IBM and many are still avid players of this game. Originally published in 1984, at that time it represented the state of the art in PC computer games. With excellent graphics and smooth interface for the time, it still holds up well against the seven years of progress since it was first introduced. It does have a few shortcomings; the most noticeable is the ease with which the computer opponents are eventually defeated (once you figure out their weak spots). This inherent weakness was based on the lack of co-operation on the part of the "electronic diplomats".

Now we move into the 1990s. A new generation of *Computer DIPLOMACY* is about to be released to the market. This is superior to the original in both graphics and speed of execution, but more importantly in the quality of the computer opponents. Developed in co-operation with Virgin Software, we are understandably proud of the new releases.

The new versions are available for the Atari ST, Commodore Amiga, and the ever faithful Commodore 64/128. Each one is state of the art from end to end. Displays are neat and simple to grasp, entry of orders is simply a matter of selecting the army or fleet, its next action from the menu or its destination from the map. Book-keeping is smooth and unobtrusive. The game program thus lends itself well to managing PBM or PBEM games, making it useful even to gamers who don't have any desire to play with computer opponents, but need a record-keeping system (one relatively impervious to the vagaries of pets, fussy spouses or small children). One can save the current game at the end of any session. The programs are certainly user-friendly, as can be seen from a brief scan of the rulebook.

Strategies will vary (depending upon the variant selected) and the game will provide a challenge to all players, from novice to veteran. The thing to keep in mind is that the computer players are negotiating with each other as well, unlike in the original computer conversion, but the only evidence you may have of their dealings is to review the previous orders - or via the

occasional message through the rumor mill. This retains much of the flavor of the original boardgame. (It is, however, a great deal simpler to get a game of the computer version together than of the boardgame.) But be forewarned, the computer players lie and cheat just like the flesh and blood players you may know.

While there is no sure-win strategy for the game, having more than one human-controlled country is to your advantage. It gives some leverage if you wind up on the receiving end of a dastardly plot on the part of the computer players. Obviously, the nice thing about the computer game is that you can try to survive the situation in various ways and save the games in progress as you fine-tune your own plots.

Bits and Pieces

Some inside information about other new products from Micro Computer Games . . .

Computer THIRD REICH for the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga is at last available and ready for shipment! The IBM version should be completed by mid-summer. The IBM version should offer to the fans of 3R who happen to be owners of that model all the visual and strategy appeal of the first two (see my last column, in Vol. 27, No. 3 of *The GENERAL*). It is hoped that release upon this more common platform will introduce many more gamers to this classic design on the grand strategy of World War II. And the fact that the computer files will be compatible among all makes will encourage interactive play to an extent not enjoyed by any other computer game.

Innovator has been sent back to the lab for a few revisions. By the time this column sees print, they should be complete. These revisions include a new interactive trade system, a macro-command function and further enhanced graphics. All of this adds new elements to make the game even more fun and easier to play.

The *WILDERLANDS* module for *LEGENDS OF THE LOST REALM* is complete and in the final stages of packaging and preparation. It offers about twice the challenge of the original scenario, but has less combat and more puzzle-solving aspects. The graphics are more detailed and sophisticated than the original as well. The wait will have been worth it for the many fans of this game.



LEVIATHAN

A GM's View of Game 1988HW, Concluded

By Gary Behnen, with Rex A. Martin

In Vol. 27, No. 4, I began the account - through the medium of the players' Press and the GM's reports - of a postal DIPLOMACY game in which I was savaged by some of the best in the hobby. We left the game hanging with two countries eliminated and the ladies in a dominate position.

As before, the turns are presented in the game report format of which Gary made use: date and GM "headlines", player list, orders, and edited Press. Each unit's order is listed separately, and most should be self-evident (A = Army; F = Fleet; c = convoy; s = support). Failed moves are indicated by italics. Illustrations showing the controlled territory are offered at the end of each second year (colors correspond to those of the countries in the game, except in the case of Russia, which is tan herein). Any proposed draw was put to a vote by the GM; the remaining active players had to be unanimous in their agreement for the game to end in this manner (a common occurrence in postal DIPLOMACY).

Without further ado, the Leviathan again "have at it."

A New Old Coalition Winter 1904/Spring 1905

Portuguese rebels accepts new Queen . . .

Is the pen really mightier than the sword . . .

Faz becoming very popular; everybody wants him . . .

The elk gets one more hound on his tail . . .

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)

Germany - Mark Fassio (Woodbridge, VA 22192)

Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)

Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)

Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)

GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders for Winter:

Austria (even): OUT

England (+2): build A Edinburgh, A London; plays one short

France (-1): NMR! GM disbands A Gascony; OUT

Germany (-1): disband A Paris

Italy (+3): build A Venice, A Rome, F Naples

Russia (even): no adjustments

Turkey (even): no adjustments

The Orders for Spring:

England: A Picardy to Paris; F North Sea c A Edinburgh-Norway; F St.

Petersburg (nc) s A Edinburgh-Norway; F Brest to English Channel; F

Portugal hold; F Denmark s A Holland-Kiel; A Holland to Kiel; A

Edinburgh to Norway; A London hold

Germany: F Bothnia s A Warsaw-Livonia; A Burgandy s A Munich hold;

A Warsaw to Livonia; A Kiel to Berlin; A Munich s A Kiel-Berlin

Italy: F Spain (sc) to Marseilles; A Serbia s A Vienna-Budapest; A

Vienna to Budapest; A Marseilles to Gascony; A Tyrolia to Munich; F

Lyon to Tyrrhenian Sea; F West Med to Tunis; A Venice to Trieste; A

Rome to Venice; F Naples to Ionian Sea

Russia: F Sweden to Norway; A Moscow to St. Petersburg; A Livonia s A

Moscow-St. Petersburg

Turkey: A Ukraine to Warsaw; F Aegean to Bulgaria (sc); A Silesia to

Berlin; A Sevastopol hold; A Galicia s A Ukraine-Warsaw; A Rumania

to Budapest

Units in Retreat: German A Kiel (either Ruhr or OTB); Russian A Livonia (either Prussia or OTB)

The Press:

Germany to Board: When I joined this game, I resolved to play it quite differently compared to "normal": more stabs, wild and unsupportable

moves, etc. I'm having some reversals here, but I'm having a blast! Whether I remain or die, be advised I plan on going out with a bang!

Kaiser to Legless Elk: Thanks, Mark Trail - but spare us the comparisons.

Instead, consider your nation one of woodchucks . . . open season with no limit! And Turkey will bag the most.

Italy to Turkey: Now that I've killed off the possums, I figure it's time for a turkey hunt.

Faz to Quinn: Thanks for the letters, but you're not about to change your spots at this juncture. If you are so concerned about Italy, then pull Russia's puppet strings and get him involved first. I think I've "normal" (?) relations with Kathy.

Flash to Kathy: It appears that Bill and you are not the pen pals I earlier made you out to be. If you decide to smite him before he smites you, well . . . "Have Toady, Will Travel". And I don't have fleas like the Wonder Dog next door.

Bloodsucker to Wonder Dog: Now, you know I enjoy turkey as much as Melinda enjoys dog meat.

KC to Faz: Who you calling a "she-devil"? Certainly not me. Otherwise, I'd get the hots for Munich.

Germany to England: Years of faithful service, only to be rewarded by the shaft . . . and it didn't even feel good. Well, now my money's on an eventual E-I draw, daffy as that may sound.

London to Board: If things didn't go as planned, sorry. I lost track. Chalk it up to an unreal real life and a 50+ hour work week. I'll do better.

It was a dark and foggy day . . . Fall 1905

It's getting a bit clearer, though . . .

Germany and Russia together again . . .

"You ain't seen nothing like the mighty Quinn . . ."

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)

Germany - Mark Fassio (Woodbridge, VA 22192)

Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)

Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)

Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)

GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England: A Paris s Ita A Gascony-Burgandy; F North Sea c A Edinburgh-Norway; F St. Petersburg (nc) s A Edinburgh-Norway; F English Channel c A London-Belgium; F Portugal to Mid-Atlantic; F Denmark hold; A Kiel s Ita A Tyrolia-Munich; A Edinburgh to Norway; A London to Belgium

Germany: F Bothnia to Sweden; A Burgandy to Paris; A Livonia s Rus A Prussia-Warsaw; A Ruhr to Belgium; A Munich to Berlin

Italy: F Marseilles hold; A Serbia s A Budapest hold; A Budapest s A Trieste-Vienna; A Gascony to Burgandy; A Tyrolia to Munich; F Tyrrhenian to Ionian Sea; F Tunis hold; A Trieste to Vienna; A Venice to Tyrolia; F Ionian to Greece

Russia: F Sweden to Skagerrak; A Moscow to Sevastopol; A Prussia to Warsaw

Turkey: A Warsaw to Moscow; F Bulgaria (sc) to Greece; A Silesia to Warsaw; A Sevastopol s A Warsaw-Moscow; A Galicia to Vienna; A Rumania to Bulgaria

Units in Retreat: German A Burgandy (either Picardy or OTB); Russian A Moscow (either Ukraine or OTB)

The Press:

Constantinople to Rome: One trick the Russian hound refuses to learn is "roll over and play dead". But the German shepherd seems to do it both willingly and well for his mistress England, despite how she kicks him.

Russia to Faz-cist: Didn't realize that you'd planned on rolling over. And here I thought I was the Wonder Dog. But it seems the ladies found you easier to house-break.

Faz to Bill: Mad Turk, what can I say? "Too much; too little; too late" comes to mind. If you are interested in joint talks, the mailbox is always open. Just make sure these are *mutually* beneficial offers, instead of this "zero-sum" crap you've been giving me the whole game.

Steeler Fan to Legless Elk in Wheelchair beset by Ravenous Beasts in Frozen North: If we pull this little ditty off, I'll be pleasantly surprised! In a weird, roundabout way, we deserve a smattering of joint success toward the twilight of our reign, wouldn't you say? I salute you as a gentleman, and a competent player, and hope success to our continued actions in this game and any others we happen to end up in together.

Russia to Germany: Please define, "out with a bang". What are the dear ladies offering you?

GM to Russia: . . . naaaahhh!

Bloodysucker to Rex the Dead Dog: I'll say one thing for you - you are consistently dumb. How can anyone trust Quinn a second time?

Italy to Germany: Of course we are having "normal" relations. I'm not perverted like the mountain lady.

GM to Kathy: Oh? Pray tell, how then are you perverted?

Faz to KC: OK Italian Diva, you've got the controls in your hands. Do what you will with the fate of the nations on this board and rest assured I believe what you say. If you need help against the infidel Turk, I'm your man. I only hope we can arrange mutually beneficial orders.

GM to All: They now say the baseball season might be a wash. I really hope they are right! No, I'm not losing my mind, just my patience with these millionaires who feel they can disregard the general public, keep raising ticket prices, pull clubs out of town, etc. I'm sure I can find plenty to do this summer without them.

Swedish Serenade Winter 1905

Separationists carry the day . . .
Czar is caught napping; will Rex van Winkle awaken . . .
Queen unilaterally calls end to the arms race . . .

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)
Germany - Mark Fassio (Woodbridge, VA 22192)
Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)
Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)
Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)
GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England (+3): build A Liverpool, A Edinburgh; plays two short
Germany (-3): retreat A Burgandy OTB; disband A Berlin, A Ruhr
Italy (+2): build A Venice, A Rome
Russia (-2): NMR! GM retreats A Moscow OTB; disbands F Skagerrak
Turkey (+1): build F Smyrna

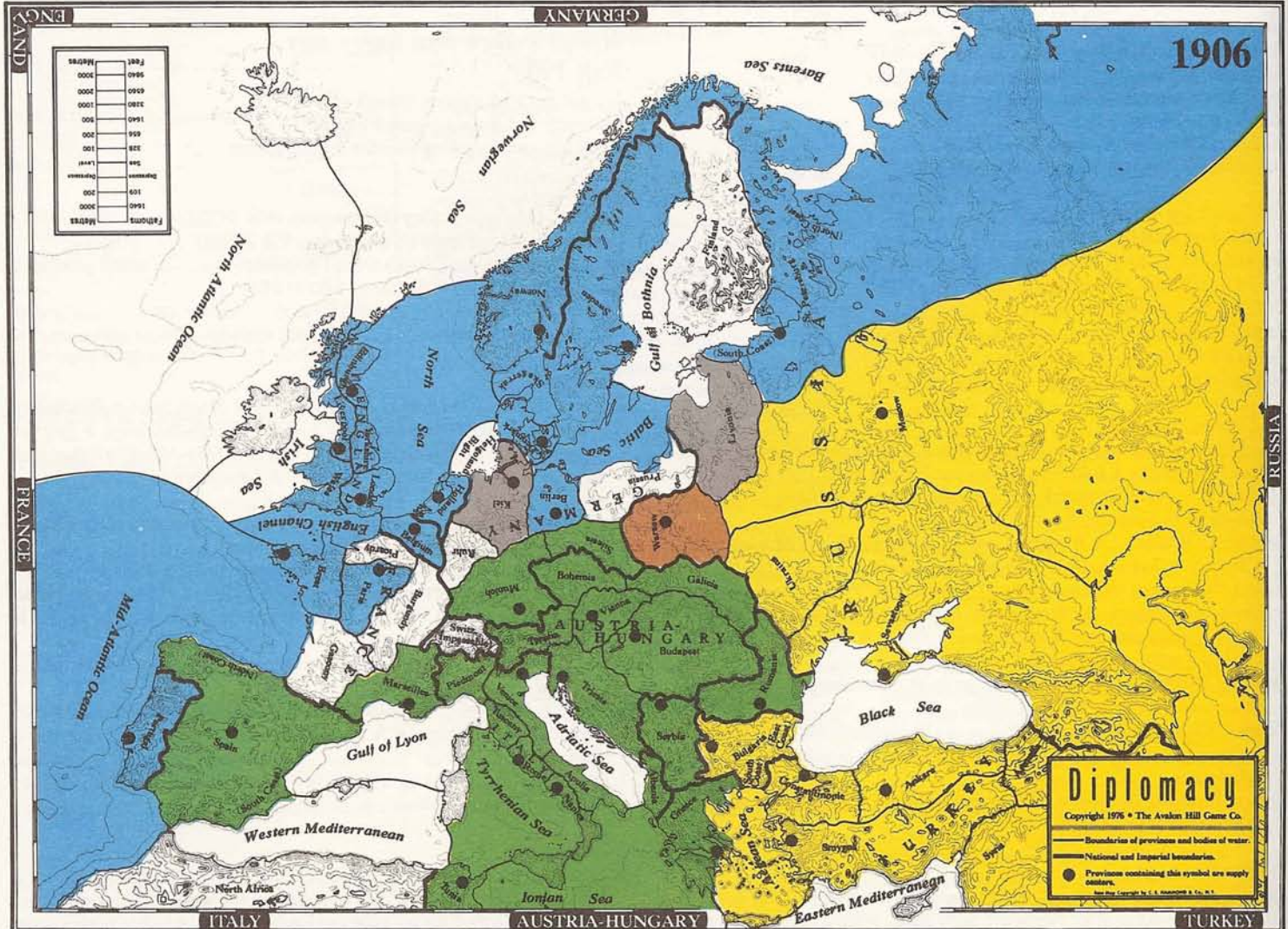
The Press:

KC to Faz: You don't really think that the Pirates will beat anyone but the Phils. As for them beating the Cards, sure . . . about the same time Rex hits 18 in this game.

GM to Board: If Rex doesn't return, Russia will go into Civil Disorder.

Italy to Turkey: Anything is better than a stalemated board. Melinda and I always were good at shakin' things up!

GM to World: We're twice blessed with a new daughter, born April 02 1990. Thanks for your well wishes. All went well and mom, babe and sis are doing fine; but me, I'm *tired*.



A Woman who Knows her own Mind!

Spring 1906

Confusion in the Italian Army (I know, I know - redundant) . . .

Kaiser sues for peace . . .

A symbolic return, but Czar may take his final bow . . .

The lion roars . . .

Are we ready for peace in our time?

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)

Germany - Mark Fassio (Marina, CA 93933)

Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)

Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)

Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)

GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England: A Paris hold; F North Sea c A Edinburgh-Norway; F St. Petersburg (nc) s A Edinburgh-Norway; F English Channel c A London-Picardy; F Mid-Atlantic hold; F Denmark s A Norway-Sweden; A Kiel to Berlin; A Norway to Sweden; A London to Picardy; A Liverpool to York; A Edinburgh to Norway

Germany: F Sweden hold; A Livonia hold

Italy: F Marseilles hold; A Serbia to Rumania; A Budapest to Galicia; A Burgandy to Munich; A Munich to Bohemia; F Tyrrhenian c A Rome-Albania; F Tunis hold; A Vienna s A Munich-Bohemia & A Vienna s A Budapest-Galicia (double-orders, will hold); A Tyrolia hold; F Ionian c A Rome-Albania; A Venice to Trieste; A Rome to Albania

Russia: A Warsaw to Moscow

Turkey: A Moscow s A Sevastopol-Ukraine; F Bulgaria (sc) to Aegean Sea; A Silesia to Galicia; A Sevastopol to Ukraine; A Galicia to Rumania; A Rumania to Bulgaria; F Smyrna to East Med

Units in Retreat: German F Sweden (to Finland, Gulf of Bothnia, Baltic Sea, Skagerrak, or OTB)

The Press:

From the Doghouse: Sorry all. Seems that, while I wrote the letter carrying my orders, I forgot to dispatch it to God. But he done good anyway, removing the pieces I would have. Guess I'm not out of this yet. Again, my apologies. The press of too many deadlines has brought on premature senility.

Russia to Turkey: Looks like we remain alone, ol' boy. Any suggestions?

For my part, I'm looking to go a-viking.

GM to Russia: On a flaming ship?

Rome to Constantinople: It was as obvious as the nose on your face; don't blame me if you are blind!

KC to Faz: It's your choice: live or die, kill or be killed.

Bloodsucker to the Wonder Dog: The ladies are offering you a grave; go find your favorite bone and enlarge the hole, as you are about to jump into it.

Warsaw to World: Tell you what. I'll take Moscow, and then quietly withdraw off the board to Siberia. Looks to me that the Queen and the Popess have this one wrapped up anyway. What's say we give them a rousing cheer, a quick pat on the back, a drawn game, and move on to other concerns.

GM to Warsaw: You can't be serious . . . what other concerns could we have?

Kaiserbunker to Europe: Well, gang, the fortunes of war have frowned upon the German nation. Can't say I didn't cause some of the misfortune, you realize; but nonetheless, it's a real bumner! I salute the victors, offer assistance to the vanquished in future games.

Faz to All: Have been tapped to leave for language school earlier than planned. Given the need to establish my school logistics (as well as a now-distraught wife stuck alone with two toddlers for ten weeks), I'm slacking off on this game. Hence, the "Hold" orders. Gary, if forced to retreat, I'll OTB. The E-I tide is unstoppable; I'm convinced of that, and to prolong the agony is silly at this stage. Again, the game was great.

GM to Faz: But it's not over yet. There's a lot of blood that can be shed still - and with knives in the hands of ladies, I'm sure it will.

Ginger to All: Thanks for all your good wishes. I can well relate to Mark's poor wife if Gary were to go out of town for 10 weeks.

The Balance of Power Shifts

Fall 1906

The ladies get Lucky 13 . . .

Rex hangs tough in Warsaw as German Army comes to rescue . . .

Kriegsmarine frees Kiel, for now . . .

Sick Man of Europe looking a bit sick . . .

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)

Germany - Mark Fassio (Marina, CA 93933)

Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)

Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)

Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)

GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England: A Paris hold; F North Sea c A York-Denmark; F St. Petersburg (nc) s A Norway hold; F English Channel s F Mid-Atlantic hold; F Mid-Atlantic s F English Channel hold; F Denmark to Baltic Sea; A Berlin s Ita A Munich-Silesia; A Sweden s A York-Denmark; A Picardy to Belgium; A York to Denmark; A Norway s F St. Petersburg (nc) hold

Germany: F Baltic to Kiel; A Livonia to Moscow

Italy: F Marseilles hold; A Serbia s A Budapest-Rumania; A Budapest to Rumania; A Munich to Silesia; A Bohemia to Galicia; F Tyrrhenian s F Tunis-Ionian Sea; F Tunis to Ionian Sea; A Vienna s A Bohemia-Galicia; A Tyrolia to Bohemia; F Ionian to Greece; A Trieste to Budapest; A Albania s F Ionian-Greece

Russia: A Warsaw s Ger A Livonia-Moscow

Turkey: A Moscow s A Silesia-Warsaw; F Aegean to Greece; A Silesia to Warsaw; A Ukraine to Rumania; A Galicia s A Ukraine-Rumania; A Bulgaria s F Aegean-Greece; F East Med to Aegean Sea

Units in Retreat: Turkish A Galicia annihilated; Turkish A Silesia (Prussia or OTB)

The Press:

Warsaw to World: With the collapse of the Evil Empire, the proud Polish people declare their independence. Although our nation's life may be short as darkness descends upon the continent, we take solace that in a few short decades, Poland will be at the forefront of the fight once again.

Constantinople to Rome: I don't believe you and the Iron Lady can make it to a 17-17 draw.

Constantinople to London: Kathy says she can win this one. Are you going to let her defeat you and me both?

Warsaw to Livonia: Glad to have you aboard! Maybe together, we can spoil someone's day (about the only role left us).

KC to Faz: At least you know who rules the board!

Faz to World: OK, OK, so I lied and didn't "Hold/OTB" my units. This is DIPLOMACY, is it not?

Faz to Bill: Stand by for RAM! Or, as they say in the US Army, "BOHICA." (Bend over; here it comes again!)

Marina to Board: Language school stinks! Homework nightly; no family (although they're flying out for two weeks soon). Only plus: Wargame-o-mania every weekend at the many cons. Into everyone's life a little sunshine must also fall. See you in August.

GM to Board: A proposed Turkey-Italy-England (T-I-E!) draw. NVRs and NMRs will be counted as a "Yes". Vote by next deadline.

Message to Moscow: Glasnost has its limits!

Winter 1906/Spring 1907

Looks like the Fat Lady is getting ready to sing . . .

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)

Germany - Mark Fassio (Marina, CA 93933)

Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)

Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)

Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)

GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders for Winter:

England (+2): build A Edinburgh, A London
 Germany (-1): disband F Kiel
 Italy (+1): refuse build, plays one short
 Russia (even): no adjustments
 Turkey (even): retreat A Silesia OTB and build F Constantinople

The Orders for Spring:

England: A Paris to Picardy; F North Sea c A Edinburgh-Denmark; F St. Petersburg (nc) to Barents Sea; F English Channel c A London-Belgium; F Mid-Atlantic s F English Channel hold; F Baltic c A Denmark-Prussia; A Berlin s A Denmark-Prussia; A Sweden to Finland; A Belgium to Holland; A Denmark to Prussia; A Norway to St. Petersburg; A Edinburgh to Denmark; A London to Belgium
 Germany: A Livonia s Rus A Warsaw-Moscow
 Italy: F Marseilles hold; A Serbia s A Rumania-Bulgaria; A Rumania to Bulgaria; A Silesia s Eng A Berlin-Prussia; A Galicia to Ukraine; F Tyrrhenian to Ionian Sea; F Tunis s F Tyrrhenian-Ionian Sea; A Vienna s A Bohemia-Galicia; A Bohemia to Galicia; F Ionian to Greece; A Budapest to Rumania; A Albania s F Ionian-Greece
 Russia: A Warsaw to Moscow
 Turkey: A Moscow to Sevastopol; F Aegean s F East Med-Ionian Sea; A Ukraine s A Moscow-Sevastopol; A Bulgaria hold; F East Med to Ionian Sea; F Constantinople s A Bulgaria hold

The Press:

Rex to All: Having now discovered a new toy, you can reach me (if the inclination moves you) through the GENie on-line system. I am still discovering all that is under the "Strategy & War Games" category, but am slowly getting my feet wet in a couple of the topics. I am quite amazed at the number of on-line, E-mail *DIPLOMACY* games on the net. Are any of you involved?
 Warsaw (or Moscow) (or Hades) to World: And forward move the gallant Poles!
 Rex to GM & Queen of the North: Congratulations on your respective *DIP* awards (even if you did get the one named after you, Melinda). You both deserve them, and I only hope my vote tipped the tally to your favor.
 Kathy to Doc: Vote for the E-I or die! The choice is yours, and it is all the same to me.
 GM to Board: The T-I-E proposal fails. A T-I-E and E-I draw are proposed for the next turn. Vote with orders.

Racing the Win . . .**Fall 1907**

Fat Lady still warming up . . .
 Draws all fail, but Mad Popess forges ahead . . .
 Confusion with geography in the Porte . . .
 Kaiser abdicates and retires to Virginia; Czar invited?

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)
 Germany - Mark Fassio (Woodbridge, VA 22191)
 Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)
 Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)
 Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)
 GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England: A Picardy to Belgium; F North Sea s A Belgium-Holland; F Barents s A Finland-St. Petersburg; F English Channel s A Picardy-Belgium; F Mid-Atlantic hold; F Baltic s A St. Petersburg-Livonia; A Berlin to Silesia; A Finland to St. Petersburg; A Holland to Kiel; A Prussia s Ita A Silesia-Warsaw; A St. Petersburg to Livonia; A Denmark s A Holland-Kiel; A Belgium to Holland
 Germany: A Livonia to Warsaw
 Italy: F Marseilles hold; A Serbia to Bulgaria; A Rumania to Sevastopol; A Silesia to Warsaw; A Galicia to Ukraine; F Tyrrhenian to Ionian Sea; F Tunis s F Tyrrhenian-Ionian Sea; A Vienna to Galicia; A Bohemia s A Vienna-Galicia; F Greece s A Serbia-Bulgaria; A Budapest to Rumania; A Albania s F Greece hold

Russia: A Moscow s Ita A Rumania-Sevastopol
 Turkey: A Sevastopol s A Bulgaria-Rumania; F Aegean to Bulgaria (sc); A Ukraine s A Bulgaria-Rumania; A Bulgaria to Rumania; F East Med to Aegean Sea; F Constantinople s F East Med-Bulgaria (impossible)
 Units in Retreat: Turkish A Sevastopol (Armenia or OTB); Turkish A Bulgaria annihilated; German A Livonia annihilated

The Press:

Livonia to World: Anybody here seen a Valhalla? I seem to have misplaced mine.
 Kathy to Doc: Give it up, for crying out loud.
 Constantinople to Rome: Vote for E-I or die! Vote or die; vote or die. OK, I choose to die.
 Constantinople to London: You can win, or Kathy can win. No E-I draw.
 Rex to World: dateline, Moscow, the center of the resurgent Polish Empire - "Next stop, China!"
 GM to Board: Both proposed draws fail. The E-I again put up for a vote next time.

**New Year, New Strategy
Winter 1907**

And then there were four . . .
 Winning is still better than losing gracefully . . .

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)
 Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)
 Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)
 Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)
 GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England (+1): build A London
 Germany (-1): OUT
 Italy (+4): build F Venice, A Rome; plays two short
 Russia (even): no adjustment
 Turkey (-2): disband F Aegean, F East Med

The Press:

Czar of One of the Russias to Valhalla: Bye, Mark. It was great knowing you. Save a spot at the table for me, huh?
 GM to Board: The E-I draw again fails, but is promptly re-proposed.

**The Final Flip-Flop . . .
Spring 1908**

The Charge of the Yellow Brigade . . .
 Italian war heroes are missing as Ottomans take revenge . . .
 The Queen looks to expand her Empire . . .

The Players:

England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)
 Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)
 Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)
 Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)
 GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:

England: A Belgium to Burgandy; F North Sea hold; F Barents to St. Petersburg (nc); F English Channel s A London-Gascony; F Mid-Atlantic c A London-Gascony; F Baltic c A Denmark-Berlin; A Silesia s A Prussia-Warsaw; A St. Petersburg to Moscow; A Kiel to Munich; A Prussia to Warsaw; A Livonia s A Prussia-Warsaw; A Denmark to Berlin; A Holland to Ruhr; A London to Gascony
 Italy: F Marseilles to Gulf of Lyon; A Bulgaria to Constantinople; A Sevastopol s A Warsaw-Ukraine; A Warsaw to Ukraine; A Galicia s A Warsaw-Ukraine; F Ionian to East Med; F Tunis to Ionian Sea; A Vienna to Budapest; A Bohemia hold; F Greece to Aegean Sea; A Budapest to Rumania; A Albania to Serbia; F Venice to Adriatic Sea; A Rome to Naples

Russia: *A Warsaw s Ita A Sevastopol hold*
 Turkey: *A Armenia s A Ukraine-Sevastopol; A Ukraine to Sevastopol; F Constantinople to Black Sea*
Units in Retreat: Italian A Sevastopol annihilated

The Press:
 Constantinople to London: Checkmate in two moves?
 KC to Doc: You really do have a death wish, don't you?
 KC to Millie: I'm almost afraid to look.
 GM to Popess: Why, Kathy, you'd be proud of her.
 Italy to Russia: Unlike Quinn, I love having you around.
 Rex to Kathy: With your unselfish help, I'll get the third spot after all. Especially if the Grand Poobah persists in voting against your equitable division of Europe.
 GM to Board: The E-I draw fails; and is yet again proposed. Please vote with your next orders.
 GM to All: I appreciate everyone playing this one out and not falling into apathy. I believe it's been an interesting game and I'm excited to see how it will end. Thanks to all for a wonderful game to GM.

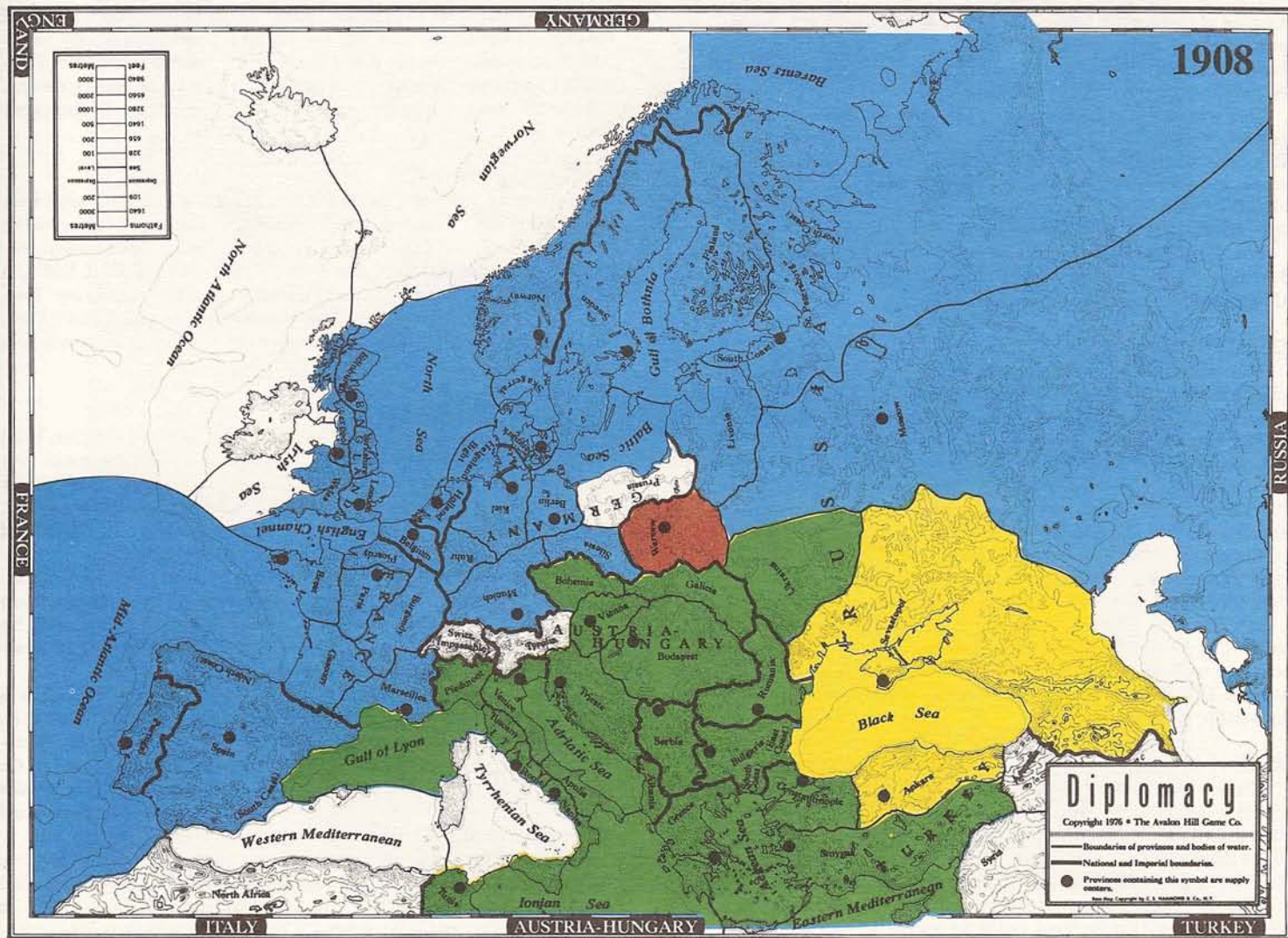
Evil Incarnate? Judge for Yourself!
Fall 1908

Congratulations to the Queen; her Empire reigns supreme in Europe!

The Players:
 England - Melinda Holley (Huntington, WV 25727)
 Italy - Kathy Caruso (Norristown, PA 19401)
 Russia - Rex Martin (Glen Arm, MD 21057)
 Turkey - Bill Quinn (Conroe, TX 77301)
 GameMaster - Gary Behnen (Olathe, KS 66062)

The Orders:
 England: *A Burgandy s A Gascony-Marseilles; F North Sea to English Channel; F Barents to Norway; F English Channel to Mid-Atlantic; F Mid-Atlantic to Spain (sc); F Baltic s A Berlin hold; A Silesia s A Warsaw; A St. Petersburg to Moscow; A Munich to Tyrolia; A Warsaw s A St. Petersburg-Moscow; A Livonia s A St. Petersburg-Moscow; A Berlin s A Ruhr-Munich; A Ruhr to Munich; A Gascony to Marseilles*
 Italy: *F Lyon to Marseilles; A Constantinople s A Serbia-Bulgaria; A Ukraine s Rus A Moscow-Warsaw; A Galicia s Rus A Moscow-Warsaw; F East Med c A Naples-Smyrna; F Ionian c A Naples-Smyrna; A Budapest s A Rumania hold; A Bohemia to Silesia; F Aegean s A Naples-Smyrna; A Rumania s A Ukraine hold; A Serbia to Bulgaria; F Adriatic to Albania; A Naples to Smyrna*
 Russia: *A Moscow to Warsaw*
 Turkey: *A Armenia to Ankara; A Sevastopol s Eng A St. Petersburg-Moscow; F Black Sea s A Sevastopol hold*
Units in Retreat: English A Warsaw (to Prussia or OTB)

The Press:
 Moscow . . . well, maybe Warsaw . . . well wherever, to the Queen: Rumors of the Czar's death seem to be unfounded. Leading a mongol horde of sub-humans, the valiant old fart stormed the walls of Warsaw, seeking once again to throw Pax Britannica into disarray. Voiced intentions were to gather the Western hosts for a crusade against the infidel - if the Popess leaves anything of the Sick Man of Europe.
 KC to Millie: I always knew "integrity" was not a word in your vocabulary.
 Italy to Rex, the Wonder Unit: I can at least hope *you* hung on!
 Wonder Dog to Infidel Turk: You know, you're not half as bad as everyone says you are. In fact, I'll bet you don't even beat your dog anymore, do you?



GM to Board: E-I draw failed again. Melinda's victory makes all other proposals now on table meaningless. Please send your endgame statements by the deadline.

GM to all Leviathan: And that's a wrap! I will miss the game, but not the "work" of doing it. My hat's off to those who game-master and publish any multi-player games in any format. I know now it is a labor of love; no one can be that masochistic or that bored to GM otherwise!

This wasn't Hunting; This was Slaughter . . . Winter 1908

Final Positions and Wrap-Up . . .

Final Positions:

England (18): London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Belgium, Brest, St. Petersburg, Holland, Portugal, Denmark, Paris, Berlin, Sweden, Kiel, Munich, Marseilles, Spain, Norway, Moscow

Italy (13): Venice, Rome, Naples, Tunis, Greece, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna, Budapest, Rumania, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Smyrna

Turkey (2): Ankara, Sevastopol

Russia (1): Warsaw

Selected Player's Comments:

ITALY (Caruso):

Never trust a woman! However, the alternative was just as bad, as that meant trusting Quinn! I was willing to work with Bill until I could split up the English-German alliance. Not an easy task, as Faz just couldn't be sold on the idea of moving against England. But show Melinda where she can grab a couple of centers quickly and bright lights flash! Her knife comes out, and any alliance is history.

Trusting Melinda is much like playing Russian Roulette. She'll be an alliance player until a better deal comes along. The gun was constantly pointed at my head, but I really thought Melinda would see the irony of her and I taking out one of the best players around and sharing a draw. Not so. She wanted it all - and she got it!

This was one of the best games ever, as communication was never a problem - right down to their last unit, most everyone was still writing. Rex, who was shafted by everyone, never gave up. I admired his persistence, and I am glad I helped him survive to the end. Bill and Faz are always tough opponents and make any game interesting. The biggest disappointment was Frueh and Mazzer.

Thanks to everyone for a fine game, and my congratulations to Melinda. As for you Gary, you're a fine GM. You should continue GMing, as outstanding ones are hard to find.

GERMANY (Fassio):

This will constitute my last thoughts on the game, as most of what I said in the past still applies. Melinda and Kathy played it well, and they are always to be feared once they unite. Bill plays some of the best PBM *DIPLOMACY* I've ever seen and is a tenacious foe, but in this game he was too greedy and stand-offish to my Germany when he should have been otherwise. I never quite felt comfortable trying to negotiate with his "zero-sum" point of view. Rex was treated shabbily by me, and in hindsight he was probably my one *true* ally - at least for a longer time than any of the others. Mark was attacked because of his reputation as a good player (and thus a major threat), although who knows what might have happened had I not been determined to bring him down from the start.

In summation, I brought down (directly, and indirectly) two countries, and in that whirlwind of destruction I reaped my own fate. A good game, and one well-managed by our GM under sometimes trying circumstances. If I couldn't win, then I guess this was the best way to go out. I enjoyed it, gang.

RUSSIA (Martin):

Congratulations to Melinda on yet another victory - even if she had to climb to it over a shattered Russia. And to Kathy, who likewise played a fine game. For my part, I'm just happy to have survived to the end amid these sharks. Hope I didn't lower the quality of play by my presence, for I am far from the *DIP* strategist that you folks are.

As is my habit, I started the game with a limited objective in mind. I wanted to bottle up the Turk (with whom early communications were

non-existent despite my letters) and form a coalition with Germany and Italy to destroy Austria. At the same time, I hoped to see the north quiet. 'Twas not to be.

Everything went swimmingly for the first couple of years. It appeared that Russia had a solid relationship with England, Germany and Italy. Was at odds with Turkey, but given the initial openings and lack of dialogue, that was expected. Besides, I hoped to tie Bill up long enough to see Austria fall and Kathy come into the fray, to my advantage. But in 1903, things started to come unhinged.

The tale is an old one and oft told. I was done in by an untimely stab by my erstwhile allies in the north. I was not surprised by England's assault (given Melinda's reputation) and had even felt that it could be contained - with German help. But the German move in conjunction was too much to suffer silently. If there was such a thing as a turning point for Russia, this was it. And, in effect, Fassio and I eliminated each other from contention (as Quinn and I did). With everyone seeking to tear a piece out of Russia's hide, it appeared to this boy that England and Italy were fairly free to do as they wished. So long as they weren't in conflict, I figured that this would become a two-way draw. And there was damn-all I could do about it.

Anyway, after the Great Stab, I tried to recruit and rebuild. Overtures to Turkey were rebuffed. Britain was silent . . . and noncommittal. Germany was openly antagonistic (until the demands of the real world finally brought Mark to the conclusion that he wasn't going to finish the game anyway; then he seems to have had a belated attack of remorse). Only Kathy down in Italy voiced a willingness to help. It is undoubtedly due to her support that I managed to stay in the game to the bitter end. For that, many thanks. It's just a shame, Kathy, that we could never manage to get one of my units into Turkey for the end. It would have been so appropriate. But my record of surviving - albeit, mostly battered - to the end of each postal game remains intact.

So, in conclusion, can't say that my diplomacy was of the calibre of the others. I never managed to establish any sort of relationship with two of the players; and my alliance with two others fell apart in a bloody welter. And it then took one of the ladies to ride to my belated rescue. Not a particularly good game for me, but I had a heck of a lot of fun (as always). Even to the last mailing, the press was amusing and the correspondence entertaining.

ENGLAND (Holley):

This was an important game for me. I *really* wanted this win! Ever since I came into this hobby, I've known Kathy Caruso and been awed by her standard of play. I felt that if I could beat Kathy - strategically, one-on-one - I could at last feel I was a "good" *DIP* player. I did it. Kathy, in many ways, is my mentor . . . and I learned well. This game is my "coming of age" game, and in honor of the Bloodsucker herself. Thanks, Gary, for the great job of GMing (and watch over your shoulder in our next meeting).

GAMEMASTER (Behnen):

This was quite an interesting game. In the first few seasons, I had excellent reports on each player's strategy; this made the game very enjoyable to follow as GM. The fact that these "insights" don't appear here is because, for the most part, they dried up. Suffice to say that Melinda's plan worked well, and once France was finished she never had to face an opponent looking her way. *That* was masterful!

Undoubtedly the biggest stab/shift in the game was the gutting of Russia in 1903. This gave England-Italy a fairly simple mid-game attack into Germany in '04 (which spelled Faz' doom). That Rex fought until the very end and finished up in Warsaw represents the best of player tenacity, as did Faz' ill-fated attempt to stem the E/I tide.

Clearly, the most frustrated (as is so often the case) advance was Turkey's. With Austria's Civil Disorder and Italy's resulting bonanza, Bill's concern seemed to fluctuate from Russia, to Austria, to Italy - eventually leading to a minor stab by Kathy. Although contained in the Balkans, Bill's play would ultimately give Melinda the opening to slide the knife in between Kathy's ribs, as Kathy concentrated on Turkey and tried diplomatically to hold onto her western centers.

Aside from the two Civil Disorders, I was very pleased with this game. I hope you all had a good time, and I look forward (as much as possible) to my next game with each of you. Congratulations Melinda on a most excellent victory; and believe me, I'll be watching you for a *long* time.

And, as Gary said, "that's a wrap". Since this game, given the designation of 1988HW by the Boardman Number Custodian (the BNC), ended in the autumn of 1990, our players have continued to be quite active in the DIP hobby. Melinda and Kathy remain two of the leading amateur publishers. Mark has returned from Europe, and has penned articles for a variety of hobby 'zines. Gary Behnen took the top spot at the 1991 North American Diplomacy Championship (DipCon, held this past year in Toronto), was awarded the John Koenig Award for "Best Player" for the year, and sits on the board of the '92 DipCon (to be held in Kansas City; see sidebar). As if this wasn't enough, he also is now serving a term as the BNC himself, recording gamestarts and finishes. And all of us continue to have our ups and downs in postal play.

Although the Press presented here may have been a bit biting at times, it is important to note that we all elected of our own free will to partake in the humor. One thing I have learned in my experiences with postal DIPLOMACY is that no player can afford to take himself too seriously. From such mild joshing can come some strong friendships, if one enters into the spirit of the game. Besides, if you remain active in "Dipdom" long enough, you'll likely meet these same folk in a future match, allowing you the opportunity to pick up the thread and extract some measure of literary revenge.

Too, through the medium of the Press you can learn much about your fellow hobbyists, and perhaps find that you have more in common than simply the love of a good game. In effect, if no restrictions are imposed by the GM, it can serve as an open forum for any topic that catches the collective interest of the players (and onlookers) - be it music, movies, politics, other games, literature, the woes of modern life, or even (as in our case) sports. The lack of this personal touch is one of the reasons I turned away from two-player PBM gaming two decades ago, wherein the only bond seemed to be the attempt to improve one's rating at the expense of another's.

One popular type of Press that we in 1988HW never instituted was the fabrication of a "pseudo-history" for our Europe. Many's the postal game wherein the GM or one of the players opens the dance with a fictitious "behind-the-scenes" account of the politics of his country or lifestyle of its ruler. Soon, others take up the tale, adding to the growing fiction and spreading it to the other nations. Of course, these orgies of silliness can be quite engaging, as for instance the recent long-running account of the Sultan's "Cud-missiles" and his bovine harem in one game on Genie. So detailed and involved do some of these "pseudo-histories" become that I know of at least two attempts to turn one into a novel for the mass market. If you've always hankered to write "alternate history", here's your chance to hang it on a framework.

There is even a pragmatic side (as such) to Press. Over the past three decades, a fair amount of ink has been spilled by hobby writers on the way to use it to gain an advantage (psychological, to be sure) in your play. At its simplest level, your public pronouncements can distract or irritate an opponent. I've found fictitious but stylish threats (occasionally under another's name) quite successful. Press has some obvious uses, especially if of the "Black" variety, to sow confusion and distrust among the other players; chatter about supposed alliances or coming attacks might just give you the diplomatic opening you need to pursue your private negotiations with a player to an agreeable end. Spurious comments on the ineptitude of yourself or others can lead the unwary to lower their guard, or discount your maneuvering on-board and off. Most important, it all lays the foundation for a mutual sense of comradery conducive to getting some one-time stranger to work with you.

Press is, in sum, one of the reasons I view DIPLOMACY as so much more than "just a game". In what other design does one get to exercise their imagination, vocabulary, inter-personal skills, logic, and all those normally useless tidbits of learning garnered from your high school and college survey courses? Each postal game takes on its own unique character through its Press. The public pronouncements of the players make each match memorable. In effect, it allows the players to stamp the game with their own personality. I hope the above account has hinted at just how much fun it can be as well.

There are many amateur 'zines that offer postal games of DIPLOMACY, complete with Press; a listing of new game openings can be found in each issue of Diplomacy World (2905 20th Street NE, Hickory, NC 28601). If you enjoy the game, I'd urge that you take the plunge. Perhaps I'll then have the chance to enjoy your Press for a change. All I would ask is that you be neither boorish nor vulgar . . . nor mundane.



The North American DIPLOMACY Championship

DipCon 1991, the 24th in the line, was held this summer past in Toronto - the first time the Canadian hobby has played host to this event. By all accounts in the hobby press, a good time was had by all. Despite the usual, unexpected snafus with the tournament, Doug Acheson, Cal White and the other Ontario DIPsters deserve a round of well-earned congratulations.

As usual, the competition for the North American crown was of the highest level. Here are gathered the very best players, most with multiple victories in both FTF and PBM format. Yet a couple of newcomers managed to shake up the field (a perennial happening at DipCons, it seems). In order of finish, the top 10 were: Gary Behnen (Kansas), Nick Beliaeff (California), Bob Odear (North Carolina), Pete Gaughan (California), Larry Peery (California), Bob Acheson (Alberta), Jim Yerkey (Maryland), Jerry Falkiner (Ontario), Ron Spitzer (California) and Bruce McIntyre (British Columbia). "Best Country" awards, given for the best finish with each nation went to Jeff McKee (Maine) as Austria, Gary Behnen as England, Nick Beliaeff as France, Marc Peters (Wisconsin) as Germany, Jim Yerkey as Italy, Vince Lutterbie (Missouri) as Russia and Larry Perry as Turkey.

For those who might want to pit their diplomatic skills against their peers for the 1992 crown, DipCon XXV will take place in Kansas City, Missouri, from the 3rd through the 6th of July. The DipCon committee consists of Vince Lutterbie (chairman), Gary Behnen and Marc Peters. Besides the North American DIPLOMACY Championship, a team tournament will be offered (limited to the first seven captains who register their teams). More information on DipCon XXV, its structure, price and/or accommodations, can be had from Mr. Lutterbie (1021 Stonehaven, Marshall, MO 65340; phone 816-886-7354). Hope to see you there!

The AvalonCon DIPLOMACY Tournament

The DIPLOMACY competition at AvalonCon this August past drew some 56 competitors. Having to take over as a last-minute substitute GM, I [Rex Martin] was forced to quickly devise a system whereby all could enjoy as many matches of their favorite game as they might wish over the weekend, yet be free to pursue other interests as well. Thus, I settled on a four-round Swiss style competition, with points awarded in each game by order of finish. If a sole winner was not arrived at within five hours, nor an agreed-upon draw (by vote of all players still in the game), nor an agreed-upon concession, I adjudicated each match by strict center-count. Ranking at the end of the fourth round would be accomplished by cumulative totals. While not a perfect system, it served to give all a chance to enjoy the competition, even after a poor showing in an early round.

So much as possible, great effort was taken to match players only against others they had not faced in previous rounds. And to insure that every game had seven players. To that end, I played in two games to fill out the tables (having dropped out of the tournament when tagged to take it over as GM). When the dust had settled, we had completed 22 matches of DIPLOMACY. I gave certificate awards to the eight best diplomats, with Bruce Reiff carrying off the plaque for top dog. I would hope that all involved enjoyed themselves, and that the experience - despite final relative finish - was rewarding. Throughout, I noted the level of competition was very high, with many of the games a great joy to watch unfold in my role as a "fly on the wall."

For the DIP tournament at AvalonCon 1992, James Yerkey has volunteered to serve as GM, bringing his years of experience in FTF competition to bear (7th at this year's DipCon; 20th at the '91 AvalonCon). He plans for a three-round Swiss tournament. No doubt, with his organizational skills, he will quickly make it one of the premier DIPLOMACY competitions in the country. Hopefully, I'll meet you there.

Diplomacy

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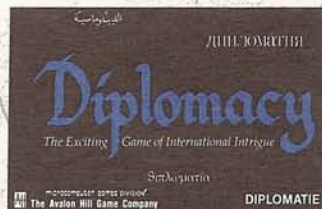
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TAC OPS

Systems of the Combined Arms Battle

By Carl Schwamberger

A wide variety of tactical simulations of hypothetical NATO/Warsaw Pact conflict have been published in recent years, of which *TAC AIR* is by far the most interesting. It goes far beyond the usual depiction of the maneuver units - the tanks and infantry - that most other games cover. The problems of command and control, of supply, of artillery support, anti-air defense and air support are not abstracted as is the usual case. Instead, in *TAC AIR* they are presented in similar detail as the combat of the frontline maneuver battalions. The result is that *TAC AIR* displays the modern battle as a synergy of command, control, logistics, maneuver and fire support. As combined arms warfare, rather than only the simple movement and combat of armor or infantry. The result for the wargamer is a much more interesting simulation than is usually encountered. The design is an elegant one, presenting a complex battlefield without resort to numerous, detailed or highly specialized rules. Because of this relative simplicity, *TAC AIR* players will find it relatively easy to use the Advanced and Optional rules.

There are two other aspects of the design which enhance *TAC AIR*. First, its structure lends itself to multi-player games. The second point is that *TAC AIR* works very well when played using "blind", or hidden movement, techniques. I suspect it was originally designed with integrated limited intelligence rules, rather than offering them as an option. As a long-time proponent of limited intell (or blind gaming), I am especially fascinated by this aspect. If an extra mapboard and an umpire are not available, then using blank counters to mask the game pieces is a good alternative. By giving up the traditional God's Eye view of the battlefield, the role of reconnaissance assumes its true importance. Also, the risks one takes will go beyond the usual vagaries of the dice.

This first of the two portions of this article will be a brief review of the major components of combined arms operations as they exist in *TAC AIR*. The second contains some thoughts on playing the five Introductory scenarios. All of this article is meant to offer some basics of combined arms warfare as presented in the game. Because of the ease in using the Advanced and Optional rules (particularly the multi-player and blind options) and the value the game gains from these, the subsequent discussion assumes their use.

OPERATIONAL THEORY

RECONNAISSANCE

Good recon is the start of any viable military operation. First, the commanders must understand the terrain they will be fighting on - meaning, look at the map. This may sound trite, but the terrain in this game is not simple and has a variety of effects on movement and combat. Elevation, in particular, is critical as it can block Line of Sight (LOS). Not only is LOS blocked for ground units, but it can be blocked

for the AA weapons as well. For example, rule 9.1.2 specifies that woods adjacent to air defense units and at the same level block the LOS in that direction. Rule 4.4 indicates helicopter units are like ground units; they are at the same level as the terrain of the hex they occupy. Other air units are one level higher than the hex occupied; otherwise terrain can still block LOS from and to them. This has some interesting implications for rules 9.5 and 11.4.1. While not an expert, I'd suspect the radars represented in these combats would be blocked by hill masses and the forests on them, so that the LOS rule of 4.4 and 9.1.2 would apply in these situations. The effects of terrain are cumulative for both movement and combat modification. Hills, forests and rivers can become entangling traps for your offensive. The roads are critical for rapid movement, and controlling key road sections will become a priority.

Air reconnaissance (21.0) has the potential to cover the widest area of the battlefield in a single turn. The limit upon it is the enemy anti-air defenses. Using your Wild Weasels to counter-attack the enemy AA units as described in 9.5.2.2 (Normal ARM Combats) will help. Route planning is critical. Note how the information gathered by air recon perishes after one turn - so use it or lose it. When planning air recon missions, remember the effects of rule 14.0 (Time and Weather). Beware of AA defenses when using helicopters in a recon role. Even the weakest AA weapon may get a D1, and a stalled chopper unit is easy prey for anything with a ground attack capability.

Your ground recon units are the most capable element of your recon effort. Because they can direct CAS, operate more flexibly under the division HQ, are less influenced by weather than air units are, and have Integral Supply (9.3.1.4), they are ideal for covering flanks and obstacles, screening ahead of other ground units, or probing an ambiguous enemy position. This is not quite as glamorous as plunging deep into enemy territory, creating havoc in a cavalry-like raid. But, such raids are likely to emulate Custer rather than Stuart. The more prosaic uses for these units are more productive.

Allow sufficient air and artillery support. When they find the bad guys, they'll need it for they quickly lose all value as they take hits - and you seldom have a surplus of these units. Should you insist on being J.E.B. Stuart and launch a cavalry raid, think it through carefully. Such adventures must be well planned to succeed. When making these deep raids, again remember to allocate sufficient fire support to it; otherwise the raiders vanish into oblivion.

The bulk of your information will come from the tank and mechanized units in contact with the enemy. Consider carefully the information from this source. The bits assembled over two or three turns from the entire battle area can give a very useful picture of what's occurring. The presence of their HQ is necessary for this

information to be turned into artillery and air support (10.3.1 and 11.3.2.3.1), which nicely and correctly reflects the role of HQs in modern combat. For reconnaissance-in-force operations, a brigade/regiment of maneuver units and their HQ are more useful than regular ground recon units or helicopters because of the better "B" factors.

Whatever constitutes your recon force, make sure it is properly supported. Wild Weasels for the air; CAS, artillery, EW and engineers for the ground. Conversely, ensure that the recon effort supports your battle plan. You will quickly learn the recon units are not plentiful. So, always plan carefully and avoid wasting them on frivolous missions.

SUPPLY

TAC AIR logistics are not so complex that a player requires an assistant as a supply officer (as his real world counterpart does), but it cannot be given the simplistic consideration usual to most wargames either. The "Supply Span" (9.3.2) of six hexes common to all supply units will limit the operations of the regiment or brigade more than the longer command span of the HQ. Widely scattering maneuver battalions will leave some unable to recover from disruption. Since the supply units use the wheeled movement rates, a road is necessary for them to keep up with any rapid maneuvers. This route need not follow precisely the formation's axis of advance; it only needs to support it.

COMMAND & CONTROL

One has some choice here: to lead from the front or to coordinate from the rear. By placing the HQs adjacent to the maneuver units battling the enemy, your disrupted markers will be removed wholesale. Up-front placement will also insure more effective DAS (10.3.1). Forward placement risks, of course, loss of the HQ to an aggressive opponent; but keeping it out of harm's way simulates very well the problems remote control command creates. As with supply units, the command span of a HQ is cut by the presence of the enemy. This means a single well-placed maneuver battalion can momentarily isolate opposing units.

The rules do allow replacing destroyed HQ (13.1), the new HQ entering the friendly edge of the board. But this is a requirement not in step with reality. New regiment/brigade HQs are formed by drawing men and equipment from subordinate and senior HQs to be combined with the survivors of the original to form a scratch command. It would be better in *TAC AIR* to place the new HQ adjacent to a maneuver unit of the formation rendered leaderless (or, perhaps, its overall HQ).

The Ground Electronic Combat (15.) units are exclusively used for neutralizing HQ. Like artillery, you never want these to be standing idle. They should always be in use, or moving to where they will be used.

AIR BATTLE

The primary role of air units in this game is Direct Air Support (DAS). Air recon, interdiction and combat air patrols are, of course, important; but they are all auxiliary missions. You'll quickly find the bulk of your orders are for DAS missions. It's preferable to mass DAS missions at the critical point of the battle rather than scattering them out in piecemeal attacks. Aside from ensuring the desired effect on the targets, massing your air can swamp the local air defense and make more effective the support of the Wild Weasel missions and other suppressive measures. As with air recon, preparing the way for DAS means using the Weasels, EW to disrupt the HQ controlling the enemy AA units, and attacks by ground forces where possible to neutralize the enemy AA directly. Route planning for the aircraft flights is very important, as the rules assume all aircraft are being flown at low altitudes to take advantage of terrain for protection from AA weapons.

The first way to use your DAS is as a follow-up for a successful ground attack. The player

who holds the initiative can try to clear the disrupted enemy from the path of his ground units for the following turn. Alternately, you can try to disrupt enemy units just ahead of your attack. This is quite useful for creating an opening when faced with sturdy enemy formations. Stacking two flights together (4.3.2) will, of course, put a hefty combined "B" factor on the target (7.5.5). It also allows the "B" factors of the air units to be combined (7.2.4) when air defense units attack. In the case of weak "B" factors, this is sometimes still insufficient advantage and it may be better to have the air units approach the target separately to ensure that more get through.

AIR DEFENSE

Because of the assumption that all aircraft are flying at tree-top (or lower) level, the fields of fire for the AA units are very restricted. Planning their locations includes three important considerations: first, identify the most important areas to defend; second, evaluate the possible routes of approach to your units; third, look

for high ground which overlooks blocking terrain. The result should be air defense units protecting critical areas with overlapping coverage, negating enemy use of terrain through placement. Soviet doctrine requires the weapons of the divisional SAM regiments be placed well forward, so their coverage extends deep into the enemy area of operations. There is merit to this - if the rear areas can also be adequately protected against air units on interdiction missions.

The fourth important consideration for air defense is the Air Control mission (7.4 and 11.). Your interceptors constitute a mobile reserve which is quite powerful. Most interceptor "A" factors will be "4" or "5", and better than the usual "B" factor of the defending air unit. The use of the interceptor is, of course, restricted by possible attack from enemy AA weapons. Here again, route planning for the aircraft is critical.

ARTILLERY

Because it is restricted to two missions (supporting combat between ground units and counter-battery - 11.3.2.2 and 11.3.2.3), one can't reproduce the full array of artillery tactics on the modern battlefield. Still, this is an important weapon. As with DAS, massing artillery units makes them much more effective. A single cannon battalion has only a small chance of disrupting the typical tank battalion. Two will put the odds up around 50/50; three can do even better against the sturdiest "B" factor.

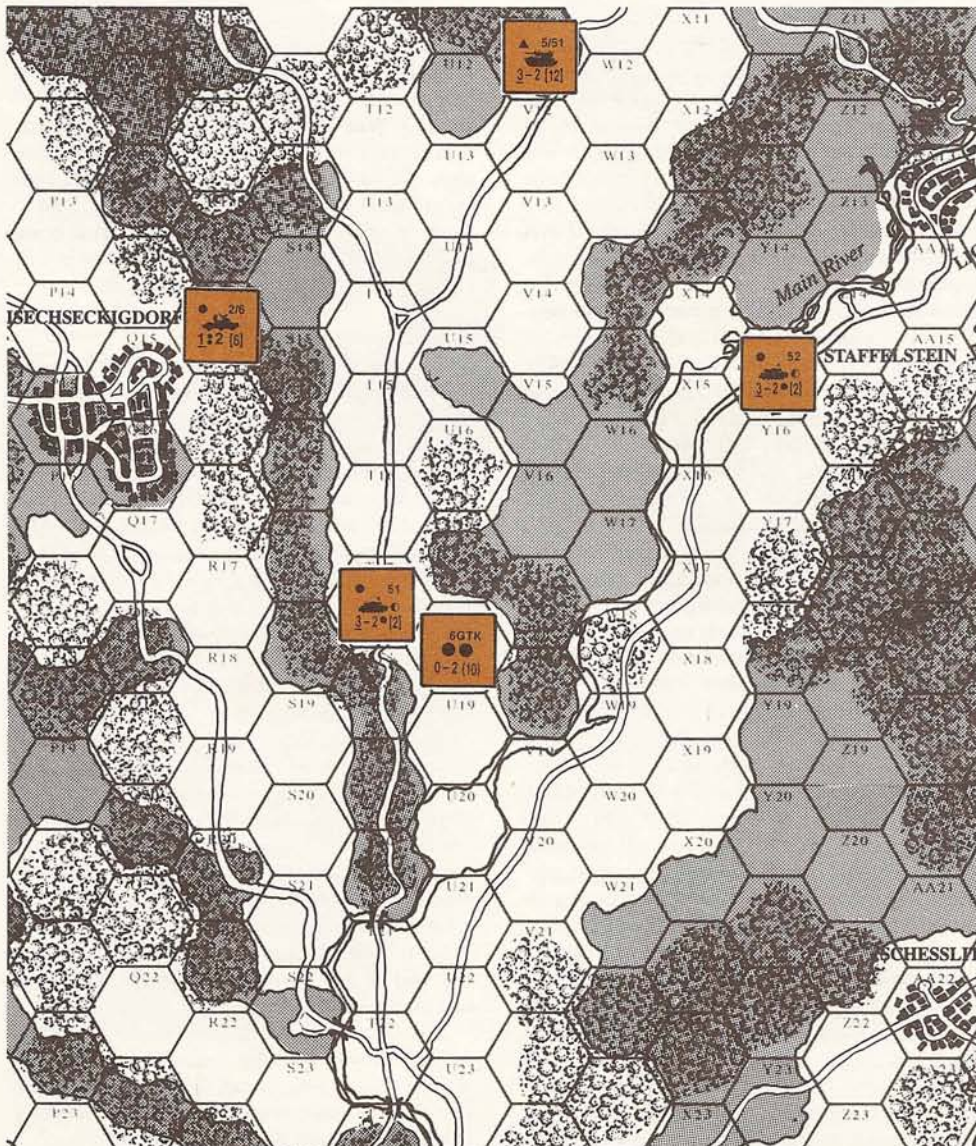
The non-phasing player has a choice of placing indirect fire on the attacking maneuver units, or on the phasing artillery units as "counter-battery". In the long run, counter-battery is more productive. The low "B" factors of artillery make them vulnerable to disruptions of two or three steps in a single attack. Counter-battery attacks become particularly important for the U.S. and German player in the Tournament and Master scenarios where the Soviet side has a clear superiority in artillery. For the phasing player the need for indirect fire attacks must be balanced against the counter-battery threat, and the need for making counter-battery attacks in the following phase. When you expect to use artillery at extreme ranges remember 11.3.2.3.1. Ensure the artillery you intend to use are positioned within the command span of correct HQ.

TANKS & MECH

The tank and infantry units are of course the foundation of the combined arms battle. Unlike other units, they are able to absorb fairly hefty enemy attacks before disruptions are assured, so they will often be placed alongside the enemy to slug it out.

Whether in attack or defense, I prefer initially to obtain as many disruption results as possible where the fight is developing. A proliferation of D1 markers on a regiment or brigade will do much to stall an attacker or weaken the defender. Once this object is achieved specific enemy units are selected for elimination and attacked in the subsequent air and ground phases. For this to work, you have to avoid the enemy attacks as far as possible. Screening your key maneuver battalions with less important ones, staying a hex out of reach, or occupy-

Figure 1: Closing the Gaps. With a SA6 battery placed at V11, the Soviet player attempts to cover aircraft routes along the Bamberg-Coburg axis. But the ridges paralleling the Bamberg-Coburg road and the Main River interfere with the LOS to most of the area. Two platoons of ZSU23s (at T17 and Y15) and one of SA8 launchers (at R14) are placed to cover the gaps, and protect a Soviet unit in U18.



ing very strong defensive positions will help keep your units free for your own attacks. For either side the most powerful assault units are the tanks. They must be used exclusively for this, with the screening/covering battalions drawn from the mechanized infantry and recon units.

Because of the multiple times "D" results can be inflicted on a unit in a turn, combat will usually be bloody. The combat results system of *TAC AIR* is the type intended to represent the organizational collapse of a unit, rather than an incremental loss of material and manpower (reflecting the command and control aspect of the game). So, a tank battalion which is subjected to artillery, tank and air attacks in the same three-hour game turn is likely to become a confused group of platoons and sections, unable to effectively maneuver or fire. This is very nicely reflected by the D2/3 results. Battalions in this condition are victory points just waiting to be picked off by the opposition, so these levels must be avoided.

Any unit with a D1 should be evaluated with respect to the necessity of its remaining in reach of the enemy. At this point, its only asset is its ability to move - so the preservation of that ability is very important. Units with a D1 should be protected with defensive artillery support, DAS and a HQ should be placed adjacent. Once a unit is immobilized the decision must be made to abandon or give further support to it. Even with a HQ in constant attendance, a D3 requires three turns to become combat-ready. This immobilizes your HQ, and necessitates screening and fire support which might be better used elsewhere.

Once the enemy units to be eliminated are identified, don't waste your time with half-measures. Certainly overkill should be avoided, but underkill is a greater sin. To make the kill with maneuver units, think "tanks" and count on using two battalions. Less will be only marginally effective; piling more into the assault isn't always practical and just creates an attractive nuclear target.

OPERATIONAL PAYOFF

The five introductory scenarios are designed to introduce the novice to *TAC AIR*. Used with the complete set of rules, these five are also excellent short games for those players pressed for time and are challenging illustrations of specific tactical problems. At first glance, several will seem hopelessly lopsided. This is not entirely true. Few battles happen with any kind of parity between sides, yet the seemingly inferior force often wins. As mastery of the principles of combined arms warfare is gained, the scenarios should come to seem more balanced.

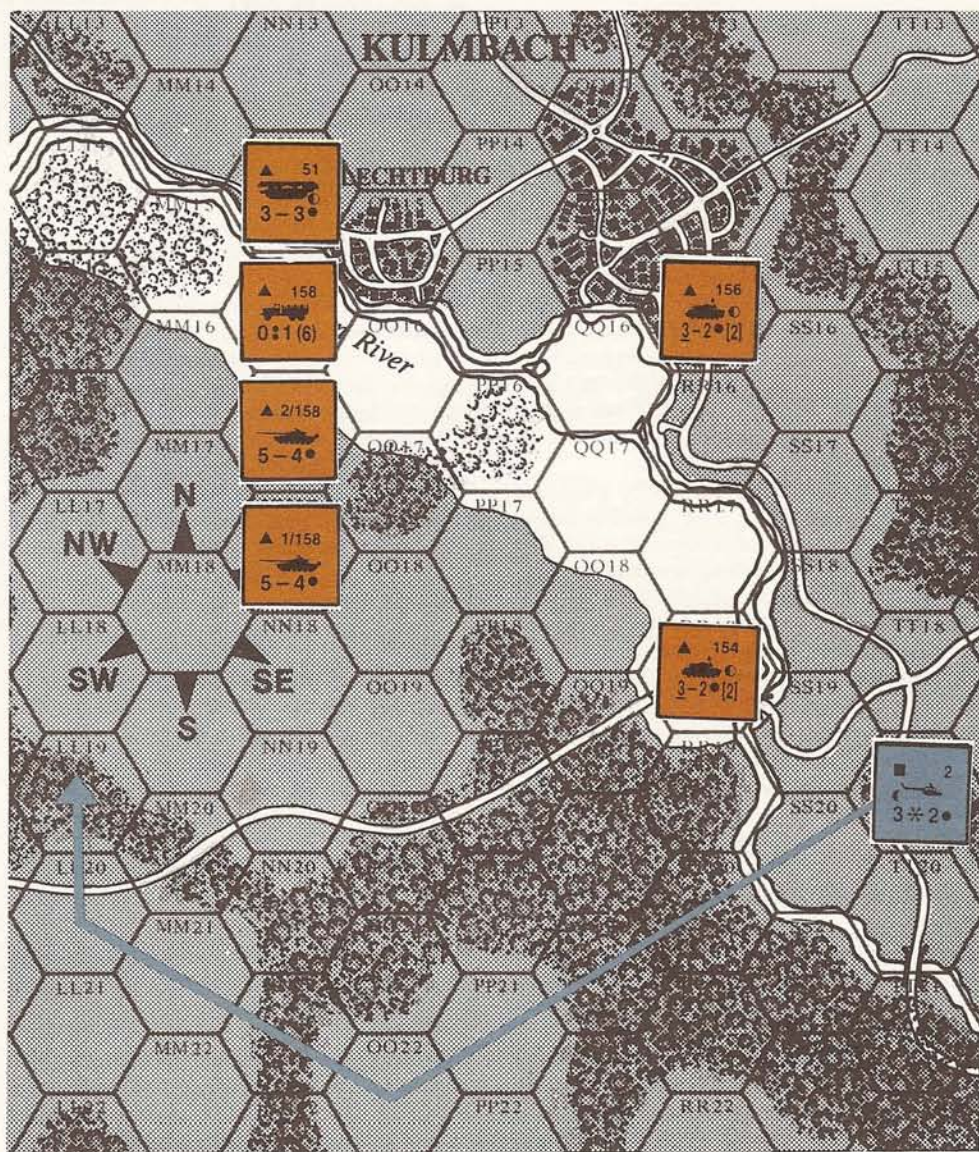
#1: COVERING FORCE

The U.S. cavalry will be destroyed if it stands in the mid- or northern board area. Soviet forces outnumber it, and American air units have a tough time assisting the U.S. cavalry there. It is all but impossible for the F16s to intercept Soviet aircraft above the center of the board, since they can hit their targets and withdraw before the F16s cover the distance. The cavalry commander should make a withdrawal as slowly as possible without becoming deci-

sively engaged. Any units lost in this phase are a catastrophe, so try never to allow an attack where the 6th Guards will have a good chance of disrupting a cavalry unit two steps. In the mid-game, strike back at exposed Soviet battalions. An overly aggressive Soviet player will push one or two into an unsupported position. Again, avoid decisive engagements into which the Guards may try to sucker you; so make sure that exposed Soviet unit isn't just bait. During the first two phases, use your engineer battalions to create blocks around the final defensive area. End game - hit the enemy with everything. If you have been careful, the cavalry still have all their battalions, occupy good defensive positions, with adequate air support. The F16s are useful for ground attack, but the need for this must be balanced against the threat of the Mig 29s to the A10 bombers. Placement of the Hawk battery is important. I like to start it in Z19. From there it can move to BB23 on Turn 1 and have a height advantage which exposes the entire battle area.

The Soviet player, with his numerical superiority, can spread out some and strike the U.S. defenses along two mutually supporting axis. Do not spread out so far that one group cannot aid the other in the following turn. There is the temptation to cross the Main river at Lichtenfels. While this will probably be a successful crossing, it violates the credo of mutual support and it is relatively easy for the American cavalry to slip away. Better to aim for your crossing south of Staffelstein (near W19 would be ideal). Approaching Bamberg along the high ground between Dreiseichsedorf and Zeil, or along the River Regnitz, will be time consuming; and it is relatively easy for the enemy to block your approach. Naturally, any cavalry unit that dawdles in your path should be pounced on and destroyed as quickly as possible. The helicopter unit works well as a mobile Soviet reserve, to counter any attempted cavalry raid on your HQ units, or to reinforce the main attack. Making a wide flanking maneuver with it is possible, but this is tricky to pull off.

Figure 2: Hedging the Recon Bet. Aware of a Soviet crossing at Schlechtburg but unable to gain direct access to that area by enemy forces around and south of Kulmbach, the German player has assigned DAS to his PAH-2 (TT19). During the Movement Phase, the helicopter moves to LL19, via OO22 to avoid unnecessary exposure to AA attacks. From its final location, the PAH-2 can observe the tank battalions and supply column in NN17-NN15, and serve as Forward Air Controller for air attacks on those hexes.



This action seems to work best late in the game as the battle closes in on Bamberg.

#2: MEETING ENGAGEMENT

The tables are reversed here, and the Bundeswehr has things its way. Although there are the same number of tank and other maneuver elements, the low "B" factors of the Soviet recon and helicopter units make them less valuable than the German recon and grenadiers. Neither are the Su25s as valuable as the Tornados, nor the assorted air defense weapons as powerful as the Gepard. The Soviet artillery is also outraged. On the plus side of the ledger for the Russians, the 52nd Guards are well provided with air defense units (however weak). And the Division HQ unit allows the formation of a second maneuver group using the divisional assets and SA8 battery. This, of course, requires dividing the forces with the attendant risk of being defeated piecemeal. But, if the Soviet player is very lucky, he may nail the 36th Brigade HQ with a flanking maneuver. In any case, the ground attack around Kulmbach is very difficult to defend, so the Russians may as well attack and go down in glory. The Soviet player should note the potential cover the hills in the northeast quadrant provide for his Su25s in their approach.

#3: ADVANCE TO CONTACT

Here the U.S. 2nd Armored Brigade tries to do better than the cavalry as it faces a similar problem. The same principles apply to both scenarios for the Americans. The armored brigade can't fight too far forward or it will be eaten alive. Instead, they should strive to delay until Bamberg itself is reached. In this battle you can use the homes of the German populace to your benefit; even without an engineer unit, the 3rd Brigade can make the town a tough nut to crack. The enemy 51st will have to be careful of its rear as your 1st Division's cavalry squadron can spring a nasty surprise. The night turns will also aid the 3rd Brigade's defense. Coming just about the time you would expect the Soviet assault on Bamberg too.

The Soviets again start out by pushing towards Bamberg as quickly as possible, keeping their tank regiments close enough for mutual support. The helicopters should range ahead to sniff out defenders, and the recon unit can cover whichever flank you feel most nervous about. On reaching the town, you can try to isolate one of the suburban appendages (such as T24) and gain a couple of points by eliminating its defender and occupying it. The Soviet player should also look for any possibility of infiltrating a tank battalion into Bamberg before the American can consolidate his position there. Forcing him to eliminate a tank battalion from the town just as your regiments arrive at the outskirts will be very helpful in the victory.

#4: HASTY ATTACK

Back to the Germans and the defense of Bayreuth. With two more regiments, much more is possible for the Soviet player. True, these are equipped with BMPs - no match for the Leopards of the Germans. But they are plentiful and have excellent mobility. With the extra vehicular power, the Soviet player can now go

ahead to fight a battle of attrition. In this case, the German 10th Brigade takes a cue from the Yanks and conducts a fighting withdrawal to the south half of the board, both to put the air battle on favorable terms and to deny the enemy the opportunity to attack.

An option for the 18th Guards is to send a flanking group across the Main around Kulmbach, to recross the river later, probably near SS19. This could cause the 10th to fall back even more precipitously - although an alert and aggressive German player should find it easy enough to block the river crossing and fight on around Kulmbach. Sustained combat is not in the German player's interest however; no points are awarded for destroying Soviet units nor for taking any territory; only for losing your own units and ground. So the skillful Bundeswehr leader will avoid combat on any but the most favorable terms. As in Scenario #1, getting the Hawk battery to the high ground is highly recommended. Hex DD19 is the most convenient. The designer is a little less miserly with the air units in this battle, and it is possible to run CAP or escort simultaneously with DAS or interdiction. As is to be expected, the German has a tough time fighting off the enemy air in the northern half of the board.

#5: DELIBERATE ATTACK

Air power becomes much more important in this scenario. Now one has the potential to pound entire brigades, paralyzing them in a single game turn. This is, of course, only potential; getting the aircraft safely to the target is necessary first. The U.S. 3rd Division is supported by two Hawk batteries, and two batteries each of the Vulcan and Chapparel. These, plus the organic air defenses of the ground units prove fairly effective against the low "B" factors of the Red air units. These American air defense weapons are then supplemented with the F15s. There are several weaknesses that can be exploited by the Soviet Falcons. The relatively high "A" factor of the Hawks and small number of them gives the Russians the possibility of swamping the 3rd's air defenses. (Particularly if SEAD missions are possible against the Hawks). The two Hawk batteries cannot effectively cover the width of the board. If they are widely spaced to attempt this, then resupply becomes a problem. With only four Vulcan and/or Chapparel batteries, the American can't provide adequate local defenses, especially if he spreads out to cover the width of the map-board.

The U.S. player's ace is the F15s. These can maneuver to cover gaps in the ground air defenses, and they can gain elimination results against the weak Soviet aircraft. Using the Radar Homing Missile rules (11.4.1), it is even possible to catch Soviet aircraft that have attacked targets several hexes north of the center of the board. Note, however, the F15s must be very careful of ground AA due to their own "B" factor of "1". The A10s and F16s have better "B" factors than the enemy however. Conversely, the Soviet AA units have better "A" factors than the Vulcans and Chapparels (and there are a lot more of them). Trying to get a U.S. ground unit adjacent to a ZSU or SAM to cause them to flip over will certainly help your

air support get through. Unfortunately, there are also the SA6s to contend with. If the Soviet player keeps these well to the rear, it is possible to sneak along in defilade to reach some targets. If given the choice, it is better to consider attacking enemy units in the open first, for even the powerful A10s have trouble getting results on units in forest or urban areas.

Closer to the ground there are helicopter units. The Soviet player has a clear advantage here. With two, he can hunt down the U.S. choppers and quickly destroy them, should his opponent be so careless as to leave them isolated. The U.S. commander should keep his helo squadron within a mile or two of a friendly maneuver battalion. It should also be confined to quick reconnaissance sweeps that return it to a safe area.

With a complete division on the ground, the Soviet player will start the scenario by feeling a little omnipotent. Similarly, the U.S. player facing this scenario for the first time will become enchanted with the number of units he has available. Both players should avoid the reflex to send battalions off to every corner of the board. To attack one of the U.S. brigades will require at least two Soviet tank regiments plus a sizable amount of artillery and other support. Conversely, an entire American brigade with fire support is required to effectively deal with a single regiment of the 51st. To prevent piecemeal destruction, each player must keep his units close together for support.

The Soviet player has a clear superiority in artillery. Use your 130mm CGF battalions to counter-battery the 3rd Division's artillery. With a total of six "A" factors, the CGF artillery has a very good chance of disrupting the target, even if it is woods or a city. The 15-hex range of the CGF also allows it to reach almost any conceivable location that the enemy artillery might support a battle from, yet stay far enough back to be relatively safe itself. The remaining Soviet artillery should be massed on targets which can be destroyed by subsequent attacks of the tank and mech units.

As usual, the victory conditions require the Soviets to take the offensive - towards Bamberg. For the 3rd's commander, the most obvious option will be to make a fighting withdrawal towards that town. He must remember that this scenario lasts two days. Too quick a retreat will leave him without room to maneuver and fight on the second day. Assuming the Soviets have chosen an optimal strategy for dealing with a simple fighting withdrawal, the American player must become aggressive or find himself with his back to the wall far too soon. The conditions for several highly successful counterattacks on Soviet forces must be created.

Initially, the Soviet recon units are the likely targets. Since the 51st will attack along two or more axes, watch for any momentary inability of one group or the other to receive timely support. These opportunities are likely to exist for barely a turn, so the U.S. player must be thorough with his reconnaissance and prepared to execute a counterattack immediately. For the Soviet player, the question is whether to attack

Letters to the Editor . . .

Dear Avalon Hill:

The translation of this issue (Vol. 27, No. 1) took about four hours. For some reason I couldn't put it down. I rated your Philosophy section #1 because the point made is so important. Being a retail manager and listening to the customers' wants, needs and complaints on a daily basis, I have come to appreciate this little known truth. The squeaky wheel does get the grease, but remember to check the other ones too. So often we in retail get burned by listening to a customer insisting we should stock such and such, which we then stock, only to discover one - maybe two - people really want it.

Thank God for the sound business policies of Avalon Hill; if it isn't selling, drop it. I don't think people realize how fragile this industry is (or retail in general). All wargamers should appreciate and thank their good fortune that Avalon Hill has prospered and guided the hobby to stability. I am actually a second-generation wargamer; my father taught me and is still my primary opponent. I look forward to passing the hobby on to my two daughters, so keep up the good work.

Neidhardt Buell
Neuchâtel, Switzerland

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

First, congratulations are in order. Vol. 27, No. 2 of *THE GENERAL* is a real corker! The graphics, layout, design and "readability" are excellent. The color photographs are superb! All-in-all, a "10" out of "10" for style, design, subject matter, editing, authorship and just general good looks. Be advised that at least one reader says the money invested to "change the look" was well spent. Keep it up!

Second, a tip-of-the-hat to Tara Greenwood for cleaning everybody's clock in *WRASSLIN'* at AvalonCon. As a former playtester of the game, I'm tickled to see Tara clobber "the boys", but did dear ol' Dad really have to lead the lynch mob in the *Battle Royal*? I'd be interested to see which wrestlers Tara used with such consummate skill. Perhaps a detailed article/report on the action some day?

E.C. Ostermeyer
Johnson City, Tennessee

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

I finally received my first issue of *THE GENERAL* (Vol. 27, No. 2) and it's just as good as I had hoped. Because I'm incarcerated, I'm not allowed access to actual wargames. Therefore, I'm forced to enjoy my hobby vicariously through replays sent by friends and the pages of *THE GENERAL*. I'm quite sorry my subscription lapsed for a few years.

Thanks too for a contest I can participate in! Cryptography was my forte as long ago as my Marine Corps days. This puzzle was a real brain teaser. First, I found all the prime factors for each number. Then it was mostly trial and error. The third number ("Wargame") fell first, as it was so obvious. But the second didn't fall until I had spent four hours testing various combinations. I had to use a recent price list to prompt my tired brain for the other two. The first ("Caesar") of those fell to serendipity, and I then actively pursued that method to find the fourth word ("Tobruk"). In all, I had three good days of entertainment out of only six-and-a-half column inches. The rest of the magazine will give me enjoyment for a few more weeks.

I'm glad you've entered the computer age. Kudos to Messers. Jobs, Wozniak and

Sculley for producing the means for such improvements. The only complaint I've ever had in ten years of Avalon Hill has been late issues of *THE GENERAL*. Now you tell me that it will not only be on time, but will be caught up to the intended schedule. I'm in hog heaven! Profound thanks to you and all the staff at Monarch-Avalon.

Steven M. Seys
Tennessee Colony, Texas

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin,

Welcome to the Computer Age! I have just received the latest issue of *THE GENERAL*, and it is excellent in every regard. I am sure you are all thrilled with the new equipment you have available to produce the magazine. It may take time to learn the new system, but I can assure you that you will become highly proficient within a few issues.

I do wish to pass on some things I learned while working in front of a cathode-ray tube (I worked with a CRT for three years at the phone company). A CRT monitor puts out a steady stream of low-level X-rays. Intermittent exposure will not cause any appreciable harm. However, steady exposure at close range for long periods of time will be detrimental. The most vulnerable body part is the eyes. In several years (perhaps sooner), a CRT operator's eyes will burn, much like a sunburn, on the eyes. I know because I suffer from the condition. My eyes have been harmed to the point where I can no longer watch television. There is a good chance that I will become blind at some point in the future.

There is a solution. It has been found that wearing glasses with a full mirror-coating reflects radiation away from the eyes and stops the burning sensation I felt. I also wore white clothing whenever I was in front of the CRT; this also reflects radiation. I have also found that the so-called anti-radiation screens offer some protection, but are not 100% effective (some X-rays will still get through). One other tip - it's a good idea to prohibit pregnant women to work in front of a CRT (it's against the law in Canada).

I know this must sound a little unusual, but I want to pass on what I have learned without paying the price. I hope this information I've provided is helpful. I know this may be an unusual letter, but I can assure you the information is absolutely accurate.

Richard Miller
Petersburg, Virginia

★★★★★

Dear Sirs:

I hope you are in the mood for some "nut" mail (although I really hope you won't consider this letter as such). A couple of years ago, I wrote a letter to Avalon Hill which was mainly concerned with the merits of *THE LONGEST DAY*. In it, I made some suggestions concerning additions to the game that I believed would have enhanced it a great deal. Since I have not heard anything about it since in *THE GENERAL*, I assumed you thought that these suggestions were not worth any further attention.

Meanwhile, my brain conjured up more ideas, and a wish that I believe only Avalon Hill can fulfill. Every time I look at *THE LONGEST DAY* sitting on my shelf, I wish that it had a sister game. Specifically, this

new game would be a simulation of the Battle of the Bulge. I realize that AH has produced three games simulating this battle. I own two of them (*BB'65* and *BB'81*) and have enjoyed playing both. However, after having played *TLD* extensively, I consider myself "ruined". *THE LONGEST DAY*, after *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*, is my idea of the perfect wargame/simulation. Other games seem so artificial in comparison.

Which brings me to the point of my letter - whether or not a wargame using the system and scale of *THE LONGEST DAY* could be produced to simulate the Battle of the Bulge.

Joe Cleere
Fort Payne, Alabama

I'm sure it could be. Whether it will be in the near future by this company is, however, highly unlikely. Such a project would require much more time and resources than we can afford to devote to a subject covered so many times by so many manufacturers already. Such projects as TLD are also prohibitively expensive in these days of recession; your fellow gamers voted with their wallets on THE LONGEST DAY, to the effect that, in general, they did not appreciate \$65 games.

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

First, congratulations on the fine job you have been doing and continue to do editing *THE GENERAL*. I very much enjoy the magazine, even though most of the articles are about games I don't play. I was a little sad to see the want ads for an editor in Vol. 27, Nos. 2 and 3; you will leave a very large pair of boots to fill.

Second, I noticed an error in Sam Mustafa's article, "The Solid South" in Vol. 26, No. 6. Mr. Mustafa suggests that the Confederate player send four SP with a decent leader (such as Jackson) to Pensacola in order to take Fortress Pickens. But the seventh paragraph of Rule 4.5 of *The Civil War* states, "A force can never cross a navigable river hexside and enter a hex occupied by an enemy fort or fortress that is in supply or occupied by an SP . . . Fort Pickens (2730) and Fort Pulaski (4425) are the only fortresses completely separated from the mainland by navigable river hexsides." Since Pickens is always in supply when the Union holds it, being on the ocean, the Confederate player can never take Pickens, even if the Union player evacuates the SP that starts the game there. Other than this oversight, "The Solid South" is an excellent look at the Confederate player's practical options in *The Civil War*.

Robert P. Buchanan
Beaverton, Oregon

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin,

As an old greybeard of the hobby, who started out with AH games back in 1960 with a copy of *U-BOAT*, it was most gratifying to read about the success of AvalonCon (Vol. 27, No. 3). I was one of the would-be attendees who never quite got there.

Having lived through the high-water mark of the hobby during the '70s, I have since seen a steady erosion of clubs and playing partners. Much of this can simply be attributed to the aging of the players and the demands placed upon them (including

myself) by job, family, etc. It is for this reason that just about 100% of my gaming time is now PBM. For players such as myself, the "Opponents Wanted" section of *THE GENERAL* is one of the most invaluable pages in each issue. Without it, my playing time would be reduced to solitary play, and number of opponents reduced to one; a plethora of solitary players does not a hobby make.

The advent of home computers and their attendant game programs have also taken a toll on us cardboard pushers. Recently, a long-time gamer friend informed me about the wonders of computer gaming, and that he found it hard to go back to something like ASL with all its bookkeeping and rules. It is much simpler to "just have the machine do it all." I worry about this attitude.

In short, it is good to see, through venues like AvalonCon, that board wargaming is still relatively healthy; however, I'm still worried about the future. I am interested to know what type of records Avalon Hill keeps on the demographics of the people who buy your games, and if the introductory games are bringing in any significant "new blood". A few gamer friends with young children have difficulty interesting their kids in playing games that don't have the lights, whistles and bells of a Nintendo, or some other computer game.

I'm looking forward to seeing AvalonCon as a yearly event - just as I did Origins events in years past - along with the renewal and invigoration of our hobby in years to come.

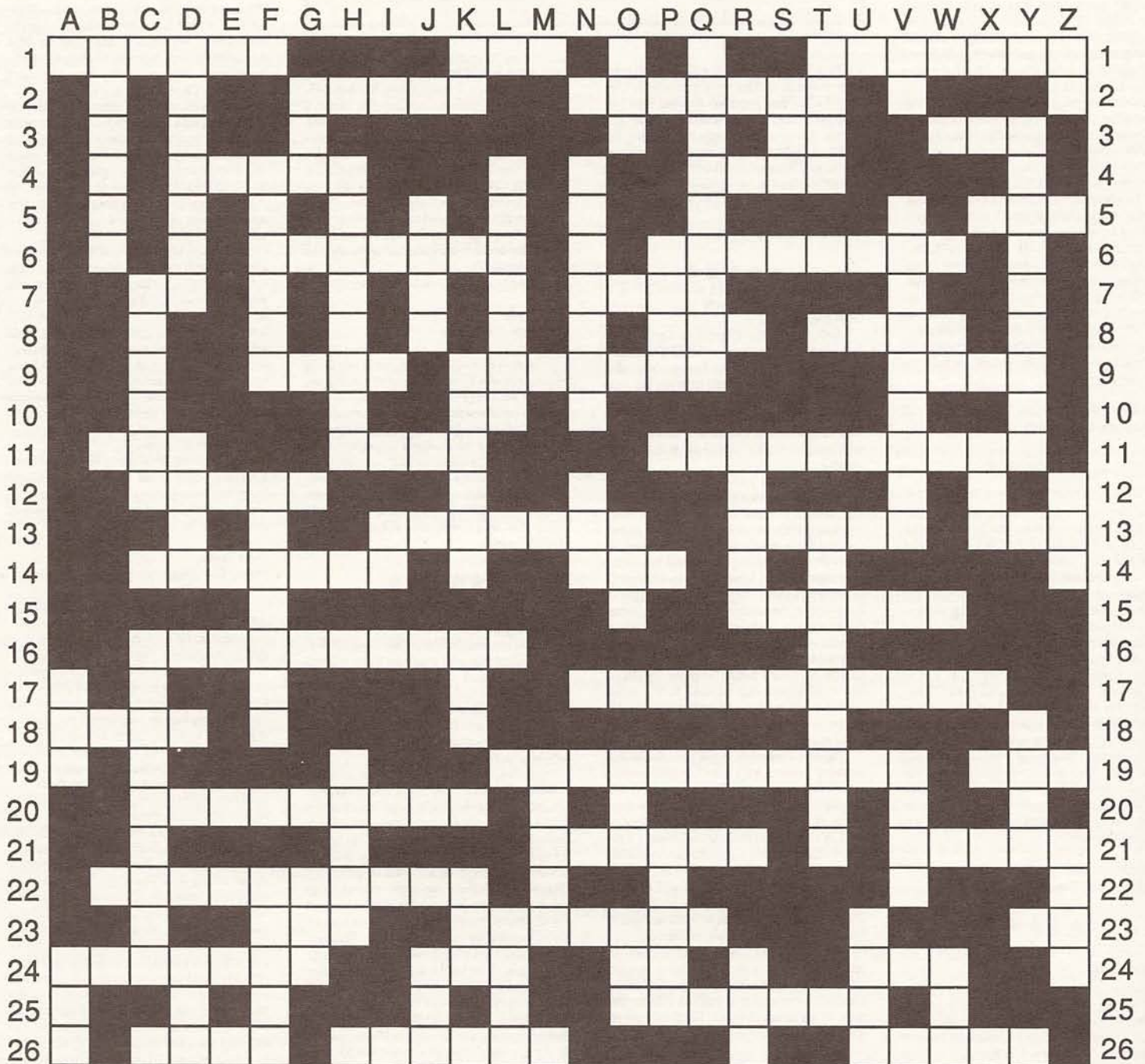
John Trosky
Jersey City, New Jersey

I am afraid that we here at the design offices don't see any sort of demographic spreadsheet (if such is even maintained) of AH-game buyers; instead, we rely on personal correspondence and conversations with wargamers from around the globe. Granted, such direct contact may carry a certain bias, but the amateur press gives us a peek at some uninhibited opinions to leaven any euphoria. From such sources, it appears to me that board wargaming may indeed be starting on an upward climb.

From the response, in terms of sales and in terms of compliments, the new line of introductory wargames (GETTYSBURG '88, BULGE '91, D-DAY '92) has brought some new folk into the hobby. It is too early as yet to say how much of a percentage of these newcomers will stay the course and become the next generation of active gamers. But the signs are encouraging. Events such as our AvalonCon and the countless regional conventions promote play of these low-complexity games and can serve to bring these new wargamers to the next step of competitive play by introducing them to more complex simulations. The influx of players into the ranks of AREA due to AvalonCon will certainly engender a higher quality of postal activity. And not to be forgotten is that marvel of the electronic age - the modem-based computer networks. Several of these (notably, GENIE) have served to spread the "gospel" of wargaming by linking once isolated fans and allowing them the chance to feed the enthusiasm. Such offerings will inevitably keep newcomers well supplied with respectable opponents and with continuous news of the hobby, thus avoiding two of the reasons that I feel wargaming declined (the erosion of the "old guard" and the slow silence that fell over our hobby).

For a host of reasons, I think our hobby has survived its nadir and has begun its upward cycle again. And I am encouraged that so many who write to us these days voice their support for our efforts and, more importantly, mention their personal efforts at introducing others to their pastime passion. So, take heart, Mr. Trosky. I think the '90s will be an exciting time for wargamers; hopefully, you'll make it to our Con in '92.

Crossed Words



CONTEST #158

For your pleasure this issue, something a little different in the way of a contest. Yes, Virginia, it's a crossword puzzle! But this one has a twist. Most of the entries, despite the given clues, have something to do with our hobby and/or military history and/or Avalon Hill. Obviously, to enter our latest mind-twister, just send in a completed copy of the grid above (a photocopy of this page will serve). For those readers who may not be wise in the ways of crosswords, the clue references are to the alphanumeric location of the first letter of the appropriate answer. And, since this is a test of your wit, as well as your wisdom, we see no need to provide you with even a hint to get started.

ACROSS:

A1 Our Esteemed Editor
 K1 Long-Range Search Plane
 T1 Pipe-Smoking General
 G2 Italian Tree Part
 N2 Naval Clash at the Bank
 S3 Veteran Organization
 W3 Commander Air Group
 D4 That by Which We Play
 Q4 Time to Go
 X5 Regulates Movement
 F6 Divinely Inspired
 P6 Final Defeat
 C7 __, Myself and I
 N7 Single Item
 P8 Squad Leader Concern
 T8 PieAreSquared
 F9 Gone but Not Forgotten

K9 Typhoid Mary

V9 Ordnance
 K10 Air Medal
 B11 Destroyer Nickname
 H11 Days of __
 P11 Fangorn, for Example
 C12 ASL Module
 I13 Dick Tracy Foe
 R13 Flyboy "OK"
 X13 Civil War Loser
 C14 B1 Down Module
 N14 Standard Package
 R15 The Roman Sees the Donut; the Gaul Sees the Hole.
 C16 Sixth Army Graveyard
 N17 Erwin's Gang
 A18 Artillery Barrel
 L19 Tank Lightning

X19 Soldier's Weapon
 C20 The Conqueror
 M21 Louie, Louie, Louie
 V21 Barnum & Bailey's Never Had These
 B22 Our Man, Manfred
 F23 Silent, Deep
 K23 Horatio, et. al.
 Y23 Starship Troopers, Abbreviation
 A24 Patton's Best Star
 J24 Estimated Time of Arrival
 O24 It
 U24 Number One in Our Heart
 O25 Four-Star Rank
 C26 Elephant Combat Performance
 H26 That Bridge Too Far
 U26 Middle Age Problem

DOWN:

B1 Bushwack
 D1 Roman Scull
 K1 Night Game Turn
 O1 Sword Wound
 Q1 Douglas as Spartacus
 T1 See Q4 Across
 V1 Squad Leader Card Game
 Z1 The Biggie
 G2 Has Nothing to Do with Movement
 S2 Army of the North
 Y3 A1 Across Predecessor
 F4 No Fun to Play With
 H4 Theater Tactics
 L4 Site of American Defeat
 N4 Add to Collection
 J5 Usual Crash Terminus
 V5 Balkoski on the Peninsula
 P6 Concertina
 C7 Point of No Return
 W8 Day Game Turn
 K9 Leader at R15 Across
 D11 Pact Opponent
 R11 AIW Combatant
 X11 Reason for Desert Storm
 F12 Fading Power Palace
 N12 All Who Were There
 Z12 Flight Leader Hardware
 I13 Squad Leader Weapon
 O13 Fossil Products
 T13 Trireme Flamethrower
 C16 UNTRCBOT
 K16 Five Down
 A17 European Theater of Ops
 Y18 Atomic Arm
 H19 Abe's Crusade
 M19 Oleson's Game
 O19 The "Killing Fields"
 V19 Jap Fighter
 P21 End of the Paratroops
 Z21 Fighting ___
 F22 Tobruk Tank Hit Location
 G22 WW1 German
 K22 The Reviewers' Forte
 L23 Grand Prix Action
 O23 Russian Plane
 U23 Searchlight Part
 A24 Patriot, for Example
 D24 Last-Ditch Naval Tactic
 J24 EIA Playing Time
 R24 NVA Offensive
 W24 Sicken



Sports Special



MARCH MADNESS for 1991

By Jim Burnett

One of the best things about *MARCH MADNESS* is the ease of updating the game to the current season. The format, in fact, allows players to follow the NCAA basketball tournament as it winds its way down to the "Final Four" and the championship. It also allows players to run multiple versions of the same tournament to compare the possibilities for victory by each team. The brackets for the 1991 tournaments, a brief history, and an additional variant rule, follows - with each team listed by its seed and the number of wins it achieved in the actual play. Not to be chauvinistic, I also present (as in Vol. 26, No. 4) the Women's NCAA listings as well.

1991 Men's NCAA Tournament:

(initial matches shown by lines)

East:

#1 North Carolina	4 wins
#16 Northeastern	0 wins
#8 Princeton	1 win
#9 Villanova	0 wins
#5 Mississippi State	0 wins
#12 Eastern Michigan	2 wins
#4 UCLA	0 wins
#13 Penn State	1 win
#6 North Carolina State	1 win
#11 Southern Mississippi	0 wins
#3 Oklahoma State	2 wins
#14 New Mexico	0 wins
#7 Purdue	0 wins
#10 Temple	3 wins
#2 Syracuse	0 wins
#15 Richmond	1 win

Southeast:

#1 Arkansas	3 wins
#16 Georgia State	0 wins
#8 Arizona State	1 win
#9 Rutgers	0 wins
#5 Wake Forest	1 win
#12 Louisiana Tech	0 wins
#4 Alabama	2 wins
#13 Murray State	0 wins
#6 Pittsburgh	1 win
#11 Georgia	0 wins
#3 Kansas	5 wins
#14 New Orleans	0 wins
#7 Florida State	1 win
#10 USC	0 wins
#2 Indiana	2 wins
#15 Coastal Carolina	0 wins

West:

#1 UNLV	4 wins
#16 Montana	0 wins
#8 Georgetown	1 win
#9 Vanderbilt	0 wins
#5 Michigan State	1 win
#12 Wisconsin-Green Bay	0 wins
#4 Utah	2 wins
#13 Southern Alabama	0 wins
#6 New Mexico State	0 wins
#11 Creighton	1 win

West (cont.)

#3 Seton Hall	3 wins
#14 Pepperdine	0 wins
#7 Virginia	0 wins
#10 Brigham Young	1 win
#2 Arizona	2 wins
#15 St. Francis of PA	0 wins

Midwest:

#1 Ohio State	2 wins
#16 Towson State	0 wins
#8 Georgia Tech	1 win
#9 DePaul	0 wins
#5 Texas	1 win
#12 St. Peter's	0 wins
#4 St. John's	3 wins
#13 Northern Illinois	0 wins
#6 Louisiana State	0 wins
#11 Connecticut	2 wins
#3 Nebraska	0 wins
#14 Xavier of Ohio	1 win
#7 Iowa	1 win
#10 East Tennessee State	0 wins
#2 Duke	Champion
#15 Northeast Louisiana	0 wins

Of course, the remarkable thing about the 1991 tournament was what did not happen. Despite being an overwhelming favorite, UNLV was defeated by the eventual champion, Duke, in the semi-finals. Their victory over Kansas in the final also brought to an end the label of "perennial bridesmaid". As for the tournament itself, it continues to grow in popularity, with tickets which have become some of the most sought after in sport. The advent of TV coverage has brought the drama into the homes of America. With the 1992 event approaching, no doubt the media build-up has already begun.

Tennessee held its streak of winning the NCAA Women's Championship in odd-numbered years. The finals match with Virginia was a classic. This year's tournament was also noteworthy for the number of upsets. The probable reason is the growing parity within the sport of college basketball. Still, the usual coaches are fielding winners.

Players of *MARCH MADNESS* will note that this tournament has only 48 teams and, therefore, the first four seeds in each region are granted first-round "byes". The women's tournament also assigns teams in the first two rounds a "home floor". Use the variant "Home Floor" rule below to reflect the impact of this. Teams whose seed number is followed by an * were granted the home-floor advantage this year.

1991 Women's NCAA Tournament:

Mideast:

#1* Tennessee	Champion
#2* Purdue	0 wins
#3* Auburn	2 wins
#4* Western Kentucky	1 win
#8* SE Missouri State	1 win
#9 Tennessee Tech	0 wins
#5* Florida State	1 win
#12 Appalachian State	0 wins
#6 Maryland	0 wins
#11* Holy Cross	1 win
#7 South Carolina	0 wins
#10 Vanderbilt	2 wins

West:

#1* Georgia	2 wins
#2* Stanford	3 wins
#3* Washington	1 win
#4* Long Beach State	1 win
#8* Nevada-Las Vegas	1 win
#9 Texas Tech	0 wins
#5* Southern California	1 win
#12 Utah	0 wins
#6 Iowa	1 win
#11* Montana	0 wins
#7* Cal-State Fullerton	1 win
#10 Louisiana Tech	0 wins

East:

#1* Penn State	0 wins
#2* North Carolina State	1 win
#3* Connecticut	3 wins
#4* Clemson	2 wins
#8* James Madison	2 wins
#9 Kentucky	0 wins
#5* Providence	1 win
#12 Fairfield	0 wins
#6* Rutgers	0 wins
#11 Toledo	1 win
#7* Richmond	0 wins
#10 George Washington	1 win

Midwest:

#1* Virginia	4 wins
#2* Louisiana State	0 wins
#3* Arkansas	1 win
#4* Michigan State	0 wins
#8* Stephen F. Austin	1 win
#9 Mississippi	0 wins
#5* Oklahoma State	2 wins
#12 DePaul	0 wins
#6* Northwestern	1 win
#11 Washington State	0 wins
#7* Texas	0 wins
#10 Lamar	3 wins

Gamers are also reminded that they may craft their own brackets for other college tournaments, such as the NCAA Division II and III, NAIA, and the NIT. Those making NIT brackets should note that the surviving teams are matched as the tournament progresses. They may mimic the road to New York by placing teams by geographical areas and then assigning "home teams" labels to those with larger arenas or greater local populations from which to draw. These teams would naturally also use the variant "Home Floor" rule. The Final Four of the NIT is played in New York City. The "pre-season" NIT and other early tournaments may also be simulated with *MARCH MADNESS*, but there will not usually be enough information generated that early in the year to accurately rate the participating teams.

Home Floor Rule: Teams noted as playing on their home floor are given two additional points in each half, and one additional point in each overtime period. This simulates the NCAA average (and Las Vegas "spread") home differential of three to five points.



The ASL Open

Being a Major League Baseball star can open a lot of doors and it got Curt Schilling (relief pitcher for the Houston Astros) the red carpet treatment when he visited the offices of Avalon Hill. He wished, it seems, to visit the "home of ASL." As a pro athlete, Curt commands instant credibility; yet he fits right in as "one of the guys." He'd rather talk ASL than baseball (but doesn't mind obliging autograph-seekers with tales of "The Show"). ASL has become his constant companion on road trips, and every National League city is now his playground for baseball at night and ASL in the day. (All of which has become a bonanza for ASL players of his acquaintance, who are sometimes Curt's guests at stadiums around the country.)

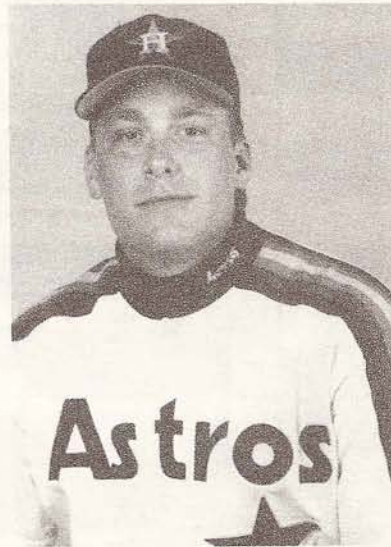
His high profile as an athlete and quite vocal support of his hobby does much to counteract the stigma many adults seem to have about admitting to their fondness for wargames. If a major league ballplayer can openly boast about his addiction to our brand of entertainment, maybe it really is OK for the rest of us to "come out of the closet" too. After briefly meeting him, several of our own ASL playtesters have made plans to fly to Houston in January 1993 for a chance to rub shoulders with the "pro" and, maybe, beat him at a "sport" in which they can hope to compete on more even terms - **ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER.**

For, you see, Curt Schilling has gone beyond the mere play of the game, and elected to pitch in to encourage high-level competitive play of ASL. He has organized what could become the ultimate competition in this most-popular tactical wargame - **The ASL Open** (15-17 January 1993 in Houston, Texas). Sponsored and run by Curt, it will be taking less of a laid-back approach than the famous ASL Oktoberfest (held each year in Youngstown), with more emphasis on structure and the naming of an overall winner. Curt's unbridled enthusiasm for ASL is refreshing in this era of big-money endorsements by pro athletes. His involvement with the ASL Open does not include any agents or contracts. Indeed, he approached us to endorse his tournament, a venture he plans to finance with its own revenues.

Curt greatly regrets that his career precludes his appearance at AvalonCon. And it forces him to offer his own convention in the dead of winter, with the hope that his ASL Open will eventually become part of an annual three-tiered championship series (including the ASL

Oktoberfest and ASL competition at AvalonCon). And he is putting his money where his heart is, for the top three finishers from both the 1992 AvalonCon tournament and the 1992 Oktoberfest will be his guests for the ASL Open.

As Curt has structured the event, no one will be eliminated, and players can expect to play a minimum of seven games. All play will be AREA-rated, and players will be seeded for the Swiss-style tournament by their AREA rating (as of 1 December 1992). To encourage competitors of all levels of skill, there will be a special \$50 prize to the highest-seeded upset, and a similar award to the player who gains the greatest number of places from his initial seed. In addition, a four-man team tournament will be held (with a top ceiling of 7000 AREA points per team). All members on the top three teams will receive a team plaque, and the winning team will have their names enshrined on the permanent Team trophy. In fact, the entire prize list is impressive:



for 1st Place: \$400; a trophy; an ASL Open jacket; assorted ASL and GHQ merchandise; subscriptions to *The GENERAL*, *At the Point*, *Fire for Effect*, *Dagger* and *On All Fronts*; and free entry and room fees for the 1994 ASL Open!

2nd Place: \$200; a trophy; assorted ASL and GHQ merchandise; subscriptions to four magazines; and free entry and room fees for the next ASL Open.

3rd Place: \$100; trophy; subscriptions to three magazines.

4th Place: \$75; a plaque; subscriptions to two magazines.

5th Place: \$50; a plaque; one subscription.

6th-15th Place: a certificate suitable for framing; and a 50% reduction in the entry fee for the 1994 ASL Open.

The entry fee will be \$20 if registered prior to 1 December 1992, and \$25 thereafter. Inquiries on this year's ASL Open should be sent to Curt Schilling (2406 Parkwood Lane, Sugar Land, TX 77479).

While you are at it, you might also wish to ask Curt about his *Fire for Effect*, the latest in the growing list of amateur ASL publications. This new bi-monthly periodical is "Committed to the Progress of ASL and its Players", and the first issue was a most impressive debut. In conjunction with Robert Wolkey, Curt Schilling has corralled some of the ASL hobby's best writers into contributing articles on tactics, scenario design and analysis, and even abbreviated Series Replays. And, needless-to-say, there is much news of the ASL Open to be found therein. Currently, *FFE* subscription rates are \$20 (\$22.50 Canadian, \$25 overseas). Or, send a 6-by-9 inch SASE (bearing 52 cents postage) and he'll send you a free sample, if copies are still available. For any fan of ASL, it is an enjoyable read.

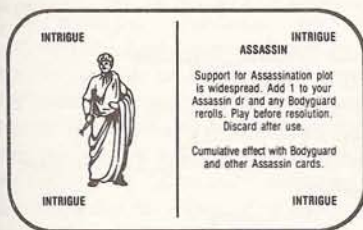
SERIES REPLAY

REPUBLIC OF ROME, Part 2

CRESCENT: Geoff Engelstein EAGLE: Bob O'Connor
 GATE: Kirk Schlesinger/Brad Andrews
 HAND: Ray Stakenas WREATH: Jim Vroom
 NEUTRAL COMMENTATOR: Don Greenwood



In the last issue, we left this play-by-electronic-mail match (see the first installment for details as to the format) at the end of the third turn, at a time the populace of Rome was growing restless because Hannibal and the forces of Carthage were devastating the peninsula unopposed. Our Senators, meanwhile, had fallen to quarrelling amongst themselves. What follows is the concluding chapter in the life of the early Republic.



TURN 4: THE RISE & FALL OF HAND

Mortality Phase:

Death passes the Senate of Rome by; no easy escape for any of them in these troubled times.

Revenue Phase:

CRESCENT: 9 Votes, 6T

Flaminius #18A (5-4-7-4), FL, K1, Tax Farmer 5, 7T

Valerius #3 (1-2-10-10), RC, Tax Farmer 6, 3T

Sulpicius #15 (3-2-8-12), PC, P3, Tax Farmer 2, 3T

Card: *Blackmail*

EAGLE: 9 Votes, 8T

Macedonicus #19A (5-4-8-15), FL, PC, A2, P7, Egyptian Grain, 10T

Julius #4 (4-3-9-14), PC, A1, P5

Calpurnius #15 (1-2-9-2), P2

Card: *Secret Bodyguard*

GATE: 9 Votes, 11T

Manlius #6 (3-2-7-4), FL, 5T

Africanus #1A (5-5-7-6), 5T

Flaminius #13 (4-2-6-8), FC, Shipbuilding, 5T

Junius #10 (1-2-8-3), G Cisalpine Gaul, 5T

Cards: *Tribune, Seduction*

HAND: 6 Votes, 5T

Fulvius #7 (2-2-8-4), FL, K1

Plautius #17 (2-1-6-12), C, PC, P4, Land Commissioner, 24T

Papirius #11 (1-2-6-3), Harbor Fees, 2T

Card: *Tribune*

WREATH: 10 Votes, 6T

Aelius #14 (3-4-7-2), FL, P1, 6T

Aurelius #9 (2-3-7-3)

Cunctator #2A (5-2-7-16), PC, K1

Card: *Tribune*

STATE: 49T + 100T (Income) + 2T (Cisalpine Gaul) - 40T (Wars) - 15T (Land Bills) - 30T (Maintenance) = 66T.

Junius again attempts, but again fails, to improve Cisalpine Gaul.

The revenue distributions tell quite a story. HAND is obviously plotting something of an offensive nature from Plautius. GATE, on the other hand, is not even taking a good defensive posture. By spreading his money equally among his senators he accomplishes little of an offensive nature since such expenditures must come from a single senator. Sadly, his "Hedgehog of Piepsk" defense accomplishes less than simply hoarding his growing warchest in his Faction Treasury would have.

Forum Phase:

CRESCENT: Flaminius #18A sponsors Games (7T) again to lower the Unrest to "0" while increasing his Popularity to "1". Draws *Statesman Cato #22A*.

EAGLE: Macedonicus #19A follows suit and sponsors Games (7T) also, and increases his popularity to "8". Draws a *Tribune*.

GATE: Draws *Assassin*.

HAND: Draws the "2nd Illyrian War". Fulvius #7 gains a Knight with no expenditure. Plautius announces a Persuasion Attempt versus Julius #4 (of EAGLE) at 13:16 (prior to placement of secret bribes).

WREATH: Draws a *Tribune*. Aelius spends 2T for a Knight attempt, but fails to attract any to his banner.

EAGLE empties his Faction Treasury in defense of Julius (8T) to bring the total defense to "24". Plautius has a total of "13" Oratory & Influence, but his 24T warchest is added to the persuasion factor for a total of "37". This leaves a difference of 13, which exceeds the maximum Base Persuasion Number of "9". The dice roll is an "8" and Julius moves over to the HAND faction with 32T in his Personal Treasury. HAND votes increase to ten while EAGLE's decrease to six. This major change in Faction power draws this scalding public reproach from CRESCENT:

"It grieves me to see that we have lapsed to fighting amongst ourselves like common dogs. Once again, senators are putting their personal agendas before the needs of Rome. We should not be engendering antagonism just as we begin to work harmoniously. As usual, it is the evil Plautius who is behind the latest plot. He of the Land Bills - proposing them as quickly as he could. Preying on the baser instincts of the populace. There is no place for the senators of HAND in the government of Rome."

Shocked by this raid upon another's faction? Perhaps, but it didn't prevent CRESCENT from recognizing an opportunity himself and issuing these secret orders for the sixth initiative prior to the outcome of the Julius Persuasion attempt:

"I will stay above the fray regarding Julius. I don't care to see either faction get my hard earned money. However, Valerius will bid 3T for the 6th Initiative, and if we get it Sulpicius will attempt to persuade HAND's Papirius."

Sixth Initiative:

HAND spoils CRESCENT's opportunism, however, by bidding 6T for the sixth initiative. This also outpaces EAGLE's bid of "3" and GATE's bid of 2T. HAND draws a *Tribune* card and announces another Persuasion attempt as well. This time the persuader is the newly-recruited Julius and the target is Sulpicius #15 of CRESCENT.

This is too much for GATE and WREATH, who send their condolences to CRESCENT along with bribes for the defense of Sulpicius in the amount of 2T and 4T respectively. Each accompanies his aid with the suggestion that a grateful CRESCENT could send a consul nomination their way in the upcoming Senate Phase. However, they should have looked before they leapt. CRESCENT has done some quick calculations and correctly deduced that HAND has sufficient funds with Julius - should he employ them all - to make defending him further just another contribution to the HAND warchest. He decides not to spend anything in defense of Sulpicius and trust to the gods of Rome for deliverance.

The gods fail him. HAND backs up Julius' attempt full bore with 26T, which when added to his Oratory & Influence equals "43". Sulpicius' loyalty of "15", plus the 3T already in his Personal Treasury, plus the 6T offered by WREATH and GATE, equals only "24". The difference of "19" once again yields a maximum Persuasion Number of "9". The dice roll is "6". Sulpicius and his Tax Farmer go over to HAND with a Personal Treasury of 35T; HAND's votes increase to 12 while CRESCENT's decrease to seven.

This was undoubtedly life in the fast lane for HAND. A lot has turned on two rolls of the dice. Even after obtaining maximum odds, each roll had a 16% chance of backfiring and turning that big warchest over to his victim. I don't fault that risk, however, so much as its timing. The game is only half over. Although he succeeded wonderfully in his plan, he now faces four hostile players united by their opposition against him. It will be difficult to hold them off long enough to win.

Population Phase:

The Unrest Level increases two to "2" for the pair of Unprosecuted Wars. A triple dice roll of "13" - 2 for Unrest = "11", which results in no change.

Senate Phase:

CRESCENT's outgoing RC Valerius nominates Aurelius of WREATH and Calpurnius of EAGLE as the new consuls. But wait . . . what commotion is this? As the newly persuaded

Sulpicius of HAND raises to cast his vote an assassin's hand strikes from beneath a toga with an Assassin card and a "4" die roll - commuted to a "5" by the card - strikes him down. Stunned, the Senators watch while the hooded assassin melts into the crowd as the life blood drains from poor Sulpicius. Any outrage felt by the Senate seems to have been muted by the jingle of coins loosed by the fallen Sulpicius. To some onlookers, the assassin bore a strong resemblance to Manlius of GATE. Yet, no one stands to accuse GATE's faction leader.

The nominees are thus elected 31-10 and Sulpicius' Tax Farmer moves to the Forum for reassignment. It didn't take long for vengeance to be meted out. The correspondence which preceded this action ranks as either the cleverest bit of diplomacy or the luckiest. It all started with this message from CRESCENT to all factions except HAND:

"According to my calculations, Sulpicius is now sitting on 35T. Because of this, and HAND's obvious advantages, I volunteer to assassinate my former faction mate before HAND can redistribute his money. I am appealing to you all for a donation of any Assassin card you may have to help me in the deed. Once we have trashed his money, we can then proceed with a major prosecution of Plautius."

It was certainly generous of CRESCENT to expose himself to the dangers of an assassination attempt. Or was it? Geoff is a student of the game and well-versed in its tricks and rules. Perhaps he knew that I would outlaw any use of a traded card prior to the Revolution Phase as the rules require. Whether he did or not, it certainly was a good way to convince the others of his sincerity in being willing to do the deed himself. And sure enough, GATE not only volunteered his Assassin card - but when informed that a traded card could not be used this turn - willingly offered to do the deed himself.

Lucky? Perhaps . . . or maybe just one heckuva clever ploy. In any case, the long-suffering GATE has placed himself in jeopardy, and unfortunately for HAND his Assassin card made the difference between a "No Effect" result and Sulpicius' death. The remarkable part of all this is that the volunteer who took CRESCENT off the hook was the person with the least reason to placate CRESCENT. How did CRESCENT repay GATE for volunteering money to fight HAND's raid? By nominating EAGLE and WREATH for consul! Granted, EAGLE's loss of Julius makes him an object of pity at this point, but GATE has received very few favors from CRESCENT (or anyone else for that matter).

Despite a great outcry of congratulations and debts owed to GATE for public service from all quarters, the new RC promptly forgets him when it comes time to nominate a new Censor. Instead, EAGLE returns CRESCENT's favor of nominating him RC by nominating CRESCENT's Valerius, who is promptly elected on the first ballot. GATE's heroics have been ignored yet again. His Flaminius is eligible for Censor and would have less influence than Valerius - the very argument that CRESCENT advanced as the chief qualification of a Censor on Turn 1. HAND, for his part, makes a conciliatory speech to the Senate in hopes that they will consider him punished sufficiently and move on to other topics, leaving him with a one-senator gain for the turn. But the conspirators are not yet through and Valerius announces a major prosecution of Plautius. This fails when Plautius appeals to the people and rolls an "11". After adding his +4 popularity modifier, this results in not only acquittal for Plautius, but a drawing of three chits to see if the angry mob lynches the prosecutor and censor.

The instigators escape unharmed, but they had no chance in any case and only exposed themselves needlessly. Even had Plautius rolled a "2", his popularity would have saved him from the mob and he could then have played a Tribune to veto the prosecution. The conspirators would have been better advised to wage a Minor Prosecution of Papirius and strip him of the Harbor Fees concession. His rich concession base has always been the source of HAND's strength.

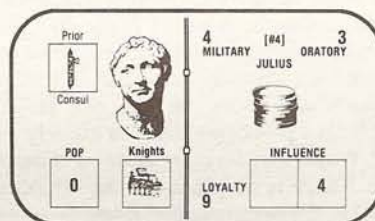
The remainder of the Senate Phase is spent sending FC Aurelius off to fight the Illyrian War with ten legions and two fleets. Another proposal to award the Sicilian Grain concession to Manlius of GATE and Tax Farmer 2 to Macedonicus of EAGLE passes by a vote of 22-10, with only HAND opposed.

Combat Phase:

FC Aurelius wins a total victory over the Illyrians with a 14:4 attack; he thereby single-handedly lowers the Unrest to "1", raises the State Treasury 10T to 76, and improves his own popularity and influence by two apiece. He also creates the 3rd Veteran Legion, which is loyal to him. Meanwhile, Hannibal again destroys EAGLE's Tax Farmer 2 and CRESCENT's Tax Farmer 5.

Revolution Phase:

In this phase, CRESCENT plays Statesman Cato #22A, thereby almost doubling his Faction's votes to 13. WREATH's Aurelius returns his troops to Rome - unable to finance a revolution even if the troops would follow him. But the threat of such a grab for power is growing, and sets off a hysteria of speculation.

**TURN 5:****THE BLACKMAIL OF JULIUS****Mortality Phase:**

The start of Turn 5 finishes the job the conspirators failed to do. The events of the past year have proven too much for HAND's Papirius #11, who dies of a stroke (causing HAND to lose 2T and two votes, plus the Harbor Fees concession which returns to the Forum for reassignment).

Revenue Phase:

EAGLE: 6 Votes, 3T

Macedonicus #19A (5-4-8-15), FL, PC, A2, P8, Egyptian Grain, 9T

Calpurnius #16 (1-2-9-7), RC, P2
Cards: Secret Bodyguard, Tribune

GATE: 9 Votes, 22T

Manlius #6 (3-2-7-4), FL, Sicilian Grain, 5T

Africanus #1A (5-5-7Z-6), 5T

Junius #10 (1-2-8-3), G Cisalpine Gaul, 5T

Flaminius #13 (4-2-6-8), PC, Shipbuilding, 5T

Cards: Tribune, Seduction

HAND: 8 Votes, 15T

Fulvius #7 (2-2-8-4), FL, K2

Julius #4 (4-3-9-14), PC, P5, A1

Plautius #17 (2-1-6-12), PC, P4, Land Commissioner

Cards: two Tribunes

WREATH: 10 Votes, 8T

Aelius #14 (3-4-7-2), FL, P1, 10T

Cunctator #2A (5-2-7-16), PC, K1

Aurelius #9 (2-3-7-10), FC, P2, A3

Cards: two Tribunes

CRESCENT: 13 Votes, 8T

Flaminius #18A (5-4-0-4), FL, P1, K1

Valerius #3 (1-2-10-15), PC, C, Tax Farmer 6, 9T

Cato #22A (1-6-0-1)

Card: Blackmail

STATE: 76T + 100T (Income) + 5T (Cisalpine Gaul) - 15T (Land Bills) - 40T (Wars) - 30T (Maintenance) = 96T

Junius tires of trying to improve Cisalpine Gaul and takes 3T of graft instead.

Strange timing - opening himself up for a prosecution on the very turn of his recall to Rome. If Junius was going to extort the province, he should have done it all three turns of his term for maximum benefit. HAND obviously anticipates more reprisals and has withdrawn all of his money into his Faction Treasury to defend against persuasion attempts; but, the events of the past turn have left the players relatively money-poor. In such circumstances, GATE's position is far from hopeless if only he would use the money advantage his inactivity has allowed him to gain. WREATH's placement of money on his FL is poor judgement. The best offensive use of money is always from the Personal Treasury of your most persuasive Senator - which in his case would be Cunctator.

Forum Phase:

EAGLE: Draws Random Event "Ally Deserts". Macedonicus attempts a Persuasion of Julius of HAND at 19:16 in an attempt to lure him back. However, the Gods rule this attempt to

be frivolous because no guarantee of money to be spent was made in the attempt and HAND is allowed an automatic 2T defense from his Faction Treasury to defeat it.

GATE: Draws "Phillip V" in the Forum.

HAND: Draws "Furius #8 (3-3-8-3)" for the Forum. An automatic persuasion attempt versus Furius at 17:8 succeeds with a "4" dice roll. The HAND votes increase to 11.

WREATH: Draws "1st Illyrian War". Aelias attracts a Knight with no money spent.

CRESCENT: Draws Random Event "Manpower Shortage". Valerius #3 plays the Blackmail card against Julius #4 (of HAND) for an unopposed Persuasion Attempt and adds 9T to his Oratory and Influence rating of "17" for a total of 26:18 (9 loyalty, 7 alignment, 2 Personal Treasury). The Persuasion Number is "8" and CRESCENT rolls a "6". The much-travelled Julius moves to CRESCENT with 11T; CRESCENT votes increase to 16, while HAND votes decline to eight.

At this point the game breaks down into a comedy of errors wherein sloppy play in the form of inadequate or incorrect directions to the GM caused planned actions to go awry. The first error was made by EAGLE in not being specific that he was willing to back up his Persuasion attempt of Julius with additional funds (which had been his intent). The GM, without this knowledge, resolved his Persuasion attempt as a frivolous one that could be automatically defeated by HAND and moved on. Had EAGLE gone through with his plans for an all-out expenditure against Julius, it probably would have been disastrous to both EAGLE and CRESCENT because HAND's pockets were far deeper. Having defeated the EAGLE attempt, Julius' Personal Treasury would then have been so bulging that the blackmail persuasion by CRESCENT would have failed automatically.

CRESCENT's play of the Blackmail card can be faulted on three counts. The first is timing. Why play it now and make yourself the new target? The game is not yet in its final stages. The "attack the leader" mentality is in full swing at this point, so why paint that bulls-eye on your own nose - especially if you can postpone your game-winning play till later? The Blackmail card is an extremely valuable card in the end game. For games with an "artificial" (end of deck) ending, it should almost always be held for the final turn. The second error is the target. Playing it on HAND in the middle of a simultaneously resolved Forum Phase is like trying to rob a bus in traffic; you're lucky if you're not hit by a passing truck. As EAGLE's aborted persuasion attempt showed, this whole blackmail scheme would have gone horribly wrong had HAND had to defend Julius seriously earlier instead of having to move only two Talents from his Faction Treasury. A safer time to blackmail is during the sixth initiative when you can see the results of the preceding five initiatives and get a feel for where the money may lie. At the very least, you won't run into a target whose Personal Treasury has been reinforced defending against another Persuasion attempt. Third, it is seldom wise to play your last red card unnecessarily. It tells everyone that you

have nothing left up your sleeve. Now they no longer have to guess whether you have veto power.

Sixth Initiative:

The bidding for the sixth Initiative is vigorous. WREATH takes it with a bid of "6" over EAGLE's 4T and CRESCENT's 3T. He draws "Claudius #5 (2-3-7-4)" into the Forum and announces a Persuasion Attempt versus CRESCENT's Cato (at 18:7).

Again, the errors compound. Cato's lack of loyalty comes as a surprise to CRESCENT [and admittedly, the *Flamininus* card is misleading for it lacks the "7/0" symbol and "*Cato Faction Loyalty: 0*" notation], but not to WREATH who despite his lack of a big war-chest has bid big for the extra initiative in an effort to take Cato away. However, he made an error himself and is now bidding money for the takeover that is not in Cunctator's Personal Treasury but that of his Faction Leader's. As this is decidedly illegal, the GM cancels his announced Persuasion attempt against Cato and allows him to take an automatic attempt versus the unaligned Claudius in the Forum - which succeeds at 18:7 without benefit of Aelius' funds.

Although WREATH's votes increase to 13, he has missed a golden opportunity to cripple CRESCENT. Cato is an extremely powerful senator - especially to CRESCENT who lacks any other source of Tribunes.

One other interesting development comes from all of this. Who should ride to the rescue of CRESCENT with an offer of a blank check to defend Cato from the Persuasion attempt? Why, it's none other than HAND - fresh from the funeral pyres of Sulpicius whose death was orchestrated by CRESCENT. And what price did he exact for his largess? Nothing more than a vague promise to "call off the dogs". The conspirators obviously have gotten HAND's attention. To put it another way, we used to call girls like this "easy". Fortunately for HAND, I disallowed his support because offers of conditional pledges are not allowed in the blind game; one must commit blindly to a specific number or not at all. The reconstructed Persuasion Attempt makes it a moot point.

The Forum Phase closes with the death of Phillip V from old age, and the return of the Family cards Papirius #11 and Sulpicius #15 to the Forum as their sons rise to the rank of Senator. Tax Farmer 2 is also revived and returned to the Forum.

Population Phase:

Two unprosecuted wars raise the Unrest Level to "3". RC Calpurnius' dice roll of "11" (-3 for Unrest, +2 for his Popularity) equals "10". This results in an increase of one in the Unrest Level to "4".

Senate Phase:

EAGLE's outgoing RC nominates Africanus #1A and his own Macedonicus #19A for consuls. This marks the first time that an outgoing RC has had the audacity to nominate one of his own for the consulship. And he does this not

from a position of strength, but one of extreme weakness. Why should he succeed? Yet he is prepared to exhaust every possible combination of Senators to get one of his own in power. And with the power of the Presiding Magistrate to vote last and thereby make conditional votes with his Personal Treasury of 9 Talents, he may well pull it off! He stands ready to veto with his own tribunes any proposal that does not contain Macedonicus.

It is EAGLE's most outspoken critic, HAND, who objects first:

"Isn't it a bit forward, nominating your own highest influence Senator? Granted, no one else would, but still . . . HAND cannot vote for this group or any group which contains Macedonicus. To raise his influence to 20 would be too large an unsettling influence and a disservice to Rome."

More importantly, there is still another Macedonian War to defeat in the deck. When it appears, Macedonicus would be the safest FC to lead Rome's armies. If he already has 20 Influence, it will be a harder argument to win.

EAGLE replies to the assembled Senate:

"Once again HAND has failed to see the forest for the trees. Rome has nothing to fear by Macedonicus gaining five more influence. With a total of 20, I would have scant chance of gaining more. However, if we look at total Faction influence we see a much greater danger to Rome: polarization around two strong factions. There are goodies to pass out to each of you who vote for me. The important point now is to redress the balance of factions in Rome."

Apparently, the others agree because the pair is elected on the first ballot 33-8 with only HAND dissenting. WREATH abstained when his offer of support in return for a pledge of the Harbor Fees concession went unanswered.

EAGLE is to be congratulated for maintaining his position in the game from such a point of weakness. However, both CRESCENT and WREATH are to be berated for allowing him to do so at such little cost to himself and no gain themselves. For the first time in the game, two factions have the power in base votes to split the game between them - or at least to make it very expensive for anyone to stop them. By controlling 29 of the game's current 52 votes between them, they can pretty much force their will upon the others and secure the winner's crown for one of them. Their failure to act in concert in this manner is hard to overlook. This is especially true because two Senators are available in the Forum and will obviously undergo a maximum Persuasion attempt by the new RC and the player to his left. Should WREATH become the new RC at this point, the lead of the "big two" will almost certainly increase. CRESCENT explained his "Yay" vote as a way of not drawing attention to himself as the leader, but this election will not change his status as the leader. However, were he to win the election - he and WREATH would certainly share the driver's seat. The game is nearing the end. Now is the time to seize chances that may not come this way again. Allowing this opportunity to slip away is truly a faux pas.



The decision as to which of the new consuls will be RC is vital to EAGLE, who needs to be RC to assure himself of the first Persuasion attempt against the unaligned Senators in the

Forum. If GATE wins the die roll in a dispute, EAGLE will go last and undoubtedly miss the opportunity to entice one of the unaligned senators. Fortunately for him, GATE is easily bought and settles for the FC and the promise of a concession. This GATE is as inexplicably lax as his predecessor was excessively bold. In fact, he's downright easy.

EAGLE shows that he is above grudges by his nomination of HAND's Plautius for Censor. It was HAND who led the objection to EAGLE's consulship. Obviously, EAGLE feels that HAND is the weakest of the eligible faction recipients, although his overlooking of GATE's Flaminius is strange considering their recently concluded deal to split the consuls in EAGLE'S favor. Obviously, a more resolute GATE could have demanded this as the price for his acquiescence in the RC matter. Nevertheless, Plautius is the surprising winner of a 28-16 vote and becomes Censor far sooner than he ever expected to hold office again. Moreover, the only opposition to his election came from CRESCENT, who not long ago was the recipient of a blank check from HAND in return for vague promises to "call off the dogs". A grateful HAND - much relieved to be back in the good graces of his fellows - declines prosecution and returns control of the Senate back to EAGLE.

Gratitude is fine, but it has its place. This isn't it. Now is the perfect time to launch prosecutions against the leaders. The campaign against Hannibal is in cruise control; now is the time to maneuver for personal position. CRESCENT's Valerius is an obvious candidate for a case of Tax Farmer fraud. Valerius has no popularity and CRESCENT has no Tribunes save for Cato. As the perceived leader, he would have a tough time summoning up much support. Aurelius, the returning FC of WREATH, is a less likely but still viable choice. This is an odd mixture of hostility and peace offerings we are witnessing here.

EAGLE now turns his attention to CRESCENT and nominates Cato as the new governor of Cisalpine Gaul. EAGLE and the others no doubt welcome this opportunity to rid Rome of Cato's Tribune power and six votes for three years. CRESCENT, for his part, welcomes the chance to get his "0" loyalty senator out of Rome and away from Persuasion attempts. He no doubt sees the reduction of his voting power from 16 to 10 as an opportunity to shift the damning title of "leader" from his shoulders to WREATH's. The measure passes unanimously.

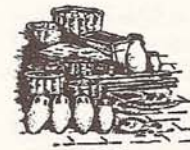
The next proposal is to send FC Africanus against the Illyrians with all ten legions. CRESCENT votes against this on the grounds that the force is too large for the feeble Illyrians [and he is right], arguing that a Disaster could result which could still bring Rome to her knees. Nevertheless, the measure passes over CRESCENT's objections 20-10.

The final business is to assign Tax Farmer 2 to Junius #10 of GATE and Harbor Fees to Claudius of WREATH; it passes 39-10 with CRESCENT casting the sole dissenting votes in vain.

EAGLE is truly a man of his word. He has indeed given something to everyone. I question the wisdom of his generosity at this point however, unless he expects long memories from grateful recipients to vote him into office yet again next turn. If WREATH is the avowed leader, why gift him with the Harbor Fees? His finances are his weakness; why alleviate them? Especially at the expense of poor GATE who so generously demurred in the matter of splitting the RC. If EAGLE feels he must reward WREATH for supporting his programs, why not do so with the less lucrative Tax Farmer (which is threatened by Hannibal) instead? CRESCENT, for his part, no doubt wishes Cato was still in Rome to veto this proposal. Now he alone among the players is without the power of veto.

Combat Phase:

Africanus attacks the Illyrians at 18:5 and wins a complete victory. The state coffers are increased to 106T and the province of Illyria is created in the Forum. The Unrest Level drops to "3". GATE returns the troops without incident and no new red cards are played during the ensuing Revolution Phase.



TURN 6: THE YEAR OF THE KNIGHTS

Mortality Phase:

No untimely deaths among our Senators.

Revenue Phase:

EAGLE: 6 Votes, 30T

Macedonicus #19A (5-4-8-20), FL, RC, PC, P8, A2, Egyptian Grain, 12T

Calpurnius #16 (1-2-9-7), PC, P2

Cards: *Secret Bodyguard, Tribune*

GATE: 9 Votes, 30T

Manlius #6 (3-2-7-4), FL, Sicilian Grain, 6T

Africanus #1A (5-5-7-14), FC, A4, P3, 6T

Junius #10 (1-2-8-3), Tax Farmer 2, 6T

Flaminius #13 (4-2-6-8), PC, Shipbuilding, 6T

Cards: *Tribune, Seduction*

HAND: 8 Votes, 19T

Fulvius #7 (2-2-8-4), FL, K2

Furius #8 (3-3-8-3)

Plautius #17 (2-1-6-17), C, PC, 4P, Land Commissioner, 4T

Cards: *two Tribunes*

WREATH: 13 Votes, 0T

Aelius #14 (3-4-7-2), FL, K1, P1, 5T

Cunctator #2A (5-2-7-16), PC, K1, 12T

Claudius #5 (2-3-7-4), Harbor Fees

Aurelius #9 (2-3-7-10), PC, A3, P2

Cards: *two Tribunes*

CRESCENT: 10 Votes, 28T

Flaminius #18A (5-4-0-4), FL, P1, K1

Valerius #3 (1-2-10-15), PC, Tax Farmer 6

Julius #4 (4-3-9-14), PC, A1, P5

Cato #22A (1-6-0-1), G Cisalpine Gaul

STATE: 106T + 100T (Income) + 3T

(Cisalpine Gaul) - 40T (Wars) - 15T (Land Bills) - 30T (Maintenance) = 124T.

Cato improves Cisalpine Gaul and gains three Influence.

Rome prospers as Hannibal lays waste to the peninsula. CRESCENT and HAND play defensively while GATE plays passively with his resources evenly spread. It would seem that GATE is playing not to lose rather than trying to win. EAGLE and WREATH lack the finances to act aggressively barring employment of real guile, but that has not stopped them from using their resources offensively in the past.

Forum Phase:

EAGLE: Draws *Tax Farmer 1*. Macedonicus spends 3T to successfully attract a Knight, and then successfully persuades Sulpicius #15 (3-2-8-2) from the Forum at 24:8.

GATE: Draws *Influence Peddling*. Attempt to persuade Papirius from the Forum fails at 19:6 on a dice roll of "10".

HAND: Draws *Armaments*. Persuades Papirius #11 (1-2-6-3) back to his faction at 18:6. Plautius spends 1T to attract a Knight and succeeds in the attempt.

WREATH: Draws *Mining*. Attracts a Knight to Aelius without expenditure. Announces a Persuasion Attempt by Cunctator versus Julius of CRESCENT at basic odds of 18:16.

CRESCENT: Draws "Syrian War". Flaminius then attracts a free Knight.

The persuasion attempt by WREATH turns out to be a feint. Cunctator spends a single Talent to bribe Julius while CRESCENT responds by spending his entire Faction treasury to defend Julian. The attempt fails automatically at 19:44, but CRESCENT's treasury is now empty and WREATH (as well as the others) must suspect that CRESCENT must secure the sixth initiative to prevent a raid on Valerius.

Sixth Initiative:

CRESCENT realizes his vulnerability and spends 13T from Julius for the sixth Initiative, which far outdistances WREATH's 5T, HAND's 3T, and GATE's 2T. He draws the "2nd Macedonian War" and attracts a free Knight to increase his votes to 12, but declines any Persuasion attempt.

The latter is probably a missed opportunity. CRESCENT should himself deduce that WREATH has placed most, if not all, of his money on Cunctator for his planned Persuasion attempt, and therefore should have little left in his Faction Treasury to defend either Aurelius (10 Influence) or Claudius (4 Influence plus Harbor Fees). Julius could have attempted to get either with a maximum Persuasion number of "9" or less. Even without risking any money at all, he could have taken a 17:14 shot versus Claudius in hopes of finding a bare Faction treasury.

In defense of CRESCENT's inaction, he may not wish to risk all on a throw of the dice at this time (even though those dice would be weighted 5:1 in his favor). However, he appears to be unable to avoid the offensive tag of "leader" going into the final turn anyway, so in my opinion the gamble is worthwhile. If he succeeds, he would be so far in the lead that the efforts of the others may fail to bring him down in time. If he fails, he passes the damning title of "leader" to WREATH to fend off as best he may in the final turn.

Population Phase:

A triple dice roll of "13" - 5 [Unrest] + 8 [Macedonicus' Popularity] = "16". The Unrest Level drops to "4".

Senate Phase:



EAGLE tries for a "three-peat" by nominating his own Sulpicius along with Furius of HAND for consuls. Even with the advantage of voting last, this will be a hard sell; EAGLE is prepared with nine Talents to buy any necessary votes, but it may not be enough.

At this point CRESCENT makes a mistake by voting in public and stating his opposition to EAGLE's power play. This gives EAGLE the chance to reply before the Senate and point out that, of course, CRESCENT, the leader, would be against anyone else gaining influence . . . but how could anyone object to the consuls going to the two weakest Factions? And while he cannot guarantee it (because he cannot guarantee being Rome Consul), he pledges that if the nomination is his the Censor will come from those who support his nominees.

This is enough to convince the wavering GATE, who changes his vote and thereby sweeps the pair into office by a 31-27 vote with only the leaders (CRESCENT and WREATH) opposed. EAGLE's purse remains full.

What EAGLE didn't tell the Senate is that if elected he will opt for the Field Consul, so it would fall to HAND to honor his pledge. He eyes the additional influence to be gained by defeating the Syrians instead. Or perhaps he senses a collapse and is plotting to revolt. An additional three Influence hardly seems ample return for surrendering the consul nominations on the final turn. Look what he's done with that power for the last three turns. By saving all of his money to buy votes he may be able to pull off a "four-peat".

The new RC Furius of HAND nominates his own Plautius for Censor! This incestuous nomination is immediately hooted down by everyone. CRESCENT even goes so far as to buy five votes in case the voting follows the "have/have-not" lines of the preceding consul vote. Faced with a unanimous rejection of his proposal, HAND vetoes it himself to save the one Influence point penalty such a rejection would bring. He then nominates EAGLE's Calpurnius and goes off to lick his wounds.

HAND has shot himself in both feet this time. His first mistake is in nominating his own man.

It is obvious now that the game is coming to an end and everyone is playing for a win by means of total Influence. No one will grant anyone else any without gaining something significant in return. In short, it will be difficult for anyone to gain the necessary votes for election. Under such circumstances you start with the least desirable candidate and work backwards - leaving yourself as the last eligible candidate to fill the position. Suppose, for example, that HAND nominated CRESCENT's Julius or Valerius. They would quickly be defeated by the others who would be loathe to vote for the leader, thus leaving two less eligible candidates. And if CRESCENT got greedy and tried to buy the necessary votes for the Censorship it could still be vetoed by HAND who votes last and can place conditional orders, wiping out CRESCENT's warchest in the bargain. HAND then compounds his error by expending half of his valuable Tribune power to save himself a one-point Influence penalty for having made such an unpopular proposal. Tribunes will be extremely valuable in the turn ahead. The voting for the next turn's Censor is likely to be even more hotly debated than this turn's has been. Election is liable to come by the last-eligible candidate route; and if so, that Tribune could well be worth five Influence (or more).

CRESCENT didn't exactly cover himself with glory either. Even if the vote had matched last turn's 31-27 balance, the five extra votes he bought could have been easily over-ridden by two Talents from HAND placing the last vote conditionally. Trading 5T for two is hardly a good buy. CRESCENT will need that money in the turn ahead. He shouldn't be frittering it away needlessly now.

EAGLE's Calpurnius does little better in his pursuit of the Censorship - losing 38-20 with only EAGLE and HAND in favor. WREATH's Aurelius #9 becomes the third nominee, but unless a deal is struck is likely to fare no better than the others.

There are many potential nominees left, so there is no need to be concerned about the last eligible candidate yet. However, to break this deadlock, a bit of diplomacy is required. Suppose that WREATH offered to CRESCENT in Open Trade one of his Tribunes and a pledge not to prosecute CRESCENT in exchange for his votes on this nomination. With CRESCENT's support, WREATH would have enough money to buy the Censorship and could then work on paring down the opposition by prosecuting the others, thus returning WREATH and CRESCENT to pre-eminence. And if WREATH passes CRESCENT in total Influence this turn, so much the better for CRESCENT. The bulls-eye for the final turn will then be resting on his nose and not CRESCENT's.

The stalemate comes to an abrupt halt as WREATH's Aurelius is elected Censor by a landslide vote of 47-0. Only GATE abstains. WREATH then announces Minor Prosecutions of Valerius of CRESCENT and Junius of GATE. EAGLE's Calpurnius and HAND's Papirius are, respectively, selected to be the Prosecutors.

This sudden show of support for WREATH is surprising. With Aurelius' election, WREATH vaults into a tie for the Influence lead with CRESCENT; and should his prosecutions prove successful, CRESCENT (who is without Tribune capability) will lose five Influence. The jockeying for position at this point is pronounced because the game is extremely close in terms of total influence. WREATH and CRESCENT have 37, EAGLE and GATE 34, and HAND trails with 32 Influence. The election to a single office or the death or persuasion of a single senator could vault any player into the lead. However, they will all be done in by the four wars opposing Rome this turn should they fail to defeat one. The possibility of rolling a Disaster or Standoff against even the weakest looms very real.

HAND and EAGLE have supported WREATH because he offered them their choice of targets for prosecutions if elected. CRESCENT's support probably grew from the realization that he had no chance to control the Censor himself and is banking on the forlorn hope that by voting for WREATH he would be spared the wrath of his prosecutions. All of this jockeying for position seems premature. If the game is indeed to be won by total Influence due to time limit, the real "king of the hill" contest will occur on the final turn, and he who has preserved the most weapons while not forsaking the protection of the pack will be at an advantage.

The players are becoming vindictive. CRESCENT rather obviously casts his 12 votes "No" on the Valerius Prosecution and appeals to the people successfully for four additional "Nay" votes. With Cato out of Rome and no other source of Tribunes, CRESCENT must rely on the sympathy of his fellow players. GATE, who as a fellow prosecution target feels some sympathy, also casts 11 "No" votes, but that is the end of Valerius' good news. EAGLE, HAND and WREATH vote next and cast nine, 11 and 15 votes for conviction to find Valerius Guilty by a 35-27 vote. Valerius loses five Influence, his PC marker, and his Tax Farmer 6. His Popularity plummets to "-5". Successful Prosecutor Calpurnius of EAGLE gains three Influence.

GATE's Junius fares little better. Buoyed by CRESCENT's vote of 12 "Nay", GATE puts his trust in gold and buys five additional votes to augment his base total of 11. EAGLE, perhaps more concerned by the rise of HAND than the fall of GATE, casts nine innocent votes for a total of 37 "Nay". HAND's 11 "Guilty" and WREATH's 15 leave the prosecutors 12 short of conviction, which WREATH buys with his conditional voting power as the last to vote. Junius loses five Influence, his PC, and his Tax Farmer 2 as well as five Popularity. Prosecutor Papirius of HAND gains three Influence and the lost PC marker of Junius.

GATE now uses the prosecution as an excuse to play his Influence Peddling card on HAND and draws the latter's Armaments card.

HAND resumes control of the Senate meeting as Presiding Magistrate and nominates EAGLE's Calpurnius as the governor of Illyricum.

The big winner in this flurry would have to be HAND, who gained some influence while remaining firmly in the middle of the pack. Even the loss of the Armaments concession is of no great concern as it is unlikely Rome will build more Legions before the time limit is reached. HAND has WREATH to thank for his largess. Twelve Talents is a lot of money to spend to knock the third-place player down to fifth - especially when it nearly empties his own warchest and leaves himself firmly emplaced as a co-leader the others will be seeking to topple on the last turn. That 12T will be sorely missed next turn.

GATE's restraint in not playing his Tribune is probably wise; the more hidden weapons a player has on the final turn, the better. It cost WREATH more than it was worth to trash GATE's senator, and in doing so GATE now becomes the obvious "pity" choice for office on the final turn. In a game this close, that is a distinct advantage. With 29 total Influence, GATE now trails co-leaders EAGLE and WREATH by eight - an amount that can be more than made up by the successful play of his unsuspected Seduction card.

EAGLE's Calpurnius is elected Governor of Illyricum on the first ballot 35-23, with GATE and CRESCENT opposing. HAND next proposes consignment of the available Tax Farmers to Manlius of GATE and Flamininus of CRESCENT.

The Governorship of Illyricum is hardly big news at this point. Even EAGLE couldn't decide whether he wanted it or not, casting his votes in favor of the nomination somewhat reluctantly. As one of the poorest provinces, it has almost no monetary value. Given the current situation, the only redeeming feature of this post is the 33% chance of earning three extra Influence by improving the province on the next turn. A side benefit is that the new Governor will be immune to persuasion and assassination attempts while out of Rome. The downside is that EAGLE will lose Calpurnius' votes in the Senate for the rest of the game. Considering that, why not nominate CRESCENT's Flamininus or WREATH's Aelius for the post? Each commands seven votes thanks to the three Knights each controls. Posting either to Illyricum would cripple that faction's voting power in the upcoming turn.

Even more puzzling is the consignment of the Tax Farmers to two rivals with nothing gained in return. The expected revenue is not much at this point (indeed Hannibal may yet make it a moot point), but why give something to a rival without getting something in return? Granted, the nomination is along least-Influence lines in the time-honored traditions of this game of keeping the factions equal in strength . . . but the end is near. It is time to think of one's self. HAND should have cut himself in for one of the Tax Farmers, or let them rot in the Forum. How does giving a rival two extra Talents on the last turn benefit him? Most of these players have already demonstrated what short memories they have when it comes to remembering past favors. Does he really expect them to change their ways with the end in sight?

The Tax Farmer proposal passes 41-15 with only WREATH dissenting.

Next, HAND proposes to send FC Sulpicius of EAGLE off to fight the Syrians with all ten legions. WREATH abstains. GATE and EAGLE vote "Yes", the latter spending his last nine Talents to buy additional votes! CRESCENT votes "No", claiming that it is safer to field two armies against two wars and thus guard against losing to the game on a Standoff/Disaster dice roll. HAND sees the wisdom in this and votes against his own proposal, but that still allows it to pass by a 27-23 vote. With only three Talents remaining in his Personal Treasuries, HAND is powerless to buy enough votes to change the outcome, so he uses his last Tribune to veto his own proposal! Thus freed from his own legislation, HAND next reveals a stunning joint proposal to raise ten legions and two fleets, send FC Sulpicius to fight the Syrians with the minimum force (one veteran and one regular legion plus two fleets) while he takes the remaining 18 legions and five fleets against the Macedonians. Moreover, he is burning his bridges behind him by announcing to WREATH and EAGLE that if the proposal fails, he will close the Senate and allow the game system to win by default.

HAND has shown himself to be both a klutz and diabolically clever in the same phase! Using your last tribune to veto your own proposal hardly brings to mind visions of great statesmen. However, credit him with the courage to recognize his own gaffe and take advantage of an opportunity when he sees it - even if belatedly.

I thought EAGLE's purchase of votes was a bit extreme, but apparently he feared just this type of counter-proposal should it fail. As it turns out, his purchase of votes was just enough to force HAND to use his last Tribune. Had HAND not had a Tribune, Sulpicius would now be leading a much larger army against the Syrians.

HAND's second proposal makes a lot of sense - from both his personal viewpoint and that of the other players. Although his motivation is strictly personal (to gain influence for himself by gaining a victory and gain ground against EAGLE should Sulpicius end up falling on his sword), he improves the chances of the others as well by giving them two opportunities to defeat a fourth war and so avoid the game-ending debacle of a Disaster/Standoff dice roll. However, his threat to close the Senate and allow the game to win automatically if his proposal fails is hardly the stuff to make him many friends on the last turn. Such blackmail rarely pays off; it often has just the opposite effect of what is intended as players would rather see the game win than the blackmailer. Moreover, the others can turn the tables on him by voting down his proposal and then playing a Tribune to keep the Senate open and propose another disposition of forces with his Furius at the head of the short-handed army. In short, the penultimate turn is too early to be making these kinds of threats. He has kissed goodbye any support whatever on the upcoming last turn, and even if he succeeds he has only made himself the target of final turn treachery.

EAGLE leads the organized outcry against HAND's heavy-handed politics. Although it would have been defeated on vote count alone, WREATH - voting third - plays a Tribune to veto HAND's proposal. EAGLE then plays his Tribune to keep the Senate meeting open and proposes a more equitable division of forces with one veteran and nine regular legions under his FC Sulpicius against the Syrians at 14:6 odds, while Furius undertakes the Macedonian War with three veteran and seven regular legions at 16:10 odds. This proposal passes unanimously and as the Senate closes good news arrives in the return of Tax Farmer 4 to the Forum. And Hannibal has not burned any new Tax Farmers. The Gods must be smiling on Rome as she sends off her do-or-die expeditions.

EAGLE's proposal is certainly a better one for both Rome and himself. In contrast to HAND, who tripped all over his greed, EAGLE has resisted the urge for revenge and sent HAND's Furius off to war with a +6 advantage when it was well within his power to turn the tables on HAND and send him out with an even force while EAGLE reserved the overwhelming advantage for himself. In fact, there are reasons why he should have done so. HAND has shown himself quick to jump on opportunities for personal advancement. Now that he has failed at his attempt of virtual blackmail of all the other players, he may well feel backed into a corner from which the only hope of personal victory would be down the path of a revolt. Entrusting such a desperate man with a large force may not be wise.

Although HAND is undoubtedly grateful to be sent out at the head of a sizeable army after the failure of his power play, he is letting slip his best chance to hold onto the opportunity this war presents. Before closing the Senate, he should try to pass more Land Bills with his own Plautius as sponsor. Having frittered away all of his tribunes, HAND's only hope of avoiding prosecution of Plautius next turn is to make him very popular. With the game ending by time limit next turn anyway, there is no need to be concerned about Rome's finances. The only way to stop this play would cost his opposition either Tribunes or popularity - both of which would be to his advantage.

Combat Phase:

FC Sulpicius of EAGLE is the first to take the field and attacks the Syrians at 14:6. A dice roll of "15" results in a Standoff with the loss of one fleet and two regular legions. Sulpicius himself survives the battle and names the XIV Legion a Veteran loyal to himself.

As RC Furius takes the field against Macedon at 16:10, the game hangs in the balance. The potential for loss is much greater than in the unsuccessful Syrian Campaign. A dice roll of "3" through "7", "13" or "14" will result in the fall of Rome and defeat for all players. The actual dice roll is a "12"; Rome escapes and the game continues by the thinnest of margins. Furius' victory is complete. He suffers no losses and names the V Legion a Veteran loyal to him. His Popularity rises to "5" and his Influence to "13". The State Treasury increases 45T

to 49T, and the Unrest Level is thus lowered to a manageable "3".

Our players have avoided disaster by a whisker, and now, thanks to the artificial time limit of the opening scenario, can get down to the business of seeing who among them shall win without further interference from the game system. The players remain extremely close in total Influence. Even GATE is in a strong position thanks to his Seduction card and money hoard. He who does best in the next Senate Phase should win the game.

Revolution Phase:

The Revolution Phase is again uneventful. HAND returns his legions to Rome (after checking to find only four will follow him) and Sulpicius remains in Syria as Proconsul. WREATH plays the Mining Concession on Aelius and EAGLE plays Tax Farmer 1 on Macedonicus.



TURN 7:

THE RISE OF GATE

Mortality Phase:

No new deaths.

Revenue Phase:

HAND: 11 Votes, 40 Total Influence

Fulvius #7 (2-2-8-4) FL, K2, PC

Furius #8 (3-3-8-13) RC, P5, AV, 11T

Papirius #11 (1-2-6-6) PC, 11T

Plautius #17 (2-1-6-17) PC, K1, Land Commissioner, 12T

WREATH: 15 Votes, 37 Total Influence

Aelius #14 (3-4-7-2) FL, P1, K3, Mining

Cunctator #2A (5-2-7-16) PC, 9T

Claudius #5 (2-3-7-4) Harbor Fees, 10T

Aurelius #9 (2-3-7-15) PC, AIII, C, P2

Card: Tribune

CRESCENT: 12 Votes, 32 Total Influence, 4T

Flaminius #18A (5-4-7-4) FL, P1, K3, Tax Farmer 2, 25T

Valerius #3 (1-2-10-10) P-5

Julius #4 (4-3-9-14) PC, P5, AI

Cato the Elder #22A (1-6-10-4) G Cisalpine Gaul

EAGLE: 5 Votes, 37 Total Influence

Macedonicus #19A (5-4-8-20) FL, PC, K1, P8, AII, 22T

Sulpicius #15 (3-2-8-7) AXIV, FC/Proconsul

Calpurnius #16 (1-2-9-10) PC, P2, G Illyricum

Card: Secret Bodyguard

GATE: 11 Votes, 29 Total Influence, 20T

Manlius #6 (3-2-7-4) Sicilian Grain, Tax Farmer 6, 6T

Africanus #1A (5-5-7-14) PC, P3, AIV, 29T

Junius #10 (1-2-8-3) P-5, 6T

Flaminius #13 (4-2-6-8) PC, Shipbuilding, 6T

Cards: Armaments, Seduction, Tribune

STATE: 49T + 100T (Income) + 9T (Cisalpine Gaul & Illyricum) + 25T (Contribution from Crescent) - 15T (Land Bills) - 60T (Wars) - 48T (Maintenance) = 60T.

In addition, Calpurnius improves Illyricum to gain three Influence for himself and EAGLE.

The Revenue distributions portend much aggressive action in the Forum Phase, as only GATE has maintained a significant defense fund in his Faction treasury. Three factions have no Faction Treasury at all! CRESCENT's contribution is noteworthy because it puts the state collectively out of danger from a Natural Disaster or double Evil Omens-induced bankruptcy. In the process, it buys three Influence for him. CRESCENT is rightly banking on the attentions of the others being focused on the leaders and is thus braving the Forum Phase virtually penniless. The strategy may be the best he can do under the circumstances, but I doubt whether it will be enough. I'd have been tempted to put it all in one big Persuasion attempt myself. In any case, I don't see where the 4T in the Faction treasury is likely to serve any useful purpose. Better to have it available for buying votes.

Forum Phase:

HAND draws "Terentius #20 (2-1-6-1)" - a particularly uninspiring character - and persuades him with Plautius at 18:6 without risking anything. Fulvius attracts a Knight with no money expenditure. HAND Influence increases to "41" and votes to 13. His money remains untouched in hedgehog fashion in expectation of defending against Persuasion attempts soon.

HAND has made two critical errors which will cost him dearly. Defending against Persuasion attempts with Personal treasuries is inefficient. The old adage that he who defends everything defends nothing is true here. If he was going to adopt a defensive posture, he should have put everything in his Faction treasury so that he could concentrate his defense on those senators which have been announced as targets. The loss of even one major senator will cost him the lead, so he would be better advised staking everything on one defense. Then if he wins that defense, he can use that money for the sixth Initiative to attempt to take back any losses to subsequent raids by other players. As the leader, he can well expect several attempts against him, but apportioning his defenses evenly only assures that no one is really safe. It may be that he is aware of the availability of the Seduction card and has thus pre-set his defenses so as to overcome the inability of his Faction treasury to interfere against that card. If that is the case, his defense is reasonable; but his only hope is that the holder of that card does not have a big warchest to play with it. The other error (which is not as defensible) is his failure to change his Faction Leader. Influence is the only valuable commodity now and the only Persuasion-proof position he has is held by his least influential Senator.

WREATH draws "Acilius #12 (2-2-7-3)" into the Forum but ignores him. He has bigger

fish to fry. Cunctator attempts to persuade HAND's Papirius with a 9T-bribe and "attacks" at 27:24, only to fail with a dice roll of "6". Papirius is 9T richer for the attempt. Acilius is also noteworthy because it is the last card in the deck. The game will now officially end after this turn.

I don't fault WREATH for the attempt on Papirius, but I do condemn him for half measures. This is the final turn - it is all or nothing. What good does it do to hold ten Talents back in reserve in another senator's Treasury? Ten additional Talents would have bought Papirius, and with him 31T for subsequent action. What will he do with that 10T now? If half measures are his bag, he would be better off going after Acilius in the forum. WREATH could also use a lesson in the wisdom of changing Faction leaders.

CRESCENT benefits from WREATH's decision to attack HAND by persuading Acilius from the forum with Julius at 17:7 with no money risked. His Faction influence increases to "37" and his votes to 14.

Nothing to harp about here; things have broken CRESCENT's way admirably. Although, he too could benefit by a FL change, and I still think his chances are better with a single major persuasion attempt of a principle Senator.

EAGLE draws an Evil Omens Random Event to reduce the State to 40T. He stands pat otherwise.

To what purpose is the Macedonicus 22T hoard if not for use as a Persuasion attempt? Is he being patient and waiting to strike during the sixth initiative, or is he simply saving the money for votes? EAGLE has one major advantage; with two of his three Senators currently out of Rome and the third his Faction Leader, he is immune from Persuasion Attempts.

GATE plays his Seduction card against HAND's Plautius, but it does him no good because HAND has already fully committed his defense in the form of Personal Treasuries and Plautius can now augment his Loyalty of "13" with his 12T Personal Treasury for a total of "25". Fortunately for GATE, the warchest he has been building with six turns of inactivity now comes into play and a bribe of 25T augments Africanus' persuasive abilities for an "attack" of 44:25. Only a bad dice roll can save HAND now, but the roll is a "6" and Plautius moves to GATE with 37T. HAND's influence drops to "24" and his votes to 11. GATE's influence vaults him into the lead with "46" and his votes increase to 13. It would appear that the "worst to first" scenario can occur in Rome as well as in baseball. GATE completes his Initiative by changing his FL to Africanus.

GATE's ace-in-the-hole Seduction card proved to be worthless, but his warchest was so large it didn't matter. The single most important thing to learn about the play of this game is that it is one of timing. What you do isn't as

important as when you do it. GATE's play has seemed uninspired throughout, but by biding his time he has been able to strike when it mattered. While the others were frittering away their resources as the game progressed, he kept his to the end. Furthermore, he benefitted from being considered "out of it" while the others concentrated their attacks on the current leader. He has not won yet; but he has by far the biggest advantage the game has yet seen, and he should be able to add to it with aggressive play in the sixth initiative phase.

Sixth Initiative:

GATE's money advantage was never more in evidence. He bids an astounding 25T for the sixth Initiative and still has far more money left over than anyone else. WREATH bid all he had (10T) for the extra Initiative, but the other three passed. GATE attempts to add to his lead by announcing a Persuasion attempt with Plautius against WREATH's Claudius #5 (at 18:14). He then uses 5T to buy a Knight outright.

The Persuasion attempt versus Claudius is backed by all 29T in Plautius' Personal treasury! Claudius must go it alone with only the 10T already in his Personal treasury, so that the "attack" comes at maximum odds of 47:24. The resulting "8" dice roll moves Claudius to GATE with 39T and increases his Influence lead to ten over EAGLE.

I question the wisdom of an all-or-nothing Persuasion attempt on Claudius, who brings only an added four Influence. GATE will inevitably be the target of an assassination attempt on Plautius and/or Minor Prosecutions, which if successful will drop GATE to also-ran status. The target should have been another major Influence guy that, if successful, would have given GATE a lead so large that he could afford to lose any one senator to an assassination and still be in the lead. Risking his warchest on an extra four Influence makes little sense to me. The others are now firmly polarized against him, so his chances of getting anything favorable accomplished in the Senate Phase are somewhere between slim and none without Tribunes to actually make the proposals. He'll need his only Tribune to deflate one Prosecution attempt, and can maybe buy his way out of the other. The presence of the Evil Omens increased his chances of losing that entire warchest (by 11% to 28%). The same effort against a more influential senator could have all but won the game. The other players would then have had to kill off two of his senators, which would require the rather drastic step of electing one to Consul and sending him with a minimum army in hopes of a military defeat while assassinating the other. Now he must sweat the inevitable assassination attempt.

One tactic that nobody used was to press their Knights for money in the Forum Phase. With the voting so polarized on the final turn, I see little reason to hold onto them at this stage.

Senate Phase:

HAND, WREATH and CRESCENT (as the three least in this soon-to-end game) have cobbled together a quick alliance designed to vault

them back into consideration. It starts with HAND's outgoing RC nominating his own Fulvius, and Aelius of WREATH, as consul. CRESCENT is promised the Censorship. These three combine to pass the proposal 36-22. However, one vote is lost when Terentius of HAND is caught in an assassination attempt on Claudius of GATE and immediately dispatched to join his ancestors. HAND's Fulvius is implicated in the plot and automatically loses the five Influence just gained by his recent consulship. Meanwhile, Aelius is true to his word and nominates Flaminius of CRESCENT for Censor.

An assassination attempt against GATE is not a surprise, nor is the assassin. HAND had the least to lose. However, the target is arguably less than the best. As a faction can be the subject of only one assassination attempt per turn, this failure leaves GATE unassailable save for minor prosecutions. HAND's motivation was to eliminate the 39T warchest of Claudius before it could be used to buy votes. But even if we assume that those 39T would have been successful in defeating a Minor Prosecution against GATE, that would only account for a difference of nine Influence whereas a successful assassination of Plautius would net a 17-Influence reduction at one fell swoop. Money is important; but without the power of the Presiding Magistrate or tribunes to actually make proposals, it can rarely defeat united opposition alone.

WREATH may have missed his best opportunity by keeping his word to nominate CRESCENT for Censor. Had he assassinated HAND's FC and gotten away with it (a 33% chance), he could have named his own Dictator and Master of Horse for a gain of ten Influence. That would have left him just two behind GATE. He could then have attempted to wrangle an Open Trade out of CRESCENT for the Censorship, one in which CRESCENT must prosecute only GATE. It is difficult to see how he can win otherwise now.

HAND's Fulvius is found innocent of the plot to assassinate Claudius by a 36-22 vote, with only GATE and EAGLE voting "Guilty" and the people registering nary a care one way or the other on an automatic unmodified Appeal dice roll of "7". Flaminius of CRESCENT is elected Censor by a 41-17 tally with only GATE opposed. CRESCENT announces two Minor Prosecutions against GATE's Plautius and Flaminius for Land Commissioner and Ship Building fraud. In an obvious and bold move for influence, his own Valerius will handle both prosecutions.

This could be a winning move by CRESCENT. The others are caught between a rock and a hard place. They must vote Guilty or concede the game to GATE - and CRESCENT alone stands to benefit from the downfall of the accused by usurping half their lost influence. The innocence of HAND is a moot point. He is effectively out of the game in terms of his own chances. At this point, all he can do is help determine who does win. Throwing him a bone at this stage costs nothing. EAGLE though has

been active with some backstage diplomacy by "tipping" GATE of the coming double prosecution and suggesting that he spend big to defeat the current nomination. Obviously, EAGLE's interest is more in deflating GATE's wallet prematurely than protecting GATE's senators, and GATE sees through this for what it is. Given his current resources, he would be foolish to contest the Censorship as he cannot defeat all of the eligible candidates.

CRESCENT appeals to the others for their votes in the coming prosecution and urges them to join him in spending all they have. What he does not tell them is that "all he has" is nothing! His fortune consists of 4T sitting idly in his Faction treasury. The first Prosecution is aimed at Flaminius, and as GATE must vote first he has no choice but to play his last Tribune to end the prosecution. He is banking on Plautius' considerable influence and popularity, combined with his bankroll, to save the day.

So when Plautius' turn in the dock arrives, GATE again leads off with 39 bought votes, plus 17 by GATE, plus 17 for Plautius' influence, for a total of 73 votes for "Innocent". Fearing this may not be enough, he wisely appeals to the People with Plautius' four Popularity, but gains only four additional votes with a disappointing dice roll. EAGLE votes next and adds to his Faction's paltry five "Guilty" votes with 20 bought ones. WREATH has nothing to spend and consequently can muster only 12 "Guilty" votes. HAND is up next, and controls the outcome of the game. Hopelessly out of it himself, he alone has enough money to convict Plautius. He votes "Guilty" and augments his faction tally with 17 bought votes, thereby allowing CRESCENT to convict Plautius with his 14 faction votes. A final tally of 78-77.

Plautius loses five Influence, dropping GATE to a total of 45. Valerius gains three for the prosecution and raises CRESCENT to 46 total influence and the lead.

Both the prosecution and the defense thereof were well handled. One could quibble with the lack of contribution by the money wasting away in GATE's Faction treasury, but that would be taking advantage of hindsight. It is interesting to point out that CRESCENT's own trickery could have defeated him in the end. By telling the others to "join him" in buying votes to use against GATE, he could have easily left HAND with the mistaken impression that he had the wherewithal to buy the necessary votes to convict Plautius himself. Had HAND been a little less generous in his support in the mistaken belief that CRESCENT could buy his own lead, CRESCENT would have come up short and lost the game by his own duplicity.

As it is, CRESCENT may be thankful that only one of the prosecutions was successful. Had both succeeded, EAGLE had left standing orders to attempt an assassination against CRESCENT. GATE's having 45 influence actually protected CRESCENT in this instance, but I doubt whether we've seen the last of the knife wielding for this turn. Only the target has changed, and now the most likely assassin is GATE.

WREATH continues the Senate meeting by proposing to send all available forces under the HAND FC to conduct the Syrian War. This proposal is defeated with EAGLE, GATE and HAND opposed. Seeing nothing more to be gained, WREATH adjourns the Senate and thereby ends the game for all practical purposes.

GATE lost the opportunity for a win with the Senate meeting closure. He should have assassinated a CRESCENT senator as soon as he lost the lead. With the Senate adjourned, he has now lost the opportunity.

The artificial time limit ending of the individual scenarios makes them a less satisfying game experience than the extended game. It would have been very interesting to see how much longer this game would have continued had we continued it into the next deck. But the requirement for brevity in a Series Replay precluded that. I suspect we would have had a winner, or the game would have defeated them all, within three or four turns. Surely the strategy would have been different at the end and the decision to live with the Carthaginians howling at the city gates would have been much tougher to make. Veteran players of REPUBLIC OF ROME will soon move beyond the scenarios and find this less of a shortcoming.

However, for those who enjoy (or must play) a short game, this artificial "end-of-the-world" conclusion to the early scenarios can be eliminated by use of the following "house rule":

When the game has reached its normal time-limit ending, continue play with the next deck as if playing an extended Campaign Game. However, at the end of each game turn, roll a die to determine if the scenario ends - thus making a winner of the current Influence leader. The game ends on a die roll greater than or equal to "6". Add +1 to the die roll for each successive turn until the game ends. In this manner, players will not know with certainty when the scenario will end, and must hedge their bets accordingly.



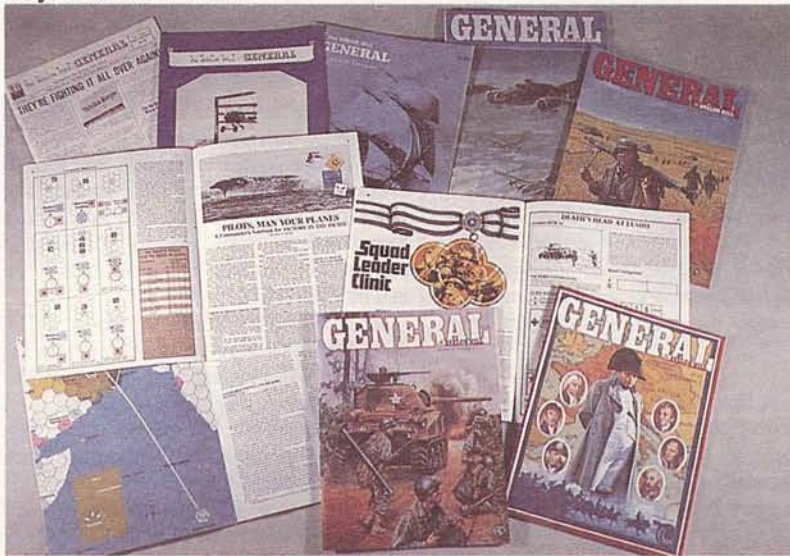
Tac Ops ... Cont'd from Page 36

in strength along two routes with a large reserve, or to move along three (or more) with a small reserve. (I prefer the latter, always keeping the different groups within supporting distance of each other.) To a large extent, his decision in this will determine American play.

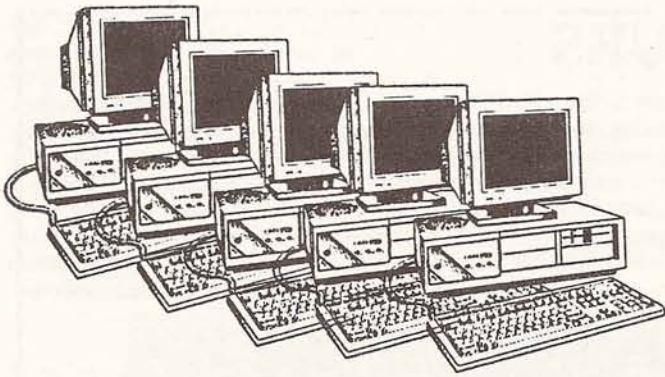
I hope this discussion has been enlightening, for the experienced as well as the novice TAC AIR player. I would also hope it generates some debate. Like PANZERBLITZ and SQUAD LEADER, this is a game system with great potential. Where it goes, however, depends much on the material for and by TAC AIR players that appears in these pages.

BACK ISSUES

Only the following back issues of *The GENERAL* remain in stock; price is \$4.00 per issue (plus the usual shipping and handling charges). Due to the low quantities of some back issues, if ordering, please specify alternative selections. Below is a listing of each in-stock back issue by subject matter; game abbreviations are italicized and standard (a partial listing may be found on the "Opponent's Wanted" form on the insert of this issue). Type of article is indicated by the following abbreviations: A - Analytical, DN - Designer's Notes, H - Historical, Q - Questions, P - PBM (postal), S - Strategy, Sc - Scenarios, SR - Series Replay, V - Variant. The featured game for each issue is always the first one listed. Those printed in red indicate one-color reprints of previously out-of-stock issues.



- 14-5: SL - H, A, DN, Q; WS&IM - A; TRC - S; MD - S; SST - S; 3R - S
 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, SR; CAE - V; KM - S; MR - S
 17-6: STAL - S; WS&IM - V, Sc; WAS - V; 3R - SR; SL - S; CL - S; VITP - 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: AF - 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 - V; SL - S; WS&IM - SR, P; DIP - S
 18-4: GL - H, V, A, Q; SL - 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; 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; DWTK - DN; TB - A
 19-2: BB'81 - H, Sc, S, DN; TLD - A, Q; SL - V; 3R - S; SOA - SR
 19-3: GSL - A, Sc, V, SR, Q; DIP - A; RW - Sc; GE - V; 1776 - Sc; LRT - V, Q; SL - A
 19-5: SON - A, S, H, Q; W&P - S, Q; DIP - A; WAT - V; WS&IM - Sc; SL - A
 19-6: VITP - P, SR; 3R - V, Q; DIP - A; FT - V; BIS - V; NAV - 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; DWTK - S, V, Q; DIP - A; CONQ - V, S
 20-5: BR - SR, S, H, Q; LRT - S; DIP - A; GSL - Sc; GE - A; WS&IM - Sc
 20-5: B-17 - A, V, SR, Q; AF - V; LW - S; DL - S; FE - S; DIP - A; MD - S; BR - SR; GOA - Sc; SL - A; PL - Q
 21-1: UF - S, A, SR, DN, Q; SOA - S; GI - H, S; TRC - S; DD - S
 21-2: NAB - S, DN; W&P - S, A, Q; NAP - S, Q; DIP - A; FR - S; FE - S; 3R - S; BFI - S; 1776 - S; SL - A
 21-4: PGG - S; SR; PB - A; 3R - S; TRC - S, V, Q; DIP - A; STAL - V, S; SL - Sc
 21-5: HW - S, V, A; MR - S, Q; OR - A; DIP - A; 3R - A; RB - S; CONQ - V; CIV - S; SL - A
 21-6: FP - H, V, SR; AIW - S, Sc; BL - V; TAC - V, Q; SL - A
 22-1: PAA - A, S, Q; TB - A, V; DWTK - DN; TR - V; GSL - P; DIP - A; AOC - S; WAS - S, Q; AK - V; CIV - S; 3R - S, Q
 22-2: BANZ - A, SR, Q; FT - A, S; SUB - Sc; VITP - S, Q
 22-3: PB - SR; PL - Sc, V, Q; SOA - S; 3R - V; DIP - A; CIV - A; UF - Sc, Q; AIW - S; GOA - A, Q; TLD - A
 22-4: RF - A, V, S; TRC - V; PK - S, Q; DIP - A; 3R - V; SUB - V; PGG - S
 22-5: DEV - S, A, Q; GSL - Sc; BR - S; DIP - P, A; SC - V; FITG - A; ASL - Sc, Q
 23-1: FL - A, V; DL - V, B-17 - V, DN; HW - S, Q; VITP - V; 3R - S; TT - V; LW - V; SST - V; RW - V
 23-2: ASL - A, S, Sc, Q; BV - SR; UF - S; DIP - A; PL - A
 23-3: SUB - V, Sc; ASL - S; BV - SR; HW - V; BL - V, Q; BB'81 - A
 23-4: EIA - S, DN; W&P - V, S; WS&IM - Sc; SC - V; NAP - S; YS - S; 3R - S, Q
 23-5: KOTA - DN, Sc, Q; WAT - V, B-17 - V, Q; 3R - S; RW - V; ASL - S; VITP - S
 23-6: 1830 - DN, S, V, Q; FP - Sc; RB - S; DEV - P; CIV - S; MR - S
 25-3: PAT - S, H, V, Sc; TPS - DN; AK - V; 3R - Sc, Q; ASL - S; PGG - P; PB - A; UF - V; SOA - V; PL - S; BB'81 - S
 25-4: EIS - S, H, V, Sc; WS&IM - V, P, Sc; EIA - V, Q; VITP - S; NB - DN; 1776 - V
 25-5: GE'88 - SR, V, H, Q; 1776 - S; ASL - H; FP - Sc; RB - V; OS - V; DEV - S; GOA - DN, Q; W&P - S, Q; BR - DN
 25-6: ASL - H, S, V, A, Sc, Q; PAA - S; RSN - V; UF - S; FP - Sc
 26-1: MOV - S, DN, V, SR, Q; DE - V; DUNE - V; DLW - S; KM - S; SC - S; ASL - A, Q; KR - V, Q; ROR - DN; CIV - V
 26-2: TPS - S, DN, SR, Q; PB - Sc; ASL - H, A; 3R - S, Q; HW - S, Q; UF - V; RF - S
 26-3: MBT - H, S, SR, Q; FL - V, Sc; FP - Sc; ACQ - S; TA - S
 26-4: SOJ - H, DN, S, Sc, Q; KM - V; TT - V; CIV - S; DIP - S; MR - A; ASL - A
 26-5: UF - S, V, SR; AF - V; FT - Sc; B-17 - V; FP - V; ASL - H, Q
 26-6: NB - DN, S, H, Sc, Q; EIA - Sc, V; 1830 - S; WS&IM - Sc; DEV - S; W&P - Sc
 27-1: TRC - S, H, V; ASL - H, Q; KR - V, Q; RF - S; TPS - S
 27-2: 3F - V, Sc, A; 6F - S; 2F - V; EIA - S, Q; ASL - S, D, Q; WS&IM - V; FT - V; VITP - S
 27-3: 3R - S, DN; TLD - S, V; ASL - S, DN, Q; FE - S
 27-4: ROR - A, SR, DN, Q; CIV - DN; KR - V; EIA - S; DIP - P



IN THE GAMEROOM, ALL ALONE

The Case for PBEM

By Russ Gifford

The following piece, reprinted from "At the Point" #7, is the product of the vivid imagination of Russ Gifford, godfather (in the original sense of the word) of the ASL topics on GENIE. With his permission, and that of Marc Hanna (editor of ATP, the best of the amateur ASL 'zines), we offer it here for those few readers who may as yet be unaware of all that online gaming has to offer the dedicated hobbyist.

It was late in the night, and it was raining when the cab dropped me at the corner of the Telephone Exchange building. I walked the last few steps to the club with the sound of thunder accompanying my footsteps on the deserted streets.

After I keyed in my personal code, the door opened and the doorman greeted me, taking my damp coat.

"Good to see you again, Mr. Gifford. I think it was last Thursday, wasn't it?"

He knew, from the tagged response to my door code and password, it was definitely last Thursday. But I knew he was only checking. If I hadn't been in on Thursday, then I'd also know someone else came in using my security code. Of course, it had never happened in six years - but that didn't stop the vigilant Jeeves from checking.

"Anyone else in, Jeeves?"

He checked his notes. "No, not at the moment; though Mr. O'Connor was here earlier, and has left you a message, and Mr. Martin is expected later this evening."

A note from O'Connor! That meant an ASL move! I nodded my thanks, and headed for the hall.

As I passed the Library, I could see eight to ten *DIPLOMACY* games, all at different stages of completion, waiting for their players to return. I could also see reams of negotiations scattered like leaves on the floor. (Hmmm . . . Must be a Fall turn!) I could almost overhear France and England deciding the fate of Germany, and debating whether the Russians were a threat. The Russians are *always* a threat, friend, especially if you're allied with them! I happened to know the Russian in question, better known around here as "Diplomacy-1". Poor fools, I thought. I'll be reading about their demise soon enough!

Any other night I might have stopped in to check out their situation. But this wasn't going to distract me tonight. Bob had left a message, and I couldn't wait to see if he'd fallen for the trap I'd set!

I took the stairs two at a time to Area 21. We used to be down the hall in #4, but we'd outgrown those rooms when Rex and Don started dropping in and telling their friends about it. Now Room #21 is devoted to just Avalon Hill games and the traffic is brisk, thanks to the PR bits in Don Burdick's "AREA News" column in *The GENERAL*.

As I topped the stairs, I heard a dull roar. I couldn't decide if it was the thunder, or the continuous Role-Playing party down in the dungeons. I never went near their lair, and they never bothered me; but we often said "hi" as we passed on the doorstep. What more could you ask of neighbors?

When I swung 'round the corner to "our" quarters, I still marveled at the "AVALON HILL" on the glass door. I'd been gaming here six years and boom, this happens six months after Rex Martin first stops by! Incredible!

Inside, there is a bulletin board in the anteroom. Here are the general notices, important changes, and other fun stuff for AH players. "CHECK IT OUT," proclaimed the big message . . . and I always do. Anything of interest to all the AH gamers could be found here. (When we were downstairs, they even posted letters from Evan during his tour of duty in the Gulf!)

The messages on this board are always aligned from oldest to newest, so it was easy to see what had been posted since my last visit. Hmmm . . . a new *B-17* squadron was heading out tonight . . . They're looking for more players in the online *STATIS-PRO BASEBALL* league . . . and . . . Oh ho! A Round-Table Conference was scheduled tonight with Don Greenwood in Conference Room #1! So that was the excitement! I could hear chairs shuffling as they prepared the room. I'll have to stop by - *after* I see Bob's move!

I entered the largest interior room and, though I had seen it many times, the sight of all these tables with ASL games in progress, all awaiting the return of their players, still awed me. It was an incredible collection of people and players; and, knowing there were still other rooms devoted to other AH games, it always seemed a little overwhelming to me. Why, the three *EMPIRES IN ARMS* campaign games alone filled an entire antechamber, and had been progressing steadily for several years since the first was started.

Some of the ASL boards were flagged, denoting their status as part of the "1991 ASL Online Championships". I looked over a few of those, noting the changes since my last visit. Hmmm, Ronald has finally given up the Death Trap in

his battle for "Guryev's Headquarters" with Phil. It looks like Lance is in trouble with Les "On the Kokoda Trail", too. Interesting . . . especially since Les would become my next opponent in the tourney, if he should win!

Continuing on toward my board, I stopped by my pigeon hole (also known as my mailbox) and pulled Bob's message. I hadn't opened it yet, but I noticed my hands were almost shaking in anticipation as I peeled the envelope off the letter. He could have fallen for my trap . . . or he could have just shot the hell out of my troops! Which would it be?

I stood there over my board, poised with tension, ready to translate from the paper to the mapboard. Would it be death, or glory? I started to move the pieces in accordance with Bob's instructions . . .

Maybe this isn't what it's *really* like online at GENIE. I mean, the doorman isn't really named "Jeeves", but he's there to greet me everytime I enter - or "sign on", as we call it. And of course, I can't "hear" things (like the wild D&D party or the *DIPLOMACY* conversations), but as I read through the different snippets and messages, it "feels" like I'm overhearing the words of other gamers.

Going online has always seemed to me like entering a huge building, filled with different rooms, on many different floors. Leaving the gaming area, which houses sections for role-playing, wargaming, computer games, PBM games and many, many others, there are various locations for almost any hobby. From short-wave radio DXers to comic-book collectors, sci-fi enthusiasts to military historians, there are "rooms" for all of them - and a multitude of others. But, of course, this is just the *hobby* section. There are also areas online for business, for research, and for communication. There are areas devoted to finance, and to fun. There are online shopping malls, college-level correspondence courses, and categories devoted to many other interests. There's something for everyone and, like Disneyland, too much for any one person to see *or* afford.

But for me, there is ASL. And that's what I'm here to talk to you readers about today.

Most wargamers are familiar with the acronyms "FTF" (face-to-face) and "PBM" (play-by-mail). Less familiar is "PBEM", meaning play-by-electronic-mail - or "Email", as it's commonly known. Electronic mail is the name given to text messages passed between computers, and PBEM is the acronym for using computer Email to play wargames.

The truth is, PBEM is really the same as PBM, only the method of exchange is different. But it does have one big advantage over regular postal play. In Email, your move is in your opponent's mailbox *as soon as you send it!* This single difference allows multi-phase games, like *ASL*, to become more accessible since you can play a full player-turn in a very short time, preserving the feel of FTF play. Also, since *ASL* by mail has to allow the attacker to send only part of his movement (to see what defensive fire he may draw), Email's speedy delivery means you're not waiting a week or more just to hear, "No Defensive Fire - go ahead!"

We make use of an honor system for resolving die and dice rolls. Worried about someone cheating? Sure, it would be easy. They can do so in most of the other systems I've tried too, so why work so hard to prevent the unpreventable? If you play with someone you think might be cheating, your option is simple: don't play with them again. It's a small price to pay to play *ASL* by mail. In all my PBEM *ASL* games, I've never felt I was being cheated, nor have I had any thoughts of cheating myself. Think about it: if I cheated and won, I could never tell myself I'd really "won" anyway; so what's the use? And if I cheated and still *lost*, what would that say about my ability to play this game? I'd be so embarrassed to know I couldn't even win by cheating that I'd have to quit!

Now that we have the ground rules, let's look at where to play *ASL* via Email. There are many different BBS available, though CompuServe and GENie are the best known. Both are fine services and offer many special features which set them apart. This article, though, will feature GENie, since this is really "where the action is" at the moment!

GENie (which stands for General Electric's Network for Information Exchange) is a little different than most Bulletin Board Systems (BBS). The heart of any BBS is the posting of public messages to fellow users. On most systems, these are placed on a "forum", or a board with room for a limited number of such messages (though that "limit" is usually VERY high!) When one more message than the limit is placed on the board, the oldest message is "pushed off" the board (or "scrolls off", as we say online). Most of these systems have general topic sections, such as "board wargames" or "PBM Games". (*DIPLOMACY* is usually one of the few boardgames to get a section all its own in most systems.) These sections are normally part of ten to 15 such topics all sharing a common theme, such as "Strategy Games".

But GENie is different, and it's this difference that has allowed *ASL* and *DIPLOMACY* - and now other AH games - to come into their own. GENie provides a category for boardgamers, and then it allows the users (that's you, me, anybody) to start a "topic" of discussion. If you gather enough people posting notes to your topic, it stays viable. The *ASL* topic languished for a month or so when it was originally started on GENie, but it then began to attract the notice of a few other *ASL*ers. As the messages began to pile up, so did the interest. We slowly took a few steps forward, played a few games online and then, in 1990, we decided

to hold a tourney. This netted us a few more players, and some more attention, and we were off!

In any other system, it wouldn't have worked as well. The messages we posted would have "scrolled off" before the interest could ever have started to grow. With nothing there to catch their attention as they come in, potential players would have passed right on by. Sure, those who manage GENie clean out our section when we hit 300+ messages; but they always leave a base of messages to catch the eye. (We now average about a hundred new messages a month.)

A key step in our efforts was the declaration of our initial online tournament as an AREA event. This meant the players had to join the AREA since all tournament games were to be reported for AREA rating. It caught Rex Martin and Don Burdick's attention, and they were nice enough to write us up in "AREA News" and the *ASL Annual*. The word started to spread, and our next tournament, again AREA-rated, drew 16 players. By then the second mention in "AREA News" was plugging the new event, and an explosion of talent followed!

Rex Martin began stopping by in July of '90, and now Avalon Hill has "officially" joined GENie, and even have their own section. With this happening, we transferred our *ASL* topic into their new category, and we are now the flagship of the AH section! (But, if *ASL* isn't your cup of tea, there are Email ladders now for *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* and *TURNING POINT: STALINGRAD*; or you can start your own AREA-based competition.)

At this point, we have even eight players willing to be alternates should any of the 1991 tournament players drop out. I recently made a nose count of different people who have posted messages in the *ASL* section in a two-month period. Of the 200+ messages, there were 40 to 50 different people chiming in! And there are still more coming on!

In essence, we have created a nationwide "club", someplace to "talk *ASL*", to find new opponents, and to gather the hottest news on the system from the guys on the Hill themselves! Rules questions are posted and discussed, which is *very* handy. Sometimes they are even commented on or resolved by Mac (aka GOD) via Rex. It's like being "plugged in" to a nationwide network of dedicated *ASL* players . . . because that's exactly what it is!

Here's a sampling of what's happening online as of this writing. There's an experiment in "double-blind" multi-player *ASL* just beginning, with six players, using the "Last Bid" scenario from *RED BARRICADES*. We are in the second round of our second annual AREA *ASL* tourney, utilizing a four-round Swiss system. Two members have undertaken a PBEM game to be used as an *At the Point* series replay, offered as a separate topic in the AH category. Many more games are happening online than just those in the tournament, and many of them are AREA-rated. Players take part in rule discussions in the section #2 bulletins, and Rex drops by rather often with news. Of late, some other "name" players have started arriving, like Eric Baker, Raymond Woloszyn, Marc Hanna and others.

GETTING STARTED

Hooking up to any BBS (Bulletin Board System) is easy. Using a modem, the computers could be hooked directly to each other or they can be connected to a "network", which is a computer system designed to allow other computers to link up and gather or exchange information. This network may be a huge system, like GENie, or it may simply be a small "bulletin board" service designed to accommodate one user at any given time.

What do you need to join? Very simply, a computer and a modem, the device which allows your computer to "send" messages via the phone lines. What kind of computer? That's up to you. It does not have to be the newest, or the largest, or the nicest for this purpose. I employ many high powered PCs in the course of my day, but I've been using the same \$100 Atari computer for Email since 1983. In fact, I recently bought a used "spare" one for \$25! Any computer that works with a modem will work to put you online! Your best option is to also have some sort of word-processor program, so you can create and save your moves "offline", saving time (and in some cases, money).

The modem is a more specific concern. Most bulletin boards accept 300, 1200 and 2400 baud transmissions. (Don't get hung up on the numbers; just realize this is the speed your computer uses for data exchange and that both computers have to be set at the same speed to share data.) The key point here is that 1200 baud is four times faster than 300, and 2400 is twice as fast as that. Most GENie telephone access lines accept any of these speeds. Other systems might not, however.

Modems have specific settings. You'll want to check your manual, but the standard setting is "8 bits, no parity, and half duplex" for GENie. If you see "double letters" anytime you type something online, change your duplex setting (from "half" to "whole", or vice-versa).

Again, don't get hung up on all this technical jargon. Do you care that your car ignition opens a switch from your battery to turn on your starting motor, which attaches to your flywheel to spin your pistons to create a vacuum which will pull a fuel and oxygen mixture into a cylinder, etc.? No - all you care is if the car gets you where you're going. The same principle applies here. Once you've set the modem, sit back and enjoy the system.

Signing up to GENie itself is simple. First, you need to discover the closest GENie access number (in many regions and large cities, they have a local trunk line that ties into the network). Do this by dialing information for the nearest to you. [*GENie now has an 800 number for sign-up as well: 1-800-638-8369.*]

After you connect, type "H" three times (do *not* hit enter/return). Then, when "U#=" appears, enter "XJMI1999,GENIE" and hit enter/return. After you are connected, they will take the information they need to allow you to become an immediate GENie member. You need to specify that GE applies the bill to either VISA, MasterCard, or your personal checking account. Whichever you decide to use, have that account number ready.

After you are actually online, you can find our section easily. Type "M805;1" at the first prompt, and then join the Gamers Round-Table. After that, type "SET 21", which places you in the primary Avalon Hill category. Then "REA 2 LAST" will give you the last message in the *ASL* section; "REA 2 # #" will allow you to read a span of messages in that same section. But a "REA 2 ALL" will take at least a half hour, so use it carefully; this command brings you all the postings in the *ASL* topic. "REA 1 ALL" should net you my online message for negotiating through the system, if you need help. A "TOP" command will show you a listing of *all* the topics in the Avalon Hill section, and the number of messages in each. And if you have any trouble, type "H" for help . . . or leave me a note on topic #2 (type "REP 2" and follow the directions). Or you can leave Email directly at my address: "SHANGRI".

One last point before I go back to the electronic age. Don't overlook small private BBS in your own home town for great gaming opportunities. For over a year, I used a local "free" BBS to teach and GM ten different *DIPLOMACY* games. It was great, and on the side a new friend and I played *TRC* and *ASL* by Email. Without that inexpensive introduction, I might never have discovered what PBEM had to offer the wargamer.

PBEM has many different forms, but it's all wonderful! For news of the hobby and the publishers, for games against skilled and responsible opponents completed in a reasonable span of time, for airing your own views, for reviews of new products, for the comradery that makes this hobby so special, there is nothing to compare with it (save perhaps, the major gaming conventions). Hope to see you online soon!

All this started from nothing. Now that AH is "online", there are sections for other AH games as well, and discussion of other topics associated with Avalon Hill (such as inside news of AvalonCon), and a special "online" version of "AREA News" co-written by Don Burdick. Among other items, this column features updates on the ASL AREA tournaments from CompuServe, GENie and FTF ones around the country. AREA ASL Specific memberships have risen dramatically since the introduction of these AREA-rated tourneys. With the advent of AvalonCon, these should *really* take off!

There are some costs involved in using an online BBS, but they are worth it to me. On GENie, the Email area (where you send and receive your moves) is a flat \$4.95 a month for unlimited usage. The AH section is part of the cost-per-minute rate, which is roughly 10 cents per minute in non-prime time (6PM to 8AM). It can take two minutes or so to scan through the "new" messages in the ASL section online if you check in every other day. You can spend up to another ten minutes if you read many sections, or "download" (copy) different files from the library sections to read at your leisure. Of course, all this depends on the usage that day or week, and how often you check in to read the messages.

But remember, what you spend is up to you. If you compose your messages online, spend a lot of time "wandering the halls" looking for "something" to happen, you're going to spend much more than you need. Use your word processor to write your answers "offline", when you aren't hooked into the system. Then sign in, collect your mail, read the new messages, upload your messages, and sign off to read the new messages and compose your new replies. It's not difficult, and it's a lot cheaper and more efficient.

PBEM may or may not be "right" for you. I will say that since I started PBEM, I have gotten "used" to PBM. I have now played many ASL games via "normal" mail, and found it equally rewarding. The difference is that regular PBM is a very solitary endeavor. PBEM on GENie is much more. There are messages posted updating players on games in progress, conferences with top AH personnel, and conversations with opponents and friends. It's like stopping by your wargaming club late at night, reading all the messages your friends have left, and getting a message from your opponent with your move. Bottom line: It's a hell of a lot of fun!

I finished the move, and sat back to look over the situation. Well, it wasn't glory, but it wasn't death either. Next time, Bob . . . next time. I started composing my defensive fire, listening to the thunder like the sound of distant guns, and heard the rain splatter on the windows like debris from a near miss. Yeah, this should work! This time, Bob, this time!



The Latest News
In
Competitive
Gaming

Area News

For Today...
and Tomorrow

BY RUSS GIFFORD

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC has become the most recent AH game to add an active AREA PBM Championship. The initial mailing to produce this ladder was sent directly to players with *VITP* Specific memberships, and netted many willing participants. Of course, there's always room for more. Glenn Petroski has agreed to act as moderator and judge. Those active in *VITP* know Glenn, either as a tough opponent or as the GM for the popular tournament at AvalonCon. His experience will be a major factor in the continued growth of this event.

Of course, a PBM ladder is only possible if there is a set of rules for PBM. James Lutz's article in *THE GENERAL* (Vol. 19, No. 6) has for seven years served as a durable set of regulations for postal play of *VITP*. Now, with some minor changes, it will be used as the official system for this ladder. For those interested in joining that may not have a copy, this issue is available direct from Avalon Hill for \$4.00.

The *VITP* ladder will follow the basic structure of the other AREA ladders. Initial pairings will be based upon the AREA ratings (note, though, that Specific ratings will take precedence over General ratings). Winners of their match will advance to play the opponent on the next higher rung, while losers will drop. Thus, in a ladder pairing of #1 vs. #2, #3 vs. #4 and #5 vs. #6, if all the odd numbered players won the second round would match #1 against #3, #2 against #5 and #4 against #6.

One difference in the *VITP* ladder will be that only one game will be played per round. If both players desire the same side, bids of POC will decide who receives the contested role. Beyond Glenn himself, others that have expressed an interest include Alan Applebaum, John Sharp, Dave Paronski, Kevin Kinsel, Tom Prokosh and Lance Ottman. If you are ready to test your skills in this classic game, now is the time to join!

I have also been asked about the possibilities of a ladder for *WS&M*. Two players - Ron Berger and Kevin Kinsel - have already "signed on" for such a ladder, should it come into being. Any other stout-hearted iron men out there? Kevin has volunteered to chair the ladder if there is enough interest to put one together.

There are also new ladders forming for Email play on GENie. A PBEM ladder of *TRC* has been started, and more players are welcome. The players are using the Sudden Death VC, and the AH/IKS-recom-

mended First Year Weather changes. If you are already a GENie member, drop by Topic 9 in Section 21; this is the "Opponents Wanted" area of the Avalon Hill section. If you are new to GENie, Email me (address: SHANGRI) and I'll send more detailed instructions for arriving there.

There's also a PBEM AREA ladder for *TPS* getting underway thereon. Ten players have signed on to date with GM Don Greenwood. Don has listed all the pertinent rules for the ladder in a special topic for that ladder, so check online for further information on this competition.

The ASL PBEM ladder mentioned in my article in this issue is still growing. Custodian Phil Pomerantz has recently expanded the pyramid to facilitate the action among the 50+ AREA-rated players currently jousting for bragging rights. Gary Fortenberry (Arlington TX) has recently successfully completed his first defense of the top spot. He is now awaiting the outcome of my own match with Marc Hanna to see who his next opponent will be.

Of course, PBM is not to every gamer's taste. In that case, the following should be of interest to you.

In FTF news, the first "ASL Masters", a Swiss-style AREA tournament, is being planned for the first weekend of December in Houston. This tourney will feature AREA-rated pairings with hundreds of dollars in prizes! This one is being offered by Astros' relief pitcher Curt Schilling, and will be the third jewel in the envisioned ASL "Triple Crown" (the others being the competitions at AvalonCon and Bill Conner's famous ASL Oktoberfest).

The premier event in the AREA gamer's calendar is fast approaching: AvalonCon 1992. The second of the series, it is set for Harrisburg PA again, with a cast of thousands. As a competitive gamer, you owe it to yourself to make plans to attend this event. As an attendee of Origins, GenCons and many regional conventions past, I can personally say that there is nothing that compares to Avalon Hill's convention. If you know someone who took part in the 1991 event, you know that mine is not an isolated view. Organized, well-run tournaments and great competition - along with a wonderful sense of comradery sets AvalonCon apart from all others. Of course, there is also the draw of playing in the AREA National Championships of your favorite boardgame!



ONE DAY AT A TIME

Strategic and Tactical Hints for D-DAY

By Robert Allred

This analysis of the Avalon Hill "classic" *D-DAY*, now to be replaced with a sleeker version I hear, will focus on the "big picture" (as they used to call it during World War II) and "zero-in" (another mid-century term) on some tactical hints. As such, this last article is not intended to be a definitive look at this great game, but rather to serve as an introduction for some of the many novice players entering our hobby who may meet up with it at conventions and decide to try their hand in competitive or open-gaming forums. I am quite sure, for instance, that some of the grognards found at Avalon-Con were studiously thrashing each other in a tense game of *D-DAY '77*.

Upon opening the mapboard, we see that the German player is placed in that most difficult of all positions, the cordon defense, which not only reflects the overall position of Germany at this stage of the war but also mirrors the problems faced by the Poles at the outbreak (as well as reminding us of the problems faced by the Confederacy during the Civil War, the Red Army in 1917-1920, and Mexico's impossible position when confronted with invasion by the United States in the last century). In *D-DAY '77*, Germany must try to cover as many of the 51 invadeable coastal hexes as possible, while holding all the invasion areas with enough strength to drive off, or at least slow down, the Allied invasion wherever it occurs. To hold all of this territory along northwest Holland and Belgium and the northwestern, western and southern coasts of France, the German player has 66 combat units, organized into 62 divisions, three brigades and a regiment, along with eight HQ counters. So we can see that, theoretically, covering every invadeable hex is possible. But how much strength should be devoted to holding these disparate and far-flung territories is certainly open to question.

Almost one-half of the Wehrmacht's units are the 33 "Static" divisions. Of the rest, 12 are infantry divisions, two are parachute divisions (with one parachute regiment), and four are armored infantry (*panzergrenadiers*). The remainder are the "sexy" units - nine panzer divisions and three panzer brigades. Any cursory survey of the mapboard shows that there are 13 major coastal ports (able to supply seven or more divisions each). With 12 infantry divisions, the German could cover them all, but - do we want to garrison every major port and coastal fortress with one of the scarce frontline infantry units? The answer must be "No". I prefer to garrison only the most important with at least a 3-4-3, or a stack of two or more static divisions. These include Marseilles (the port with the largest capacity), the vital hexes of Boulogne and Brest, and the linchpins of Le Havre, Calais, Dunkirk, Cherbourg, Rotterdam and Bordeaux.

After the initial invasion, which is likely to result in an intact Allied force in France, the German player's task becomes complicated by

the twin facts that not only must he build a defensive front to hold off the Allied units that are ashore, but he must also continue to hold as much of the remaining coast line as is practical. The latter is crucial, for he must deny the Allies the supply sources (the ports). As part of the strategic overview, take another look at the mapboard, which the rules booklet likens to a "funnel" with its broad mouth to the west and south and the narrower neck to the east, along the Franco-German border. Although the "narrower" neck isn't really all that much narrower, it is a much stronger defensive position owing to the cities, fortresses, river lines, mountain hexes and fortified zone (the vaunted "Siegfried Line"). For the German player, perhaps the most important advantage of this area is its close proximity to his replacement centers.

Let's take a closer look.

Any German effort to contain an Allied landing in the Bay of Biscay, Brittany or Normandy - to me, the only logical sites for the initial invasion - will hinge on bottling up the Allies on the respective peninsula (if the invasion comes at one of the latter two) or vigorously attacking to split up the Allied forces if they come ashore in the Bay of Biscay. In all of these cases, however, the Allies will eventually break out and the German player will be faced with the decision of where to build a defensive line across France, and of how much strength to commit to it. This decision is crucial, and much depends on how far forward the defensive line can be positioned. The further west you decide to establish it, the more of the Channel coast must also be covered.

Thus, a German defensive line that extends from Le Havre to Vichy encompasses not only the 20 hexes between those cities (behind the Seine/Loire river line) but also must include the 17 hexes along the coast between Le Havre and the dyke hexes at E11 and E12, as well as the 11 coastal hexes in southern France - for a total of 48 hexes in all. The potential German defensive line of the Somme, Oise, Meuse and the mountains (to Belfort) is also 20 hexes long, but shortens the Channel coast defensive line by five hexes. A line that takes in the Siegfried Line, including the retention of Rotterdam, and swings up as far as I16 (abandoning Boulogne) is 24 hexes in length, but the Channel coastline has shrunk to a manageable four hexes and cedes the southern France coast (hopefully, the German garrison there can safely evacuate to the new positions). About the only savings in distance over the Rotterdam/Siegfried Line is the final Ijssel/Siegfried Line position, which abandons the rest of the invadeable coast.

So, we can see that the funnel analogy is indeed valid. The further east the Wehrmacht establishes a defensive position, the shorter it will be - and the easier to manage with the shrinking forces available to the German player.

For the Allied player, the situation is not so much one of meager resources as it is one of getting them ashore in sufficient force and of seizing enough supply ports to build up fast enough to advance to the Rhine without delay. The Allied player has at his disposal 89 divisions, with a combined strength of 376 attack factors, as well as his air power; this array of might is opposed by 197 (unmodified) German defense factors. Of the combat factors available to the Allies, 228 are infantry, which alone would have a reasonable chance of success against the Germans. But the Allied player also possesses 130 armored and 18 parachute combat factors. Air strength must be calculated as well, for it can account for six factors (or even more if applied in an interdiction role, which can deny the enemy many more times the number of available combat factors at the front during any given turn).

However, there are some considerations to remember while making these calculations. The 12 Allied HQ units must be protected, and this will of necessity cost the Allied player 12-52 factors for garrisons to keep them safe from counterattack. The German player will usually enjoy a greater replacement capacity; although, after the 28th week, the Allies will receive up to five additional French divisions if France has been cleared of German units.

For the Allied player, his job will be to gain a victory through the judicious and efficient use of his superior force. The opposing player, with lesser quantity, will naturally tend to make optimal use of his available forces. On the other hand, the player with the superior numbers often overlooks the most efficient use of his forces at hand, and either wastes too many units in useless and unnecessary garrison duties or may send too many troops to the front but without getting them engaged in offensive operations. The Allied player in *D-DAY* must guard against the attitude that he is "rich" in units, or he will become too poor to attain the difficult goals set him by the game.

Allied armor units must always be placed in stacks with infantry units (or, at least, wage offensive combat with infantry participating) in order to avoid casualties in any "Exchange". In that armored and infantry units have the same movement factors and identical rules for combat and movement, this is much easier than in other games where such is not the case; they are in reality interchangeable, and it only makes sense to preserve the stronger units to maintain maximum combat power in the Allied force pool.

A resource that the Allied player cannot afford to squander in useless or risky actions is his parachute divisions. Of these six airborne units, four are available on D-Day, and the other two come into play in the 24th week. The Allied player will, of course, commit as many as possible to his initial invasion. Any that survive, plus any that can be resurrected in the

course of replacement, can and should be saved for a second (or even third) massive airborne assault - either in an effort to penetrate the German fortified line/mountain range position, or to breach a river defensive line (as the Allies attempted at Arnhem).

Allied players should make maximum use of the combined-arms approach, as this is the way to multiply the strength of their forces at hand through the commitment of every type of available unit acting in concert to inflict the most damage on the German forces. Airborne units drop behind a river line to cut retreats and eliminate favorable modifiers, while infantry and armor units attack across the river, with air support, to best effect. It is occasionally possible to use this combined-arms approach with the option of launching the offensive on the same turn and in the same area as your second invasion, thus adding the insult of an amphibious landing in the flank or rear to the injury.

The primary complication for the Allied player, in addition to simply getting ashore initially, is the rapid capture and control of enough Channel ports to supply the drive to the Rhine. He must guard against any "Battle of the Bulge" type counteroffensive, where the German player attempts to drive through a weak spot to seize Allied supply ports. Your HQ units at the Channel ports must have additional support in the form of garrisons of infantry or parachute units in or around the same hex in order to protect them in the event of a German breakthrough. The German player's ability to launch such counterattacks, although limited, is not negligible. Six strong infantry units, the powerful 3rd Fallschirmjaeger, four panzer-grenadier and ten panzer divisions are a force to be reckoned with, should your opponent elect to commit them in an offensive mode. The primary danger to the German player if he does resort to a counteroffensive, is that the Allied player might use his superior forces effectively, thereby eliminating enough of the strongest German units to make a drive across the Rhine relatively easy.

However, limited German counterattacks are another matter. It is imperative for the German to keep in being at least two stacks of the most powerful panzer and panzergrenadier divisions available to counterattack immediately any Allied spearheads that might manage to pierce the defensive line. Whenever possible, these counterattacks must include at least one infantry or static division to soak off any combat losses due to an "Exchange". This will not always be easy, as the infantry and static divisions have a lesser movement factor than the mechanized units. For this reason, as well as providing a "stiffener" for the line of static units along the front, I like to deploy infantry units at intervals of no more than five or six hexes apart along the line to provide a force pool of mobile units to deploy in any necessary counterattack.

Before proceeding, a word about the often maligned "static" divisions. The static divisions, despite their low combat value, are the "filler" that rounds out the German army in France in your game of *D-DAY*. These static divisions should not be sacrificed by abandoning them in the event of a general withdrawal,

any more than the infantry or paratroop or HQ units. They can and will help to occupy key points and fill out the new defensive line. The static divisions should even be replaced to some extent (while you also restore the more valuable mobile and infantry units) in order to keep your German OB at its optimum efficiency. These units can be used to soak off casualties in counterattacks, to hold important objectives, maintain a continuous front, and to secure the flanks of stronger divisions. In brief, the smart German player of *D-DAY* will find this mass of weak and slow divisions as invaluable an addition to his small number of strong units as did his counterparts in history.

The German player must also make judicious use of his HQ units, both in the initial set-up and in later deployments. HQ units can be placed in key backup positions behind the front to guard against any sudden Allied breakthroughs that might occupy important objectives that would otherwise be undefended. Such key hexes include loops in river lines behind the front, fortress, city or mountain hexes, island hexes in Holland, the crossing at the Zuider Zee dyke, and hexes along the Rhine. Another useful deployment for the German HQ - particularly in the initial set-up - is as a screen against Allied parachute drops by placing them in positions immediately behind the forward combat units, preventing the enemy from dropping behind units being attacked from the water.

An area that is particularly vulnerable to airborne assault is the Netherlands, owing to its flat terrain and the many river lines (which are an asset to landed parachute units as added protection against immediate counterattack. Indeed, Holland includes what is the most important real estate on the mapboard (outside Germany itself): hexrows H and I. These hexrows must be stoutly defended if and when the Allied armies approach overland. They should be guarded by an advance line that includes the islands in hexrow K, Antwerp, Liege and Maastricht and the hexes in L between these cities. If the Allied player can force the river defenses in H and I, then a crossing of the Rhine at the Ijssel cannot be far behind. Conversely, the Allied player will find the going tougher the farther south he attempts to cross the Rhine - with the exception being, oddly enough, the three fortress hexes at Trier, Metz and Saarbrücken. Once Metz has fallen, Allied divisions attacking S14 can ignore the German units in the fortresses, as their zones of control do not extend out.

The German positions south of Aachen will be strengthened by their depth, but any Allied advance through or north of this city will face but a single fortified line (and the Rhine itself). So this is the path of least resistance if the German player has heavily garrisoned the Dutch river lines as he should. The Allied drive above and through Aachen can be complemented by an offensive north of the Moselle, with the ultimate objective being a pincers move against the Rhine River loop at hex N11. Once the Rhine has been crossed, whether here or to the north, the advance should be toward the Ruhr River, thus avoiding the mountains and replacement centers to the south and east. Again, all of the

above attacks, from Holland and over the Rhine, should be accompanied by airdrops, so the Allied player would be wise to hold back his parachute divisions for this, the final and decisive phase of the game.

For the German player, time is strength; the expenditure of strength to buy time can be a wise investment - if the time bought is worthwhile. Thus, a thin line of static divisions in a "picket line" in front of the main line of defense can cost the Allied player a turn or two. As an example, the Dutch island-Antwerp-Liege-Meuse line can be "protected" by advance outposts of static divisions at Ostend, Lille, Tournai, Brussels, Namur, Verdun, Chalons, St. Dizier, Chaumont, Dijon, Vesoul and Besancon. Two or more static divisions and/or some infantry divisions in the gap along hexrows 19 and 20 can protect the approaches to Sedan for a turn or two. An Allied drive toward the Rhine south of Saarbrücken can become a nightmare for him, unless the German is foolish enough to under-garrison the area.

Of the seven invasion areas, the three closest to Germany (North Sea, Pas de Calais, and Le Havre) are the most critical. Normandy is of pivotal importance; if the German player holds it too lightly, it is the best bet for a successful landing site, and is an area that still allows for a fairly rapid buildup and permits a breakout into the interior of France (either towards Paris, or towards Le-Mans and Tours). The three remaining invasion areas are less conducive to a rapid buildup, breakout and race to the Rhine.

When structuring the initial coastal defense, the German player should garrison each of the coastal fortresses with an infantry unit - and La Rochelle, Bordeaux and Marseilles as well. Place paratroop divisions in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, and a mechanized unit holding the flanks of the Calais coastal fortresses at hexes L21 and O25.

With regard to the last three mentioned invasion areas (Brittany, Bay of Biscay, South France), if the German player has heavily garrisoned the Channel coast all the way to Brittany, then an Allied landing in one of these may be the only alternative open to the Allied player. As for South France, although an invasion here in the actual conflict made good strategic sense, insofar as the game is concerned, it may prove a difficult road to follow. Even though Marseilles has the largest port capacity in *D-DAY*, placing three HQs there will only extend the port's supply line as far as hexrow V. Although this is sufficient to drive towards the southern Rhine, it is not enough to threaten the weaker German positions on the northern half of the mapboard.

The Bay of Biscay is a fine place for the Allied player, who can be fairly certain of getting and staying ashore, and it is an easy area to keep from being bottled up in. It provides a fine staging point for a breakout. But, its small allowance for a buildup of only four divisions a turn and its distance from the Rhine make it a marginal invasion site.

Likewise, Brittany offers a coast that has so many invadable hexes that it is unlikely that the German player can prevent a successful landing there. But it is possible for the German

to bottle up the invasion at the neck of the peninsula, and its small buildup capacity make it a less desirable place to land.

The pivotal site of Normandy is a good choice for the Allies to come ashore, unless the enemy has garrisoned all its six invadable hexes and backed them up with additional units in Carentan and St. Lo and hexrow T. If Normandy is this stoutly defended, then the Allied player should consider an invasion in one of the areas to the west and south.

It goes without saying that the German player will most tightly hold the North Sea, Pas de Calais and Le Havre invasion areas. These should be considered invadable only for the second Allied invasion - and then only if the German garrisons there have been weakened to reinforce the lines in the interior of France. The North Sea is of particular interest as a second front as its seizure by the Allied player will bring him a much easier road. It is for this reason that the German player should pay careful attention to his forces there.

The German side has the capability, in the form of his panzer divisions, to inflict some grief on an incautious Allied landing. These forces should be used judiciously, and always in conjunction with infantry and panzer-grenadier divisions, wherever the Allied player's beachheads become overextended or disorganized. Some excellent avenues for panzer thrusts are the open areas along and on either side of hexrows K, P, S and T and anywhere in the south. These most valuable German units must be protected by stacking them with weaker units to absorb any losses.

For the Allied player, his paratroop divisions are the most valuable, and they must be protected as much as possible from the counterattacks which an astute German player will be sure to mount. It is for this reason that the German should strike at Allied airborne divisions, especially when these are in exposed positions and without friendly infantry or armor close at hand. Of course, the Allied player will try to reach and support his airborne units, and replace them as rapidly as possible.

When the German player does engage in a massive "Bulge" style offensive, the soundness of the logic of this attempt to cut the Allied supply line by recapturing Antwerp and other major Channel ports should be emulated. For this reason, in addition to hindering the Allied replacement rate, strong garrisons should be left in Boulogne, Calais and Dunkirk, even if isolated by the Allied advance. A subsequent German counterattack could link up with these fortresses.

Indeed, the German player should never give up on his slower moving static and infantry divisions, even if they are caught on the wrong side of an Allied breakout. Just as the tortoise managed to outrun the hare, these units might manage to rejoin a re-established front (if they are not isolated from their source of supply) if they maintain a persistent movement. The German should keep in mind that a successful Allied landing constitutes a penetration of his front, even if the enemy does not immediately break out into the interior, and all unit stationed to the west and south (with South France being

the exception) should begin to evacuate towards the new line to be established.

Thus, a successful Allied landing in Normandy should see the garrisons in Brittany (except Brest) and the Bay of Biscay moving towards the new defense line, which will follow the upper Loire and Eure rivers. Units in South France can hold in place until their escape route between Vichy and the Swiss border is threatened as the Allies approach the Loire. By evacuating as many units as possible (or failing this, using them to make sensible local counterattacks), the German player can make the most of his meager resources until he begins receiving reinforcements. Gaps in the line that are opened as the mass of static and infantry divisions withdraw should be plugged temporarily by the more mobile panzer and panzer-grenadier divisions. On the other hand, the Allied player will do well to attempt to isolate straggling German units from their supply sources. In all of the above, the German player will be at a distinct disadvantage, as the judicious use of Allied air power can tip the scales by altering the odds of any battle, as well as by isolating the enemy through river interdiction and even hindering the movement of specific units by their individual interdiction.

In sum, the player who makes maximum use of the resources at his disposal and employs them in an intelligent and pre-meditated manner will be the ultimate victor. The factor of chance tends to even out during the course of the game. Both players need to remain flexible if they expect to win. The German player will move from a static defense - where every hex is contested - to rapid withdrawal and mobile battle. The Allied player will meanwhile adopt this same flexibility, his status changing from a rapid breakout to several turns of buildup and concentration while preparing for the next short offensive.

With flexibility in mind, the German will not abandon the mass of static and weak infantry units, but will instead attempt to either withdraw with some form of battle line, or he will engage in some aggressive counterattacks. The Allied player will throw the maximum weight in ground and air into each offensive, and once a penetration is made will attempt to drive through into the enemy's next line of defense, isolating and destroying enemy units that become exposed. (Then he must halt to reorganize for the next effort, perhaps capturing any additional ports he may need.) *D-DAY* is a game of flexibility and proper use of resources - with the German maintaining a strategically defensive posture, but switching over to counterattack when necessary, and the Allied player on the strategic offensive, but perforce occasionally enduring a period of consolidation and buildup.

Any two novice players of *D-DAY* will find this simulation, if they alternate playing each side, balanced, accurate and highly enjoyable, without the complexities found in other designs on the campaign for France in 1944. It truly is one of the classics of wargaming. And it serves as an excellent introduction to our hobby - as I am sure Mr. Taylor's new design will as well.

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed: 124

Total Responses: 470

Rank:	Title	Rank Times			Freq. Ratio
		Last Pub	On Time	List	
1.	Advanced SL	AH	1	31	4.2
2.	Diplomacy	AH	2	32	2.2
3.	Third Reich	AH	5	11	2.0
4.	Up Front	AH	8	18	1.9
5.	VITP	AH	--	1	1.8
6.	Civilization	AH	10	4	1.7
7.	FlatTop	AH	14	3	1.6
8.	Russian Campaign	AH	3	5	1.6
9.	Bulge '81	AH	--	1	1.5
10.	Republic of Rome	AH	4	5	1.4
11.	Squad Leader	AH	--	1	1.4
12.	Russian Front	AH	17	2	1.3
13.	Empires in Arms	AH	--	1	1.2
14.	Gettysburg '88	AH	7	5	1.1
15.	Titan	AH	--	1	1.1
16.	Afrika Korps	AH	18	2	1.0
17.	Blackbeard	AH	11	3	1.0
18.	Bulge '91	AH	9	2	1.0
19.	Panzerblitz	AH	--	1	1.0
20.	WS&IM	AH	12	2	1.0

With the exception of the top four, long-running entrants in this casual "popularity poll", the listings for our many other titles are separated by but a few votes. Interestingly, some of the older games are getting quite a bit of play these days; perhaps the advent of PBEM and of AvalonCon have given them a new lease on life. Interesting too that both versions of *BULGE* are represented hereon. No doubt gamers will be debating for some months the values of each, a process started by our coverage in this issue. Meanwhile, the likes of *TITAN* unexpectedly slips into the listing, despite its age, lack of recent coverage, and fantasy format. A pleasant surprise, I might add; obviously some new players have discovered its joys.

AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 4

preparations for, it might be wise to have a few extra introductory games that you can use to entertain the overflow. Other methods include dividing the commands up in many games, so that all have a few pieces to run. Or you could take a chess tournament approach where two players actually play the game, and step back regularly to allow the class an opportunity to view the results and ask questions; the participants can then be rotated through the various class sessions.

Finding and developing opponents for our hobby can sometimes be a frustrating experience. Sometimes it just seems like there is no one out there who plays any of the games we enjoy. But, perhaps, with a little extra push on the part of us all, we can "educate" a few more individuals. And through these efforts reap the benefits of having a multitude of new opponents. I would be very happy to offer concrete suggestions and advice to anyone interested in starting a beginner's game class. Feel free to contact me at *Games, Crafts, Hobbies & Stuff* (9220 Lackland Road, St. Louis, MO 63114).



Whew! New for '92!

For those who've wondered what it takes to become PRESIDENT...

Innuendo! Rumor! Scandal!

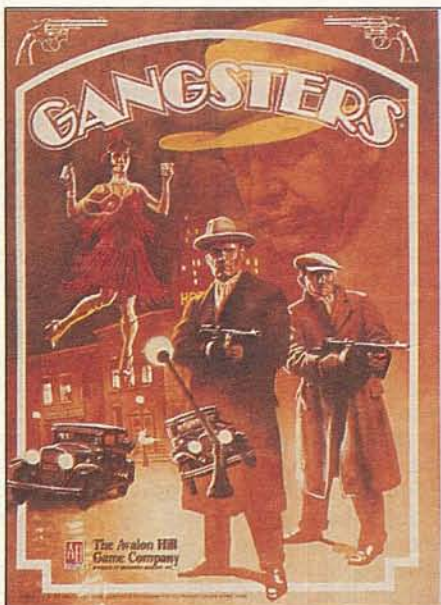
It's all here in CANDIDATE, the new board game that lets anyone chase the great American dream. No boring wait for turns! Everyone plays simultaneously in this fast-paced game that puts everyone in the shoes of a primary presidential hopeful. Object is to visit various states to win as many primaries...by fair means or foul...as is needed to become a presidential nominee.

For 2 to 6 players, CANDIDATE is a game packed with more surprises than a Dan Quayle resumé.

NO.	TITLE	PLAYERS	AGES	SUGGESTED RETAIL
6435	CANDIDATE	2 to 6	10 & Up	\$19 (a)

(a) Special Presidential Primary Promotion price; goes up to \$25 May 1.

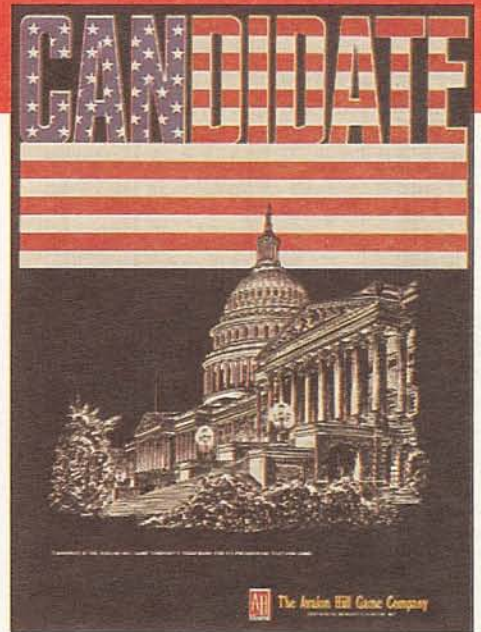
*Re-creation of the "good ole days" ...
extortion, mob activities, bootlegging,
racketeering, gang wars ... it's all here!*



It's the "Roaring Twenties"... and the object is to put together a syndicate and rule Chicago. Each player heads up a rival gang, directing the activities of racketeers, thugs, and vamps. Quick to learn due to simple rules; strategy plays a major role. A delicate balance must be attained between the use of subtle maneuver and outright use of force; decisions which must be made within the 2-minute turn limit.

For the light of heart, frivolity is not forgotten. Shootouts may occur and participants may get a drenching from their real-life adversaries with the Gangster Gun, a harmless water pistol included in the game.

NO.	TITLE	PLAYERS	AGES	SUGGESTED RETAIL
6430	GANGSTERS	2 to 5	12 & Up	\$29.95



30-year old college student seeks opponents for ASL, TLD and many other AH wargames. Joe Cleere, 3600 Gault Avenue North, Fort Payne, AL 35967. (205) 845-9599.

Opponents wanted: two-player and multi-player games. Yours games or ours. Small group of college-age players. John Baker, 4675 South Harrison Road #95, Tucson, AZ 85730. (602) 290-9177.

Opponents wanted for ASL, SL and 3rd REICH. Wes Vaughn, 3509 East Huntsville Road, Fayetteville, AR 72701. 442-2141 (or 422-9567 days).

PBM opponents for DD, FE, BB'81, TRC. Rated (1500 Prov) or unrated. Getting back into hobby after long absence. Bob Robles, 1155 Everett Court, Concord, CA 94518. (510) 827-9219.

Wargame Club newly formed in Moorpark, CA. Central location for Camarillo, Simi and Conejo Valley gamers. All games. Excellent facilities. For more info, contact: Jon Wagner, 4054 Bending Oak Court, Moorpark, CA 93021. (805) 529-1160.

The Marines have landed! A GUNG HO ASL player seeks new opponents. Are there any ASLers nearby? Robert Orf, 1166 East Alexander Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92404. 883-4898.

Would like opponent and/or gamemaster for PBM: FT, Pacific War, VITP, PL, PB, TLD, 5th or 7th Fleet. AREA 1500. Michael S. Fleming, 555 John Muir Drive #B621, San Francisco, CA 94132. (415) 333-0502.

AIR FORCE Campaign Game "Battle of Britain". Fly for the Luftwaffe or RAF. Only players interested in long-term play. C. Webb, c/o Hulet Associates, 701 Santa Monica Boulevard #200, Santa Monica, CA 90265.

Adult gamer seeks FTF opponents for ASL. San Fernando Valley area. SL Okay. Competitive but easy-going. Don Burton, 16601 Osborne Street, Sepulveda, CA 91343. (818) 893-3955.

Adult gamer seeks FTF opponents for ASL, AF, FT, FL and VG Fleet series. Kim Mark, 33648 Hartford Drive, Union City, CA 94587. (510) 471-6443.

Seeking FTF opponent in Fairfield-Vacaville area for ASL, W&P, 3R, WS&IM. Willing to play almost anything. Scott Peuse, 317 Ogden Way, Vacaville, CA 95687. (707) 451-0394.

3-person gaming squad wants opponents for role-playing games and ASL, BL, CM, DIP, GE'88, KR, MOV, TT, 1830. Dustin Hatchett, 7301 Jay Street, Arvada, CO 80003. (303) 427-5413.

Serious gamer seeks FTF ASL tutor or TPS opponents. Or, let me know what you've got and we'll explore options! Kurt Ballard, 2285 Parliament Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920. (719) 548-1328.

Experienced but rusty adult gamer getting back into the hobby. Seeks AREA/non-Area PBM/FTF for FE, PK, TRC, BB'81, TPS, TLD or FT. Jeff Martin, 38 Hannah Street, Bristol, CT 06010. (203) 585-6827.

Old Guard awargamer new to AREA. Will play AK, BB, TRC, FE, PG, TPS. No beginners or SL players please. Randy Heller, 138 Osprey Drive, Groton, CT 06340. 448-0198.

Adult gamer seeks FTF or PBM 3R, WS&IM. Am willing to set up multi-player game for each. John Moulton, 12262 SW 131st Avenue, Miami, FL 33186. (305) 233-5714.

Wanted: Adult PBM, rated or unrated, for RF, 3R, Pacific War. Have playable postal systems. Dave McFarland, 2247 Quail Ridge South, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418.

OPPONENTS WANTED

The ASL Schwerpunkt is advancing in Tampa. ASL players of all abilities are invited for lots of killing and fun. Evean Sherry, 503 Manatee Drive, Ruskin, FL 33570. (813) 645-6264.

MAGIC REALM PBM! Have 5 players - want more! Never too late to join. Beginners welcome also. C. Young, 13748 Hooli Circle, Pearl City, HI 96782.

Advanced CIV PBM. Playtested system. Objective: GMing. Low-moderate complexity. Grudgeless, randomized calamities. Send preference list/pick number between 1-10. Jared Scarborough, RR #1, Box 160, Payson, IL 62360.

Have games; will travel! FTF/PBM ASL, FP, BB'81, GE'77, WS&IM, Vietnam, NB, many more. Reasonable travel distances not a problem for me. Paul C. Worthington, 83 Maple Court, Hebron, IN 46341. (219) 996-5789.

Novice gamer in Kokomo area seeks FTF opponents in AK, MD, TRC, SL, VITP, W&P, WAT. Willing to learn others. Brian Gifford, 738 South Washington, Kokomo, IN 46901. (317) 452-4955.

FTF in or near Lafayette, Indiana. Will play most historical games. Carl Schwamberger, 1212 North 18th Street, Lafayette, IN 47904. (317) 742-7995.

Wanted: PBM PL, PB, 3R, W&P; AREA or non-Area. Michael Patterson, 9833 Overbrook Court, Leawood, KS 66206.

Tulane and New Orleans area gamers wanted. FTF play of VITP, 3R, DIP, CIV, BRIT, SP sports games. Will learn others! Jay Ovzts, 6440 South Claiborne, Apt. 106, New Orleans, LA 70125. (504) 866-8156.

I would like to PBM in a multi-player game of 3R run by a GM/referee. Leave message. Ernest Bartis, 71 Longwood Drive, Portland, ME 04102. (207) 772-1462.

Aberdeen area wargamers seek new opponents. Meet every Sunday. EIA, CM, CIV, MACH, EIS, KR, BRIT, MOV, ASL, UF, TPS. Kurt Schlegel, 708 Clayton Street, Aberdeen, MD 21001. (410) 272-3248.

Come play AH games at the "Chess Story". Personally, I will take all comers in any game; prefer ASL. Damon Norko, 332 Park Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201. (410) 783-4261.

Looking to have KM tournament in DC metro area. All welcome. Call/write for details. Kirk Harris, 1639-G Carriage House Terrace, Silver Spring, MD 20904. (301) 622-2618.

Pbm opponents wanted for BL, PB, BB'65, many others. AREA 1600 verified. Would like to try/learn SON and EIA. Douglas Ilioff, 1087 Buckhorn Road, Sykesville, MD 21784.

Gamer with eclectic tastes seeks same for FTF. Some favorites are ASL, DIP, NAP, TT, UF; but will try anything. Seth Owen, 62 Howland Road, Fairhaven, MA 02719. (508) 999-6118.

The Greater Springfield ASL Club is now the Southern New England ASL Players Association. We meet most Saturdays. Call or write: Vic Provost, 1454 Northampton Street, Holyoke, MA 01040. (413) 536-9661.

Looking for FTF opponents for BRIT, 3R, TRC, STAL, KREM, DIP, HW, VITP, 1776 from eastern and central Massachusetts. David Gage, 8 Massachusetts Avenue, Worcester, MA 01609. (508) 752-2077.

Adult PBM (AREA : 1500 Prov.) for AZ, TRC, BL. Non-Area play in GOA, GE'77, BB, RF. Quick, friendly, competent player seeks same. Jeff Scholz, 1908 Menominee SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506. (616) 245-8316.

Players wanted for umpired AF/DL PBM Demo Derby. SEnd SASE for info. FTF AF/DL opponents wanted also. Mike Rowles, 3119 14th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407. (612) 724-0610.

St. Louis area FTF players wanted for 1830, CIV, CONQ, DIP and RF. Edward Kazzimir, 629 West Canterbury, Apt. B, University City, MO 63132. (314) 569-5967.

Attention PB-lovers! I will GM PBM "blind" PB. No game fees. You pay postage. First two applicants accepted. Jeff Wise, 4711 North 118th Street, Omaha, NE 68164. (402) 498-3525.

PBM: AK, STAL, PN, PL. Reliable 30-year old seeks friendly, reliable, unrated competition. Jeff Wise, 4711 North 118th Street, Omaha, NE 68164. (402) 498-3525.

Adult gamer seeks PBM for PB, PL, MD, SL, TRC, FE; rated or non-rated. Any PBM systems for ASL? John A. Trosky, 247 Woodlawn Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07205. (201) 433-4784.

Looking for committed FTF 3R players only! Even at death's door, I will grapple with thee. Now that's commitment. I have unique 3R big board set up. Fred Kowalski, 41 Elizabeth Street, Port Chester, NY 10573. (914) 934-1374.

Local opponents wanted in Albany area for MD, MBT, RB, DUNE, CIV, UF and more. Michael Charbonneau, 224 Shirlwood Drive, Rotterdam, NY 12306. (518) 356-5813.

Experienced gamer relocated to Buffalo area. Prefer FTF ASL, 3R, others. Will also PBM. Will travel reasonable distance. Kevin Koenig, 255 Palmdale Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221. (716) 631-8615.

Adult player needs DEVIL's DEN opponent. Learn best while under fire. Need PBM system. Willie Voll, 250 Underhill Avenue #31, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598. (914) 245-4636.

Rise from your foxholes! Play ASL PBM. Great system. All letters answered since my wife won't let me FTF anymore. Jef Paull, 404 Trappers Run, Cary, NC 27513. (919) 469-5045.

East-side seeks same for FTF play of ASL, CAE, WS&IM, MD, others. Peter A. Shelling, 2891 East 111, Cleveland, OH 44104. (216) 229-0438.

Beginning adult gamer in north central Ohio area willing to take his lumps seeks FTF opponents for BB, SOA, CASS, STAL. John Simatocalas, 25 Cedargate Court, Galion, OH 44833. (419) 462-5883.

Beginning adult wargamer seeks FTF or PBM opponents in WAT, WS&IM, DEV, BB'81, BR. Michael O'Connor, 19901 Laurel Avenue, Rocky River, OH 44116. (216) 356-1539.

12 ASLers now in OKC/Tulsa metro! More in OK for friendly fun and future State Championship? Novices and old SL players welcome! Call or write John Farris, P.O. Box 547, Norman, OK 73070. (405) 799-8691.

UF, TPS, FT, NAP, GWE, BB '91, RF, HW, ASL, DEV, VITP, WS&IM. Anthony Togliola, 2404 Hirst Terrace, Apt. 5, Havertown, PA 19083. (215) 853-2671.

Serious adult novice seeks FTF experienced or novice player to help play through SL scenarios. Also have PL. Ted Femeza, 482 Laurel Hill Road, Cranston, RI 02920. (401) 434-9870.

Looking for adult FTF opponents in Charleston area. Will play PL, PB, SL, SOA, UF. Non-smokers only. Mark H. Walker, 105 Alwyn Blvd., Ladson, SC 29456. (803) 875-6114.

FTF opponents wanted in Knoxville and Morristown area. Rated and non-rated play for ASL system. Adults 19+ only. Tim Deane, 2110 Carolyn Drive, Jefferson City, TN 37760. 475-9286.

Adult gamer seeks FTF opponents for ASL. Have most modules and boards. Leave message. David Goodrich, 14825 Omicron Drive #204, San Antonio, TX 78245. (512) 677-0052.

Mountain State ASL fan needs FTF opponents. (R.Bamette of Romney, are you listening?) I consider myself a good gamer who needs a challenge. Rick Haines, P.O. Box 384, Augusta, WV 26704. (304) 496-9391.

Wanted: opponents for ASL RB CG3 within one hour of Madison (including Milwaukee and Rockford IL). Will travel. Let's get started. Rich Summers, 2207 Woodview Court #2, Madison, WI 53713. (608) 258-8262.

AREA 1500 player looking for rated/non-rated PBM games of SOA, 3R, PB. Will also play FTF games locally. Steve Cochran, 5452 West Green Tree Road, Milwaukee, WI 53223. 358-0949.

Fox Valley Gamers meet on alternate Saturdays. Mature players welcome! CIV, PB, PAA. Also two-player with emphasis on historical games. William Jacobsen, 1309 Liberty Court, Neenah, WI 54956. (414) 722-6187.

Adult FTF opponent wanted for AH and VG games. Brian Clemens, Site J2, C5, RR #2, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5K2. 722-2555.

Any wargamers in area? Play RF, W&P, PAA. Willing to learn new games and travel in immediate area. Desperate! Ron Alderdice, 1109 Water Street, Prince Rupert, BC, V8J 1C1. 627-7095

PBM for DD, AK, STAL, BL, TLD. Must be willing to play both sides. AHKS or AREA matches OK. Paul Martin, 1914-1917 St. Laurent Boulevard, Ottawa, ONT K1G 3P8. (613) 739-7053.

Windsor-Detroit area gamer would like opponents for FT, 3R, FP, 1776. David Micola, 2957 Meadowbrook Lane, Windsor, ONT N8T 3C4. 974-1822.

Hey Yankees! Experienced Brazilian player wants opponents to PBM. I bet you lose! Need system. All letters answered. EIA, FE, GOA, RF, W&P, WS&IM, 3R. Neditson Jorge, Sqn 307, "B", ap. 301, Brasilia, DF, 70746, BRASIL. Phone: (0055) (61) 347-2532.

Average Brazilian player needs opponents. CIV, DIP, GOA, MOV, ROR, 3R; rated or not (my AREA, 1500 Provisional). All letters answered. Luiz Claudio Duarte, SHIS-QI19, Con Junto 7, Casa 35, Brasilia, DF, 71655, BRASIL. Phone: 366-3432.

Any gamers near Köln (Cologne)? FT, TRC, RW, MBT, 6th Fleet, etc. PCS Nov '92, Box 177, APO 09072. Kevin Knoell, Bruesselestrasse 61, Kerpen, GERMANY 5014. Phone: 02237-52927.

Reliable adult gamer in Great Britain wants opponents for 3R, WS&IM, and DIP. All letters answered. Jonathan Smith, 90 Alderney Street, Pimlico, London, SW1V 4EY, GREAT BRITAIN. Phone: 071-2336810.

THE QUESTION BOX

REPUBLIC OF ROME

6.22 Does a War (such as the Jugurthine War) whose card does not indicate a subtraction of 20T still cost the Rome Treasury 20 Talents?
A. Yes.

7.312B If Statesmen 29A and 29B are both in play when the Family card #29 is drawn, who gets it?
A. It is placed beneath Stateman 29A.

9.24 & 9.91 Can a Senator refuse to be Master of Horse?
A. No.

9.411 Does a successful Minor Prosecution strip the prosecuted Senator of any office he is currently holding?
A. No.

9.412 Can the Censor name himself as Prosecutor?
A. No.

9.421 Does an exiled Senator lose negative Popularity also?
A. No, he loses only positive Popularity.

9.34 Does a Senator who forced a proposal to a vote using a Tribune lose influence if the motion is unanimously defeated by the votes of all the Senators of all the other factions in play?
A. No - he is not the "Presiding Magistrate" during the phase. Defeat of his proposal and loss of his Tribune is penalty enough in the game.

9.41 Can the same Senator be prosecuted twice in the same turn if he held two concessions, or a concession and an office?
A. Yes.

9.423 Does a faction that cast the most votes for an exiled Statesman's return and makes a successful Persuasion Attempt versus that Statesman also get the Family card of the Statesman even if it is held by another faction?
A. Yes - even if that Family card is the Faction Leader.

9.611A In which phase are concessions destroyed by the 2nd Punic War or Gladiator Slave Revolt?
A. The Senate Phase.

9.631 Can you repeal a Type I landbill during the Senate Phase?
A. Yes, but they are rarely repealed because they expire during the next turn anyway.

9.64 Can a Legion or fleet be disbanded and rebuilt in the same Senate Phase?
A. No.

9.64 How is the status of Veteran Legions determined when sending a force to oppose a particular war?
A. Should the proposal to send forces fail to specify the specific makeup of those forces, the Commander of the forces may pick which ones to take.

9.67 Can a "Consul for Life" nomination ever be made without the approval of the Presiding Magistrate or use of a Tribune?
A. No.

9.72 Can a Tribune veto either an appointment or a Dictator's election?
A. It can't veto an appointment. It can veto a Dictator's election, but only during its faction's turn to vote.

9.8 May a Faction attempt to assassinate one of its own Senators?
A. No. "Opposing" Senators are the only possible targets.

9.83 Are re-rolls for possible capture modified by the played Assassin and Bodyguard cards?
A. Yes.

9.84 If "neither the Censor nor Prosecutor" is involved in a special Major Prosecution, who chooses the voting order?
A. The Censor.

9.91 Can more than one Dictator election be held if the first is defeated?
A. Yes, but unlike Consular elections, there doesn't have to be one elected; 9.23 doesn't apply.

THE LONGEST DAY

\$85.00

Avalon Hill's Mammoth Game of the Battle for Normandy, 1944

At last, enough responses were received to insure a new entry on the RBG. And, in general, these were quite complimentary concerning Avalon Hill's first "monster" game (an "Overall Rating" of 2.53 places it 14th on the list). Given that the sample base is sufficiently broad, the results brought a couple of interesting points to mind.

One such is the correlation between "Playing Time" and "Playability". Average game length for *THE LONGEST DAY* is the highest to date on our chart. I suspect that this fact had something to do with the rating for "Playability", also the highest thus far. It's not easy to find the time (nor the space, for that matter) to enjoy this challenge to its fullest. Yet those who made the effort rated the "Excitement Level" as quite high.

Also of note is the players' consensus opinion on "Complexity", which they set significantly lower than that we accorded *TLD*. Seemingly less complex than some of Avalon Hill's recent products, the game system may be a perfect blend of simple

systems and historical detail. For both simulationists and gamers, this "old" design offers something worthy of praise.

Overall Value: 2.53
Components: 2.65
Map: 3.00
Counters: 2.18
Rulebook: 2.98
Complexity: 6.35
Completeness of Rules: 3.52
Playability: 4.29
Excitement Level: 3.17
Play Balance: 3.36
Authenticity: 2.88
Game Length (average): 189.1
Shortest: 6 hrs., 27 mins.
Longest: 56 hrs., 34 mins.
Year: 1980
Type: 2P
Sample Base: 62

READERS BUYER'S GUIDE

The following games are ranked by their reader-generated Overall Value. 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 each title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly. Readers are reminded that ratings take the form of a numerical value ranging from 1 to 9 (with "1" equalling "excellent" and "9" equalling "terrible"). However, the Game Length category is measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus, a rating of "18" equates to three hours). A "+" following the Year of release indicates that the game is continued or complemented by additional modules in successive years (for instance, the ratings for SL reflect the entire system - original game plus add-on modules). Game Type is broken down into three broad categories: SO = Solitaire; MP = Multi-Player; 2P = Two Player. Finally, it should be noted that a minimum requirement of 50 responses (see the Sample Base) was judged necessary for a valid representation; additional titles that garner such will be added to the RBG in the future.

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness	Playability	Authenticity	Game Length	Year	Type	Sample Base
ADVANCED SL	1.80	1.77	9.25	2.11	3.44	2.04	33.02	'85+	2P	172
1830	1.85	2.00	3.88	2.72	2.04	3.20	24.52	'86	MP	50
CIVILIZATION	1.97	2.60	3.20	2.03	1.72	4.09	32.08	'82	MP	152
FLATTOP	2.00	2.47	3.61	3.12	3.56	1.76	43.96	'81	2P	95
EIA	2.08	2.45	8.08	2.94	3.84	2.11	156.86	'86	MP	71
TP STALINGRAD	2.10	2.14	3.42	3.56	2.23	2.94	30.00	'89	2P	61
UP FRONT	2.11	2.24	4.36	2.83	2.38	3.56	10.16	'83+	2P	126
RUSSIAN FRONT	2.12	2.33	5.32	2.88	2.67	2.40	40.16	'85	2P	113
KREMLIN	2.28	2.51	3.64	3.33	1.81	5.24	11.94	'88	MP	63
BRITANNIA	2.31	3.08	2.93	2.89	2.07	3.52	23.72	'87	MP	77
TAC AIR	2.38	2.39	5.02	2.91	2.77	2.72	33.65	'88	2P	88
GETTYSBURG	2.42	2.61	1.79	3.32	1.64	4.43	9.11	'88	2P	66
MOV	2.50	2.42	3.38	2.46	2.24	3.53	15.42	'88	MP	79
LONGEST DAY	2.53	2.65	6.35	3.52	4.29	2.88	189.10	'80	2P	62
VITP	2.55	3.12	2.56	3.32	1.91	5.56	21.09	'77	2P	183
TRC	2.60	3.35	3.85	3.10	2.28	4.22	35.44	'76	2P	220
ENEMY IN SIGHT	2.61	2.88	2.30	2.63	1.87	5.76	7.73	'88	MP	68
7th Fleet	2.62	2.77	6.47	2.96	3.04	3.16	38.01	'87	2P	50
CASSINO	2.68	2.71	4.43	2.75	2.32	2.63	23.67	'88	2P	52
DIPLOMACY	2.71	3.36	3.00	2.69	2.92	5.16	33.26	'76	MP	169
ST. NAZAIRE	2.72	2.56	4.01	3.12	2.80	2.52	18.92	'87	SO	98
FIREPOWER	2.76	3.03	6.42	3.63	3.76	2.88	15.48	'85	2P	94
FLIGHT LEADER	2.79	2.20	4.62	3.00	2.77	3.20	10.18	'86	2P	76
MBT	2.80	2.68	5.37	3.16	3.36	2.57	15.08	'89	2P	51
DEVIL'S DEN	2.81	2.85	5.04	2.99	3.52	2.61	24.58	'85	2P	60
B-17	2.83	2.87	2.93	2.83	2.00	3.33	8.82	'83	SO	192
SQUAD LEADER	2.84	2.11	8.05	3.68	4.27	3.00	21.37	'77+	2P	231
2nd Fleet	2.89	3.35	5.27	3.44	3.28	3.55	32.23	'86	2P	55
WS&M	2.92	3.24	5.64	3.00	3.04	2.60	20.07	'75	2P	172
THIRD REICH	2.95	3.56	8.83	3.70	4.00	3.51	45.83	'81	MP	227
PANZER LEADER	3.12	2.79	5.63	3.72	3.32	3.82	19.47	'74	2P	210
WAR & PEACE	3.13	3.44	4.55	3.68	2.95	3.15	36.80	'80	2P	138
TITAN	3.16	2.68	3.48	2.66	2.47	4.48	29.08	'82	MP	65
Civil War	3.20	3.69	6.95	3.92	4.17	3.58	46.96	'83	2P	112
MAGIC REALM	3.29	2.44	8.41	4.08	4.20	3.79	20.76	'79	MP	75
NAVAL WAR	3.35	4.20	1.12	3.40	1.60	6.72	6.00	'83	MP	81
KINGMAKER	3.39	3.21	5.65	4.48	3.49	4.63	27.98	'76	MP	141
PG GUDERIAN	3.40	3.24	5.44	3.20	3.28	3.32	22.87	'84	2P	90
PATTON'S BEST	3.43	3.22	4.16	4.23	3.25	3.87	14.13	'87	SO	109
GLADIATOR	3.44	3.36	3.89	3.32	2.56	3.20	8.69	'81	2P	56
CM	3.47	3.60	3.28	3.39	2.64	3.36	11.70	'80	2P	91
6th Fleet	3.48	3.04	5.64	3.73	3.88	3.64	47.67	'85	2P	59
AIR FORCE	3.48	4.27	5.36	3.64	3.61	3.12	12.90	'80+	2P	76
PANZERBLITZ	3.56	3.55	4.92	4.16	3.26	4.50	18.25	'70	2P	215
Pacific War	3.64	3.57	7.98	4.32	5.28	3.19	120.63	'86	2P	66
Pax Britannica	3.64	3.60	4.85	3.91	4.25	4.61	52.14	'85	MP	50
MIDWAY	3.65	4.48	2.80	3.16	2.43	4.52	21.10	'64	2P	130
Ambush	3.68	4.08	4.94	4.40	3.91	4.61	19.69	'83+	SO	121
AFRIKA KORPS	3.77	4.43	2.20	2.84	1.88	5.40	21.44	'64	2P	167
HITLER'S WAR	3.80	3.89	4.20	4.25	3.44	4.68	34.79	'84	2P	78
WIZARD'S QUEST	3.82	3.07	2.11	2.94	2.15	4.92	20.92	'79	MP	85
WAR AT SEA	4.04	3.94	1.40	3.40	1.87	6.72	12.80	'76	2P	155
BLITZKRIEG	4.19	4.36	5.84	3.87	3.60	5.57	33.76	'65	2P	136
1776	4.25	3.64	5.28	3.88	3.24	4.40	26.30	'74	2P	154
D-DAY	4.32	4.73	3.56	3.45	2.91	5.08	27.16	'77	2P	125
RICHTHOFEN'S	4.33	3.78	3.99	3.60	3.24	4.87	8.23	'83	2P	53
WATERLOO	4.44	4.48	2.24	3.08	2.21	5.55	17.99	'62	2P	104
LUFTWAFFE	4.80	4.27	4.16	4.08	3.91	5.33	20.08	'71	2P	170

Returning to our roots, Vol. 27, No. 3 of *THE GENERAL* featured *THIRD REICH* - along with its expansion into an "Advanced" and computer version. Backed by some excellent articles on *THE LONGEST DAY* and AvalonCon, this brought the issue a very respectable 3.44 Overall Rating. Based upon a random sampling of 200 responses, the various articles therein rated as follows:

MAKING THE TRANSITION	223
AVALONCON	215
BATTLE LOG	154
PULLING OLD CHESTNUTS, Part II	145
ADVANCED GAME DESIGN	133
AH PHILOSOPHY	76
DOUBLE-TURN SHOTGUN	57
TO SPRING A TRAP	47
SHOOT-OUT IN THE WEST	38
BEHIND THE HIGH-WATER MARK	36
COMPUTER CORNER	29
COMING ATTRACTIONS	21
NORMANDY'S BACK DOOR	17
AREA NEWS	9

Der Musketier is undoubtedly the best German-language wargaming magazine, and three-time nominee for a "Charles Roberts Award" for amateur periodical (the only non-English publication ever nominated). It is printed four times a year, averaging 40-52 pages in length - and every word is devoted to our favorite hobby. A sample issue is available for two International Reply Coupons by contacting the editor: Ulrich Blennemann (Rosenthal 76, D-4320 Hattingen, Germany).

We're looking for volunteers to playtest again. This time the subject is a "Mad Max" type of futuristic, demolition-derby, cross-country auto race. The game system is exceedingly simple, much in the *ATTACK SUB* school of design. The playtest will require groups of at least four players (preferably six). Volunteers must be willing to spend a minimum of 20 hours per month in the effort and submit three written monthly reports regarding their findings. Applicants are cautioned that the playtest materials are of pre-production quality and may involve considerable labor to assem-

Infiltrator's Report

ble. Remuneration is limited to a free copy of the game for each group co-ordinator upon publication. If interested, you should dispatch a short letter of introduction to Don Greenwood (c/o Avalon Hill). We regret that, due to the volume of mail such playtest invitations usually generate, we will be able to reply only to those actually selected for the playtest.

Seems many of our readers have a better memory than we, for Contest #156 had more than the 76 entries that we had pegged. *GO, OD, MRWHO, TUF, TAC, RAM* and *NBA* (the latter three computer games) inadvertently slipped into the letter grid; although defunct and eminently forgettable, all are legitimate responses. Too, a case can be made that *AREA* (found in the upper right-hand corner of the grid) is a "product", and hence was an allowed answer; however, we discounted *CAP*, as it was not specific enough (although Avalon Hill caps were much seen at the recent AvalonCon). Hence, there were 84 possible entries on the letter grid of Contest #156! After dispatching those that had the misspelled *REPUBLIC OF ROME* indicated, we found that several dozen still had 80+ correct entries. From these, by way of the infamous random draw, we selected the following ten winners: Carlo Amato, Norristown, PA; Mike Arnold, Leominster, MA; Jim Burnett, Clinton, TN; Paul MacArthur, Maplewood, NJ; Steven Mones, Bear, DE; Don Maddox, St. Louis, MO; Scott Romanowski, Wilmington, MA; John Spurgeon, Council Bluffs, IA; James Truitt, North Grafton, MA; and Jeff Wolf, Willow Bunch, SASK.

One last word regarding our contest. Jim Burnett, in his letter, admitted to making use of a computer to solve our puzzle:

As this contest would have posed a bit of a problem to old, tired eyes, I knocked out a short computer program to convert all the various directions of text into linear left-right. Even this left the difficulty of visually searching the text, so I dumped the output to a file and began string-searching. This program turned up the more arcane titles easily. The hour

invested in the design of each of the separate programs certainly saved quite an amount of time. These programs were written in BASIC (MicroSoft QuickBasic, to be exact). I will be glad to furnish the listings to any who are interested.

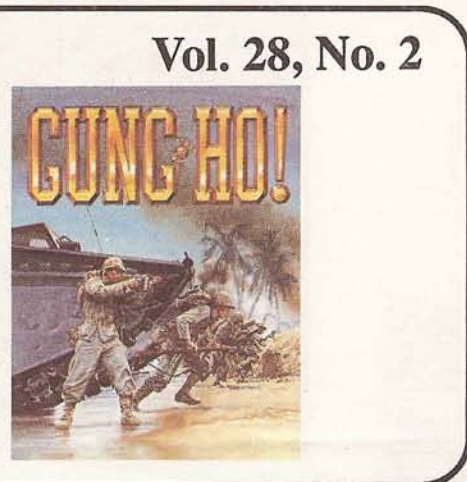
After some soul-searching, we decided nothing precluded using "artificial" intelligence to solve one of our new brand of contests. Rather, we'll just have to learn to put more twists into them to out-think those damnable machines.

Wrapped in a fictitious account of "Team 'CEPT" at AvalonCon, our 157th contest was devised (and revised) to kill off a few of the surplus brain cells of the readership. In short, it was a devilishly clever little logic puzzle. For those who may not yet have untangled the terse clues offered to arrive at the proper sequence of nicknames, last names and games played, here is our eight-step method:

- #1: From the first clue, "Tirreme" lost in either his second or third round, Mr. Midway in the third or fourth round of his tournament, and the fellow beaten at *PB* in the first or second round of that competition.
- #2: From the second clue, "Panzer" or Mr. Bismarck played *PB*.
- #3: From the third clue, "Erwin" or Mr. Arnhem could also have played *PB*.
- #4: But, more importantly, *PB* could not have been the first game lost - so our team member must have lost it in his second round (see #1 above). Which means, of course, that "Tirreme" lost in his third round and Mr. Midway in his fourth round.
- #5: Further, you can eliminate "Caesar" from the possible 2nd round losers' list (for he didn't play a WW2 game).
- #6: Next, the first game lost by the team must have been either *MBT* or *2nd Fleet*, so you can eliminate "Erwin" and Mr. Arnhem as potential first-round losers. And, since "Caesar" cannot be the loser in the first round, "Panzer" is the only remaining possibility. Further, "Erwin" must be the second-round loser, and "Caesar" the fourth.
- #7: Since "Panzer" played an "armor wargame", eliminate *2nd Fleet*; he must have lost at *MBT*.
- #8: By the third clue, "Caesar" Midway could not have played *WAS*, leaving *2nd Fleet* as the only remaining possibility for him. And, hence, *WAS* was lost in the third round.

The rest is merely a matter of matching up the last names with the proper games. And, it is fitting that Mr. Circus, who started all this, lost in his first-round match. The correct solution to Contest 157 should read as follows:

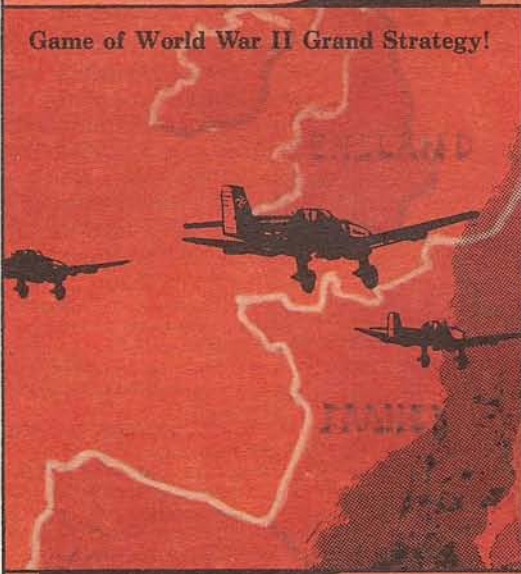
"Panzer" Circus lost *MBT* in the first round.
 "Erwin" Bismarck lost *PANZERBLITZ* in the second.
 "Tirreme" Arnhem lost *WAR AT SEA* in the third round.
 "Caesar" Midway lost *2nd Fleet* in the fourth round.



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Computer Third Reich is available for \$39.95. Please add \$6.00 shipping and handling (Canadian orders \$12.00; overseas \$18.00). IBM PC/PS and compatibles version is coming soon.

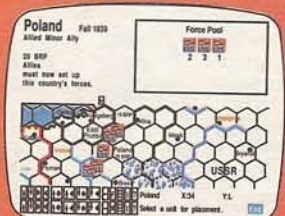
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MIDLAND	\$2500	18	0
FESTIVAL	\$400	18	0
GENERAL	\$1500	18	1
CONTINENTAL	\$500	18	4

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WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are always in vogue—be the subject books, television, shows, movies or even games. The public seems never to tire of seeing how its favorite way of spending their leisure time stacks up against the competition. So, to cater further to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity), this is *The GENERAL's* version of the gamer's top ten. From the responses to this form the editors produce the regular column "So That's What You've Been Playing" found elsewhere in this issue.

We aren't asking you to subjectively 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 fewer) games which you've spent the most time playing since you received your last issue of *The GENERAL*. With the collation of these responses, we can generate a consensus list of what's being played by our readership. This list can serve both as a guide for us (for coverage in these pages) and others (convention organizers spring instantly to mind). The degree of correlation between this listing, the Best Sellers Lists, and the RBG should prove extremely interesting.

Feel free to list any game of any sort regardless of manufacturer. There will be, of course, a built-in bias to the survey since the readers all play Avalon Hill games to some extent; but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other periodicals with special-interest based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's own evaluation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Opponent Wanted

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1. Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on this form or a facsimile and must be accompanied by a 50¢ token fee. No refunds. Payment may be made in uncanceled U.S. postage stamps.
2. For Sale, Trade, or Wanted To Buy ads will not be accepted. No refunds.
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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.

Advanced Squad Leader—ASL, Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Anzio—AZ, Blitzkrieg—BL, Britannia—BRIT, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, D-Day—DD, Devil's Den—DEV, Diplomacy—DIP, Empires in Arms—EIA, Enemy in Sight—EIS, Firepower—FP, Flat Top—FT, Flight Leader—FL, Gettysburg—GE, Gladiator—GL, Hitler's War—HW, Kremlin—KR, Kingmaker—KM, Knights of the Air—KOTA, The Longest Day—TLD, Luftwaffe—LW, Magic Realm—MR, Merchant of Venus—MOV, Midway—MD, Napoleon's Battles—NB, Naval War—NAV, New World—NW, Panzerarmee Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, PanzerGruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Rail Baron—RB, Republic of Rome—ROR, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Russian Front—RF, Siege of Jerusalem—SOJ, Stellar Conquest—SC, Squad Leader—SL, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Tac Air—TA, Third Reich—3R, Thunder at Cassino—CASS, Titan—TT, Turning Point: Stalingrad—TPS, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

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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 to 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 *HITLER'S WAR*, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 24, No. 5. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for Complexity, Year of Publication and Type (2P=two player; MP=multi-player; SO=solitaire) have been provided for your information.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Overall Value | _____ |
| 2. Components | _____ |
| 2a. Mapboard | _____ |
| 2b. Counters | _____ |
| 2c. Rulebook | _____ |
| 3. Complexity | _____ |
| 3a. Avalon Hill Complexity | <u>2</u> |
| 4. Completeness | _____ |
| 5. Playability | _____ |
| 5a. Excitement Level | _____ |
| 5b. Play Balance | _____ |
| 6. Authenticity | _____ |
| 7. Game Length | _____ |
| 7a. Shortest | _____ |
| 7b. Longest | _____ |
| 8. Year of Publication | <u>1991</u> |
| 9. Type | <u>2P</u> |

CONTEST #158

On Page 38 of this issue, readers will find yet another contest to challenge their knowledge of the hobby and Avalon Hill. As explained there, to enter our 158th contest, simply return the completed crossword puzzle. For those not wise in the way of crossword puzzles, the clue references relate to the alpha-numeric location of the first letter of the appropriate answer. While most of the answers to these clues deal with wargaming or military history, some demand a more eclectic knowledge. To insure that your entry is accorded proper consideration, please print the answers to the clues legibly in the spaces provided. Winners will be drawn from those who offer a completed crossword; failing that, those with the most correct answers will be declared winners.

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a reasonable facsimile - a photocopy of Page 38 with the answers thereon will serve). Ten winning entries will receive a merchandise credit voucher from The Avalon Hill Game Company. To be valid, an entry must include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole and a listing of the three best articles in the judgement of the contestant. The solution to Contest #158 will appear in the next issue, and the list of winner in the following issue.

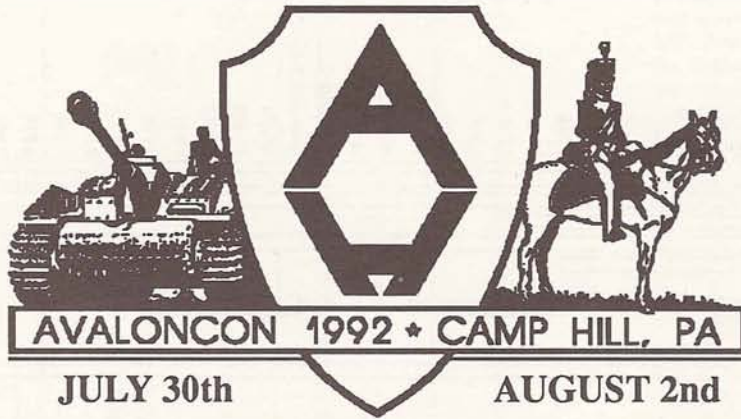
Issue as a whole _____ (Rate from 1 to 10, with "1" equating excellent and "10" terrible). To be valid for consideration, your contest entry must also include the three best articles, in your view:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____



I am not yet an AREA member. As a paid registrant to AVALONCON, I will receive my free Generic AREA membership which will allow me to play rated games in any tournament. I understand I'll receive AREA membership materials in the mail before the Convention program.

I am already an AREA member. My AREA Membership Number is: _____

I've lost my AREA number. I believe my Zip Code at the time I entered the AREA system was: _____

I am already an AREA member and already have a Specific Game membership rating in the _____ game which I would like printed on my badge for use in that tournament.

I enclose \$10.00 to purchase a Specific AREA membership for use at (or before) AVALONCON for the _____ game.

OFFICIAL AH USE ONLY:

Membership Number: _____ Current AREA rating: _____ Specific rating: _____

TEAM TOURNAMENT: I wish to register my four-person team in the Team Tournament at no additional charge. I realize that all the members of my team must be pre-registered and that we must each play a different title for which we have pre-registered. Substitutions of team participants or game selections can be made by mail or phone (410-254-9200, ex 320) anytime prior to July 27th. Our team members and the game each will play are listed below:

Official AH
Use Only:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

Game to be played by this team member:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

HATS & T-SHIRTS: Please reserve my free AVALONCON souvenir because I've pre-registered before July 1st. ✓ one only:

T-Shirts: Small Medium Large Xtra Large XXL XXXL XXXXL

Avaloncon cap

There is a \$4 surcharge for these sizes.

Please reserve _____ additional hats for which I enclose \$8 each.

Please reserve _____ additional t-shirts in sizes _____ for which I enclose \$8.00 each or \$12.00 each for size XXL or larger.

I enclose \$25 in check or money order made payable to The Avalon Hill Game Company to register for AVALONCON.

Charge my: VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS Expiration Date _____

Account Number _____ Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Total Enclosed: _____

HURRY! Registrations postmarked after July 1st, 1992 will not receive a free AVALONCON souvenir t-shirt or hat. Make your check or money order payable to: The Avalon Hill Game Company and mail to 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 or to FAX it, ☎ 410-254-0991.

◆ Be sure to register for your main event(s) on the reverse side. ◆

☛ **SMOKING POLICY:** There is a No Smoking policy in effect in all public areas of AVALONCON which will be strictly enforced.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF EVENTS

: Multiple Heat Entries Allowed
 : One Heat Entry/Player

Pre-registration Selection is limited to non-overlapping events.



STRAGGLER'S SORTIE; 4 PM SUNDAY; For registered guests of the Penn Harris on Sunday evening.

◆ If you select overlapping events, only the first will be recorded. ◆ Specify which Heat of multi-Heat events you'll enter. ◆



ROOM RESERVATIONS

July 30- August 2, 1992

Complete this form or a facsimile and return it with the required deposit to: Penn Harris Hotel, P.O. Box 839, Camp Hill, PA 17001. Or call 1-800-345-PENN. We suggest you make your room reservations promptly, as we cannot guarantee availability or equivalent alternate lodging after July 16, 1992. Once the Penn Harris is sold out, lodging requests will be referred to the nearest available hotel honoring the AVALONCON room rate. Be sure to fill out the form carefully, as the Penn Harris will honor only those reservations received with complete information and deposit or guarantee.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Arrival Date: _____

Departure Date: _____

Check-in time is 3:00 PM. ♦ Check-out time is 1:00 PM. Reservations which are not guaranteed by check (made out to Penn Harris Hotel) or credit card will only be held until 5:00 PM.

Credit Card

& Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

RATE: The Room rate is \$60.00 per day plus \$3.60 tax for one-to-four guests per room. Maximum of four people per room. A \$63.60 deposit is required to guarantee each room reservation.

I will share this room with:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Deposit Enclosed: _____

Registration and Open Gaming will begin Thursday, July 30th at 2 PM. Official tournaments will not start before 6 PM that evening.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: All spectators and children 14 and under are admitted free and may participate in Open Gaming without registration. They will not receive a badge, program, or free souvenir items. Children 14 and under may participate in specially designated "Juniors-only" tournaments free of charge. All other participation in official events at AVALONCON is limited to paid registrants wearing their own badges. Registrants may participate in unlimited events at no additional charge, but are limited to playing in one at a time. Most events will not be "sold out", but to guarantee your opportunity to play you must bring a copy of the game (to ensure sufficient copies on hand) and be present at the announced starting time. Those registering at the door will not receive a free AVALONCON souvenir but will be eligible for a \$5 discount if registering on Saturday and a \$10 discount if registering on Sunday.

WHAT YOU'LL GET: Pre-registrants of record on July 1st will be entitled to their choice of a free AVALONCON souvenir hat or t-shirt upon arrival. *Those who are not already members of the AREA Player Rating System will receive a free membership and explanatory materials by return mail.* Any game played at AVALONCON is subject to rating in the AREA system *if any participant requests it at the start of play.* Refusal to submit to rated play is not allowed. All who are pre-registered by July 1st will have the Convention program mailed to them on July 6th or shortly thereafter. This is the only confirmation you will receive. Those registering after July 1st must pick up their convention program at the site.

TEAM TOURNAMENT: You may pre-register any four players as a team provided each plays a different title for which he has pre-registered. Team entry and substitutions of players or game choices are allowed **ONLY** by pre-registration. You may make such changes by mail or phone only if they are received by July 27th. Call 410-254-9200, ex 320 to make last-minute changes. Players in the Team Tournament play individually for themselves, but also score in the event they have entered as a Team Tournament entry for their team's total score. The winners will receive a free suit at the 1993 AVALONCON.

EVENT DESCRIPTIONS: Events are listed in chronological order on page 2, and in alphabetical order here using the following format:

Name, Class, Format, Style, Duration, GM, Starting Time.

Name: Lists abbreviated name for the event used on the Chronological Chart & badges.

Class: A: Rules will not be explained; for experienced players only. B: Beginners welcome. Rules will be briefly explained. **If you need to be taught how to play, be present one hour before the scheduled playing time for instruction. Rules will NOT be taught during play except on an individual basis as time allows.**

Format: *Swiss Elim:* Play consists of a number of preliminary rounds in which all entrants participate to determine a number of finalists which will then play in Single Elimination format. *Swiss:* All entrants will play same number of rounds - usually being paired against opponents with similar records. *SE:* Single Elimination. Entrants play until they lose a game. *DE:* Double Elimination. Entrants play until they lose two games. *DEMO:* No prizes. *OTHER:* System to be explained by the GM.

Style: *Continuous:* Play continues round after round until completed with no more than 1-hour breaks. Rounds will not start after midnight and will resume at 9 AM. *The GM may require that rounds begun by midnight be played to conclusion that night.* Players must adhere to the GM's schedule.

Those who cannot must forfeit. **SCHEDULED:** Play has designated, timed rounds with predetermined meal/rest breaks of two hours or more. **SPLIT:** Two or more qualifying heats at different times. Unless otherwise specified, players may participate in more than one qualifying heat.

In all formats, the GM may adjudicate games which do not adhere to schedule.

Duration: The expected number of rounds and length of each. **NOTE:** *Some formats will require more or less rounds than announced depending on number of entrants.* Players should schedule their time accordingly and refrain from entering those events which their time constraints will not allow them to finish should they advance to the finals. SE events are especially prone to the need for added rounds to accommodate larger-than-expected fields. The GM may accommodate the schedules of finalists in the final round at his discretion.

GM: The Game Master who is in charge of the event. If an address is also present, the GM will provide additional photo-copied information in advance to all who send him a SASE.

Times: Starting times of the initial round are abbreviated as follows: Th - Thursday, Fr - Friday, Sa - Saturday, Sun - Sunday, A - AM, P - PM. The expected duration for all events is shown on the Chronological listing. You may wish to copy that page before pre-registering.

Prizes: All winners will receive a championship plaque. The winner and other finalists will receive Merchandise credits good for the purchase of our merchandise or finalist plaques according to a standard schedule based on the number of entrants. For example, there will be 32 prize-winners in a 128-player tournament.

PRE-REGISTRATION: You may pre-register for more than one event if no portion of their respective time lines overlap on the Chronological listing. Otherwise, select only one event. **NOTE:** Events with gray time lines have optional heats that do not require play in every session. Indicate the letter of the Heat for which you wish to register on the line following its abbreviation. Pre-registration earns preferential treatment for byes and helps us allocate space. Those events with a limited number of possible entrants are underscored; pre-registration for these events is recommended for entry.

THE EVENTS: Those designated "jr" are for those 14 and under only.

Acquire (ACQ), A, Swiss Elim, Continuous, three preliminary 1-hr rounds, four advance to 1-round final. B. Cleary. Fr 11 A.

Adel verpflichtet (ADV), B, Swiss Elim, Continuous-Split, four preliminary 1-hr rounds, two SE final rounds. May enter only one of two heats. R. Pfeiffer. Th 8 P.

Advanced Civilization (ACV), A, SE, Scheduled. Final will start Saturday night and finish Sun AM. Final will use Western Map Extension for an 8-player game. C. Hickok. Sa 9 A.

Advanced Squad Leader (ASL), A, Swiss, Continuous, seven 5-hr rounds. R. Berger, 24 Verde Vista Dr East, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360. Fr 9 A.

Advanced Third Reich (A3R), A, Swiss, Scheduled, three rounds of 3, 8 & 12 hrs (1940, Barbarossa, 1941 scenario). J. Brophy, 16 Beachfront Ln, New Rochelle, NY 10805. Fr 9 A.

AFTER ACTION MEETING: Beat your chest or sing our praises. Your chance to critique AVALONCON 92 and influence next year's championships. Midnight Saturday.

Afrika Korps (AFK), A, SE, Continuous, 6-hr rounds. J. Beard, 3822 E. Sahuaro Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85028. Th 8 P.

Anzlo (ANZ), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr. rounds of the 15-turn Basic Game. T. Oleson, Bergbostigen 5, 163 60 Spanga, Sweden. Th 6 P.

Attack Sub (ATS), B, SE, Continuous, five 1-hr rounds. Each is best 2-out-of-3 with one player choosing scenario and opponent choosing side. GM provides tie-breaker.

Rounds may go to single game format if running late. M. Fitzgerald. Su 10 A.

B-17 (B17), A, Other, Continuous, four 2-hr. rounds. A multi-round bombing raid. Play till you're shot down or the last mission to take off before midnight. D. Terry, 7501 Norris Ave, Sykesville, MD 21784. Th 6 P.

Battle of Bulge '81 (B81), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds using Race to Bastogne scenario, 2nd ed., Advanced rules & Optional Rule 36. B. Eshleman, 807 Logue St., Williamsport, PA 17701. Sa 9 A.

Battle of Bulge '91 (B91), A, SE, Scheduled, 3-hr rounds. Scenario #1 with all Basic Game and Optional rules and no draws. R. Eastep. Fr 9 A.

Blackbeard (BKB), A, SE, Continuous Two-pirate games with four players per game. If no winner after 4 hours, the surviving pirate with the most loot will advance. R. Knowles. Fr 2 P.

Britannia (BRI), B, Swiss-Modified, Split, five 5-hr rounds. Must play in at least two of five heats to qualify for finals. T. Strong, 1027 E. 7th St #5, Long Beach, CA 90813. Th 8 P.

Candidate (CDT), B, SE, Continuous, 3-hr rounds. Dirty tricks aplenty in our new election game. J. Vroom. Th 7 P.

Circus Maximus (CMS), B, SE, Split, Join any or all of the four qualifying race heats to qualify for the Sunday final. W. Forrest. Fr 2 P.

Civil War (CVW), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds. D. Johnson, 11635 Crystal Creek Ln, Manassas, VA 22111. Fr 9 A.

Computer 3rd Reich (C3R), A, SE, Scheduled. Play two games vs the Omega - one as each side - anytime between noon and midnight. Top four scores advance to SE head-to-head Saturday morning. J. Huff. Fr 12 P.

D-Day '92 (DD9), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, two preliminary 3-hr rounds playing each side once. Four highest point totals advance to SE play in which they again play two-game rounds. S. Duncan. Fr 10 A.

Dinosaurs of Lost World JR (DLW), A, SE, Continuous, two 3-hr rounds. R. Stakenas. Sa 10 A.

Diplomacy (DIP), A, Swiss, Scheduled, three 5-hr rounds. Traditional Diplomacy prizes augment merchandise credit. J. Yerkey, 4 Dutton Ave, Catonsville, MD 21228. Fr 6 P.

Dragonhunt Jr (DGH), B, SE, Continuous, two-hour rounds. K. Stroh. Fr 3 P.

Dune (DUN), A, Swiss-mod, Continuous, two 3-hr rounds. S. Cousins, 96 Cedar St #4, Bangor, ME 04401. Fr 10 A.

1830 (183), A, SE, Split, three 5-hr qualifying 1st-round heats to qualify for subsequent play. Players may enter more than one Heat. A non-competitive teaching game will run concurrently if there is sufficient interest. K. Whitesell. Th 6 P.

Empires in Arms (EIA), A, Other, Continuous, one 3-day round of the 1805 or 1792 scenarios with the winners based on % of VPs in the game being played. This event limited to multiples of 7. W. Jaffe, 7048 Darby Towne Ct., Kingstowne, VA 22310. Fr 12 P.

Enemy In Sight (EIS), B, SE, Continuous, 2-hr rounds by designer Neal Schlaffer. Su 9 A.

Enemy In Sight Jr (EIJ), B, SE, Continuous, 2-hr rounds. C. Villeneuve. Sa 5 P.

Fifth Fleet (SFT), A, DE, Scheduled, first four rounds will use these scenarios in order: Nicobar War, Indian Ocean Wolfpacks, Battle of the Maldives, and Battle of the Flattops. K. Boylan. Fr 12 P.

Flashpoint: Golan (FPG), SE, Scheduled, 3-hr rounds using Duel for the Golan, Northern Incursion, & Battle of Armageddon as the rounds progress. Using a fixed game-turn length known only to the GM. K. Boylan. Sa 3 P.

Football Strategy (FBS), B, SE, Continuous, five 2-hr rounds. J. Powell. Th 7 P.

Fortress Europa (FSE), A, SE, Continuous, 3-hr rounds of the Invasion scenario. R. Heller, 138 Osprey Dr, Groton, CT 06340. Th 6 P.

Gangsters (GSR), B, SE, Continuous, 2-hr rounds played to a time limit in AH's newest game. D. Hawthorne. Fr 6 P.

Gettysburg '88 (GBG), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds of Scenario 5 using Optional rules 10A, B, C, & E. K. McCarthy. Th 7 P.

Kingmaker (KGM), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds. Variant and Advanced Game cards will be used. H. Thoen,

6220 Sherbrooke St. W, #510, Montreal, QUE H4B 1M3 Canada. Fr 9 A.

Korean War (KRW), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds. Opens with Invasion of S. Korea scenario. Must use Advanced Game in final. Side determined by VP bid. J. Bellas. Th 6 P.

Kremlin (KRM), B, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, three 2-hr Preliminary rounds using Advanced Game. Top six advance to final round to play Revolution variant (if majority agrees). S. Davis. Sa 12 P.

Legends of Robin Hood Jr (LRH), B, SE, Continuous, 2-hr rounds. C. Frattali. Fr 1 P.

March Madness (MMS), B, Other, Split-Continuous, four heats of four 1-hr rounds. Advanced Game. Each Heat resolves one 16-team bracket for entry to Final Four on Sunday. Entrants draft from predetermined 16 teams (including several new ones of recent vintage) in random order. Those who enter more than one Heat are placed at bottom of draft order in later Heats. J. Ellmann. Fr 8 P.

Merchant of Venus (MOV), A, Swiss, Continuous, two 3-hr rounds. Winner based on % of game's money. G. Mayer, 5190 Winter Haven Ct, Imperial, MO 62052. Sa 9 A.

Merchant of Venus JR (MVJ), B, SE, one round with winner based on % of game money if multiple games in play. C. Hickok. Th 6 P.

Napoleon's Battles (NPB), B, Demo. Straggler's Sortie: 15mm miniatures for those who can't get enough and will be remaining at the Penn Harris Sunday night. Starts Sunday at 4 PM. R. Berger/ERyan. Sa 4 P.

Naval War (NVW), B, SE, Continuous 2-hr rounds of six-players to 100 pts. J. Sharp. Th 7 P.

New World (NWD), A, SE, Continuous 5-hr rounds of six-player games. S. Nicewamer. Sa 7 P.

Panzerblitz (PZB), DE, Continuous 3-hr rounds. C. Harris. Sa 9 A.

Panzer Gruppe Guderian (PGG), A, SE, Scheduled, 4-hr rounds. P. Rennert, 7135 Kurth Ln, Seabrook, MD 20706. Fr 6 P.

Panzer Leader (PZL), A, DE, Continuous, 3-hr rounds. K. Harris, 1639G Carriage House Terrace, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Sa 9 A.

Patton's Best (PTB), A, Other, Continuous, one 6-hr round. Rules adapted for multi-player format. Can you lead the 999th "Armored Apparitions" Bn into Bastogne on Xmas day? J. Robert, 11318 Chimneas Ave, Northridge, CA 91326. Sa 6 P.

Pax Britannica (PXB), SE, Scheduled, 6+-hr rounds. Winners and top VP scorers advance to 7-player final. M. Herman. Fr 6 P.

Peloponnesian War (PPW), A, SE, Scheduled, 3-hr rounds of the Peloponnesian War scenario. M. Herman. Fr 4 P.

Rail Baron (RBN), A, SE, Scheduled, two 6-hour rounds. C. Willis. Fr 4 P.

Republic of Rome (ROR), A, SE, Scheduled, 6-hr rounds. No advance if the game wins. The Early Republic scenario will be used in the first round, and the Middle Republic in the second, but if decided by time limit, both will use Sudden Death VC published in Vol. 27, #5 of GENERAL. J. Gottesman. Fr 6 P.

Roadkill (RKL), B, SE, Continuous, 2-hr rounds. If this new futuristic demolition race game is not yet available at the convention, a prototype demonstration will be held instead. R. Jenkins. Sa 2 P.

Russian Front (RFT), A, SE, Scheduled, 7-hr rounds. Advanced Game with no options. June '41 scenario. Bid # of objectives/VP calculation. June '41 Fair Weather. J. Falling. Fr 9 A.

Speed Circuit (SCT), A, SE, Continuous 2-hr rounds with six players/board. J. Burnett. Sa 7 P.

Squad Leader (SQL), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, three 4-hr preliminary rounds. Top 8 advance to SE. No COI, COD, GI - original SL rules only. S. Romanowski. Fr 1 P.

Status Pro Baseball (SPB), A, Mini-League, Continuous. Draft 24-man teams and then play divisional schedule plus play-offs for division leaders. Only those who write the GM for a draft position beforehand may play. W. Patrick, 30575 Quinkert, Roseville, MI 48066. Sa 10 A.

Storm Over Arnhem (SOA), A, SE, Continuous. Three-hour rounds with optional AT Gun placement in effect. J. Fuqua. Th 8 P.

Super Deluxe ASL (SDA), A, Other, Continuous, ongoing round. Uses GHQ Miniatures & Terrain Maker hexes. Each player gets troops and a personal leader and plays till that leader is eliminated. Players may withdraw and re-enter to accommodate their schedules provided they can get their force off the board. GHQ will co-sponsor this event and offer additional GHQ credit prizes. A special "Hans Kruger" Award for Close Combat will be awarded by GM E. Ryan. Th 6 P.

Superstar Baseball (SSB), B, Swiss Elim, Split, two Heats of four 1-hr rounds. New charts of '91 Divisional Winners will be provided all entrants. Play in both heats is advantageous but not required. Only the two-highest scoring mgrs will advance to best-of-seven World series. R. Cox. Fr 5 P.

The Longest Day (TLD), A, Demo, Continuous. Non-stop continuation of 91's marathon game session starting June 25th with positions as they ended last year. Players should be willing to enlist for a minimum of an 8-hr stint. P. Sommers. Th 6 P.

The Russian Campaign (TRC), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous, five 2-hr rounds & SE finals. The swiss format which will determine SE seeding will be 5-tum games with historic weather. Players will bid for Germans using number of cities controlled after five turns as the bid. P. Flory. Fr 9 A.

Third Reich 4th Edition (3R4), A, SE, Continuous, limited to 16 players due to time restraints. GM will pick variants and adjust SW rules. R. Bamfield, 3209 S. 114th E. Ave, Tulsa, OK 74146. Th 6 P.

Third Reich Teams 4th Edition (3RT), A, SE, Continuous, Teams of 3-6 players in two or three rounds of Campaign Game play. Each team simultaneously plays a game as both the Axis and Allies. Enter your own team or write to be assigned one. B. Sutton, 9225 Fairlane Place, Laurel, MD 20708. Th 6 P.

Titan (TTN), A, Swiss Elim, Scheduled, three qualifying 6-hr rounds to pick six finalists. B. Scott, 2317 Barracks Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22901. Fr 9 A.

Titan JR (TTJ), B, SE, Continuous, 3-hr rounds, L. Lingle. Th 6 P.

Turning Point: Stalingrad (TPS), A, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds. One week games with tie-breakers. Bid VPs for sides. Ranged attacks x3 and Russian CB play balance rules. If more than 16 entrants, first round will be Kuibyshev scenario. H. Jones. Fr 12 P.

Tyranno Ex (TYX), B, SE, Continuous, 4-hr rounds. Learn and play the newest AH game imported from Europe. If unavailable by the convention, a prototype demonstration will be played instead. M. Uhl. Fr 6 P.

Up Front (UPF), A, Swiss Elim, Continuous, four-90 min. rounds to determine 16 finalists for the four rounds of SE play. Any agreed-upon scenario can be used in preliminaries, but finalists must play Scenario B, City Fight. A. Maly, 212G Foxhall Dr, Bel Air, MD 21015. Sa 9 A.

Victory In The Pacific (VIP), A, Swiss, Scheduled, seven 5-hr rounds. G. Petroski, 210 W. Hunt, Twin Lakes, WI 53181. Fr 9 A.

War At Sea (WAS), A, Swiss, Scheduled, six 2-hr rounds. A. Applebaum, 12 Gibbs St #3, Brookline, MA 02146. Sa 11 A.

Waterloo (WAT), A, SE, Scheduled, 5-hr rounds. Three 5-hr rounds/day. R. Robinson. Fr 9 A.

Win, Place & Show (WPS), B, Continuous, 3-hr rounds. J. Burnett. Sa 11 A.

Wizard's Quest Jr (WQJ), B, SE, Continuous. B. Navolis. Fr 10 A.

Wooden Ships & Iron Men (WSM), A, Swiss-Elim, Continuous. Three 90-min rounds in preliminaries. Top 4 advance to 3-hr finals SE. Advanced rules. J. McAden, RR#2, Box 43, Millbrook, NY 12545. Fr 9 A.

Wrasslin' (WRS), A, SE, Continuous. Elimination bout. Each player receives a stable of three wrestlers. C. Kibler. Fr 5 P.

Wrasslin' Jr (WRJ), B, SE, Continuous. GM picks wrestlers. R. Stakenas Jr. Sa 4 P.

Wrasslin' Battle Royal (WBR), A, SE, Continuous. GM selects wrestlers. C. Kibler. Su 11 A.

Wrasslin' Tag Team (WTT), A, SE, Continuous. Best two of three falls per match. Form your own two-player teams. GM selects wrestlers. C. Kibler. Su. 9 A.

A VIEW FROM THE TOP



ASL SCENARIO G13



Southwest of BOLOGNA, ITALY, 23 February 1945: As a prelude to the final offensive in Italy, it was vital that "Riva Ridge", a series of four peaks dominating Route 64 between Vergato and the city of Bologna, be cleared. Following successes on Mount Belvedere and Mount Gorgolesco, taken by *coup-de-main* on the 18th and 19th, the U.S. 10th Mountain Division was ordered to press its luck and storm Mount Torraccia. But here the German resistance stiffened. After several days of heavy fighting, the 85th Mountain Infantry was unable to dislodge the emplaced defenders on the hill-top. The 2nd Battalion, which had been pinned down 400 yards short of the summit, was withdrawn after having suffered over 400 casualties. General Truscott, in command of the 5th Army, demanded the peak be attacked again and promised air support for the next attempt. On the morning of the 23rd, the 3/86th was committed from divisional reserve.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



(Only hexrows R-GG are playable on board 15)

BALANCE:

- ☒ Delete the HMG from the American OB.
- ☆ Add one 6-6-7 to the American OB.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win if, at game end, they Control \geq seven Level-4-hill hexes on board 25.

TURN RECORD CHART

☒ GERMAN Sets Up First [84]	☆ 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [186]									

Elements of Infanterie Division 334 [ELR: 4] set up on hill hexes on board 25: {SAN: 4}

12	2					3	9	2	8	4

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 86th Mountain Infantry Regiment [ELR: 5] set up on board 15: {SAN: 3}

12	3	2			2	2	

SPECIAL RULES:

1. Weather is Ground Snow (E3.72), with Wet EC and a Mild Breeze from the southwest at start.
2. Hammada does not exist; treat as Open Ground. Roads do not exist. All buildings are stone.
3. All German units, regardless of terrain, may set up concealed. The OB-given "?" must be used as Dummy counters.
4. All Americans are ski-capable (E4.2), have Winter Camouflage (E3.712), and are considered Commandos for Climbing purposes (B11.433) only.
5. U.S. Air Support is available in the form of one FB with HE bombs, which arrives automatically on Turn 1.

AFTERMATH: Truscott made good on his promise, as Allied fighter-bombers struck the German positions atop Torraccia at dawn and continued their attacks throughout the morning's battle. Although the 3rd Battalion moved quickly across the saddle between the peaks on Riva Ridge under cover of the air bombardment and strafing, heavy German fire slowed its further progress. For a time, it appeared that the attack would falter completely. But the German division was not as well-armed as others in the line, several key machinegun positions were destroyed by the bombing, and its own growing casualties took a toll. Persistent efforts on the part of the American officers got the GIs to move forward right into the zone of the air attack. By mid-afternoon, a company had managed to fight its way to the top and capture the German command post on the summit. Resistance collapsed. With Riva Ridge in American hands, a wedge had been driven into the Gothic Line. The April offensive would see the Allies break into the plain beyond.

A realistic look at the Golden Age of Piracy!



Perhaps no period in history has been more widely romanticized in contemporary accounts than the Golden Age of Piracy near the turn of the 18th Century. Like the gunmen of the Wild West, their names have passed into legend forevermore and read like a veritable Rogue's Gallery of history's greatest villains: Edward Teach (Blackbeard) . . . Bartholomew Roberts . . . Long Ben Avery . . . William Kidd . . . and a score more of the worst cutthroats to ever hoist a Jolly Roger now sail the Spanish Main again in search of plunder and adventure. A veritable cornucopia of sea faring lore is relived in every game of BLACKBEARD.

A highly-informative game, BLACKBEARD puts to rest several myths about those who went "A-Pyrating", while relating the careers of another era's scoundrels who became infamous, yet were often admired by the common man for their misdeeds. Players work both sides of the law. Each commands several historic Pirates plus King's Commissioners—a form of sea-going bounty hunter sent out to bring them to their final day of reckoning. The pace is dictated by a Fast Action card system that brings merchants over the horizon to be plundered or ports to be raided and sacked. An ill wind can bring all manner of misfortune . . . warships, storms, hull rot, scurvy, or even mutiny among one's own crew. A good Pirate needs to know when to make himself scarce and when it's wise to reward his mates with a little harmless fun. Alas, a poor soul can't even find relief in a bottle without some scoundrel running ye thru amidst your debauchery and revelry. Nor does it hurt to cross the right palm with some ill-gotten pieces-of-eight when it comes time to rest and refit. There's more to BLACKBEARD than simple swordplay. The game includes 2 Gameboards, 24 Pirate Cards, 40 Action Cards, Playing Pieces, Historical Notes, and various Playing Aids, all designed to recapture the Golden Age of Piracy.

For 1 to 4 players ages 12 and up. Solitaire rules included.

No.	Title	Players	Ages	Complexity	Suggested Retail
887	Blackbeard	1 to 4	12 & Up	Medium	\$35.00



The Avalon Hill Game Company

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